

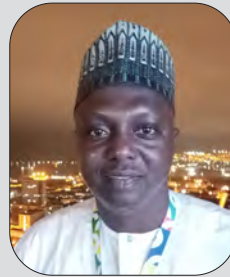


Strengthening and Revitalizing the Local Cultural Ecosystem

[Discussants]



Jeong Duk YI
(Emeritus Professor,
Jeonbuk National
University)



Francis SOKOMBA
(Focal Point of Bida;
Niger State Tourism
Corporation)



Tara POOLE
(Focal Point of Ballarat;
Leader of Creative City
Unit)



Seongjin NAM
(Researcher, Jinju
Culture Research
Institute)

1. The Need for a Limited Concept

The concept of culture is a word that gets used in many different ways. As a result, there are often confusions when communicating about culture. This is also true for the concept of cultural ecosystem, as it uses the word culture. This is because when the meaning of culture changes, the meaning of cultural ecosystem also changes. In cultural anthropology or human geography that concerns culture, cultural ecosystem is a comprehensive systematic approach to cultural phenomena through which humans adapt and interact with natural and social ecology. In a broader sense, it is a way to understand culture through the system of interaction between natural environment and humans.

However, this discussion intends to use the meaning of cultural ecosystem in a different way from above. While there is still disagreement as to what exactly the cultural industry (creative industry) is and whether it should be considered an industry, as its attributes are very different from those of other industries (for example, most cultural or creative activities are not profit-driven), efforts are increasingly being made to promote a comprehensive understanding and sustainable development through an ecological perspective that goes beyond the consideration of individual elements, as the importance of the cultural industry (creative industry) has increased significantly over the years. This approach is not an ecological approach toward the entire culture—instead, it is an ecological approach toward the creative industries, and therefore, practical discussions are being focused on the creative industry ecosystem, despite the use of the term cultural ecosystem. As such, only when the meaning of the term is clearly defined can a more specific discussion continue. Also, since the discussion is in relation to UNESCO Creative Cities, the use of the limited concept will help us to more effectively find ways for the sustainable development of UNESCO Creative Cities.

In addition, the concept of the ecosystem is being used here not to understand the system of interaction with the natural environment, but to understand the complex system and the context of the creative industries. This approach aims to contribute to the sustainable development of

UNESCO Creative Cities. That is, while the existing approaches to cultural and creative industries are interested in the production and consumption of the creative products or the agglomeration of creative industries, the ecological approach aims to comprehensively connect the cultural environment and creative activities, the interaction of different stakeholders and institutions, and the system of production-distribution-consumption. Similar to the concept of culture, the concept of ecosystem can also be used in a wide variety. As a result, even if we limit the meaning of cultural ecosystem to the creative industry ecosystem, a wide variety of thoughts and contents may be presented, which in turn will make the focus of the discussion unclear. Therefore, a definition of the creative industry ecosystem needs to be discussed here to some extent in order to make the discussion more productive and concentrated.

2. Key Elements of the Creative Industry Ecosystem

Since 2010, there has been increasing discussion on applying the concept of ecosystem to the creative industries, and the following tasks have emerged as being particularly important: 1) As the concept of culture is too broad and can be used in many different ways, there is a need to consider culture as art (creative activities and their products) to limit the scope of discussion; 2) therefore, artists (creation/production) who are related to art (creative industry), intermediaries (planning/distribution/marketing/commentary, etc.), enjoyers (consumption/purchase), and 3) the role of capital and distribution in the process of industrialization are important; 4) policies and support from the government, institutions, and organizations are important; and 5) the cultural foundations of the region concerned, including cultural tradition, creative organizations, creative facilities, creative talents, creative activities, creative expansion, creative education, enjoyment, industrialization (commercialization), play an important role. Certainly, there is a need to actively consider the external factors from an ecological perspective, as the external capital, external countries, and external creative activities are closely related to and interact with the tasks

described above. However, since the discussion of such external factors and their interactions requires a more complex framework, the present discussion will be limited to the internal factors.

The latter can be divided into the following factors: 1) creative talents (artist, intermediary, talent cultivation, activity system, activity space); 2) capital (planning, industrialization, marketing, distribution, profit); 3) support and facility (government, institution, organization, facility); 4) consumption and enjoyment (purchase, participation); and 5) local cultural background (cultural tradition, cultural activity, institution, network, governance). It is necessary to identify if and how these factors can interact with each other to achieve continuous synergy, as a reproductive system of sustained interaction. This requires active involvement of each participant.

In what direction should the interaction between these factors be stimulated in order to contribute to the development of local creative industry? To address this problem, the following questions can be asked: How will we cultivate creative talents, and how and where will we promote their creative activities that produce successful creative products?; How will we attract capital and make investments, or how will we as individual artists, craftsmen, and culinary producers design, create, and distribute the marketable creative products to secure profits?; What external capital (business) will we attract and what kind of relationship can we develop?; How will we stimulate local or visiting customers to consume and enjoy, thus revitalizing local creative activities, securing greater profits, and exploring pathways for expanded reproduction?; What, whom and how will local governments, institutions, and organizations support to revitalize creative activities and successfully commercialize products?; How can local production, consumption and enjoyment interact to further enhance the quality of creative products and make them marketable externally; In what ways are the local cultural traditions and social systems advantageous for the interaction with the local creative industries?; What type of local governance will contribute to the development of local creative industries?

