

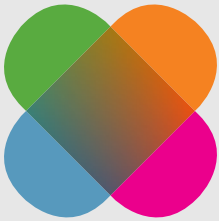


**INTERNATIONAL AWARD**  
UCLG - MEXICO CITY - CULTURE 21

**WINNER**

**3** EDITION

**SEONGBUK**



## COMMON SEONGBUK ARTIST ROUNDTABLE'S LOCAL CULTURE GOVERNANCE AND ART COMMUNITY VITALIZATION PROJECT

### CONTEXT

Seongbuk-gu is northern one of the 25 autonomous districts in Seoul. With approximately 467,000 inhabitants, Seongbuk-gu is the 8th most populous district. It is a territory with a great cultural vitality and a highly developed educational system.

Cultural heritage is one of the biggest assets of Seongbuk-gu. The remains of the Joseon Dynasty period (from 1392 to 1910) can be admired as sites and monuments of outstanding universal value. Jeongneung Royal Tomb and Uireung Royal Shrine belong to the World Heritage List of UNESCO, and Hanyang capital city is currently designated to be promoted. Also, Seonjam-danji and Seongbuk-dong are other landmarks in Korean history and culture.

Seongbuk-gu is a crossroads of many artistic ecosystems that have a long tradition, such as 'munin-chon', the artist's town made up of writers, composers and other artists. Other communities also have been recently created: the district has become home to many artists in search for an alternative space for the 'Daehak-ro Deviation' phenomenon.

The potential of diverse governance models is not only shown within the cultural sector but within the educational community. Seongbuk-gu has the largest number of the universities in Seoul, 7 universities which provide a unique educational environment for both experts and youths.

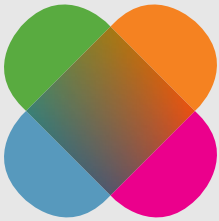
Public policies in Seongbuk-gu aim to boost the access and promotion of the cultural rights of local residents. Since 2010, the district has been striving to create a strong cultural support system and to provide cultural facilities to guarantee the development of local cultural identity and the preservation of historic and cultural resources. The creation of programs such as "Activation of the library", "Village democracy and governance", "Vitalization of the living culture" is the respond to this aim.

Furthermore, under the suggestions and activities of Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable, Seongbuk-gu government (through Seongbuk Cultural Foundation) has launched several policies and businesses based on democracy and construction of active governance models for all citizens.

### GOALS, CHALLENGES AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The main goal of the Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable is to form and activate a sustainable and autonomous cultural ecosystem in Seongbuk area, enabling to expand the cultural rights of the citizens and the values of cultural democracy, cultural diversity, cultural governance and sustainability.

Other specific goals are the composition and vitalization of the local cultural art ecosystem, the



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formation of cultural art ecosystems by regions, the creation and operation of resident-oriented cultural spaces, and the foundation of the cultural policy governance in Seongbuk-gu.

Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable began 2014 as an autonomous gathering of 4 cultural artists in the area and soon became the representative community in the region based on civil governance, reuniting over 300 people working together under the values and principles of autonomy, democracy, solidarity and diversity. It is the community of local cultural artists, but it also has been activated as the cultural governance organization with Seongbuk Cultural Foundation, Seongbuk-gu Office, and other public institutions in Seongbuk-gu.

With the implementation of this project, Seongbuk-gu is facing some challenges:

- **The need of a public shared space for the sustainable development of local culture ecosystem.** The district is lack of supporting environment where the local culture art community could communicate, network and cooperate.
- **The need of social experiment on creative cultural governance.** "Community Art" based on the active cooperation among the subjects of local culture have to be vitalized. Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable went into action for

the expansion of cultural values and rights over the local community. It designed various creative governance models based on private and public collaboration.

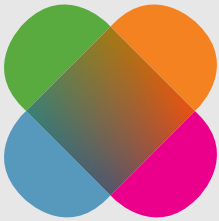
- **The need to foster the relationship between cultural art initiatives and local residents' life.** Major local organizations and the young generations demand a mid and long term supporting system, not only to complement each other, but also to be connected and coevolved.

