

COMPLETION REPORT

Towards a Socially-Inclusive Creative City: What George Town world Heritage Site Can Learn From Japan?

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Renowned Japanese creative city scholar, Masayuki Sasaki, has acknowledged Kanazawa as a socially-inclusive Creative City. This study aims to examine the ways towards becoming a socially-inclusive creative city for George Town World Heritage Site by gleaning lessons from Kanazawa, Japan - a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Arts designated in 2009. A comparative study between Kanazawa, Japan and George Town World Heritage Site, Penang was undertaken where the researcher carried out fieldwork in both cities. A purely qualitative research approach was adopted where primary data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions and field visits in both cities. Purposive and snowball sampling methods were engaged to identify key informants. A total of fifteen (15) interviews and four (4) focus group discussions were conducted in George Town with government agencies, State Executive Officials, Non-Government Organisations, independent consultants, heritage traders, artists, the private sector and local think-tanks. In Kanazawa, four (4) interviews and two (2) focus group discussions took place with City Hall officials, directors of cultural institutions, artisans and the private sector. From the interviews and focus group discussions, the requirements for GTWHS to be a socially inclusive Creative City are: i) strong state intervention, ii) distinct cultural and creative policies that integrate the elements of social urban inclusion, iii) adequacy of infrastructure, resources and support system, iv) availability of packaging, branding and marketing mechanisms for creative/cultural products, and iv) efforts to mitigate the downsides of gentrification. The study also identified several issues, challenges and barriers faced by GTWHS such as: (i) ignorance towards the Creative City concept, (ii) fragmented and disorganized efforts by various stakeholders, (iii) non-symbiotic co-existence of heritage craftsmen and modern artists/entrepreneurs amidst gentrification, (iv) shortage of successors for heritage trades, and (v) existing Malaysian education system that does not prioritize the cultivation of arts and culture. This study also analyzed Kanazawa's strategies and policies, and they were organized under five sub-themes, namely, a) foundations, b) people, c) planning, d) markets and e) visions. Under the theme 'foundations', Kanazawa's history is integral towards the city's success as a socially inclusive Creative City. Under the theme 'people', it was found that Kanazawa's craftsmen possess a great sense of pride in their work thus contributing to the success and sustainability of the city's creative industries. The people of Kanazawa's high awareness and appreciation towards arts and culture also help to support local creative economy. Under the 'planning' theme, Kanazawa is a city with integrated physical planning and design, excellent museums and galleries complemented with good infrastructure and local communities to support the city's arts and local culture. Under the theme 'markets', Kanazawa positions and embeds culture in business. Kanazawa citizens mostly opt for original (instead of imitation) products, and the city has good packaging, branding and marketing mechanisms. The theme on

'visions' disclosed that Kanazawa has past leaders with foresight and their visions are continued by contemporary ones. Key recommendations: i) to incorporate multi-dimensional policy-making in George Town; ii) to ensure George Town's urban planning, design and use of public spaces integrate a cultural approach; iii) to utilize George Town's cultural endowments for all citizens to foster social inclusion.

Publication of the Results of Research Project: **(Please refer to Appendix A to view evidences of publications.)**

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

1. Talk-cum-Sharing session with Penang's local community on the preliminary findings from fieldwork in Kanazawa. (Date: 29 August 2018) [As stated in original agreement]
2. Guest Lecture to urban planning undergraduates and postgraduates (Course Code: RPK538) at School of Housing, Building & Planning, Universiti Sains Malaysia. (Date: 13 November 2018, 10.00 am). Lecture Title: Towards A Socially-Inclusive Creative City: What George Town World Heritage Site Can Learn From Japan? **[EXTRA Output]**
3. Presented research findings from this project during the 2nd International Conference on Sustainable Development Goals 2019 (ICSDG 2019) at Olive Tree Hotel, Penang, Malaysia. (Date: 31 July 2018, 3.20-3.40 pm) Title of talk: Kanazawa as a Socially-Inclusive Creative City: Lessons for George Town World Heritage Site. [As stated in original agreement]
4. Participated, disseminated information and built networks related to research topic during the 8th World Summit on Arts & Culture, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. (Date: 11 – 14 March 2019) **[EXTRA Output]**

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

NO thesis was stated as output in the original agreement.

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

1. One (1) Technical Report entitled 'Towards A Socially-Inclusive Creative City: What George Town World Heritage Site Can Learn From Japan?' [As stated in original agreement.]

EXTRA OUTPUT (not stated in original agreement)

1. Submitted manuscript to 'City, Culture & Society' on 6 March 2019. Paper Title - Towards an Inclusive Creative City: How Ready Is The Historic City of George Town? (Status: In press) **[EXTRA Output]**
2. Submitted manuscript to 'Creative Industries Journal' on 20 August 2019. Paper Title - Towards Cultural Sustainability in Creative Cities: What George Town, Malaysia Can Learn From Kanazawa, Japan? (Status: under review) **[EXTRA Output]**
3. Submitted manuscript to USM Press for publication of book chapter on 22 November 2019. Paper Title - Kanazawa as a Socially-Inclusive Creative City: Lessons for George Town World Heritage Site. (Status: under review) **[EXTRA Output]**