

Recreation, Sport, Culture and the Arts

Hong Kong offers no lack of sports, cultural and recreational opportunities for its hard-working populace. The wide variety of activities, ranging from international sports and arts events to community programmes, leaves people of all ages and abilities spoilt for choice.

The Home Affairs Bureau coordinates government policies on recreation, sports, culture and heritage. Organisations such as the Sports Commission and Hong Kong Arts Development Council help the government draw up these policies.

The Sports Commission advises on all matters relating to sports development and oversees committees on community sports, elite sports and major sports events.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), an executive arm of the bureau, provides services to preserve Hong Kong's cultural heritage, enhance its physical environment, and foster cooperative interaction between sports, cultural and community organisations. The department also organises exhibitions, sporting events and cultural performances.

Recreation and Sports

The department develops and coordinates the provision of quality recreational and sports facilities for leisure enjoyment, including parks, landscaped open spaces, sports grounds, playgrounds, sports centres, holiday camps, water sports centres, swimming pools and beaches. It also organises and supports a wide variety of recreational and sports programmes to promote community sports, identify sporting talent and raise sporting standards. It works closely with the District Councils, the National Sports Associations under the auspices of the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, District Sports Associations and schools to promote sport for all. In 2017, some 940,000 people took part in activities organised at 24 holiday camps and sea activity centres run by 11 non-governmental organisations subvented by the LCSD.

The department also issues and renews licences for places of amusement. In 2017, it processed 50 applications for billiard establishments, six for public bowling alleys and five for public skating rinks.

Parks and Greenery

The LCSD manages over 1,500 parks and gardens, including 26 major parks. It is responsible for planting and maintaining plants at the public parks, recreational and sports venues, and roadside amenity areas. In 2017, the department planted 2.57 million trees, shrubs and other plants, and enhanced the landscaping at about 17 hectares of park and roadside amenity areas.

Hong Kong Park

Hong Kong Park occupies 8.16 hectares at the former military barracks in Central District. The park, which blends modern design into the natural landscape, features flowing water as its central motif and has artificial waterfalls, streams and ponds. Its main features include an aviary, a conservatory, a sports centre, a squash centre, a children's playground, an Olympic Square, a vantage point and a restaurant. The aviary resembles a tropical rainforest in which about 600 birds of 70 species are kept. In 2017, three bird species in the aviary reared offspring. The conservatory's three sections, namely the Display Plant House, Dry Plant House and Humid Plant House, have adjustable environmental control equipment to simulate different climatic conditions for plants from arid and tropical regions. About 250 orchids representing over 30 species were featured in an orchid exhibition at the Display Plant House from October 2016 to January 2017.

Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens

The Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens, developed between 1861 and 1871, is the territory's oldest public garden and occupies 5.6 hectares overlooking Central. Despite the urban surroundings, the garden provides a conservation centre for endangered species. Ten endangered species of mammals, birds and reptiles lived there in 2017. The bird collection is one of the most comprehensive in Asia, comprising about 190 birds of 45 species. The mammal collection consists of about 70 animals of 13 species, mainly primates. More than 900 species of trees, shrubs, creepers and foliage plants thrive in the garden. The medicinal plant collection and a greenhouse help to promote public interest in 500 or more species of herbs, orchids, ferns and indoor plants. An education and exhibition centre provides teaching facilities for participants in guided visits and for the display of botanical and zoological specimens.

Country and Marine Parks

Some 40 per cent of Hong Kong's total land area is designated as country parks and special areas for nature conservation, outdoor recreation and nature education. The 24 country parks and 22 special areas provide extensive hiking trails, barbecue, picnic and camp sites and visitor centres. Visitors can learn about the beauty and diversity of local marine life at five marine parks and one marine reserve.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department manages the country parks, special areas, marine parks, marine reserve, Hong Kong Wetland Park and Hong Kong Unesco Global Geopark.

Hong Kong Wetland Park

The 61-hectare Hong Kong Wetland Park stretches from the northern part of Tin Shui Wai to the southern tip of the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site. It is a special area designated under the Country Parks Ordinance. The park promotes wetland conservation, education and nature-based tourism, and gives visitors the opportunity to appreciate wetlands and local wildlife in an open and natural setting.

Hong Kong Unesco Global Geopark

Extending from Sai Kung to the northeastern New Territories is the Hong Kong Unesco Global Geopark. This area of natural heritage comprises spectacular hexagonal volcanic rock columns of a size and composition rarely found elsewhere in the world, and sedimentary rocks of over 400 million years old that are of great geological and educational interest.

The geopark's Volcano Discovery Centre at Sai Kung Waterfront Park is accessible by public transport and is an ideal point to start a visit to the geopark. Visitors can sign up for a guided tour or pick up a self-guided tour map at the centre.

Green Hong Kong Campaign

This campaign raises awareness of the importance of greening the environment. The LCSD provides at least one community garden in each of the 18 districts. In 2017, the districts conducted more than 50 gardening courses and 20 community planting activities. More than 430 local celebrities joined the Green Ambassador Scheme, over 7,300 people joined the Green Volunteer Scheme to promote community greening, and 881 schools and kindergartens took part in a Greening School Subsidy Scheme to promote environment-friendly initiatives. About 373,100 students from 1,166 schools participated in a One Person, One Flower Scheme. They received seedlings to plant at home or school.

Hong Kong Flower Show

This annual event provides a good opportunity for hundreds of thousands of Hong Kong people and horticulture lovers from around the world to appreciate the beauty and diversity of flowers and to share their experiences in flower cultivation. In March, over 200 organisations from Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas participated in the show at Victoria Park, drawing a record-breaking 670,000 visitors.

Recreation and Sports Venues

Hong Kong Stadium

The 40,000-seat Hong Kong Stadium is the territory's largest outdoor sports venue. It is used mainly for football and international rugby matches and large-scale community events. Events held during the year included the popular annual Hong Kong Sevens, the Lunar New Year Cup, as well as a Champions League 2017 preliminary match and an Asian Cup UAE 2019 qualifiers

final under the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). In the summer, four English Premier League football clubs, namely Liverpool FC, Leicester City FC, West Bromwich Albion FC and Crystal Palace FC, visited Hong Kong to compete for the Premier League Asia Trophy 2017.

Mong Kok Stadium

The 6,668-seat Mong Kok Stadium is an important venue for sporting and community events. It is one of the major venues for the Hong Kong Premier League and the training ground for the football national squad. Events hosted in 2017 included international football tournaments in the AFC Champions League 2017 group stage and three friendly matches between Hong Kong and Jordan, Laos and Bahrain.

Water Sports Centres and Holiday Camps

The LCSD manages five water sports centres: Chong Hing, Tai Mei Tuk, The Jockey Club Wong Shek, St Stephen's Beach and Stanley Main Beach. Events held at these centres draw more than 120,000 participants annually. The department also runs four holiday camps: the Lady MacLehose Holiday Village, Sai Kung Outdoor Recreation Centre, Tso Kung Tam Outdoor Recreation Centre and Lei Yue Mun Park. These holiday camps attract about half a million day visitors and overnight guests every year.

Beaches and Swimming Pools

Swimming is one of Hong Kong's most popular summer pastimes. The department manages 41 gazetted public beaches and 44 public swimming pool complexes.

Other Recreation and Sports Venues

The department manages 99 sports centres, 256 tennis courts, 292 squash courts, 25 sports grounds, four driving ranges and two public riding schools. Works for eight other major projects are under way.

