

APPENDIX 6: AKCF Project Initiation Brief

AKCF Project Initiation Brief

1. Project Title:

KONNECT ASEAN – An ASEAN-ROK (Republic of Korea) Arts and Cultural Programme

2. Project Description

ASEAN has, since its inception, done much to facilitate people-to-people exchange in the arts sector across Southeast Asia to encourage dialogue and debate. This unique space for artistic discourse that allowed for pluralistic notions of what constituted a regional artistic identity and aesthetic is one of ASEAN's great legacies and is widely discussed, researched, and acknowledged by a new generation of art historians and curators. In the last 15 years ASEAN relinquished this role – an important aspect of its community building aspirations in the arts sector – allowing the proliferation of Asian biennales, art fairs, and maturing cultural institutions to serve this function in its stead.

As the post-Cold War reality of a new world has taken shape and formed new directions and conversations, ASEAN will re-enter the contemporary art space via collaborative efforts between various ASEAN bodies. KONNECT ASEAN is a development project supported by the Republic of Korea and will serve as the ASEAN Foundation's core arts and cultural programme. KONNECT ASEAN signals both an eagerness by ASEAN to revitalise its once integral role in contemporary visual arts and South Korea's sincerity in establishing closer ties with ASEAN.

The programme will celebrate Southeast Asian arts using different platforms e.g. exhibitions, educational outreach, community arts workshops and exhibits, and printed and digital documentation, and in the process explore and discuss social, political, economic, and environmental issues in the region. The artists' works and activities will engage and strengthen the public's understanding of ASEAN. Furthermore, the programme intends to connect with the three major stakeholder groups of government, business, and civil society to achieve the vision of an ASEAN Community. Outcomes will provide permanent resources recording why ASEAN matters and its ongoing contribution to the region's growth, prosperity, and stability.

Futhermore, KONNECT ASEAN addresses the Strategic Plan for Culture and Arts 2016-2025 of the Senior Officials Meeting on Culture and Arts by contributing to realise strategic priority no. 4.1 which is to encourage a multi-stakeholder approach in promoting an ASEAN mind-set and identity to increase the appreciation for ASEAN's histories, arts, traditions and values. At the same time, the KONNECT ASEAN addresses the work plan of ASEAN-ROK Plan of Action, 2016-2020 by promoting cooperation in the area of culture and arts.

3. Introduction of Proponents/Implementing Agencies

The ASEAN Foundation (AF) is an organisation from and for the people of ASEAN. As one of ASEAN's bodies, AF is tasked to support ASEAN mainly in promoting awareness, identity, interaction and development of the people of ASEAN. The Foundation is also recognised for its capacity and experiences to work through the ASEAN system, and its work plan and initiatives are also strategically planned and developed to align fully with the ASEAN agenda and priorities, in particular, the ASEAN Blueprint 2025 forging Ahead Together. [<https://www.aseanfoundation.org/>]

Asia Art Agency (A3) collaborates with arts specialists across the globe to conceive of sustainable art programmes for government agencies in Asia. Burmese-Australian curator Benjamin Milton Hampe represents the agency in Southeast Asia. He has been the curator and consultant for the ASEAN Gallery since 2018. [<https://www.arndtartagency.com/>]

Artsolute supports the development and social needs of thousands of people of all age groups in Singapore and Southeast Asia with its art of empathy, creativity, and empowerment. It is a multidisciplinary outfit of various art forms including drama, visual arts, puppetry, and music. It is also a socially conscious organisation, focusing on the mentorship and development of youths and young Singaporeans through the arts as a means of empathy and innovation. [<https://www.artsolute.asia/>]

4. Information on the programme/project management teams

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5. Project Keyword

#KONNECTASEAN #ASEANKOREACREATES #ROKASEANART #CREATIVEASEAN
#MAKEASEANCREATEAGAIN

6. Activities

a. Art Exhibitions

There will be *touring art exhibitions* in three cities in ASEAN with high art market activity, namely Jakarta, Singapore and Manila, over two years – 2020 & 2021. These cities have been chosen because of their high concentration of art collectors, potential future programme partners, and robust art markets that can be leveraged to benefit the entire SEA region.