There are certainly many problems with conceiving and presenting a unified ecosystem for discussion. This is because there are significant differences within the cultural industries (creative industries), as some

may be consumed through large-scale reproduction such as in films, while others may rely more on the craftsmanship of artists or chefs. In addition, megacities and small cities in rural areas show creative activities and creative industrialization in very different forms. Nevertheless, the more important factors are considered and selected here in order to focus the discussion in a somewhat unified framework. In particular, the perspectives of small and medium-sized cities with a locality will be considered more in this discussion, as they are mainly the members of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, rather than megacities.

3. Specific Questions

Based on these concerns, the discussion for this volume will focus on the perspectives of the local cultural ecosystem or creative industry ecosystem. The following are the list of questions to be discussed. We ask you to provide answers based on the experiences of the UNESCO Creative City to which you belong, or a creative city of your choice. You may also provide answers in a more general sense, and the readers can then apply them to their own cities in a more specific context.

1. The topic for this year's discussion is "Strengthening and Revitalizing the Local Cultural Ecosystem." As the discussion is mainly about the UNESCO Creative Cities, we would be grateful if you could discuss the local cultural ecosystem, especially in relation to the local creative industry ecosystem. The concept of local cultural ecosystem is to understand the system between cultural sectors and various factors by analyzing the cultural ecosystem of a region as a whole, to establish the structure of its virtuous cycle, and to promote the sustainable development of a creative city. Do you think such perspective or approach can help to revitalize UNESCO Creative Cities? In what ways can it help?

Jeong Duk YI: I think that the concept of local cultural ecosystems is an indispensable viewpoint for their harmonious development based on a comprehensive understanding of the conditions of each region. The elements of a natural ecosystem maintain or improve a balance by interacting and circulating through energy and materials. If some elements are excessive or insufficient, the balance of the entire ecosystem may be weakened or collapse completely. I think that the same is also true for the cultural ecosystem. It will move toward a developed balance if managed in such a way that people, money, and efforts interact; it will fail to do so or degenerate into a reduced balance if a problem occurs in some of its elements.

In the natural ecosystem, energy and materials evolve into a state of abundant balance through the interactions of the environment, producers, consumers, and decomposers. Similarly, in the local cultural ecosystem, people, money, and efforts can develop into a more abundant balance through the interactions of various institutions, organizations, producers, intermediaries, and consumers. Therefore, the local cultural ecosystem can be improved more systematically if we understand what key elements are involved (elements), what relationships between these elements presently exist and what is a more effective way to reconstruct them (relationships, systems, and patterns of elements), and how people, money, and efforts

could be improved (changes in key drivers).

The local culture can be broadly divided into three layers: everyday culture, which operates in daily life and relationships (meanings, rituals, leisure, play, everyday arts, everyday crafts, etc.); public culture, which is generally carried out by local communities and governments (local festivals, cultural centers, cultural complexes, museums, public support for culture and arts, cultural assets, etc.); and commercialized culture (films, cultural content, TV or OTT, advertising, commercial performances, commercial crafts, cultural products, cultural tourism, etc.). They are closely interrelated but work at different layers. More specifically, commercialized culture makes money through capital and technology and public culture enhances residents' sense of pride, attract tourists and raise a local identity, while everyday culture exists for residents' life, enjoyment, and relationships. Of course, while all three layers are interrelated, UNESCO Creative Cities emphasizes the utilization of the local culture for local development. Therefore, I think it is crucial to focus on local development through commercialization in a dignified manner.

In addition, introducing dynamic concepts of ecosystems, such as interrelationships, interactions, and virtuous cycles, will help to promote better synergistic development of elements and relationships. In the end, a more comprehensive and systematic approach will enhance the effects of interventions in local creative industries.

Francis SOKOMBA: Strengthening and revitalizing the local cultural ecosystem will help to create synergies among UNESCO Creative Cities. The ecosystem is an asset of the region on which the foundation of cultural goods and the fulcrum of the creative industry ecosystem rest. A good understanding of the local cultural ecosystem will stimulate creative activities that will add value to the network of producers, distributors, and consumers. Certainly, there is a need to transform the local cultural ecosystem, structuring it to maintain and adopt successful advanced regional practices that will promote and share experiences with other regions to develop or create new products, while strengthening productivity and achieving a balanced, eco-friendly environment.

Cultural knowledge is supreme and educative. Working together as a team will be the best strategy to successfully preserve the local cultural ecosystem. The local cultural ecosystem is dynamic and its exploration is unending with ongoing discoveries: Many practices have not been studied, while some are poorly documented and ineffectively analyzed. Diversity and its value chain is a source of livelihood. Creative knowledge sharing with other regions will result in regional cooperation, leveraging the enrichment of knowledge to cut across various local cultures. This will help to attract new audiences to appreciate and research the potential and resources of the ecosystem, considering its availability, cost-effectiveness, and value to the unlimited creative industry ecosystem.