Recreation and Sports Organisations

Hong Kong Sports Institute Limited

The sports institute seeks to provide an environment in which sports talent can be identified and nurtured. Its state-of-the-art facilities enable the training of high-performance athletes. Other forms of support given to athletes include coaching and training, sports science and sports medicine, and education and employment training. The institute's Elite Training Programme renders dedicated support to athletes in 19 Tier A sports: athletics, badminton, billiard sports, cycling, fencing, gymnastics, karatedo, rowing, rugby sevens, sailing, skating, squash, swimming, table tennis, tennis, tenpin bowling, triathlon, windsurfing and wushu. It also supports athletes in 13 Tier B sports: dance sports, dragon boat, equestrian, golf, judo, kart, lawn bowls, life saving, mountaineering, orienteering, roller sports, shuttlecock and taekwondo. Outstanding athletes whose sports fall outside these two tiers are covered under an Individual Athletes Support Scheme and a Disabled Sports Elite Training Programme.

The institute's \$7 billion Elite Athletes Development Fund offers a sustainable long-term source of financial support for the institute's operation.

Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China

The Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China is recognised as a National Olympic Committee by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and is a member of the IOC, the Olympic Council of Asia, the Association of National Olympic Committee and the East Asian Olympic Committee. The federation organises Hong Kong's participation in all major international, continental and regional multi-sports games, such as the summer and winter Olympic Games, summer and winter Asian Games and East Asian Youth Games.

With a membership of 79 National Sports Associations (NSAs) and sports organisations, the federation represents the collective voice of the Hong Kong sports community. Most of its members are NSAs, which are in turn affiliated to their Asian federations (AFs) and international federations (IFs). The NSAs are empowered to coordinate and conduct activities related to their sports, including recreational programmes for the community, and training programmes and competitions for novices and elite athletes locally. They organise and sanction participation in overseas competitions and train coaches and referees. They also enforce local and international rules and regulations and represent Hong Kong at IF and AF meetings.

The federation coordinates a four-month Festival of Sport from March to June each year, featuring about 80 activities organised by more than 60 NSAs to promote sport for all. Extensive educational programmes are also available for sports leaders, administrators, coaches and technical officials, notably through the Hong Kong Olympic Academy, which offers sports management and sports science courses.

Under the support of the government and commercial sponsors, the federation organises the annual Hong Kong Sports Stars Awards to recognise the achievements of top athletes.

The federation also helps athletes through its Hong Kong Athletes Career and Education Programme to obtain educational qualifications and a career after retiring from athletic life. Funded by sponsors, a separate charitable company set up under the federation operates the Sports Legacy Scheme to develop the potential of students through a team of retired and retiring athletes.

The independent Hong Kong Anti-Doping Committee, formed under the auspices of the federation, plans and implements education and testing programmes to enforce a dope-free environment for fair play under the guidance of the World Anti-doping Agency.

Hong Kong Paralympic Committee and Sports Association for the Physically Disabled

The year 2017 marked the 45th anniversary of the association, which had been bearing witness to the sustainable development of the local Paralympic movement.

The association hosted the BISFed 2017 Asia and Oceania Championships – Hong Kong in May for over 160 top athletes, coaches and team officials. Hong Kong captured one gold and two silver medals, placing third out of the 11 participating countries and territories. In December, a 34-strong team brought home seven golds, 13 silvers and four bronzes in athletics, boccia, swimming and table tennis from the Dubai 2017 Asian Youth Para Games.

With the Indonesia 2018 Asian Para Games and qualifiers for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games just round the corner, Hong Kong's athletes are working hard for a challenging year ahead as the association continues to move forward the Paralympic movement.

Hong Kong Sports Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability

The Hong Kong Sports Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability develops, promotes and organises sporting activities to help people with intellectual disability develop their potential and cultivate positive attitudes through sport, and to facilitate their integration into the community. These activities include training sessions and competitions. The association's training programme caters for all levels of ability.

Intellectually disabled athletes won 142 medals during the year, comprising 51 golds, 53 silvers and 38 bronzes. They made the most of the many international competitions they took part in to sharpen their skills and bring glory to Hong Kong. Highlights included one silver and one bronze at the Sheffield 2017 World Para Swimming World Series – British Para Swimming International Meet; one gold at the 2017 Inas Athletics Championships in Bangkok, Thailand; two silvers at the 2017 PTT World Team Championships in Bratislava, Slovak Republic; two golds and one bronze at the 4th Taichung Table Tennis Open for the Disabled 2017 in Taiwan; one silver at the World Para Athletics Junior Championships 2017 in Nottwil, Switzerland; one gold, one silver and two bronzes at the 2017 ITTF PTT Asian Championships in Beijing; 10 golds, nine silvers and six bronzes at the Inas World Table Tennis Championships 2017 in Hradec Králové, Czech Republic; and five golds, eight silvers and three bronzes at the Dubai 2017 Asian Youth Para Games in the United Arab Emirates.

Hong Kong athletes also achieved excellent results at these Special Olympics meets: the World Winter Games in Austria; Macao Golf Masters in China; Kim Kallstrom Trophy in Gothenburg, Sweden; Table Tennis Competition and Athletics Competition in Macao; East Asia Unified Basketball Competition in Fuzhou; and Macao Inter-city Competition – Unified Bocce Competition.

Hong Kong Jockey Club

The Hong Kong Jockey Club is a world-class racing club that acts continuously for the betterment of society. Founded in 1884 as a membership club to promote racing and riding, today it operates an integrated business model of racing and racecourse entertainment, a membership club, responsible sports wagering and lottery, and charities and community contribution. This enables the club to generate economic and social value to further community development.

In 2016-17, the club returned 79.1 per cent of its wagering and lottery revenue to Hong Kong, paying \$21.7 billion in tax to government and donating \$4.1 billion to 215 charity and community projects. Together with a special donation of \$3.5 billion to build the Hong Kong Palace Museum, total donations were \$7.6 billion. The club is the territory's largest single taxpayer, contributing 7.5 per cent of all taxes collected by the Inland Revenue Department in 2016-17. It is also one of the world's top 10 charity donors.

Horse racing is Hong Kong's most popular spectator sport, attracting an attendance of 2.2 million in 2016-17. It is also increasingly popular around the world, with live and pre-recorded Hong Kong racing widely available overseas and commingled wagering provided via 34 partners in 10 countries and jurisdictions. Fundamental to this success is the high standard of training and horse care, the recruitment of world-class trainers and jockeys, and the import of quality horses by the club's members. As a result, Hong Kong is now home to 12 international Group One races, including the Hong Kong International Races, widely regarded as the Turf World Championships. Nine ranked in the World's Top 100 Group One/Grade One Races for 2017, with five being in the top 50. Hong Kong also had 22 horses in the World's Best Racehorse Rankings for 2017. All this was achieved despite Hong Kong having just 0.8 per cent of the world's horse races and 0.7 per cent of its thoroughbred racehorses.

The club is authorised by the government to provide responsible horse racing and football wagering services and to operate the Mark Six lottery. In doing so it helps meet the public demand for betting and assists the government in combating illegal gambling. Indeed, the club holds the highest Level 4 accreditation under the World Lottery Organisation's Responsible Gambling Framework.

The club has been contributing to Hong Kong for over a century, both directly and through the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. Today, it benefits 10 areas of social need: arts, culture and heritage; education and training; elderly services; emergency and poverty relief; environmental protection; family services; medicine and health; rehabilitation; sports and recreation; and youth development. Thanks to improved business performance, regular charity donations quadrupled between 2007-08 and 2016-17.

Drawing on its sporting expertise, the club promotes community football and equestrian sports, while through its Riding High Together festival, which 47,000 people attended in 2017, it educates and inspires the wider community.