The touring exhibition offers a physical platform for networking and interaction. However, the project encourages the use of a digital platform to broaden interaction among ASEAN and Korean artists and curators, encouraging information sharing, education, and learning that cut across demographic and socioeconomic lines. Encouraging the use of digital communication tools can certainly facilitate more engagement with artists, whether Korean or ASEAN.

In addition to the touring exhibition in Busan, another seminar will be organised in 2021 similarly to the seminar that would be organised in 2020 to continue to facilitate discussions of the KONNECT ASEAN overall concept and individual research interest, as well as the collaborative formulation of exhibition projects.

Results from this discussion will be incorporated into the educational outreach programme. A Korean language version of the coffee table publication can also be produced with an introduction from the Korean curator. The Korean curator will also be responsible for logistical matters pertaining to the Korean exhibition tour.

During the ASEAN Day celebrations in Jakarta in 2020 and 2021, a large-scale installation by both an ASEAN and Korean artist/arts group is proposed to be installed at the ASEC foyer. The work of the artists can be chosen to reflect ideas of sustainability from the ASEAN region either through the use of materials (i.e. recyclable waste) or technique/methodology (i.e. community art project). The main exhibition will be held in the ASEAN Gallery, located in ASEC. It will consist of contemporary (recent) artworks as well as modern (20th century) artworks. In tandem with the exhibition at ASEC, a booth display will be placed during Art Jakarta to drive audiences and build awareness for the overall project.

b. Educational Outreach Programme

Two educational outreach activities will be commissioned to engage and expand the audience in 2020 and 2021 in Jakarta. In 2020, a gathering of curators/artists/academicians from ASEAN and

ROK will be invited back to back with the education outreach. The gathering will consist at least one representative from each AMS and the ROK, and one artistic director. The representatives have two main responsibilities of (1) giving input, advice and direction for the artistic selection and presentation of touring exhibitions and (2) attend the education outreach activities at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. It is envisaged that art professionals who are deeply imbedded in their communities, interested in developing an international network, and are excited by the idea of shaping and initiating further projects and collaborations between countries. These art professionals will need to demonstrate understanding of international curatorial practice either through work/projects, study or research. They would need to have excellent verbal and written communication skills in English and speedy responsiveness to communications.

Bringing together these group of people will facilitate discussions of KONNECT ASEAN overall concept and individual research interest as well as the collaborative formulation of exhibition projects. The co-curatorial model seeks to incorporate an “ASEAN Way” into the selection process of KONNECT ASEAN, hoping to discover new strategies for presenting artists and artwork from Asia to international audiences. The deliverables from the seminar will then be used as resources to reaffirm the importance of ASEAN and its ongoing contribution to the sustainability of the arts sector in the region.

As these educational outreach activities will be recorded, this will increase access of artists and curators from ASEAN or Korea to know about works from the region and Korea. There is also the possibility of using FB Live to engage audiences when the educational outreach activities are being conducted.

Inputs from education outreach activities in Jakarta 2020 will lean into the development of the touring exhibition project in 2021 in Busan. The participants will consist of ASEAN and Korean artists as well as curators, academics and community cultural workers to allow the development of friendship and inspiration from both ASEAN and Korea.

The education outreach activities will consist of seminars/panel discussions organised to allow for cultural thought leadership within ASEAN’s development concerns between artistic practitioners from ASEAN and Korea to ensure widespread inclusion and meaningful connection. Furthermore, issues pertaining to the development of a common ASEAN identity would be teased out in the discussions. Thematically they will focus on policy outcomes referencing ASEAN’s Strategic Plan for Culture and Arts 2016-2025 (i.e. economic effects, mobility, private investment) with a view towards building an eco-system for the future growth and successful implementation of programmes.