Tara POOLE: The designation of Ballarat as a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art complements the City of Ballarat's own Creative City Strategy—a strategy which was designed to deliver a more sustainable environment for creative practitioners to thrive within. The strategy underpins our work in measuring the sustainable practices of creative businesses and people, and in turn informs our city planning. The UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals have provided another overarching set of targets.

Ballarat is moving towards a new way of working, but it is at the beginning of this journey. The integration of creative practitioners and businesses into a broader economic picture is only just starting. The test is in helping the small micro-enterprises to survive and complementing this with structured support for larger creative businesses and organisations, alongside the attraction and securing of complementary services, to help build a healthy creative ecosystem.

Newer generations of Australians within Ballarat are interested in regenerating lost traditions, and renewing support for training and education of trades and skills. There is a greater acceptance of First Nations knowledge and a growing awareness of the rich wealth of information and education which has been lost. Communities are starting to respond to the challenge. Representative and advocacy groups are supporting new ways to relearn old skills, and then applying contemporary design to ensure

interest and popular appeal. But there is much ground to make up. These efforts are small and disparate.

An Australian Research Council-funded research project sought to identify where the craft skills required to sustain and grow future making are located across the national economy. The project found that in 2021 Australia's craft economy employed 116,538 people (1.1% of the total workforce) and generated AU\$19.2 billion in gross value added (1.0% of the total). The Australian craft economy has been in decline since 2006, while the overall economy has continued to grow. This rate of decline accelerated from 2011 to 2016, but has stabilised in the period from 2016 to 2021.

The difference experienced in Ballarat is that the creative sector (of which there are 28 different category groups) is the fastest growing sector of the Ballarat economy. Since 2016, the total number of jobs (full and part-time) in the sector has more than doubled, although the revenue made from these jobs has fallen.

2. From the perspective of the local cultural ecosystem, what are the advantages and disadvantages of the local cultural ecosystem in your own region or city? What efforts can be made to overcome such disadvantages or shortcomings? In what ways can the perspective of a local cultural ecosystem help?

SOKOMBA: The local cultural ecosystem is the identity, custom, and source of inspiration for the people. It provides income and sustains cultural practices that are primary sources of raw materials for the creators. These practices are available and easily transmitted through familiar media.

Some of the local cultural ecosystems have not been accepted as universal practices; they are practiced within a specific section of the community without being subjected to criticism. There appears to be a missing knowledge link among creators, distributors, and consumers on

the agreed product output. Many knowledge holders have been unable to develop a scientific approach to local cultural ecosystems for effective communication. Moreover, the quality assessment indicators for local cultural ecosystem generally lack a conscious conceptualization of the subject to be measured, which may lead to confusing results.

Technology is rapidly advancing civilization by adopting technological parameters to calibrate traditions developed from the rich heritage and practices of local wisdom. It is necessary to develop a methodology for assessing the local cultural ecosystem in order to integrate it into the framework in a more balanced way. This will help to discover new innovations and enhance understanding of its value chain perspectives.

YI: As Jeonju is designated as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, I will narrow my discussion to focus on the strengths and weaknesses of its local cultural ecosystem as it relates to food. In particular, I will try to explain people, money, and efforts in terms of a system of interactions between various institutions, organizations, producers, intermediaries, and consumers.

Considering such elements and systems of an ecosystem, let's talk about people first. Jeonju has long been most famous in Korea for its food. In other words, there are abundant and delicious foods with a high level of involvement by talented people. In addition, the local people have a high interest in and knowledge of food. However, when it comes to modern factors such as capital input, food modernization, and promotion, traditional foods are now being pushed by contemporary commercial restaurant chains due to a lack of capital and modernization efforts.

Seen from the interactive system of producers, intermediaries, and consumers, Jeonju's food still appeals to lovers of traditional Korean cuisine but less so to younger generations whose tastes are becoming more Westernized. Chefs, as producers, are generally older and lack the ability to reflect the preferences of the younger generation on their food. Jeonju City, as an intermediary, concentrates its efforts on discovering the values and recipes of traditional foods. The designation of local restaurants in Jeonju also focuses on traditional dishes like bibimbap, bean sprout soup

with rice, stone pot rice, and *hanjeongsik* (Korean full-course meal). Other intermediaries such as restaurant associations, chef associations, and the Citizens' Network for Jeonju UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy also focus on traditional food. However, all of them fail to adequately reflect the changing tastes of consumers.

The concept of a local cultural ecosystem seems to contribute to a systematic understanding of how people, money, and efforts influence each other through a system of interactions among various institutions, organizations, producers, intermediaries, and consumers, and how they can facilitate the development of ecosystem as a whole. Thus, from the perspective of the local cultural ecosystem, Jeonju's food is well equipped with institutions, organizations, and producers related to traditional food and is deeply rooted in the lives of Jeonju's people through history and everyday practice. However, the biggest drawback is that other elements and systems do not properly reflect changes in consumer tastes. In short, Jeonju's food lacks the talented people, money, and effort to do so. Therefore, the concept of the local cultural ecosystem can be seen as effectively revealing the limitations of the whole local ecosystem and the directions of efforts for improvement.

