

REPORT

2013-2016

KOBE

UNESCO CITY OF DESIGN



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

City of Design
KOBE 

Member of the UNESCO
Creative Cities Network
since 2008

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INTRODUCTION

Since pre-modern times, Kobe's distinct culture has been shaped through cultural acceptance and assimilation by the influx of people, information and products arriving from abroad.

The growth of Kobe's unique urban resources and assets accelerated with the opening of Kobe Port in 1868. The cityscape in particular is characterized by exotic architecture and its proximity to both the sea and mountains. Kobe lifestyle is founded in an open, liberal cultural climate nurtured by an active hunger for foreign cultures; local manufacturing and craftsmanship is represented by unique products including chemical shoes, pearls and various confectionery.

Furthermore, the reconstruction following the Great Hanshin Earthquake in 1995 was a lesson to the city in the depth of interpersonal ties, spirit of mutual aid and many other human strengths. It turned out that the city's time-honored, inherent qualities—including creativity through design—united people and raised hopes for the future, helping the city through its rehabilitation.

Design is indispensable to many things: the promotion of tourism utilizing local resources, creating attractive scenery, and promoting industry, for example. Design also plays an important role in daily life, making familiar issues such as the environment, disaster prevention, crime prevention, welfare and education more visible, easier to communicate, more relevant, and action-prompting. Design makes things handier, friendlier, more enjoyable and positive.

Art and culture can help develop that creativity, and prompted by creativity, a person's independent, voluntary actions can enrich people's lives and bring a dynamic element to society. It is our goal to share the values of such developments in Kobe, a UNESCO City of Design.



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GENERAL INFORMATION

- Name of the city: **Kobe**
- Country: **Japan**
- Creative field of designation: **Design**
- Date of designation: **October 16th, 2008**
- Date of submission of the current report: **30th November, 2016**
- Entity responsible for the report: **Creative City Promotion Office, Kobe**
- Previous report submitted: **May 26th, 2015**
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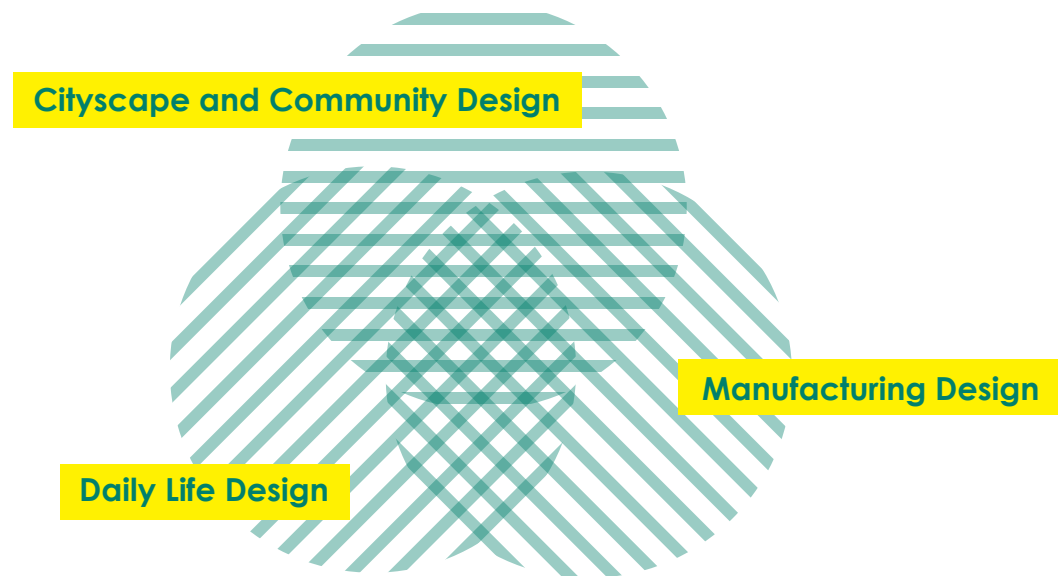
CONTRIBUTION TO THE NETWORK'S GLOBAL MANAGEMENT

- Number of UCCN annual meetings attended in the last four years: **All of them**
- Hosting of a UCCN annual meetings and dates: **Not up to now**
- Hosting of a working meeting : **UNESCO Design City Forum in Kobe**
Participating cities (May, 2015): **3 (Shenzhen, Graz, Helsinki)**
- Hosting of an international conference on issues related to creative cities: **Not up to now**
- Financial and/or in-kind support provided to UNESCO's Secretariat: **Not up to now**
- Membership of the Steering Group and period: **Not up to now**
- Participation in the evaluation of applications: **2015, 6 cities/2014, 4 cities**

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THE BASIC POLICIES TO PROMOTE “CITY OF DESIGN KOBE”

City of Design, Kobe carries out policy utilizing design under the following three fundamental objectives, in order to create a dynamically developing city that people want to visit and continue to live in.



