



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Creative Cities Network

CLT/CEI/CID/2009/PI/139
24/09/2009

Shenzhen

UNESCO City of Design



Fast facts

- Shenzhen is a coastal city in South China, separated from Hong Kong only by the Shenzhen River.
- Shenzhen has more than 6,000 design firms with 100,000 employees, creating a yearly output of around 11 billion Yuan (US\$1.54 billion).
- Shenzhen has become China's largest production base for ladies' clothes. More than 30,000 designers work for more than 800 Chinese fashion brands.
- Shenzhen has a population with an average age of 30.8, most of whom are well educated, regrouping one-sixth of China's postgraduates.

A «culture-based city»

- In January 2003, Shenzhen established the strategy for a «culture-based city» and the principle of a «cultural economy,» aiming to build Shenzhen into a cultural and ecological city. Design has become an important part of residents' lives. Each year during «Creative December», creative design competitions are held for residents and youths.

Birthplace of China's modern design

- Shenzhen has taken the national lead in optimizing its processing and manufacturing industries. Since the beginning of the 1980s, Shenzhen-made products have been very popular with Chinese people. A direct orientation toward the overseas market has prompted Shenzhen enterprises to attach more importance to product quality and design. Some processing enterprises began to cultivate their own



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designers to better transform foreign designs into their products or devise their own products, both to reduce designing costs and to upgrade the level of local designers. Thus the concept of modern Chinese design was gradually created in Shenzhen.

Design industry

- Shenzhen's design industry has a comparatively high marketing level and a close connection with other industries, which make the city a major design hub and one of the leading cities in China. Shenzhen is the Chinese leader in graphic design, industrial design, interior design, packaging design, fashion and Architecture. It also has a particular advantage in the design of light industrial products, including watches and clocks, medical instruments, telecommunication products, electronic products, toys and furniture.
- Shenzhen is the most attractive city for young designers in the country. Many elite Chinese designers who have substantial influence in the domestic design industry are from Shenzhen. Supported by the government's industrial policy, private companies have renovated old factory buildings and villages to let to designers, artists, craftsmen, graduates with design credentials, and other entrepreneurs in the creative industries. More than 20 creative industry clusters have been established that covers an area of about 2,000 km².

Design training and education

- **Shenzhen University**
Founded in 1983, the first comprehensive institution of higher learning in Shenzhen, providing one of the oldest industrial design courses in China.
- **Shenzhen Polytechnic**
It focuses on teaching applied professional techniques in production, construction, management and services. Its school of Art & Design has 10 specializations.
- **The Research Institute of Qinghua in Shenzhen**
Located inside the Shenzhen University Town, its Art Design Center offers post-graduate courses in art design.
- **Shenzhen Tourism College of Jinan University**
It provides courses in scenic site design and landscape design for students to pursue bachelor's, master's and doctor's degrees.



- **Shenzhen Institute of Technology**
This institute provides courses in animation, online games, product design, pearl and jewelry design.
- **Shenzhen Institute of Information Technology**
It has courses in software and telecommunications design.
- **The Institute of Digital Media Technology Ltd.**
Established by the GDC IDMT (Shenzhen) Ltd., it is one of the most influential 3D animation design training agencies in China.
- **Puzzle Animation Training Institute**
A subsidiary of the Shenzhen Puzzle Studio, which features the development of animation-related production and 2D cartoons.
- **Other schools**
Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts' Shenzhen College, Shenzhen Xingzhi Technology and Shenzhen No. 2 Technology all have related design courses. The China Central Academy of Fine Arts has also established a training base in Shenzhen to provide post-graduate courses.

Design events and international exchanges

- **Graphic Design in China Biennale Exhibition**
The most influential graphic design event in China began in 1992.
- **Shenzhen Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture**
First held in 2005, its theme is «Open City, Open Door!» with works on display focusing on China's urbanization. It became Shenzhen & Hong Kong Bi-city Biennale of Urbanism \ Architecture in 2007 with a motto of «City Reborn.»
- **FIYTA Cup Watch Design Contest**
An annual event, the most influential watch design contest in China. The event is co-sponsored by Qinghua University and FIYTA Group, the manufacturer of China's first space watches.
- **China Industrial Design Elites Competition**
Since the first competition in 2002, this event has aroused great interest across the country.

Creative industrial clusters

- **Shenzhen University No. 3 Art Loft**
Covering an area of 3,000 m² with 23 separate workshops, It serves as a base for arts education.



23 renowned artists in ink paintings, oil paintings, engraving and sculpture have their studios there.

- **No. 8 Zhongkang Road**
This site has been developed into a large industrial park and became home to the Shenzhen Sculpture Gallery in 2003. The gallery rents out workshops to individual artists at rates lower than market prices.
- **Bao'an Art Zone 22**
Built in an old industrial base, this park contains a total of 13 projects related to creative art, such as artwork banks, photography museums or contemporary art demonstration centers.
- **OCT-LOFT at Overseas Chinese Town**
Created from renovated factory buildings with a floor space of 151,036 m² and inaugurated in 2007, OCT-LOFT features a characteristic of the post-industrial era and targets mainly design companies and enterprises engaged in cultural creation.
- **Tianmian Creative Industrial Estate**
Opened in May 2007 and created from 11 old factory buildings, this park covers an area of more than 10,000 m². It is now opening similar parks in other cities in China.
- **Shenzhen Yijing National Cartoon & Animation Industry Base**
One of the State-level animation bases certificated by the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television of China.
- **Guanlan Print Original Industry Base**
Opened in May 2006, the China International Prints Biennale is an international prints exhibition with the most participating countries, artists and the highest-quality works.
- **F518 Idea Land**
Created from old factory buildings, it was opened in December 2007 and comprises a 21-story hotel, a creative exhibition center, an art gallery, an art street and a 10,000 m² dormitory building for artists.
- **Nanshan Cyber Cultural Industry Base**
Attracting mainly enterprises engaged in animation, video games and the production of film and TV programs, it introduces the recycling economy strategy by using the photovoltaic curtain wall technology.