3. The topic of the keynote presentation at the 8th Jinju UNESCO Creative Cities International Forum on July 7, 2023 was "Local Arts and Cultural Ecosystem: Focusing on the Role of the UCCN Program." In this presentation, the organic relationship among cultural producers, distributors, and consumers was mentioned as an important element in establishing the ecosystem. Considering the efforts to revitalize the cultural ecosystem of your own region, please explain what are the strengths and weaknesses of these three factors.

Seongjin NAM: Jinju is a city where intangible cultural heritage has been passed down in various forms such as music, song, dance, and

traditional crafts, including Nongak and Ogwangdae, which have been inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity List. This has contributed to Jinju's identity as a traditional cultural city. The transmission system established over the years by the producers of arts and culture has served as a foundation for its position of a cultural city and as a channel for discovering potential talents.

However, despite the abundant productive base in arts and culture, there have been limitations in achieving sustainable engagement in this sector. This is mainly due to the lack of distributors or intermediaries specializing in the distribution of arts and culture, which has prevented the formation of an organic link between production and consumption. As a result, the development of an enthusiastic customer base that can provide continuous support and interest has not been possible.

Therefore, it is necessary to revitalize the cultural ecosystem by strengthening systematic planning and government support to ensure the artistic and cultural activities in daily lives and build a virtuous cycle of creation, distribution, and consumption.

SOKOMBA: The strengths of our cultural ecosystem lie in the availability of raw materials, ecological sustainability, and the maintenance of sound traditional practices. This way of life requires less effort because its practices are carried out through the indigenous mother tongue. There exist mutual benefits between the producers, distributors, and consumers. They work based on the utilitarian and commercial values of the production line. They usually work within the community space with a strong commitment to trust. Working with fewer ideas, they are often comfortable with the normal routine and enjoy a less competitive market. They are comfortable with a sense of home and spiritual experience related to the natural environment.

Producers, distributors, and consumers are less innovative due to a lack of knowledge sharing and an inability to adopt new ways of thinking when trying out new products. They are often influenced by a strongly biased belief system and a failure to document their works. The lack of educational support for the local cultural ecosystem hinders interaction.

They devote less time to aesthetic awareness and lack the capacity to invest in extensive research.

YI: I completely agree to the view that an organic relationship between producers, distributors, and consumers is crucial for the establishment of an ecosystem. As already mentioned, the producers in a creative city of gastronomy can be said to be chefs. As much as Jeonju is known as the city of Korea's best traditional cuisine, its commercialized restaurant dishes are famous throughout the country. Since Jeonju cuisine is rooted in history and everyday life (e.g. daily home meals and feast food), the level of its producers is very high. The problem is that the level of their efforts and attempts are not as high in responding to the changing tastes of younger generations. Due to the deep roots of Jeonju cuisine, there is a strong tendency to rely on existing traditions.

Therefore, I think that it is very important to find a way to harmonize the deep roots of Jeonju cuisine with the changing tastes of today's consumers. As the consumption of traditional foods is declining due to this fact, I believe that simply focusing on traditional foods alone will reduce the possibility of their future growth. It is necessary to set new directions and make efforts to repackage and modify traditional foods to meet modern tastes, to add traditionality to modern foods to satisfy traditional and modern tastes together, and to expand the market for traditional foods globally.

However, Jeonju City and food organizations, which have the most influence as intermediaries, do not seem to sufficiently consider these limitations and look for ways to make a breakthrough. In addition, there are few efforts by cuisine researchers and scholars, whose main concern is to discover and give meaning to traditional foods, to suggest new directions to overcome this situation. Due to their small size, Jeonju's food companies with capital face limitations in actively pursuing and exploring new directions from a global perspective. Only a small number of restaurants are trying to franchise their existing menus nationwide.

To summarize, in terms of Jeonju's food sector, producers and distributors of food culture are not keeping up with changing consumer

preferences, and intermediaries such as businesses, the city government, civil society organizations, and scholars provide little help to producers in adapting to consumer changes.

4. From the perspective of the local cultural ecosystem, it is important for various parts and sectors to organically interact and develop with each other. In your city, how do local governments, organizations, artists, capitalists (businesses), and enjoyers interact with each other? Is there such an interconnected governance, platform, or mechanism? Also, what efforts do you think should be made to improve the future interaction in this direction?

YI: As a matter of fact, since Jeonju is considered by its residents and its chefs to be Korea's best food city and is also known nationally as such, the collaboration and relationship between the city government, chef organizations, restaurant associations, and residents is established in a highly systematic way. Currently, 96 restaurants have been selected as "100-Year Restaurants" and are supported by the government. The Jeonju city government, residents, and experts have also voluntarily organized the Citizens' Network for Jeonju UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy to ensure overall cooperation and coordination in the city. In addition, they are carrying out various initiatives such as the Jeonju food archives, Jeonju food genealogy, Jeonju food transmission education, cultivation of masters and prestigious families of Jeonju's local traditional food, training of Korean cuisine professionals, Jeonju Food Festival, and the promotion of the restaurant industry.