Cityscape and Community Design

Creating attractive scenery based on local features, we will build a community full of vitality and amusement where residents can feel safe and comfortable.

Daily Life Design

We will build a community whose residents value diverse lifestyles, feel attachment to the region, and lead active lives by finding excellent designs that develop their creativity.

Manufacturing Design

We will build a community of lively industry where new markets will be created through support for manufacturing high value-added products of excellent design.

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MAIN LOCAL INITIATIVES (2013-2016)

The organizations promoting City of Design Kobe

City Office Organization

Departments responsible for each of the three fields of implementation—Cityscape and community design, daily life design and manufacturing design—have been established.

Kobe City Creative Director (from 2015)

A specialist in the design field has been appointed as the Kobe City Creative Director. The Creative Director is responsible for the elevation of foundational strength in each department in the City Office and directs various administrative challenges towards resolution using the power of design. Since inauguration the Creative Director has influenced 191 individual policies.

Design Advisory Board (2007 - 2013): a contrivance for specialist advice

The Design Advisory Board was created with five specialists who gave advice from their professional points of view in relation to policy based on the fundamental objectives of the three design areas: Cityscape and community design, daily life design and manufacturing design.

City of Design Kobe Creative Council (from 2014): implementation of creative ideas from professional creators

Proposals and suggestions with professional points of view were given from industry creators at the Kobe Creative Council. Opinions were based on the policies in the fundamental objectives of the three areas of design: Cityscape and community design, daily life design and manufacturing design. In addition, the communication accumulated ideas and knowledge that were then used in the actual implementation of new creative activities with many citizens involved in the process.

(Actual projects produced by Kobe Creative Council from 2014 to 2016)

The revitalization project of Higashi Yuenchi Park
A talk event about architecture
The elevation of appeal for products produced by welfare institutions for the disabled
The introduction of a friendly community cycle
An exhibition of healthy food from Kobe
A reconsideration of the City Hall space
Kids SOZO Project (Creative reuse)
An exhibition on the importance of manufacturing design
Implementation of training for municipal employees in regional and community creation
A downtown art festival
Implementation of a project for people to experience living in Kobe
The project of casually enjoying music around the city
The "Kobe Creator's Meeting" for creative citizens to get together

Design and Creative Center Kobe (KIITO) (from 2012)

The former Kobe Raw Silk Testing Center was remodeled, and the Design and Creative Center Kobe (KIITO) was established to operate as the base for the creation of City of Design Kobe.

◆ “A platform for the “+Creative” practices of a variety of people”

Since opening, KIITO has implemented various creative activities in art and design. These were born from the exchange of many different people with non-stereotypical, liberal points of view, and each activity probes a different idea and scheme. KIITO puts a lot of energy into the “+Creative” platform in particular, which resolves social issues by bringing people and resources together, adding the power of art and design into the mix and then spreading news and implementing activities.

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|----------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of annual users (persons) | 71,542 | 103,628 | 113,626 | 114,193 |
| Sponsored programs | 168 | 248 | 234 | 198 |

•Programs (excerpt)

2013

+Creative Seminar

(Designer training for diversification, support for child rearing, disaster prevention + community creation + tourism, media literacy)

+Creative Workshop

(Architecture and dance)

2014

+Creative Seminar

(The start line for ideas guiding design, disaster prevention, the future of new parks)

+Creative Workshop

(Contact Improvisation Meeting
“Communication starts with a touch”)

2015

+Creative Seminar

(Manufacturing design, counter plans for global warming, food)

+Creative Lecture

(Considering the role of a regional community's design center, art as a skill to transform circumstance)

2016

+Creative Seminar

(Revitalizing the downtown area, the future of roads)

Talk show

(What is area renovation?)

◆ Bringing together human resources for creative activities

KIITO also manages office space that brings together people behind the creative fields such as design, art, fashion and the business people supporting them. The aim of the office space is to create exchange amongst tenants that crosses industries and occupations, bringing forth many types of new ventures.

Tenants as of Nov. 2016: 35 individuals and organizations

Educational institutions for training and producing excellent designers

Kobe has several higher educational institutions including Kobe Design University for the molding of designers, artists and other creators into excellent designers of creative talent. Many are also involved in training talent to be active internationally, in coordination with overseas educational institutions.