Looking to the future, the club remains committed to the betterment of society. To safeguard this commitment, not least from the substantial threat of illegal gambling, the club continues to invest in its development. Four new or refurbished venues opened in 2016-17 under its \$6.7 billion Racecourse Master Plan, while work continued on a next-generation customer information and wagering system. Above all, the Conghua Training Centre in Guangdong Province, due to open in August 2018, will provide the training and stabling facilities the club needs to develop its world-class racing.

Outward Bound Hong Kong

Outward Bound Hong Kong (OBHK) was established in 1970 to provide personal development programmes for Hong Kong people to learn essential life skills and reach their maximum potential. It is the first and only experiential education organisation in Asia to be accredited by the international Association for Experiential Education. As part of Outward Bound International, OBHK benefits from the network of over 35 centres round the world.

Outward Bound's mission is to help people discover and develop their potential to care for themselves, others and the world around them through challenging experiences in unfamiliar

settings. Programmes are designed to foster confidence, responsibility, leadership, teamwork, creative thinking, problem solving and social responsibility. The organisation utilises challenges in the outdoors to help participants gain insights and skills that can be applied to work and everyday situations. In 2017, about 6,000 people joined its programmes in Hong Kong.

OBHK is a not-for-profit organisation based in Sai Kung, with its headquarters located at Tai Mong Tsai and an island base on Wong Wan Chau. Its facilities include a 67-foot sail training yacht named *Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong*, a world-class challenge ropes course and a fleet of expedition sea kayaks and open-rigged sailing ketches. All the resources are checked regularly and maintained according to international safety standards.

The organisation's public courses cater to people of different ages and needs, taking participants to remote and scenic areas of Hong Kong that most are unaware exist. Hong Kong residents can reclaim up to 80 per cent of the fees of programmes subsidised by the government's Continuing Education Fund. These programmes help individuals become more confident and effective, equipped to handle daily challenges in their lives and careers.

OBHK's corporate department, Outward Bound Professional, works with companies to design programmes that help their staff become more resilient, communicative, cohesive and innovative, ultimately benefiting the company itself. Programmes are also devised with schools, colleges, universities and charities to help their students become high-performing and competent leaders.

Adventure-Ship

Adventure-Ship, a charity registered in 1977, provides educational training and recreation at sea for young people on board a sailing junk called the *Jockey Club Huan*, in the first charitable programme of its kind in Hong Kong. The charity promotes personal development with its theme of 'learning by experience'. It is a member of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, and is funded mainly by the Community Chest and Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust.

All young people above the age of nine are welcome to join the programme, but preference is given to disabled and underprivileged youths. About 10,000 people take part each year.

The 34.5-metre aluminium-hulled, three-masted, traditional-rig *Jockey Club Huan* accommodates up to 60 people. She is equipped with modern navigational devices in addition to various amenities and barrier-free training facilities tailored for trainees with disabilities.

The junk plies within Hong Kong waters, and each training trip lasts one to three days. The training regime has been designed carefully to cope with different weather conditions and the special needs of young people with different aptitudes and backgrounds. Guided by instructors, participants become members of the ship's supplementary crew and work alongside their peers, learning to face challenges and be self-reliant. The exercises also foster camaraderie and team spirit.

Hong Kong Youth Hostels Association

The Hong Kong Youth Hostels Association is a non-profit-making organisation providing safe, good-quality and affordable hostel accommodation. It aims to encourage young people to embrace nature through outdoor activities and appreciate different cultures via the hosteling experience and international exchange programmes.

Established in 1973, the association plans, runs and markets seven youth hostels. It has more than 30,000 individual and corporate members, and is also an affiliate of Hostelling International, which has over four million members worldwide.

The seven hostels each features different characteristics. The flagship is the YHA Mei Ho House Youth Hostel, which was transformed from a six-storey resettlement block in Shek Kip Mei that formed part of Hong Kong's first public housing.

The association's annual Ngong Ping Charity Walk, held in January at North Lantau Island Country Park, attracted near 1,500 participants and raised much needed funds for hostel enhancement, environmental protection and the association's conservation projects.

Sporting Achievements

Highlights of 2017 included achievements of the Hong Kong delegation to the Asian Indoor and Martial Art Games in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, and the National Games in Tianjin. The delegation won 10 golds, 11 silvers and 14 bronzes in Ashgabat, a total of 35 medals, of which three golds each went to cyclist Sarah Lee Wai-sze and swimmer Stephanie Au Hoi-shun. In Tianjin, Hong Kong captured two golds, seven silvers and seven bronzes, the city's best showing since it first took part in the National Games in 1997. The two golds were clinched by the cycling team – Pang Yao and Yang Qianyu in the women's madison event and Leung Chun-wing in the men's omnium.

The tenpin bowling team achieved brilliant success in the World Bowling Championships held in December in Las Vegas, with one gold, one silver and one bronze. Wu Siu-hong, Michael Mak and Eric Tseng, competing in the men's trios, reaped the first gold for Hong Kong. Billiard player Ng On-ye was champion in the World Ladies Billiards and Snooker's (WLBS) World Women's Snooker Championship, WLBS World Festival of Women's Snooker and International Billiards and Snooker Federation's World 6-Reds and Team Snooker Championships, while windsurfer Chan Hei-man claimed a gold in the Asian Sailing Federation's Asian Championship. Tiffany Chan Tsz-ching qualified for the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) with an impressive second-place finish in the LPGA Tour Qualifying School. Tse Ying-suet and Tang Chun-man became Hong Kong's first champions in the mixed doubles of the Denmark Super Series Premier, and also bagged a historic silver in the Badminton World Federation's World Superseries finals.

Young athletes performed outstandingly as well. Siobhan Bernadette Haughey snared two golds and set a new Universiade record in the women's 200m freestyle at the Summer Universiade in Taipei. Cheung Ka-long became Hong Kong's first world junior champion in the Junior and Cadet World Fencing Championships in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

In disabled sports, Ng Mui-wui swept seven golds in the International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability's World Table Tennis Championships in Hradec Králové, Czech Republic. The women's fencing team of Chung Yuen-ping, Justine Charissa Ng, Tong Ngating and Yu Chui-ye took home a gold from the International Wheelchair and Amputee Sports Federation's Wheelchair Fencing World Championships in Rome.

Recreation and Sports Programmes

In 2017, the LCSD organised some 38,480 recreation and sports programmes for about 2.7 million participants of all ages and abilities at a total cost of \$182 million.

District Sports Teams Training Scheme

A total of 9,214 young people took part in 249 district team events about basketball, football, handball and fencing.

Young Athletes Training Scheme

Training was conducted for 31,327 teenagers in 30 sports disciplines.

School Sports Programme

The programme provided 8,400 sporting events for 629,000 students at about 980 primary and secondary schools through seven subsidiary programmes: Sport Education, Easy Sport, Outreach Coaching, Joint Schools Sports Training, Sport Captain, the Badges Award Scheme and the Sports Award Scheme.

Community Sports Club Project

The project, organised by the department in collaboration with the NSAs, supported about 430 Community Sports Clubs in organising 2,350 sports training activities for 51,000 participants. Seminars and management development programmes were formulated for some 400 sports volunteers to help them run the clubs.

Sports Subvention Scheme

The department provides subvention to the NSAs and other sporting organisations for sports promotion and development. The subvention covers office and personnel expenses and spending on NSA programmes. In 2017, subventions totalling about \$361 million were allocated to 60 NSAs and 22 sport organisations, which organised 10,700 sports programmes for 749,000 participants. The subventions included subsidies for NSAs to stage local and international events in Hong Kong, such as the Fédération Internationale de Natation Swimming World Cup Hong Kong, Boccia International Sports Federation Asia and Oceania Championships – Hong Kong, Asian Judo Championships and I Baseball Federation of Asia Women's Baseball Asian Cup. Subsidies also went towards supporting the NSAs in strengthening squad training and in helping athletes representing Hong Kong take part in overseas competitions.