This cooperation system is mainly led by the city of Jeonju, meaning that it cannot function properly without the city. For example, even the Citizens' Network, which was established in 2010 to develop Jeonju as a Creative City of Gastronomy, is unable to function properly without the support of the city. This can be attributed to the fact that since many

civil society organizations and professional organizations, although large in number, have been operating under the direction and control of the government over the past 100 years in Korea, they are largely driven by the government's decisions rather than conducting independent activities of their own.

Accordingly, although there are several organizations and networks of civic groups, chefs, capital (businesses), and consumers, their vitality wanes as the government's interest in them diminishes. As a platform organized to connect and coordinate these organizations, the Citizens' Network has recently experienced a slowdown in activities with the decrease of the government's support. While the Jeonju Food Story (jeonjufoodstory.or.kr) was created to consolidate and stimulate these connections online and provide basic relevant information, its function as a platform for interconnection and coordination is weak.

In order to better facilitate such interactions, close collaboration among the local government, the Citizens' Network, and the Jeonju Food Story is needed. This will lead to promoting professional creativity and activities of chefs and capital (businesses) and maintaining or even enhancing the vitality as the Creative City of Gastronomy by responding more actively to the changing preferences of consumers.

SOKOMBA: There is little stakeholder participation and interaction on the local cultural ecosystem, which affects the sustainability of heritage. The interactions are mainly on traditional platforms such as annual cultural festivals, town hall meetings, and individual displays at informal gatherings.

To speed up this development, a more contemporary mechanism should be put in place by the formation of deliberate policies, the development of a sustainability plan, the enactment of preservation and copyright laws, the distribution of incentive packages, and the establishment of a regulatory council to address the existing gaps. This will improve interaction through institutional support, workshop training, research materials, product exhibitions, exchange programs, competitions, excellence awards, and documentation. In addition, platforms for art

spaces should be included in city design and outstanding craft creators should be recognized as part of the city brand and monuments. These measures will improve interaction among creators, distributors, and consumers.

5. The local cultural ecosystem includes many different networks involving creators, producers, presenters, supporters (government, organizations, cultural foundations, etc.), intermediaries, and participants in the field of arts and culture. While the existing analyses of local culture have been conducted primarily from the perspective of creators, producers, and presenters, the perspective of the local cultural ecosystem also considers supporters, intermediaries, and participants. Among the creators, producers, presenters, supporters, intermediaries, and participants, which group is most vulnerable or relatively weak in your city? What efforts can be made to strengthen this group? What efforts can be made to improve the interaction between creators, producers, presenters, supporters, intermediaries, and participants?

NAM: In terms of producers and creators, Jinju has a workforce that is unmatched by any other city, allowing for a wide range of creative endeavors. This has established its status as a city of arts and culture. However, support and interest from consumers and participants are relatively low compared to other cities. This can be attributed to factors such as imbalances in private artistic activities and the supply chain due to budget allocations biased in favor of government-led events, and deficiencies in a cultural distribution system due to the absence of intermediaries.

Therefore, in a changing cultural environment, the voluntary solidarity of various actors shaping the ecosystem, the establishment of a private-led cooperation system, and cultural collaboration among citizens, artists, and administrators are of paramount importance. In addition, effective support

from the local government is needed to promote the arts and culture sector as a strategic industry and to create a stable and sustainable distribution ecosystem for arts and culture.

SOKOMBA: Creators are relatively weak in terms of new innovations, exposure, access to modern tools and equipment, technical education, financial support, productivity, raw materials, and grants.

They need institutional support to provide training to vulnerable groups within the local cultural ecosystem, enhancing their understanding of the virtuous cycle of products. Creators should study the work of others and apply new ideas to their own work. The use of advanced technology is essential to reduce production hours and facilitate the application of skills to the medium, using eco-friendly devices to achieve the best results.

Efforts should be made on capacity building, exchange programs, artist residency programs, and group and joint exhibitions to develop the arts through the intersection of different materials of the local cultural ecosystem. This process will enhance interaction to produce new products for the development of the city.

Another approach is to exchange materials between different local cultural ecosystems to enhance the export of skills and materials. This can promote skill and material interaction among creators of different local cultural ecosystem backgrounds.

To further encourage interaction, it is necessary to establish a craft competition as a part of a craft festival. This platform will deepen interactions within the creative city, with the aim of appreciating skills, creativity, aesthetics, and effective use of time and space in creating works within a specific time frame. Since diversity is endless, continuous collaboration within the local cultural ecosystem of creative cities will sustain interaction for the greater good of all.

YI: In the case of traditional foods, the key players are chefs (in the case of cooking, a chef is a creator, producer, and presenter), supporters, intermediaries, and consumers. As mentioned earlier, Jeonju already has high-level chefs who reflect its reputation as a food city. The system of

training and discovering chefs is well established. Jeonju's support is also systematically provided in various aspects of the food industry (traditional food discovery, human resource development, restaurant improvement, value enhancement, and globalization). Intermediaries (civic organizations, chef organizations, restaurant organizations and culinary commentators) are in place and collaborate effectively with each other.