The sessions will be designed in such a way as to allow digital access from other ASEAN countries and Koreans, possibly via a digital classroom. The sessions will be recorded and kept live on ASEAN Foundation website creating an open educational resource for arts and culture. An end of project publication will be produced including recommendations for the development of future arts and culture initiatives in ASEAN will also be produced and kept as resource in the

ASEAN library among other academic and outreach facilities (see below: *Documentation and Resources*). The programme will be timed after ASEAN Day to ensure the extension of audience outreach and overall attendance figures.

c. Community Art Exhibit

Two Community Art Exhibits will be arranged for KONNECT ASEAN. The 4-day exhibits will present an accumulation of artworks, artefacts and performances centred on the crafts, heritages, and lores of ASEAN's communities. The exhibit includes photos and explanation of the process, highlighting the relationships between artists and communities. The goal of these exhibits is to create an art market for traditions and community-focused practices that are not already recognised for their cultural value. Contemporary artists in Southeast Asia and Korea will be able to recognise the technical skills, ideas and ideals that come from long-standing traditions to feed into their understanding and appreciation of their artisanal roots. The Exhibits therefore intend to aid the sustainability and economic value of community work and community-focused artists in the wider context of the global art market. Although the techniques used maybe traditional arts and crafts, their realisation will be contemporary artworks linking them to the overall project. The programme will be timed after ASEAN Day to ensure the extension of audience outreach and overall attendance figures.

d. Community Art Workshops

Four Community Art Workshops will be arranged. The 4-day interactive workshops focus on developing a relationship between the public and artist, as well as promoting the positive social outcomes of community art in the modern world. Accompanying the workshops are displays of videos and artefacts of their work for the general public. Community artists will use the feedback received from public participants regarding the relevance of community art for future programmes and artworks. Although the techniques used maybe traditional arts and crafts, their realisation will be contemporary artworks linking them to the overall project. The programme will be timed after ASEAN Day to ensure the extension of audience outreach and overall attendance figures.

e. Documentation and Resources

To accompany the art exhibitions, educational outreach activities and the community art workshops and exhibits, these materials will be produced: (i) coffee book (ii) end of project publication and (iii) video documentation series.

The coffee book is an inaugural publication highlighting the ASEC art collection currently on display at the ASEAN Gallery and maintained by the Community Relations Division. Such a

publication would be an excellent catalyst for educating and creating awareness among art lovers and supporters of milestone events on the role of the ASEAN Gallery as a channel for bringing ASEAN closer to the people.

For publishing this coffee book, Distanz, a publishing company in Berlin has been proposed. Distanz releases books and exhibition catalogues on the visual arts as well photography, architecture, design and fashion of the 20th and 21st Century. Distanz publishing produces artist monographs and anthologies in collaboration with prestigious editors and authors. Distanz publishing cooperates with leading national and international museums and institutions. A local publisher could alternatively be used to keep costs down while ensuring quality content that could possibly be picked up later by international publishers.

For greater visibility, the coffee book can be distributed at these distribution points: ASEAN Secretariat (gallery & library), Art Stage Jakarta, ASEAN Centre Busan, A3 (Berlin & Singapore), National Gallery Singapore, Singapore Art Museum, Asia Society (Hong Kong, New York, Australia), Museum MACAN, MIIAM, Bangkok Art Centre, The Factory HCMC, and various commercial art galleries globally with an interest in Asian art.

The end of project publication will document the outcomes of the educational outreach programme and overall KONNECT ASEAN project. It may also contain submissions from a call for papers exploring themes relevant to contemporary SEA art. It will be produced as an accompaniment to the coffee book publication and will be translated in both Korean and English. The end of project publication is intended to be a research tool and empirical reference distributed to universities and state agencies, providing recommendations to further ASEAN's arts and cultural strategic plan and stimulate further programming initiatives across the region.

The video documentation series will capture the educational outreach, community art workshops, and exhibits in a visual manner containing info-graphs, slides, videos and presentations to document the "voices" of the cultural artists and arts workers on their journey in the KONNECT ASEAN programme. These can be uploaded to the ASEAN website and social media channels.