



## Thailand Steps Onto the Global Stage: Advancing Sustainable Development Through Culture

**Bangkok, August 30, 2024** - Silpakorn University Bangkok, in collaboration with the Department of Cultural Promotion, Ministry of Culture, and partner network Roamingelephants.com, will host a seminar to foster cooperation with the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), an organization committed to advancing the role of culture in driving sustainable economic development on a global scale. This marks the first time Thailand, as a member country, will participate in such an event, held under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. Prasop Riangngoen, Director-General, Department of Cultural Promotion remarked, “This is Thailand's inaugural step as a UCLG member in promoting Culture 21 on the world stage. It is an opportunity to showcase Thailand's cultural potential and its significant role in driving sustainable development. Cultural issues are increasingly recognized at international meetings, including the recent UN General Assembly, which in December 2021 approved the integration of culture into the global development agenda. This integration is vital for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The Agenda 21 for Culture, also known as 'Culture 21,' acknowledges culture as a fundamental pillar for sustainable national development in various dimensions, such as tourism, the creative industry, urban development, and cultural learning resources, as well as the development of community products.”

Currently, the Agenda 21 for Culture is driven by UCLG, which leads efforts to leverage cultural roles in fostering significant economic development globally. With more than 140 members worldwide, including neighboring countries like China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Indonesia, UCLG has established a robust network committed to this mission. "Thailand, with its rich and enduring cultural heritage recognized globally, must now demonstrate its cultural potential in the dimension of sustainable development on the world stage," added Mr. Riangngoen.

Assistant Professor Dr. Juthamas Wisansing, founder of Roaming Elephants, a Thai sustainable tourism platform, and the project leader and UCLG coordinator in Thailand, noted, “The UCLG-Culture 21 International Award celebrates projects and cultural policies that contribute to

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sustainable development goals. The UCLG - MEXICO CITY - Culture 21 International Award recognizes local development projects that employ international cultural dimensions to enhance the quality of life for people. This award also serves as a gateway to global trade markets aligned with sustainable business practices (ESG) and supports the award-winning area or city in collaborating with the European trade market, which adheres to the strict sustainability inspections mandated by the EU Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence.”

Following this seminar, various departments will have the opportunity to propose potential cities or communities for development, aiming to select Thailand's Culture 21 Best Practice as a model for the 2025 International Award UCLG - Culture 21 competition.

Participants in this seminar include consultants from the Department of Tourism, Department of Local Administration, Department of Community Development, Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), Office of Creative Economic Promotion (Public Organization), Special Tourism Development Organization for Sustainable Tourism (Public Organization), the Municipal League of Thailand, the Subdistrict Administrative Organization Association of Thailand, the Thai Town Planning Association, the Urban Design and Development Center (UddC), and Silpakorn University, along with cultural community networks nationwide.

**Jordi Pascual**, Coordinator of the UCLG Agenda 21 Cultural Committee, emphasized, “The Thailand Culture 21 Best Practice Initiative is a crucial step in promoting sustainable urban development and enhancing the capabilities of local governments in Thailand. We are dedicated to fostering innovation, resilience, and growth in cities across Thailand, ensuring they are prepared to meet future challenges.”

For more information and updates on the project, visit:

- [www.facebook.com/thailandculture21](https://www.facebook.com/thailandculture21)
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