In the case of food consumers, however, a big shift in their preferences has emerged in recent years. In particular, as the tastes of the younger generations are rapidly becoming Westernized in Korea, the interest in and consumption of traditional foods is rapidly decreasing. The biggest weakness of Jeonju as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy lies in that its chefs, supporters, and intermediaries failed to adequately respond to this changing situation. In Jeonju, many efforts are being made to preserve, upgrade, and expand traditional food tastes through various events, book publications, and tastings. However, there is a limit to such efforts to turn back the huge tide of Westernized tastes. Rather, more creative and ambitious efforts are needed, especially on the part of chefs, to adapt to the changing tastes of consumers. In addition, Jeonju's support for these efforts must be further strengthened.

POOLE: It is critical for the City of Ballarat to have an in-depth understanding of its creative sector if we are to help it to thrive. In 2019 the City of Ballarat initiated a **Creative Sector Database** to identify and track the creative sector—from larger business through to small sole practitioner.

The database has become an essential tool to understand the needs and requirements of this complex sector. With 28 different sub-sectors identified, and upwards of 70 different creative services tracked, the Creative Sector Database is vital in helping understand the most vulnerable, the most successful and those who are most in need.

The Database has revealed to us that Ballarat is a city of creative micro-enterprises, sole traders and individual practitioners. And the number of those making income from their creative practice is climbing. In the last year alone, we've seen a **6 percent jump in self-employed professional**

creative practitioners.¹

To complement the Creative Sector Database an annual survey, the **Creative Sector Survey**, was introduced to establish benchmarks. We have consistently sought information about the economic security of the sector, including measuring the percentage of creative practitioners who have more than one income stream.

Sixty-two percent of Ballarat's creative sector rely upon multiple streams of income to support their practice. This figure has remained consistent over the past year.

The biggest divide for creative practitioners is income levels along gender lines. In 2022, 45 percent of those who identified as women reported their household earning under \$50,000 per annum. For those who identified as men, less than 20 percent reported income under \$50,000. In 2023, creative women's income had increased, but 50 percent still reported their household earnings as under \$75,000, with 13 percent under \$25,000 per annum.

The annual nature of this Survey has enabled the Creative City team to structure educational programs and tailor activities to respond to the needs of specific groups. It has also helped us identify the need to attract complementary services and related services to the city. Additionally, the application of the Survey and the resulting robust data has allowed us to better communicate the accomplishments and value of the sector to the community.

1 . City of Ballarat, *Creative Sector Survey 2022 & 2023*.

6. One important purpose of the UNESCO Creative Cities is to revitalize the economy. In your city, are there any implemented strategies, capital inputs, resident consumption, tourist consumption, or external sales to promote the revitalization of the creative industries? What elements are working well and why, and what elements are not working well and why? What kind of efforts are needed to comprehensively improve them?

POOLE: Revitalisation of the creative economy is considered a core requirement for building the strength of Ballarat's overall economy.

Creative people who have been priced out of larger cities such as Melbourne are moving to the city. However, once they move their businesses to Ballarat they find that the overall value of their creative work has dropped.

Additionally, tourists and visitors seek creative experiences when they visit the city. But in recent years, the desire to pay a true market rate for these experiences has diminished.

Nevertheless, tourism remains one of the biggest influences on the arts and creative industries. The number of overnight cultural visitors of Ballarat jumped by over 10 percent between 2022 and 2023. In 2023, 27.5 percent of these visitors to Ballarat invested in cultural experiences, including arts, culture, heritage, and indigenous activities. This equated to \$109 million injected into the cultural economy. This figure is up from \$92 million in 2022. For each dollar spent by a tourist in Greater Ballarat, it is estimated that \$0.10 is typically spent on arts and recreations services. This has increased by 20% since 2019.

The City of Ballarat is attempting to directly support this rise in tourist demand for creative experiences. In 2022–2023, small trial programs supporting creative micro-enterprises to develop cultural tourism products were implemented.

The experiment revealed there is a gap between small micro-businesses and robust creative businesses that can provide ongoing tourism products to meet the current level of increasing demand. With such demand

currently outstripping supply, this presents the City of Ballarat with a real opportunity to attract complementary organisations and businesses to the city.

NAM: Jinju City has found it difficult to fully leverage its various cultural assets and develop them into a cultural industry. Therefore, since 2019, the city has been gradually formulating and implementing plans to support the development of cultural content and the diversification of its distribution channels as a key strategy. As a result, initiatives such as several convergence art performance productions, craft startup idea contests, and biennials have been implemented, providing artists, residents, and tourists with opportunities for business development, appreciation, and enjoyment. In addition, works by individual craftsmen have contributed to economic revitalization by providing opportunities for overseas sales.

However, the perceived level of industrial revitalization in the folk art scene is still low. The reason is that within the limited spatial scope of Jinju, the lack of budget and stage availability leads to the repetition of performances with the same format, leading to a sense of monotony. This has increased the self-doubt of folk artists, dampening their creative motivation and preventing progress toward industrialization. Cultural content requires a certain degree of novelty, so a continuous repetition of the same content may hinder its development. It is necessary to create a creative atmosphere and expand distribution channels to encourage the creation of high quality J(Jinju)-content and artworks.