To enhance the corporate governance of NSAs, the department organised a symposium for over 200 representatives from 63 NSAs and related organisations in March. It also conducted five seminars as induction training for all NSA office-bearers and senior staff members to familiarise themselves with the responsibilities of NSA board members.

'M' Mark

The 'M' Mark system aims to solicit support from the commercial sector and the community for NSAs to develop sustainable major international sports events. Thirteen events were awarded 'M' Mark status and/or support packages in 2017.

'Healthy Exercise for All' Campaign and 'Sport for All Day'

The 'Healthy Exercise for All' campaign is a territory-wide event organised jointly by the LCSD and the Department of Health. In 2017, more than 80,000 people took part in about 1,400 programmes under the campaign. Over 230,000 people participated in August in the annual 'Sport for All Day', which adopted 'Stay Active, Let's Dance' as the event slogan to promote sport for all in the community. On that day, free recreation and sports programmes were held at designated sports centres in all 18 districts and most of the fee-charging sports facilities were open to the public free of charge.

Hong Kong Games

The 6th Hong Kong Games was held from 23 April to 28 May, with a total of 3,269 athletes. Over 500,000 people took part in related community programmes. The games, held biennially, aims to promote a stronger sporting culture in the community through competitions and community activities.

National Games

The 13th National Games was held between 27 August and 8 September in Tianjin. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region sent 254 athletes to take part in 22 final competitions, capturing two gold, seven silver and seven bronze medals, the HKSAR delegation's best performance since its first participation in the National Games in 1997.

Culture and Arts Funding

Capital Funding

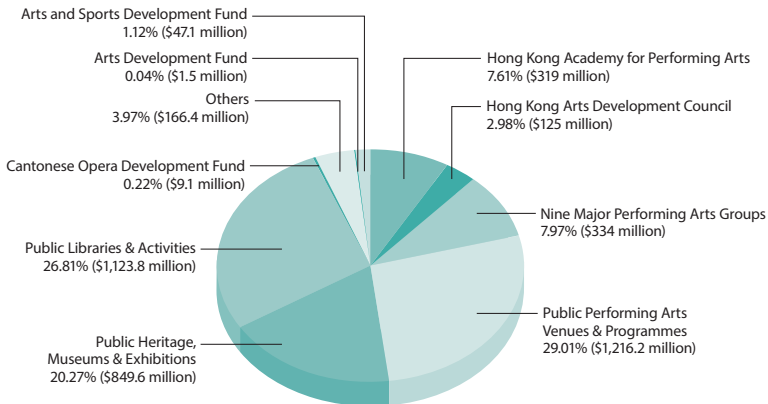
The government granted an upfront endowment of \$21.6 billion to the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority in 2008 to develop the West Kowloon Cultural District so as to meet the long-term infrastructural and developmental needs of Hong Kong's arts and culture. Another \$4.17 billion was approved in 2015 to build the East Kowloon Cultural Centre in Ngau Tau Kok to alleviate the shortage of professional performance facilities. The cultural centre, scheduled for completion in late 2020, includes a 1,200-seat auditorium and a 550-seat theatre and will become a major cultural venue in East Kowloon.

Recurrent Funding

In 2016-17, the government earmarked about \$4.2 billion, excluding capital works expenditure, for arts groups, arts education and promotion, and administration. Of this sum, about \$334 million went into supporting nine major performing arts groups: the Chung Ying Theatre Company, City Contemporary Dance Company, Hong Kong Ballet, Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, Hong Kong Dance Company, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, Hong Kong Sinfonietta and Zuni Icosahedron.

Chart 1

Provision for Arts and Culture 2016-17



Total government expenditure on arts and culture in 2016-17 was \$4.19 billion

Arts and Sport Development Fund

The arts portion of the Arts and Sport Development Fund subsidises long-term arts and cultural development through investment returns generated by seed money of \$1.5 billion injected in 2010-11. Under the arts portion, the Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme disburses about \$30 million annually in the form of Springboard Grants with matching elements and Project Grants. The scheme seeks to develop the capacity of local artists and arts groups and to promote public-private partnership in local arts development. It has financed 87 projects. Around \$30 million is also earmarked annually to support projects initiated or recommended by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council.

Cantonese Opera Development Fund

The Cantonese Opera Development Fund helps to preserve, promote and develop Cantonese opera. In 2017, it granted about \$9.1 million to support projects including the Venue Partnership Scheme at Yau Ma Tei Theatre, Yuen Long Theatre and Sha Tin Town Hall.

Arts Development Fund

The Arts Development Fund is used mainly to support cultural exchanges. In 2017, \$5.2 million was approved for 95 such projects.

Lord Wilson Heritage Trust

The Lord Wilson Heritage Trust provides funding for community organisations and individuals to implement heritage-related projects. Sixteen projects worth about \$3.85 million were approved in 2017.

Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund awards scholarships to candidates of outstanding calibre to pursue further studies or training in music or dance in or outside the city. Eight scholarships worth \$3.93 million were awarded in 2017.

Art Development Matching Grants Pilot Scheme

The Home Affairs Bureau's \$300 million Art Development Matching Grants Pilot Scheme seeks to widen the sources of funding for arts groups and to encourage community support for arts and cultural development.

Culture and Arts Venues

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department manages 16 performance venues.

Hong Kong Cultural Centre

The Hong Kong Cultural Centre is the territory's premier performing arts facility, attracting leading artists from around the world. It has three main performance venues: the Concert Hall, seating 2,019 patrons; the Grand Theatre, 1,734; and the Studio Theatre, 496. In 2017, the cultural centre staged *Ninagawa Macbeth*, a classic of the late Japanese theatre director Yukio Ninagawa, and concerts by the Berliner Philharmoniker under the baton of its artistic director and chief conductor, Sir Simon Rattle.

Hong Kong City Hall

Hong Kong City Hall opened in 1962 as the territory's first purpose-built major civic centre. Its main facilities include a 1,434-seat concert hall, a 463-seat theatre and an exhibition hall. In 2017, major programmes included a violin recital by Kyung Wha Chung from South Korea and a choral performance by the United Kingdom-based choir The Sixteen.

Yau Ma Tei Theatre

Yau Ma Tei Theatre, the only surviving pre-war cinema building in the urban area, is dedicated to nurturing young talent for Cantonese opera. To mark the 100th birth anniversary of master playwright Tong Tik-sang, the Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong presented a series of Tong's timeless masterpieces, including *Princess Changping* and *The Peony Pavilion*, under the Cantonese Opera Young Talent Showcase in 2017.

Regional and District Civic Centres and Theatres

The department runs 11 regional and district civic centres: the Sheung Wan and Sai Wan Ho civic centres on Hong Kong Island; Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre and Ko Shan Theatre and its New Wing in Kowloon; and the Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan, Tuen Mun and North District town halls, Kwai Tsing and Yuen Long theatres and Tai Po Civic Centre in the New Territories.

Indoor Stadia

The 12,500-seat Hong Kong Coliseum and the 3,500-seat Queen Elizabeth Stadium are the territory's premier multi-purpose indoor stadia. With flexible stage and seating configurations, the two stadia host mega sports events, pop concerts, major celebrations and other activities. In 2017, 39 and 123 events were held at the coliseum and the stadium respectively.

Venue Partnership Scheme

This scheme fosters partnerships between the department's performance venues and performing arts groups. It aims to enhance the image and character of individual venues and

their partners, expand the audience base, optimise usage of venue facilities, develop marketing strategies, facilitate arts sponsorship, and encourage community involvement in the arts. The venue partners organised 654 stage performances in conjunction with 972 educational, promotional and audience-building activities in 2017.

