

SONGPA, WHERE CULTURAL ART BLOOMS AROUND SEOKCHON LAKE



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
3. CULTURE AND EDUCATION
6. CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
7. CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE

CULTURAL, CAPACITY, PUBLIC SPACE, RENEWAL,
BASIC SERVICES, EDUCATION, ARTS, URBANISM,
GROWTH, CULTURAL RIGHTS



1. Songpa-gu and culture

Songpa-gu is an autonomous district in the southeastern part of Seoul, with roughly 660 000 residents. It is a place where history and modernity coexist. In terms of culture, the demand for cultural arts in Songpa-gu is very high but there are fewer cultural spaces per capita than in other areas in Seoul. To overcome this problem, constructions of public cultural facilities have been initiated.

Songpa-gu also has a beautiful natural environment, including Seokchon Lake. Surrounded by a green belt, it provides trails and resting areas, cultural activities such as the Seokchon Cherry Blossom Festival and the Autumn Leaves Festival, as well as unique shops, forms of entertainment, and restaurants. With cultural art facilities emerging, it is now transforming into a new center of cultural arts.

THE AIM IS TO CREATE A CENTER OF CULTURAL ARTS NEAR SEOKCHON LAKE BY CONSTRUCTING CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURES FOR RESIDENTS.

2. Project goals and implementation

2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The aim is to create a center of cultural arts near Seokchon Lake by constructing cultural infrastructures as a space for residents where people can easily access nature and culture in their daily lives.



2.2. Project development

Exp.space hosu is cultural space and resting area for people to actively communicate their creative ideas and cultural imaginations. This space operates cultural programs led by direct participation of the residents. With a smart healthcare zone for small-scale performances, people can also run cultural art programs and watch movies. Moreover, the space includes Songpa-gu's independent educational models: the Future Education Center and the Cooking Studio.

Seokchon Atelier is designed as an immersive theater. It is a cultural art venue where local artists, experts, and residents can participate proactively and contribute to the development of local cultural art.

Additionally, there are Songpa Smart Education Models (SONGPA SSEM), the first independent educational model of the local government, composed of four core infrastructures: the People's Library, Future Education Center, Instrument Library, and Educational Portal. An Educational Development Council was formed with people from the Office of Education, private organizations, and Songpa citizens. As a result, real-time users of SONGPA SSEM's educational platform are increasing as it has gone viral, while creating job opportunities and solving child care issues after school.

SONGPA SMART EDUCATION MODELS ARE THE FIRST INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL MODEL OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT, COMPOSED OF THE PEOPLE'S LIBRARY, FUTURE EDUCATION CENTER, INSTRUMENT LIBRARY, AND EDUCATIONAL PORTAL.



For instance, the Instrument Library was remodeled and makes instruments accessible for residents, thus lowering potential entry barriers and closing the cultural gap among the citizens. It is operated in association with the Music Production Center and rents around 700 instruments (Western and Korean), which are also used as educational materials in schools and local youth centers. This initiative also supports various musical activities, such as studios, the Music Production Center, the instrument storage, and a small concert hall.

The Songpa's Art Gallery will be constructed as a comprehensive educational and cultural space to display artworks of retired artists and to actively search for rising artists, while promoting a living cultural ecosystem with educational and exhibition-associated programs. The design of the building, selected from a design competition, harmonized with the geographical characteristics of the lake, the artistic qualities of the building, and the identity of the gallery to display its original function. Expected to be completed in June 2023, the city plans aim it to be a world-class art gallery with a huge role in creating a lifestyle-culture ecosystem.

Aside from constructing a cultural facility within Seokchon Lake, the local environment will also be developed to revitalize the local economy and increase the demand for cultural and artistic tourism.

3. Impacts

3.1. Direct impacts

Tourism content related to cultural art spaces near Seokchon Lake was created to strengthen the competitiveness of the district. Songpa-gu received the highest grade on the 'Special Tourism District Project Evaluation' (2021).

As a response to Covid-19, "exp.space hosu" provided venues to perform temporary exhibitions and online performances. Also, local artists could perform and stream at the Autumn Leaves Festival. In the future, the aforementioned instrument rental will be available to all residents, schools, and local organizations, and will



expand the targets to young artists. Moreover, 'Noontime Busking' will support amateur musicians, music clubs, and family bands, allowing them to perform with basic sound equipment at no cost.

With the tourism promotion project of Songpa-gu, the commercial power of Songridangil street has increased. In addition, the Instrument Library received instrument donations, and created a 'culture of sharing' by renting or gifting those instruments.

THE INSTRUMENT LIBRARY MAKES INSTRUMENTS ACCESSIBLE FOR RESIDENTS, THUS LOWERING POTENTIAL ENTRY BARRIERS AND CLOSING THE CULTURAL GAP AMONG THE CITIZENS.

3.2. Assessment

Feedback was gathered on the use of exp.space hosu and Seokchon Lake Atelier with two advisory conferences, including 21 councilors, ward members, experts, public officers, and residents. Nearby community centers conducted a survey to check what the residents thought about the construction of the culture and art center.

Also, the Master Plan Establishment for the Seokchon Lake was conducted to identify the current status of the lake, analyze the conditions, and set the direction to use nearby spaces.



3.3. Key factors

Seokchon Lake is one of the key attractions in Seoul with many visitors throughout the year, and has the best conditions for creating a culture and arts hub within nature due to its geographical advantage. In the long run, MICE industrial facilities will be created to develop the Jamsil International District, which has the potential to become a center of culture, leisure, and tourism.

Moreover, the culture and art infrastructures were harmonized to promote public cultural art with an independent educational model to provide equal rights, without discrimination, and opportunities to learn culture and art. Lastly, not only is it an independent program of a local government, but it is also the result of public-private-academic cultural governance.

3.4. Continuity

After the establishment of the Songpa Foundation for Arts and Culture, it took over 11 public libraries and Songpa Women's Culture Center to operate them. The cultural foundation cooperates with various cultural facilities within the district and contributes to saving expenses through different funding activities.

Songpa-gu continued to review systematic and comprehensive development plans around Seokchon Lake and carried out its Master Plan for Songpa Naru Park, Shincheon Matgol and Olympic Park Revitalization and Development Plan, and the Jamsil Special Tourist Zone Promotion Plan to establish an ideal image of the future.

4. Further information

Songpa-gu (Seoul) was a candidate for the fifth “UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21” International Award (February – June 2022). The jury for the award drew up its final report in September 2022, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

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