YI: Jeonju attracts over 10 million tourists a year and is one of the most well-known cities in Korea for its food. As a result, tourists flock to Jeonju to explore its rich gastronomic offerings. The consumption of residents and tourists has led to a large number of restaurants in the city. Currently, approximately 20,000 people are employed in about 5,000 restaurants. Over the past decade, the number of restaurants in and around Jeonju Hanok Village, a tourist destination, has increased. However, the city has not adequately responded to changing food preferences. To address these changes, creative innovations in traditional foods are essential.

While Jeonju has focused on discovering and improving traditional foods, it has not properly formulated a strategy for changing food preferences and effectively addressing them. The expansion of Jeonju's food beyond this region is also lacking. Despite increasing food sales to tourists through its image as a creative city of gastronomy, the reputation of Jeonju's food is gradually weakening compared to other cities.

The consumption of Jeonju's high-end traditional foods is currently limited mainly to locals, making it difficult to improve the image of Jeonju's traditional foods and promote them nationally or globally. Ironically, this is causing high-quality restaurants to close down. In addition, the small size of food establishments makes it difficult to engage in sophisticated or creative food development on their own. Due to a lack of capital, there is also a reluctance to actively expand restaurants by opening branches or franchises.

To overcome these problems, Jeonju's chefs must first actively and creatively develop or improve their food. Second, due to the limited capital of Jeonju's residents, they must attract outside investment and standardize recipes, as well as more actively develop franchises or branches. Third, considering the growing global reputation of K-food, more active efforts should be made to expand overseas. Fourth, Jeonju City must make more active efforts to support and coordinate these initiatives throughout the process. It is also necessary to create specialized restaurant districts to make it easier for tourists to find, and to develop various tourism programmes related to Jeonju cuisine.

7. In order for the local cultural ecosystem to sustain itself in a healthy manner, it requires not only the involvement of artists and capital, but also the active engagement of various institutions and organizations, the active participation of local residents, the proactive creative education of youth for the future, and the steadfast support of the local government. Are such efforts being made in your city? If there is anything that needs to be improved, please specify what it is and how you would improve it.

POOLE: Building robust ecosystems of creativity and craft in a contemporary Australian city is no easy task. Not only have the frequent waves of economic and social change since colonisation disrupted traditional knowledge and craft practices, but contemporary economics in a Western society have also undercut the ability of craft as a practice to survive.

Ballarat is applying a push-pull strategy to create an environment where craft can thrive. This includes a myriad of different strategies that need to work in harmony. This includes ensuring that future plans for the city incorporate arts and culture into new suburbs and developments. As the city grows and accommodates new people, it is important to ensure that there are provision standards for the building of cultural assets such as workshops, studios, galleries, rehearsal spaces and more for the next generations of city dwellers.

Ballarat is making it easier to reimagine older buildings for creative uses. As a city with heritage buildings that struggle to be activated due to planning and heritage constraints, this can often be complex. The heritage of the city defines a significant portion of its identity, and the challenge is to work with the limitation of heritage rather than against it. Craft practitioners occupy underutilised spaces, negotiated through non-traditional licensing arrangements rather than commercial leases.

The city continues to support micro-enterprises to establish themselves as viable entities. This includes structured business skills, networking, proactive promotion of collaboration, and the establishment of “export

ready” initiatives to help creative businesses expand beyond the regional city.

The city is about to embark upon a proactive program to attract creative industries that complement the mix of makers already in town. It is working unashamedly to attract medium and larger creative industries through incentives and other programs.

And finally, Ballarat celebrates the makers. This is a simple but necessary activity. To help makers and artisans to see themselves as part of something greater, to encourage their collaboration and support of one another, and to build civic and community pride. Centering the narrative of Ballarat as a Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art has been a rallying call which has built upon itself and shows no signs of slowing.

YI: Compared to other cities, Jeonju City has continuously been interested in the discovery, commercialization, promotion, and talent development related to its food. In addition, universities are actively conducting research on traditional foods and making efforts to train chefs. On the other hand, the activities of restaurant associations are limited only to partial improvements, and the creative efforts of the Citizens’ Network of Jeonju UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy are gradually fading. Overall, there is a tendency to settle for the status quo rather than making creative new developments. Reliance on the stable demand from Jeonju’s residents and tourists has led to a lack of risk-taking efforts to creatively explore new opportunities. When the economic situation worsens or the number of tourists decreases, the number of restaurants also decreases. More creative chefs and entrepreneurs are needed to further activate Jeonju cuisine as a creative industry.

NAM: Various organizations have played a crucial role in building and maintaining the cultural ecosystem in the Jinju region. The Jinju Culture Research Center has proposed and presented activities, practical policies, and future directions to connect the local cultural ecosystem. The Samgwang Cultural Research Foundation and the Namseong Cultural Foundation have provided financial support for artists to facilitate their

creative activities and have collaborated extensively to promote the cultural rights of citizens. In addition, residents have actively participated in folk art dissemination projects and farmers' music competitions at the *eup*, *myeon*, and *dong* administrative unit levels, thus expanding the opportunities for all citizens to enjoy culture. The provision of art experience programs for children and elementary school students has contributed to the early discovery of creative talents.

