



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Shanghai
City of Design

UNESCO Creative Cities Network
Member since 2011

10 Things to know about

SHANGHAI UNESCO City of Design

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Cultural heritage in Shanghai

Shanghai is a city featured by its inclusive and open culture where eastern and western civilizations meet and form a unique historical and cultural landscape. The Bund, the most famous region of the urban landscape in Shanghai, is the well-protected historical heritage of the city. It has 52 buildings of various styles, including the Gothic, Baroque, Romanesque, classical, Renaissance, and mixture of Chinese and western styles, which have become the landmark buildings with the name of "architecture expo of different countries".

Complete education and training system for creative talents

There are 63 universities in Shanghai with the schools or majors on creativity and design. Besides, many enterprises, institutions and training centers have carried out a variety of creative training programs. Shanghai Human Resources and Social Security Bureau provide training for more than 80,000 professionals in creative industries each year. Shanghai has launched a series of policies for the attraction and support of the talents, and has brought around 300,000 professionals to Shanghai in the recent years.

Active creative design groups

Shanghai not only enjoys advantages in the training of creative design talents, but also has many intermediary service agencies, professional research centers and studios represented by the associations for design industry, which have provided sustainable driving force for the creative industries in Shanghai. For example, Shanghai Convention and Exhibition Industries Association, Shanghai Advertising Association, Shanghai Gem Trade Association, Shanghai Software Industry Association, Shanghai Industrial Design Association, and Shanghai Garment Trade Association.

Funding in multiple channels by the government

In 2009, the gross output of the creative industries in Shanghai reached 390 billion yuan, with the added value increasing by 17.6% to the previous year

and 950,000 employees. In 2007, “Shanghai Service Industry Development Fund” was set up to support the creative enterprises and projects in the field of services. The “Digital Media Innovation Fund” and the “Special Fund for Digital Publication” also invest in millions to bring a positive influence to the new field. In the construction of creative clusters in Shanghai, nearly 80% of the investors didn’t belong to the creative industries.

Working and operating mechanism for creative industries

Regarding to the operating mechanism of creative industries, Shanghai has formed a “trinity” operating mechanism with government guidance, market operation and intermediary services. That is: the government should mainly lead and guide the industry, and mobilize the capacity of the enterprises and market as the main factors. Meanwhile, various intermediary agencies are encouraged to participate in the creative industries. In the past two years, a number of civil intermediary agencies, investment institutions and research institutions have been established, such as Shanghai Creative Industry Center, Shanghai Creative Industries Association, Shanghai Creative Industry Investment Co., Shanghai Creative Design Center, Shanghai International Fashion Federation, and Shanghai Creative Industry Institute.

The largest creative clusters in the world

At present Shanghai is the city with the largest area of creative clusters in the world. About two-thirds of the creative clusters in Shanghai are built through the protection and creative regeneration of the old factory buildings and warehouses. They have received 6,110 creative enterprises from over 30 countries and regions, with more than 114,700 employees. Many creative clusters have achieved good brand awareness, such as the Bridge 8, Tianzifang, M50, Highstreet Loft, Red Town, 2577 Creative Garden, and Zhangjiang Cultural and Creative Industry Base.

International festivals and events

Shanghai has organized many festivals, exhibitions and events with good reputation, including the Shanghai International Creative Industry Week,

Shanghai eArt Festival, Shanghai Design Biennale, Shanghai International Film Festival, China JOY, and Shanghai International Art Festival.

Multi-layer media coverage

The numerous media play an important role in building the atmosphere for innovation and creativity. The SMG cultural channel broadcasts the first program on creativity and culture “Creative World”, which encourages the enthusiasm and enjoyment of the audience on creativity through the most up-to-date visuals and the most classical case studies. The traditional paper-based media also give a great deal of concern to the design industry and participate in the development with various efforts. In addition, the new media – design-focused websites, represented by “China Visual” and “Arting 365”, are growing as another channel for the dissemination of concepts and knowledge of design.

Complete cultural facilities and developed cultural market

Shanghai owns a relatively complete system of modern cultural facilities, such as Shanghai Museum, Shanghai Library, Shanghai Grand Theater, Shanghai Book City, Shanghai Science and Technology Museum, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai Oriental Art Center, Oriental Cinema World, Shanghai Circus World, Pudong Library, Pudong Exhibition Hall, Shanghai International Expo Center, Shanghai international Mart, etc. Shanghai Grand Theater has the most advanced equipment among theaters in China.

Design everywhere

Shanghai is the birthplace of the design industry in China and in Asia, and many “firsts” in the field of design in China were born in Shanghai, such as the first architecture company, the first printing company, the first design company, the first jewelry company, the first military shipyard, the first advertisement, the first cartoon... The 10 major design categories found in Shanghai are: industrial product design, architecture and planning design, fashion design, exhibition design, printing and packaging design, advertising

design, software design, cartoon comics and game design, graphic design, and jewelry design.

With the inclusive culture, the inherited tradition of design, the excellent incubator for creativity and the good environment for investment, Shanghai will be able to promote the development of creative industries in China, Asia and the world through bringing forward the energy and scale of creative economy