West Kowloon Cultural District

The West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD), a 40-hectare prime waterfront site, is being developed as an integrated arts and cultural district with world-class facilities. Its aim is to promote the development of arts and culture, meet the growing cultural needs of the public and strengthen Hong Kong's position as an international arts and cultural metropolis.

The facilities that constitute the WKCD steadily took shape in 2017: the building structure of the Xiqu Centre was completed in April and interior fitting-out works were in progress; construction of the M+ visual culture museum and Art Park was ongoing; Freespace, including a black-box theatre and an outdoor stage, was topped out in July and works continued inside the building; foundation works for the Lyric Theatre Complex were substantially completed; and the scheme design of the Hong Kong Palace Museum was completed and the foundation work tendered out. The temporary Nursery Park remains open for public enjoyment while works in the rest of the Art Park continue.

To nurture new audiences and raise awareness of the project, the WKCD Authority initiated and co-presented events that included *Rising Stars of Cantonese Opera*, *Tea House Theatre Taster*, an Experimental Chinese Opera Series, four exhibitions held at the M+ Pavilion and a new season of Freespace Happening at the Nursery Park from September featuring free outdoor performing arts.

Urbtix

The Urban Ticketing System, or Urbtix, is one of the most widely used computerised ticketing systems locally. It provides ticketing services through counter booking at over 30 outlets, and via the internet, telephone and a mobile application. In 2017, the system issued 3.85 million tickets with proceeds of more than \$1.03 billion.

Culture and Arts Organisations

Hong Kong Arts Development Council

The Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) operates grant schemes and plans, promotes, funds and supports the overall development of the arts.

The council grooms talented people, arts administrators and budding artists by providing opportunities for them to receive training, cultural exchanges, internships and attachments both in Hong Kong and abroad. In 2017, it offered over 10 talent nurturing schemes, including Arts Administration Scholarships (Local/Overseas) and the Professional Attachment at Summerhall, Edinburgh (Pilot Scheme).

The council co-presents with RTHK *Artspiration*, a television series on arts, artists and cultural events, and with Cable TV *ArTour*, a segment in the programme *Close to Culture*, promoting local young artists.

Large-scale promotional events under the council include the Hong Kong Arts Development Awards and Arts Ambassadors-in-School Scheme. A new arts festival, Jockey Club New Arts Power, was rolled out during the year. In July, the council organised the Hong Kong Music Series, the first large-scale Hong Kong music event in London, and led Hong Kong delegations comprising local arts groups and artists to take part in the Performing Arts Market in Seoul and OzAsia Festival in Australia again. It also organised the third edition of the International Arts Leadership Roundtable and participated in Guangzhou's China International Performing Arts Fair for the first time.

The council worked with M+ to present 'Samson Young: Songs for Disaster Relief' at the 57th Venice Biennale International Art Exhibition and put up the Response Exhibition of the 56th Venice Biennale International Art Exhibition in Hong Kong with the Hong Kong Institute of Architects Biennale Foundation and Oi!.

Arts research and policy advocacy are part of the council's main tasks. Through an Annual Arts Survey, it collects data on visual arts exhibitions, arts performances and film screenings. The council also collects and provides Hong Kong's cultural data for the annual *World Cities Culture Report* and publishes a series of yearbooks on the arts in collaboration with professional and academic groups.

The council implements the HKADC Matching Fund Scheme to help small and medium-sized arts organisations take part in the Art Development Matching Grants Pilot Scheme.

Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts offers professional education, training and research facilities in the performing arts: Chinese opera, dance, drama, film and TV, music, and theatre and entertainment arts.

In 2017, 832 students enrolled in undergraduate and post-secondary programmes in the six performing arts disciplines. Another 156 students were pursuing master's degree programmes in dance, drama, film and TV, music, and theatre and entertainment arts. The academy also admitted more than 650 students to its junior programmes and over 3,000 students to its Extension and Continuing Education for Life programme.

Hong Kong Arts Centre

The self-financing Hong Kong Arts Centre in Wan Chai promotes contemporary arts and culture. It conducts programmes featuring works of local and overseas artists, and provides facilities for performances, films and exhibitions. The centre's Hong Kong Art School runs diploma and degree courses in arts studies.

Fringe Club

The Fringe Club is housed in what used to be a cold-storage warehouse built in 1890, now listed as a Grade 1 historical building and adapted for use as a contemporary arts space. It adopts an open access policy to nurture budding artists and promote mature artists by providing venue and publicity support, as well as opportunities for overseas tours. A diverse cultural programme runs throughout the year.

In 2017, there were over 400 exhibitions and live music, drama or dance performances. A cultural heritage leadership programme entitled Learn • Play • Lead, funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, offered guided tours, talks, an exhibition and an immersive theatre production to promote conservation while the building facade was under renovation.

Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre

The Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre (JCCAC) is a multidisciplinary arts village and arts centre housed in a converted nine-storey decommissioned factory estate in Shek Kip Mei. It is a self-financing registered charity which provides space to nurture creative talent.

As an arts village, the venue rents studio facilities to more than 100 artists and art groups. As an arts centre, it hires out facilities, including the Central Courtyard, galleries and the Jockey Club Black Box Theatre, for arts and cultural activities.

The centre's large-scale public programmes include the annual JCCAC Festival in December, the quarterly Handicraft Fair and regular free events such as open-air film screenings. It hosted almost 300,000 visitors in 2017.

Major Performing Arts Groups

Chung Ying Theatre Company

During the year, Chung Ying Theatre Company initiated a cultural exchange scheme with its Guangdong and Macao counterparts by hosting playwriting competitions and staging the winning plays in Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao. It also brought *Tuesdays with Morrie* to Guangzhou and Canada.

City Contemporary Dance Company

The City Contemporary Dance Company is a professional modern dance company that nurtures creative dance talent in the context of contemporary China. It hosts the Contemporary Dance Festival, which in 2017 linked up East Asian dance artists with international presenters. The dance company also led young local choreographers and dancers to restage their classic choreography in the Mainland of China, and toured Israel, South Korea and Japan.

Hong Kong Ballet

Hong Kong Ballet is one of Asia's premier classical ballet companies. In 2017, it staged the Asian premiere of Anna-Marie Holmes' *Le Corsaire* and the world premiere of company choreographers Yuh Egami and Ricky Hu's *Carmen*. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR, the ballet company toured Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou and Jinan.

Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra

The Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra organised the Hong Kong International Youth Chinese Music Festival and the International Conducting Competition for Chinese Music. It toured six Mainland cities to celebrate the HKSAR's 20th anniversary.

Hong Kong Dance Company

The Hong Kong Dance Company promotes Chinese dance of Hong Kong character. The company's major programmes in 2017 were *L'Amour Immortel* and *Lady White of West Lake*, and it also toured London, Beijing and Guangzhou.

Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is recognised as Asia's foremost classical orchestra, presenting more than 150 concerts every year featuring international and local conductors and soloists, offering free shows including the popular outdoor *Symphony Under The Stars* and organising educational programmes for the young. In 2017, the orchestra performed Part 3 of Wagner's four-opera cycle *The Ring of the Nibelung – Siegfried*. It also toured Seoul, Osaka, Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney between April and May, and was re-invited to perform in the Beijing Music Festival in October, attracting tens of thousands of concertgoers overseas.

Hong Kong Repertory Theatre

The company seeks to develop creative and diverse theatrical productions of Chinese and western works and local originals. Its 40th anniversary was celebrated in 2017. Highlights included the Broadway musical *Scrooge* and the local musical *Field of Dreams*. The company toured Mainland cities, where *Field of Dreams* won the Most Popular Musical of the Year and Top 10 Best Productions at the Beijing News Drama Awards.