Cityscape and Community Design

Creation of Landscapes overflowing with appeal

One of the attractions of Kobe is the wonderful views abundant in diversity; the metropolitan area between Kobe harbor and the Rokko mountain range, the abundant nature and the rural communities. A public selection of the 50 and 10 best views of Kobe was established to allow future generations to continue enjoying excellent views through preservation and promotion. Scenery creation guidelines were established to regulate the height, breadth and colors of new construction in certain areas. Signs, in the shape of the eye of a needle, were established at viewpoints in an attempt to assert their appeal in Kobe.

In addition, a plan for the implementation of the best night views of Kobe was established, which led to the Flower Road "Light Museum Project" and the light up of the Kobe Ohashi Bridge, and the fascinating trial of prosperous events in the shopping arcades and retail markets in the city area at night, promoting Kobe's night scenery and making it even more attractive.

Viewpoint Signs established: 15 (as of Nov. 2016)



Preservation and Use of Historical Architecture

There are many examples of modern architecture and old Japanese-style homes that speak of Kobe's culture; they're local symbols built in the area after the port was opened. These historic, and other symbolic buildings were designated as Important Architecture Forming Kobe's Scenery, and a system to preserve and utilize them is currently being established.

Number of established buildings: 21 (as of Nov. 2016)

Daily Life Design

Chibikkobe (The future of Kobe as a town by children)(2014,2016)

Chibikkobe gives children aged 8 to 15 years the chance to learn professional knowledge and skills directly from expert creators from various occupations over the course of a few months and create their own town, just for children. Chibikkobe cultivates creativity in children based around three main occupations (chef, architect and designer), and has been held every two years since it started in 2012.

2014 July-October

Attendees to the children's town: 10,057 children

Workshops held 54 times

Co-operating creators: 97

Co-operating volunteers: 568

2016 July-October

Attendees to the children's town: 12,666 children

Workshops held 57 times

Co-operating creators: 83

Co-operating volunteers: 874



Kids SOZO Project (Creative Reuse) (from 2015)

Using scrap material from the city of Kobe in effort to change trash into treasure, "creative reuse" leads to the invention of fantastic items. The various scrap material collected from shops and factories in the city, such as leather odds and ends, woodchips and plastic, allowed for a full display of Kids SOZO (a word derived from the Japanese words for creation and imagination) in their free forms of expression. This program allowed children to polish their sensitivity towards design, and was also a great chance for learn about the shops and factories in Kobe city.

2015 Participants: approx. 260

2016 Participants: approx. 230 (calculated as of Nov.)

issue + design (from 2008)

Making use of the experience of the great Kobe earthquake in 1995, “issue+design” was put into practice as a social issue solving project run by the public and private sectors. Social “issues” threatening our safety and peace of mind in society—natural disasters, traffic accidents, environmental problems, food safety, medical/welfare issues, chemical pollutions, etc.—are resolved through the power of design and the creativity of citizens, and steps are made towards a society where citizens can live in peace. The ideas and products produced from the “issue+design” project have won various awards, including the extremely influential Good Design award (Japan).

2013 Theme: suicide / depression +design, Deliverables: Stress Mountain

2014 Theme: tsunami +design, Deliverables: Kokokuru? (Good Design Award)

2015 Theme: city creativity +design, Deliverables: Creative City INDEX

LIFE IS CREATIVE Exhibition (2015)

As Japan finds itself heading towards an aging society, this exhibition was held to discover new ways to create ‘life’ in an aging society, without being attached to any preconceived images of what old age is. “Laboratory” workshops were held with eight different themes about various perspectives on the issue of aging society. After an introduction of leading local and international examples of the UK, and other countries, participants were given the chance to think together resulting in part of the Kobe Action Plan proposal being put into effect. The exhibition was an attempt at considering the future of an aging society. It was a step towards discovering ways to make life more creative in an aging society, involving both the elderly, those supporting them and everyone concerned about the future we face, with the goal of creating a sustainable city, and happiness for all.

Eight themes: Senior Media, old town, food, senior disaster prevention, public parks, making preparations for passing away, love, products for mental impairment of the aged.