The development of the project consists of five following phases:

### 1. Setting: establishment of the foundation

The formation of a public sphere and network involved the creation of 7 working groups which belong to the Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable, including residents, artists, and artist organizations that participated from the initial stage of planning and became the main subjects for building the artistic village. Establishment of cultural governance foundation also implied launching the Seongbuk-gu Creative Cultural City Committee, enacting the law for Seongbuk-gu's creative cultural city and the participation of Seongbuk-gu governance operating committee.





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### 2. Planning: development of the agenda using local resources

Devising the basic plans for Seongbuk-gu cultural policy and Seongbuk Cultural Foundation entailed the research on major local cultural policies. Historical liberal artistic and living resources had to be used for initial projects' planning, local characterized cultural art education program as well as for the formulation of the cultural art contents reflecting the regional infrastructure such as plays and musicals made with the local stories.

### 3. Intermediation: activation of governance between local residents, cultural artists, universities and the public institutions

Seongbuk-gu's culture public facilities are used and operated as base space for local artists. Some examples of them can be shown as Miari Ridge Art Theatre, now managed directly by the local artists and citizens, the Cheonjansan Mountain Fable Theatre, converted into the main theatre after 3 years of discussion and cooperation between residents, Seongbuk-gu's library and the Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable, and the Seongbuk Downon which was a neglected space but now emerged as the main visual art cluster space.



### 4. Promotion: practice and development of local democracy

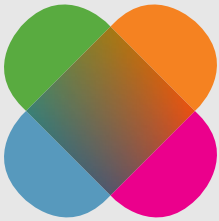
The Art Village Development Working Group of the Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable was decentralized to 7 regions in 2017. Some representative festivals in Seongbuk-gu such as 'Nurimasil Friends' have adapted into new models of governance based on cooperation and the values of cultural diversity. Local art instructors formed a cooperative union named "Maeul-on Art" and gathered to share the concerns on culture and art education, meeting the local community residents related to the practice of culture and arts.

### 5. Self-reliance: creating an autonomous and sustainable social economic structure

Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable has established and supported cultural cooperative unions, social enterprises and village enterprises through various local activities. By managing cultural events, local festivals and revitalization projects of traditional market, those initiatives contribute to the revitalization of local economy beyond the individual economic activities. In the long run, citizen capitalization is planned to be promoted.

Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable, Seongbuk-gu Office and Seoul City (Seoul Housing and Communities Corporation) have established and promoted the residential supporting policies for creative cultural artists, youths and social innovation entities, enabling them to continue their stable activities in the region.





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### IMPACTS

The activities and projects of the Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable have deeply changed the cultural policy and cultural administration of Seongbuk-gu, transiting from agency-led decision making to decision-making based on citizen and deliberative democracy; from outsourcing-based business promotion to direct planning with local residents and communities; from policy structures based on quantitative performance results to process-oriented policy structure based on sustainability; and from the policy approach of culture as a tool for urban management to the policy approach of culture as principle and purpose of urban management.

Regarding the local cultural ecosystem, artists have engaged in various recent cultural art related groups and meetings due to the initiatives undertaken by the Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable. Exchanging processes and cooperative system among individuals, organizations and businesses has been made, and the foundation for governance with local governments has also been realized.

As a result, cultural actors in the district and the city have identified the value and potential of local cultural activities, engaging actively in them. In particular, Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable has provided concrete opportunities to improve not only cultural activities, but also housing policies, job creation and economic vitality. Furthermore, this initiative

is expanding toward social solidarity to solve some issues within the local community.

The activities of Common Seongbuk Artists Roundtable confirmed the importance of cultural, political, economic and social values throughout the entire Seongbuk area. Common Seongbuk Artist Roundtable is briskly linked with the village democracy policies promoted by Seongbuk-gu, and contribute to deepen democracy in everyday lives.

The Common Seongbuk Artists Roundtable has conceptualized, politicized and commercialized "Cultural Democracy, Cultural Diversity, and Cultural Governance" as the philosophy of the city administration in the region. Therefore, specific programmes and projects on cultural rights, awareness on gender equality, sustainable economy, transitional cities and social innovation have been promoted and spread on a daily basis.