Hong Kong Sinfonietta

One of Hong Kong's leading symphony orchestras, the Hong Kong Sinfonietta performed at festivals in France, Germany, Poland and Portugal in 2017 and premiered a number of new works by local and overseas composers, including a work by Thomas Larcher that was co-commissioned with five other European orchestras. The orchestra's First Hong Kong International Conducting Competition attracted 310 applications from 49 countries and regions.

Zuni Icosahedron

Zuni Icosahedron presented the fifth edition of the Architecture is Art Festival, during which a new theatre work, *The Architecture of the City*, was presented, and launched a Freespace Tech Lab that put together theatrical creations and applied technology for experimentation and educational purposes. The company also organised the premier Hong Kong Belt-Road City-to-City Cultural Exchange Conference 2017 and conducted a new edition of *One Table Two Chairs*, in which 12 performing arts masters from various Belt and Road cities as well as more than 20 young Eurasian artists were invited to take part.

Culture and Arts Presentations

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department presents quality cultural programmes throughout the year. In 2017, more than 477,000 people attended 990 performances featuring local and visiting artists and arts groups. Visiting musicians and groups included Renée Fleming, Ute Lemper, Daniil Trifonov, Rafał Blechacz, the China National Traditional Orchestra, the Philharmonia Quartett Berlin and Antonio Sanchez with Migration Band. Visiting dance groups included Nederlands Dans Theater 1, Alonzo King Lines Ballet from the United States, Compañía Eva Yerbabuena from Spain and the National Ballet of China. Visiting multi-arts programmes included *Hallo* by Zimmermann and de Perrot from Switzerland. A new thematic series, From Puppets to Humans, featured two visiting programmes: *Clowns' Houses* by Germany's Merlin Puppet Theatre and *Cell*, co-produced by Smoking Apples and Dogfish from the UK.

Two special events were organised to mark the HKSAR's 20th anniversary: the International Military Tattoo with a two-day carnival and concerts by the Berliner Philharmoniker with live relays at three sites.

To support emerging local artists, performance platforms were created in these series: Our Music Talents, City Hall Virtuosi, New Force in Motion, Dance On and New Energy.

Chinese opera audiences were treated to the department's eighth Chinese Opera Festival in the summer and annual Cantonese Opera Day in November. Dance Day, another large-scale free community event, was held in December.

The department also organised 23 major carnivals and 606 district art shows, attracting over 1,036,300 people.

Arts Education and Audience-building Projects

In 2017, the department organised 1,238 arts education and audience-building activities in schools, community halls and other public venues to promote the arts and encourage participation in cultural activities.

The department also sought to motivate students to engage in arts and cultural activities by extending its collaboration with the Education Bureau in designing arts education programmes which tied in with the school curriculum. Two themes were set for the 2017 Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme: 'Elderly-oriented Performing Arts Project' and 'Community Arts Project with Interactions and Experiments in the Programme Format'.

Major Culture and Arts Events

Hong Kong Arts Festival

The 45th Hong Kong Arts Festival presented 16 world premieres and 14 Asian premieres, including the festival's own productions: *A Floating Family – A Trilogy* and *Hong Kong Odyssey*. Other highlights included the festival opening performance of *La Bayadère* by Bavarian State Ballet, *The Makropulos Case* by National Theatre Brno, Ray Lee's sound installation Chorus, Jen Lewin's interactive event Super Pool and the festival finale, *Dream of the Red Chamber*, co-

produced with San Francisco Opera. The festival's 180 performances and more than 400 outreach and educational events attracted over 190,000 people.

International Arts Carnival

The department's annual International Arts Carnival in July and August opened with *Pizzazz!* by the China National Acrobatic Troupe. Some 94,000 people attended the carnival's 306 events featuring music, interactive installations and various forms of theatre such as dance and shadow puppetry.

World Cultures Festival

The department's seventh edition of the World Cultures Festival was themed 'Vibrant Africa', showcasing the continent's music, dance and theatre productions performed by artists and arts groups including Youssou NDour and the Super Étoile de Dakar, Cape Town Opera and Angélique Kidjo. The festival's 109 events attracted more than 70,000 people.

Chinese Opera Festival

The department's eighth Chinese Opera Festival featured Cantonese opera, Peking opera and other regional genres. About 45,000 people attended the festival's 69 events.

Hong Kong Week 2017@Taipei

The sixth Hong Kong Week in Taipei, presented by the Hong Kong-Taiwan Cultural Cooperation Committee, ran from 24 November to 3 December with six performances, one exhibition and six extension activities, attracting an attendance of more than 31,000.

Museum Summit

The Museum Summit, the first of its kind organised in Hong Kong, was held in June at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. With 'Museums in a New Era' as the theme, the summit invited 20 professionals from museums across the globe as speakers to share their experiences, insights and visions. A total of 861 local and visiting participants were present.

Muse Fest HK

The third edition of Muse Fest HK ran from June to July with the theme 'Rippling'. It brought together 14 museums, five cultural venues and four museum-related disciplines under the department to organise 91 programmes. Fourteen other museums from Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao were invited along with three other local organisations to promote a museum culture. The museum festival attracted more than 490,000 people.

Museums

Hong Kong Museum of Art

The Hong Kong Museum of Art, its site in Tsim Sha Tsui now under renovation, staged the 'Art Upon an Island' exhibition at the Hong Kong City Hall from February to March and hosted 'Growing City • Growing Home' in Salisbury Garden from December. To promote the museum's collections overseas, 'Living with Bamboo: Museum of Art is Here' was launched at the National Library of Singapore in October.

In commemoration of the HKSAR's 20th anniversary, 'Hall of Mental Cultivation of The Palace Museum – Imperial Residence of Eight Emperors' was held at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum between June and October, featuring valuable artefacts that educated the public on the political, historical and cultural importance of the Hall of Mental Cultivation, or Yangxin Dian, in history. About 20 staircases in different districts were also decorated with artworks selected from the Museum of Art's collection from March to December. The project, 'City Dress Up: Blossoming Stairs,' was curated under a floral theme. The decorations were changed seasonally to give the public a fresh experience, while educational programmes, artist workshops, as well as tours for the disabled were arranged to coincide with the project. Graffiti and animation works created by participants of 'Summer Art Cadets 2017 – Graffiti-Teen Stairs' were also shown on the staircases.

The third phase of the Jockey Club's 'Museum of Art on Wheels' outreach learning programme was launched in October. This is a moving art museum designed for primary and secondary students. It tours various schools and the community, bringing art appreciation to every corner of the city during the museum's renovation. The pilot scheme of the programme gained recognition in the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2017, winning the silver prize in the Team Award (General Public Service). Since the 2015-16 school year, the programme had visited 180 schools and served 70,000 students and members of the public.

The Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware, a branch of the Museum of Art, features tea ware and related implements from the collection of the late Dr. K S Lo, as well as rare Chinese ceramics and seals donated by the K S Lo Foundation. Regular activities introduce the art of tea drinking. The museum organised the Tea Ware by Hong Kong Potters 2018 competition in December, at the same time displaying winning works from the 2016 competition that were functional yet creative, presenting new styles of local tea ware creation. 'The Legacy of Liangzhu Culture: Neolithic Relics from the Zhejiang Provincial Museum' exhibition opened in March. The tea ware museum welcomed 209,000 visitors in 2017.

The Museum of Art will reopen in mid-2019 after renovation.

Hong Kong Museum of History

The Hong Kong Museum of History in Tsim Sha Tsui runs the permanent exhibition, 'The Hong Kong Story'. It staged three other exhibitions in 2017: 'The Legend of Hong Kong Toys', 'Longevity and Virtues: Birthday Celebrations of the Qing Emperors and Empress Dowagers' and 'Miles upon Miles: World Heritage along the Silk Road'. More than 1,597,800 people visited during the year.