Exhibition Attendees: 4,980 people, Participants in related events: 5,686 people



Kobe Biennale (2007-2015)

In an attempt to devise a connection between revitalization, city prosperity and further encouragement of arts culture, this arts festival has been held once every two years since 2007 with community creation and the idea of “people creation” a supporting benchmark. Kobe Biennale doesn't place its attention on invited artists, rather the focus is placed on the various competitions that aim to discover and cultivate up-and-coming artists, and is held as an arts festival open to all, regardless of whether they be professional, amateur or specialists in their fields. In October 2012 a protocol of understanding was exchanged between Asia's top-level Gwangju Biennale (South Korea) and the Kobe Biennale, regarding a joint deal of universal cooperation for the development of both cities. The deal includes networking of artistic talent, including the referral of promising artists and the offer of information to share and use.



| | 2011 | 2013 | 2015 |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Attendees | 242,766 | 369,455 | 383,339 |
| Competition Applicants | 2,190 | 720 | 681 |

Kobe International Flute Competition (from 1985)

The Kobe International Flute Competition drives community creation in a culturally rich Kobe by offering young flutists the chance to soar into the international world of music. Held every four years since 1985, it has conveyed Kobe as a City of Music to the world. This Competition was the first in Japan to join the The World Federation of International Music Competitions, a prominent leader in concerts around the world, and is the only registered periodic competition for solely flutes. This competition is one of the three largest internationally, and many past prizewinners make up principal posts in the international flute world.

8th Competition, March - April 2013, 229 people from 35 countries participating



Manufacturing Design

Kobe Design School (2013, 2014)

Targeted at manufacturing businesses and young designers, these lectures were held for the enhancement of and strategic application of design administration ability. A matching program was implemented in which the challenges facing each participating business were raised as topics, and groups of businesses and designers worked on product development to reach a conclusion, of which the results were eventually announced.

2013: 27 participating designers, 8 participating businesses
2014: 28 participating designers, 9 participating businesses

Design Executive's Forum, Kobe (from 2013)

Design Executive's forum was held for managers interested in design, designers, students and other citizens, where they could learn directly from managers of companies with corporate philosophies based around design principals. Participants were given the chance to learn about the importance of design in corporate management, and they also received hints and ideas on how to lead creative lives in addition.

2013: 102 participants/ 2014: 107 participants

Product Design Collaboration Lab (from 2015)

A program supporting the development of products for small-to-medium manufacturing businesses. Producers with ability were invited as lecturers, participants learned concrete methods and the know-how of product development that made best use of design, and trial products were created based on the conclusions of concept plans for in-house brands or products companies wanted to produce themselves.

2015: 11 companies participating
2016: 7 companies participating

The Power of Design Exhibition (from 2015)

An initiative of City of Design, Kobe, this exhibition was held at the International Industrial Fair 2016 (Kobe). The many significances of using design were transmitted within the product lineup and Good Design award-winning products showcased. Individual discussions and educational seminars from specialist advisors assembled helped spread the word about the results and significance of adopting design in manufacturing.

Kobe Fashion Contest (from 1974)

The Kobe Fashion Contest has been held every year since starting in 1974. It's goal is to foster support for the next generation of young creators in the fashion industry in both Japan and the rest of the world. This Japan-leading contest is a highly evaluated project that symbolizes "Fashion City Kobe" for the people aiming to be designers active in the world stage creating unique items. Since 1999, programs supporting studying abroad in various fashion universities and vocational schools in France, Italy and England have been held, bringing the number of students who have studied overseas to over 100.

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MAIN INTER-CITY CO-OPERATIVE INITIATIVES

Asia Design City Forum 2013 (2013)

A Design Forum was held in cooperation with UNESCO Design Cities Shanghai (China) and Seoul (Korea). Representative designers gave precedent reports and participated in group work, with the goal of resolving issues facing Design cities. This new forum offered the chance to experience mutual learning, new discoveries and lead naturally to the resolution of various issues.



Taking part in the Shenzhen Design Award (2013, 2015)

Sponsored by City of Design Shenzhen, Design City Kobe has constantly participated in the Shenzhen Design Award for participants in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. "Ability Bibs," which was the result of an issue+design project, took the Merit Award in 2013.



UNESCO Design City Forum in KOBE (2015)

Inviting representative guest speakers from Graz, Shenzhen and Helsinki cities, a panel discussion was held where precedent examples were shown of the kind of measures carried out in each country to capitalize on design.

Talk Theme: " 'GRAZ – city of design – ' campaigns" (Graz)
" How we foster young designers" (Shenzhen)
" Design in the DNA of Finland and Helsinki" (Helsinki)

Design Workshop for the Children (2015, 2016)

As a joint initiative with City of Design Saint-Etienne, design workshops were held inviting designers from each city as lecturers. The opportunity allowed them to encounter children from different cultures, and aimed at creative cultivation. This program was not just about cultivating creativity in children, but also a contribution to strengthening relations between cities, between the design centers in each and between the designers themselves through a process of joint-initiative.