Thanks to the support and sponsorship of the local government, local projects such as international exchange activities, the creation of a creative atmosphere, and the cultivation of creative talents have been carried out smoothly to a certain extent. Still, there is room for improvement in the establishment of a "platform" such as a "Creative City Design Center" so that these activities and education can be closely and organically implemented. It is also necessary to establish a cooperation system involving the public and private sectors, industry, and academia, along with stable support from the local government.

8. Unlike industry, we cannot abandon culture just because it is not profitable. Profit-making will only be sustainable if the creative industries interact in harmony with non-profit, government-supported artistic activities, and the daily creative activities of the local residents. In your city, is there a harmonious balance between for-profit and non-profit creative activities? What efforts should be made to achieve this harmony?

NAM: Profit-generating support activities include biennials, performance production projects, and contests for craft start-up ideas. Non-profit support activities include international initiatives such as the publication of an international journal and the organization of international seminars and forums, as well as local initiatives such as folk art dissemination projects to develop human resources and an art delivery project to enhance cultural enjoyment opportunities for vulnerable groups.

These two types of activities have been harmonized in a complementary relationship, building theoretical foundations by exploring the role of culture and cultural policies, and then applying them to nurture the next generation, promote cultural rights, and provide cultural practices to citizens and tourists. The two activities should be promoted with consistency and continuity in order to achieve harmony, permeate the lives of citizens, and create greater synergy.

In addition, we should endeavor to promote horizontal values such as harmony, cooperation, coexistence and balance in the community as a whole by ensuring that profit-making activities and value-based non-profit activities support and revitalize each other. In doing so, it is crucial to strive for the creation of social values and public good.

YI: Food must be able to generate profits in order to expand as a creative industry. Jeonju holds various food festivals and programs to maintain the reputation of its cuisine and promote it to the public. The city also strives to find new recipes from its residents, conduct various cooking classes, research and archive Jeonju's food, operate online food stories, and organize food festivals and competitions.

However, it is unclear how much these efforts contribute to creative profit-making activities. We believe that improving or maintaining the image of Jeonju cuisine can be helpful in generating continued interest. Jeonju must make it more apparent that its programmes and activities around food directly contribute to creative profit-seeking activities. To reiterate, it is necessary to encourage chefs and entrepreneurs to adopt a more entrepreneurial mindset and to creatively develop and sell food products.

9. Local cultural heritage, tradition, and identity can both significantly influence and be influenced by the creative industries. How is your city's main creative industry linked to local cultural heritage, tradition, and identity? What are strengths and weaknesses of the creative industry? What efforts can your city make to ensure that the elements of the creative industry ecosystem positively influence each other?

POOLE: Ballarat is a small city in the regions of Western Victoria, Australia. With a population of just over 120,000, it is a sizeable regional city by Australian standards. The city is at the gateway to the Goldfields region of Western Victoria and the centre of the gold rush which brought huge waves of new people.

But the same event left environmental degradation and devastation for the indigenous populations, the Wadawurrung people. In the space of a few short years, over 60,000 years of knowledge and environmental management were wiped out and rich cultural traditions lost.

In the mid-1800s, Ballarat was briefly one of the richest places on the planet, leaving the centre of the town with a legacy of colonial style buildings and lush European streetscapes. The wealth brought libraries and galleries, art schools and universities, artisans and makers. The colonisation of craft practice was complete, with new trades from pottery to ironmongery taking over.

Ballarat is a town that has consistently faced existential crises. The experience of colonisation and the gold rush, then a shift from mining to agriculture, and now to manufacturing, education, and healthcare has had massive impacts on the community. The city has developed into an outer commuter suburb to metropolitan Melbourne. The city is again going through yet another cultural shift with a new population influx. Today, this is coupled with environmental issues, climate change, and complex social constructs. Ballarat's creative sector has had to change remarkably to adapt.

YI: Jeonju has long been known as a representative food city in Korea. Its residents take pride in their food's nationwide fame. Therefore, the Jeonju Creative City of Gastronomy is closely related to the city's culinary intangible heritage, food tradition, and identity. Located near mountains, plains, and the sea, Jeonju has a history and identity deeply rooted in the use of fresh ingredients from these various regions to create excellent food. Therefore, citizens are interested not only in Jeonju's food itself but also in its industrialization. As a result, there is widespread agreement on the direction the city should take in developing its food. The significant advantage is that Jeonju City, local stakeholders, and citizens have a common commitment to sharing and improving its cuisine.

On the other hand, a weakness lies in the lack of an entrepreneurial mindset to develop creative foods that meet new tastes and actively expand sales. For a more active virtuous cycle, the creative and challenging entrepreneurial mindset of chefs, as well as the active support and participation of the city government and capital are needed to promote and sell newly improved cuisine both domestically and globally. While there is an abundance of talented chefs, a lack of entrepreneurial mindset and capital has resulted in the perpetuation of a stagnant cycle.

Ballarat has strategically identified the importance of protecting and reinforcing the cultural economy. The theory is to nurture old practices mixed with new ideas so that it might support a new form of engagement for the future. The idea of embedding the creative economy into the operation of the city is about embedding a way to in part future proof the city from economic and social shocks in the future.