Two special programmes enable community groups to understand the city's history and cultural heritage. 'Inclusive Life: Museum for All – Interactivity Scheme' offers people with disabilities guided tours and workshops, while 'Caring for the Community' holds outreach activities for ethnic minorities, youngsters, the elderly, families and new immigrants.

The museum works with the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), Lingnan University and Chu Hai College of Higher Education to organise public seminars and lectures on the history

and culture of Hong Kong. A new initiative, Museum Day and Night, and story-telling tours help visitors know more about the history in a fun way.

In schools, the museum organises teacher seminars, a school competition and the Future Curator Training Course to enhance teachers and students' understanding of Hong Kong's history and culture.

The Museum of History manages five branch museums: the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence, Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery, Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum and Law Uk Folk Museum.

The Museum of Coastal Defence is converted from the old Lei Yue Mun Fort in Shau Kei Wan. It holds the permanent exhibition, '600 Years of Hong Kong's Coastal Defence', and organises educational programmes such as field trips to places of military interest and a National Day flag-raising ceremony. In 2017, the museum staged 'Braving Untold Dangers: War Correspondents', as well as an interactive drama to arouse students' interest in learning Hong Kong's military history. The museum attracted over 160,000 visitors in 2017.

Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, housed in the historic Kom Tong Hall in Central, runs two permanent exhibitions about Dr Sun's life and career. In 2017, the museum staged 'A Matter of Record: Dr Sun Yat-sen in the Historical Archives'. It attracted over 94,800 visitors during the year.

The Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery in Quarry Bay Park displays the decommissioned fireboat, relics and literature on the history of fireboats and sea rescue. The exhibition gallery celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2017, organising an anniversary Memorial Day as well as trips to the fireboats *Alexander Grantham* and *Elite* and to the Fire and Ambulance Services Education Centre cum Museum. Some 77,800 people visited during the year.

Hong Kong Heritage Museum

Hong Kong Heritage Museum in Sha Tin explores the city's diverse cultures through exhibitions on art, design and history. Highlights of the year included 'Inventing le Louvre: From Palace to Museum over 800 Years', a collaboration with Le French May and the Louvre Museum that showcased the diversity of the museum's collections and enabled visitors to explore the Louvre's history. Heritage Museum also joined hands with the University of Hong Kong to present the 'Splendours of Dunhuang: Jao Tsung-i's Selected Academic and Art Works Inspired by Dunhuang Culture', exhibiting the fascinating Dunhuang culture and Professor Jao's contributions to Dunhuang studies. 'Touch – Hong Kong International Poster Triennial 2017', comprising a competition, an exhibition and a symposium, documented the development of international poster design.

The museum also cooperated with Pixar Animation Studios to organise 'Pixar 30 Years of Animation: Hong Kong Celebration of Friendship and Family', featuring artworks in various media as well as interviews with the film directors to introduce the craftsmanship and creative process behind Pixar's productions. At the same time, 'Moving Tales of Hong Kong Animation' was staged to offer an overview of the development of local animation over the past decade.

A new permanent gallery, the Jin Yong Gallery, was opened on 1 March. It contains more than 300 exhibits and a number of interactive installations introducing the literary career of Dr Louis Cha, whose pen name is Jin Yong, and the impact of his martial arts novels on the development of Hong Kong's popular culture.

The museum conducts an Arts Buddies project jointly with the Education Bureau, Arts Development Council, HKBU's Academic Community Hall and CUHK's Office of the Arts Administrator. It also runs a MuseKids programme to stimulate children's interest in museum learning, and the annual MuseTeens: Youth Leadership Scheme to enrich teenagers' understanding of the museum's work and collections.

Heritage Museum manages two branch museums, namely the Railway Museum in Tai Po and Sheung Yiu Folk Museum in Sai Kung Country Park. The former is situated in the old Tai Po Market Railway Station with a station building constructed in 1913, while the latter is located in a Hakka village built in the late 19th century. Heritage Museum, Railway Museum and Sheung Yiu Folk Museum attracted some 1,106,000, 312,000 and 39,000 visitors respectively in 2017.

Hong Kong Science Museum

In 2017, Hong Kong Science Museum in Tsim Sha Tsui presented the 'Eternal Life – Exploring Ancient Egypt' exhibition jointly with the British Museum, attracting over 850,000 visitors. Apart from displaying Egyptian mummies and objects, the exhibition introduced how advanced tomography scanning was used in research on these exhibits. Other major exhibitions included 'Miffy and the Oceans', aimed at raising young children's awareness of ocean protection, 'Wonder Materials – Graphene and Beyond', which introduced the latest developments in materials science, and 'Inspiration – Dreams Come True', showcasing Hong Kong's first home-built aircraft and its round-the-world journey. The new permanent Children's Gallery was also opened. More than two million visitors came during the year.

The museum cooperated with 42 scientific and government bodies to present HK SciFest 2017, with 172 programmes. The Science Alive 2017 programme, catering for students, highlighted the importance of appreciating and preserving the beauty and complexity of the Earth. Through the Young Scientists Study Tour, 20 secondary students and three teachers visited the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and other research institutes and observed a total solar eclipse in the US.

At the museum's Meet the Shaw Laureates 2017 public forum, winners of the Shaw Prize shared the challenges and joys of doing science.

Hong Kong Space Museum

Hong Kong Space Museum in Tsim Sha Tsui organises regular astronomy activities on-site and holds stargazing and family programmes at its Astropark and iObservatory in Sai Kung. Its Stanley Ho Space Theatre is equipped with digital planetarium projection and sound systems and offers Omnimax, 3D Dome and Sky shows.

The permanent exhibition halls were closed in 2017 for renovation and the installation of new exhibits. A weatherproof vacuum solar telescope system was installed to capture images of the sun for real-time display in the exhibition halls and streaming on the internet.

Under a Young Astronaut Training Camp, 30 secondary students visited major aerospace facilities in Beijing and Jiuquan from 30 July to 6 August. The trip was jointly organised with the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, China Astronaut Research and Training Centre and Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre to broaden students' horizons.

Some 422,000 people attended shows in the space theatre, while more than 26,000 took part in the educational and extension programmes.

Hong Kong Film Archive

The Hong Kong Film Archive in Sai Wan Ho offers the permanent exhibition, 'In Memory of Queen's Theatre'. It organised three exhibitions in 2017: 'Magic on the Screen: Hong Kong Cinematic Effects', 'The Stars, the Silver Screen and the Period Wardrobe' and 'The Stars, the Silver Screen and the Qipao'. More than 181,850 visitors were recorded during the year.

The archive is duplicating the film scripts and censor documents of late-1950s Hong Kong films from the New York State Archives.

In 2017, it acquired 112 films and 19,527 film-related materials, including picture negatives, soundtracks, subtitles, inter-negatives, inter-positives, film prints, magnetic tapes and trailers. Major acquisitions included 16mm, 17.5mm and 35mm pre-print materials from 104 titles dating from 1970 to 2007, and 487 film-related materials such as stills, betacam tapes, posters and handbills donated by Star Alliance Movies (HK). Lam Kar Sing Fan Club donated 239 film-related materials such as stills and film programmes. About 1,900 film-related materials such as portraits and handbills were acquired from Film Biweekly Publishing House.

Public Libraries

The department operates 70 static and 12 mobile libraries and a books registration office. The libraries hold 13.04 million books and more than 1.86 million items of multimedia material, serving almost 4.53 million registered book borrowers and lending more than 50.25 million books and other library materials in 2017.