Held in Kobe in 2015

Lecturers: Kaksi design (Élode Vichos, Guillaume Granjon)

Participants: 41 people

Held in Saint-Etienne in 2016

Lecturers: Kuri-Kuri (Shinichi Yamauchi, Kanako Yamauchi)

Participants: 17

Creative Travel to Japan: Exhibitions in UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (2016)

An exhibition and symposium with a Japanese culture and creativity theme was held in UNESCO's Paris headquarters with five Japanese UNESCO Creative Cities and one candidate city participating. Through the exhibition and symposium, all participants shared their own experience and knowledge on the ways cities should contribute to sustainable development.

Participating cities: Kobe (Design)

Kanazawa (Crafts & Folk Arts)

Sapporo (Media Arts)

Hamamatsu (Music)

Tsuruoka (Gastronomy)

Yamagata (candidate for UNESCO Creative City: Film)

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ACTION PLAN FOR THE FORTHCOMING MID-TERM FOUR YEAR PERIOD

Grounded in “Kobe 2020 Vision” (an action plan for Kobe city from 2016-2020), this effort is an attempt to create an attractive city that makes the best use of design, culture and the arts to create a place for new generations to find attractive design-related jobs and flourish, and also to cultivate, accumulate and establish creative talent, focusing especially on the active youthful generation.

Encouraging young designers providing various opportunities in cooperation with UNESCO Creative Cities

- Offering many chances for exchange between Kobe's young creators and creators from other cities in the network, and increasing chances for demonstrations of creativity by new ideas derived from diligent application with excellent creators from other cities.
- Offering Kobe's young creators the chance to participate in various competitions by utilizing the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, and shining a light on the ability of younger generations by connecting them with new activities both locally and internationally.
- Implementing initiatives in cultivating creativity in children, by focusing on the training of future-generation creators.

Offering superior design services to citizens

- The keyword “+design” is held as an opinion cross-functionally promoting “Kobe 2020 Vision”, the action plan for Kobe City from 2016-2020. Through various projects close to citizens, such as environment, disaster prevention, crime prevention, welfare, education, etc. we offer highly designed public services using ICT.
- When making decisions on the design of public services and facilities in Kobe, we employ the ability of recognized local and international designers to increase the opportunities citizens have to come in contact with the abundance of design appeal.

Enhancing the appeal of the city using the power of culture and the arts

- 2017 commemorates the 150th year of the opening of Kobe Port; various events will be held to celebrate. As part of the festivities, an arts and culture festival will also be held for all people to attend. This is not just sponsored; citizens and artist organized activities will also be supported.
- In 2017 the Kobe International Flute Music Festival will be held with the 9th Kobe International Flute Competition at it's heart; this is an opportunity for prosperity, enjoyment and creativty in the musical arts, and many people (including citizens) will be participating in the events.
- By holding various international sporting and cultural events such as the Rugby World Cup 2019, Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Kansai World Masters Games 2021, etc., Kobe offers the chance for citizens to mingle with many people visiting from other cities both nationally and overseas.

Improving the network of creative cities in Japan

- There are 7 recognized UNESCO Creative Cities from 5 fields in Japan. Using this network, cooperative projects will be held between creative cities by making best use of each city's recognized field.

Design: Nagoya

Music: Hamamatsu

Crafts and Folk Arts: Kanazawa, Sasayama

Media Arts: Sapporo

Gastronomy: Tsuruoka

- As a coordinating city of the Creative City Network of Japan (CCNJ), we will foster participation in the UNSECO Creative Cities Network by communicating the meaning and advantages of other creative Japanese cities participating in the network, by making use of the existing network between national creative cities.

Estimated annual budget

2017: As we are currently in the middle of formulating the budget, a fixed sum cannot be made available. We anticipate however, a budget scale by and large of the same standard as 2016 (170,000,000 yen).

Communication and Awareness

- Kobe Creator/Sponsor Registration System

In an attempt to accumulate creative talent, a universal network was constructed for creators and those supporting creators. Information related to design policy and creative activities continues to be updated through a dedicated web site for design policy and a mail service.

City of Design Kobe Website: <https://design.city.kobe.lg.jp/>

Mailing list registrants (as of Nov. 2016): Creators/supporters: 639 persons

- Design and Creative Center Kobe (KIITO)

The Design and Creative Center Kobe (KIITO) is an information hub that increases awareness in design. The center is not only for professionals in the field of design, but also for the general populace and even children who have an interest in design and creative activities.

Design and Creative Center Kobe (KIITO) Website: <http://kiito.jp/>

Mailing list registrants (as of Nov. 2016): 2,309

Website views: 747,393

Facebook registrants: 7,323

Twitter followers: 1,505

Revitalization Project of Higashi Yuenchi Park with the aid of citizens