Hong Kong Central Library

The Hong Kong Central Library is a major information and cultural centre, with a stock of more than 2.72 million books and other reading materials, multimedia facilities, a central reference library with six subject departments, an arts resource centre, a Hong Kong literature room, a map library, a language learning centre, a young adults library and a toy library. It offers for hire a 1,540 square metre exhibition gallery, a 290-seat lecture theatre, two activity rooms, a music practice room and eight discussion rooms.

The Central Library organises cultural programmes and public lectures, and promotes library resources and a culture of reading.

Improvements to Library Services

Two new libraries were opened in 2017. Yuen Chau Kok Public Library in Sha Tin was fully commissioned in March and Yuen Long Public Library was reprovisioned with enhanced services and facilities in June. The city's first self-service library station, located at the Island East Sports Centre Sitting-out Area in Eastern District, was launched in December, offering round-the-clock public library services.

The public libraries work closely with District Councils and local groups to set up community libraries, which are offered block loans of library materials. To develop Hong Kong into an age-friendly city, the department enhances library facilities and promotes reading among senior residents.

Reference and Information Services

Professional reference and information services are available at the Central Library and the public libraries of City Hall, Kowloon, Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai, Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun. The Central Library's reference collection covers subjects including Hong Kong studies and international organisations, while other major libraries also offer specialised thematic collections. The City Hall Public Library has collections about business and industry, creativity and innovation resources and the Basic Law. The Kowloon, Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun libraries provide collections on education resources, sports and fitness, modern living and food and nutrition respectively. In 2017, the public libraries handled 3.15 million enquiries.

Information Technology and Digital Library Services

Online service is integral to the public libraries' reference and information services. The libraries provide more than 1,900 computers giving public access to their 65 e-databases and the internet. About 270,000 e-books are available to registered members for remote internet access.

Promotion of Reading and Literary Arts

In 2017, the public libraries conducted 22,882 outreach programmes, including story-telling sessions, talks and exhibitions, to promote interest in reading. During the HKSAR's 20th anniversary year, a theme of Chinese culture was adopted for the 4 • 23 World Book Day Creative Competition and an exhibition, 'A Tour of Chinese Culture', was organised during the Summer Reading Month. The 14th Hong Kong Biennial Awards for Chinese Literature was held to promote Chinese literature and creative writing.

Books Registration Office

The Books Registration Office registers local publications and monitors the use of the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) system. It publishes the Catalogue of Books Printed in Hong Kong in the Government Gazette every three months. The catalogue can also be viewed on the internet. In 2017, the office registered 13,960 books and 8,168 periodicals, and issued 875 publisher prefixes totalling 15,050 ISBNs.

Heritage

Cantonese Opera

The government is keen to preserve, promote and develop Cantonese opera in Hong Kong. The Ko Shan Theatre New Wing provides a 600-seat auditorium and ancillary facilities for performances, training and rehearsals. In September, a Cantonese Opera Education and Information Centre equipped with advanced technology was opened to provide digitised and interactive Cantonese opera resources.

The Academy for Performing Arts offers the city's first Cantonese opera degree course. The Arts Development Council provides funding to the Cantonese Opera Academy of Hong Kong to organise training programmes.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

In August, the government announced the first Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Hong Kong, comprising 20 items with high cultural value and an urgent need for preservation. The government will enhance measures to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, including its identification, documentation, research, preservation, promotion and transmission, to raise public awareness and encourage the community to support the protection of such heritage.

The Hong Kong Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre is a display and resource centre set up by the government at Sam Tung Uk Museum in Tsuen Wan. It attracted 102,992 visitors in 2017.

Lord Wilson Heritage Trust

This trust aims to preserve and conserve Hong Kong's human heritage by organising activities and funding community organisations and individuals to implement heritage-related projects. It approved 15 heritage-related projects in 2017.

Conservation Office

The Conservation Office conducts conservation treatment on museum artefacts, including paintings, prints, historical documents, textiles, metals, ceramics, sculptures, organic objects and archaeological finds. Scientific research and analyses were carried out to complement the conservation work for 341 artefacts in 2017.

A conservation virtual reality game was launched at Muse Fest HK, attracting 1,600 participants to experience the fun of being conservators as they navigated the museum gallery to complete exigent conservation missions. The office also held 67 educational workshops and behind-the-scenes laboratory tours. In total, it received over 2,993 participants including students, and registered about 10,276 service hours contributed by 193 volunteers.

The office organised the IIC-Palace Museum 2017 Hong Kong Symposium through a collaboration with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC) and Palace Museum to foster professional exchange and development among conservators.

Nurturing Talent

Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund

Scholarships are awarded to candidates of outstanding calibre to pursue postgraduate studies in music or dance at degree-awarding tertiary education institutions in Hong Kong; professional music or dance training at renowned institutions; or less formal studies, projects or creative work outside Hong Kong. The fund awarded eight scholarships in 2017.

Arts Administrator Trainee Scheme

The Arts Administrator Trainee Scheme aims to nurture a pool of arts administrators to support the development of performing arts. Trainees undergo two years of training in venue operation, facility management, stage management, event promotion and the organisation of performing arts programmes, carnivals and arts festivals. There were 32 LCSD trainee placements in 2017. The department also sponsored its 20 venue partners and the Hong Kong Arts Festival to run similar programmes for trainees to learn about the management of performing arts groups and the organisation of arts festivals.

Museum Trainee Scheme

The Museum Trainee Scheme aims to develop museum professionals by attaching trainees to the Museum of Art, Museum of History, Heritage Museum, Film Archive, Art Promotion Office and Conservation Office. They receive two years of on-the-job training in museum management or conservation services, learning to manage museum services and organise educational programmes and gaining hands-on experience in curating exhibitions and projects. There were 17 trainee placements in 2017.

Music Office

The Music Office promotes knowledge and appreciation of music, especially among young people, by providing instrumental and ensemble training and organising music activities. It aims to build a new generation of concertgoers and organises international exchange programmes to foster sharing of music among young Hong Kong musicians and their counterparts round the world. In 2017, it provided music training for 9,046 trainees and recorded 260,309 participants in its promotional activities.

Visual and Public Art

Art Promotion Office

A public art project, 'City Dress-up: Seats • Together', organised by the Art Promotion Office saw 20 groups of local architects, artists and designers create 20 sets of appealing and courtesy seats at 20 locations across the territory in July, so as to inject more art elements into the environment and provide more opportunities to appreciate art. The office also worked with 1a space to organise an exhibition entitled 'The 6th Artists in the Neighbourhood Scheme: 9x9'.

Other public art projects staged by the office included 'Hi! Houses', the 'Art Display @ TI Tower – #ArtTravellers' exhibition series, 'Public Art Scheme of Tsun Yip Street Playground' and 'ARTivating Public Buildings'.

Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre (vA!)

Managed by the Art Promotion Office, the Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre is an open, multi-directional art space that focuses on art learning, research and exchange. It organises visual arts activities and provides facilities for hire, including well-equipped art studios, multi-purpose rooms, a lecture theatre and an exhibition hall. The centre's major programmes included the Art Specialist Course 2016-17, medialogue and 'The 6th Artists in the Neighbourhood Scheme: No Neverland' exhibition.

Oil Street Art Space (Oi!)

Oi! is a platform for art practitioners to realise their artistic creations and invite community engagement. Projects in 2017 included the performingART exhibition series, Xchange: Social Gastronomy, Play to Change, and four exhibitions under the Sparkle! Exhibition Scheme.

Websites

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department: www.afcd.gov.hk

Home Affairs Bureau: www.hab.gov.hk

Hong Kong Public Libraries: www.hkpl.gov.hk

Leisure and Cultural Services Department: www.lcsd.gov.hk