

Chapter 5

Culture, Sports and Tourism

Hong Kong offers a wide range of sports, cultural and recreational opportunities, ranging from international sports and arts events to community programmes. The tourism sector continued to grow in 2024, with overall visitor arrivals to Hong Kong rising to nearly 45 million.

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau coordinates government policies on arts and culture, sports, recreation, creative industries and tourism. It promotes the development of culture, sports and tourism and aims to create diverse experiences through events that attract visitors to Hong Kong and boost the tourism industry, while also invigorating the cultural and sports industries through tourism and expanding their audience base. The bureau is supported by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency (CCIDA) and Tourism Commission in implementing these policies.

The LCSD promotes the city's arts and culture, enhances its venues and facilities, and fosters cooperative interaction between sports, cultural and community organisations. It also organises exhibitions, sports events and cultural performances.

Blueprint for Arts and Culture and Creative Industries Development

The government published the *Blueprint for Arts and Culture and Creative Industries Development* in November, setting out the vision, principles and strategic directions for the development of these industries. The blueprint aims to promote Hong Kong culture, boosting residents' pride in their home and consolidating the city's position as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchanges.

Arts and Culture Venues

The government provides the majority of arts and culture venues in Hong Kong. The LCSD manages 15 museums, 15 performing arts venues, two indoor stadia, two art spaces and 83 libraries.

West Kowloon Cultural District

The West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) is a strategic investment by the government, with a vision to create a world-class, vibrant and integrated arts and cultural hub. Stretching across 40 hectares along Victoria Harbour, it is home to the Hong Kong Palace Museum, M+, the Xiqu Centre, Freespace and the Art Park. The WestK Performing Arts Centre is planned for completion in 2026.

The Hong Kong Palace Museum, with an exhibition space of 7,800 square metres, promotes the study and appreciation of Chinese art and culture, and advances cultural dialogue through international partnerships. M+, with an exhibition space of about 17,000 sq m, is a museum of contemporary visual culture presenting collections that display visual art, design and architecture as well as moving image from Hong Kong, the Mainland, Asia and beyond.

The Xiqu Centre, with a 1,075-seat Grand Theatre, is dedicated to preserving, promoting and developing the art of Chinese traditional theatre, Cantonese opera and other forms of xiqu. Freespace provides a creative space for cutting-edge productions to promote new ways of seeing and experiencing and includes a 'black box' theatre accommodating 900 people standing or 450 seated.

Indoor Stadia and Performing Arts Venues

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 stadia host mega sports events, pop concerts, major celebrations and other activities.

The Hong Kong Cultural Centre is the territory's premier performing arts facility. It has three main performance venues: a 1,971-seat concert hall, a 1,734-seat grand theatre and a 496-seat studio theatre.

Hong Kong City Hall is the territory's first purpose-built major civic centre and a declared monument since 2022. Its main facilities include a 1,430-seat concert hall, a 463-seat theatre and an exhibition hall.

Yau Ma Tei Theatre, the only surviving pre-war cinema building in the urban area, is dedicated to nurturing young talent for Cantonese opera. The theatre's phase 2 is under construction to enhance its function as a professional performance venue.

The LCSD 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 with priority venue hiring policy for Cantonese opera performances 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.

PMQ

PMQ occupies the site of the former Police Married Quarters in Central. It combines heritage conservation and supports the creative industries.

The revitalised Grade 3 historical building includes spaces converted into creative studios, pop-up stores and work spaces, and creates a platform for up-and-coming design and creative entrepreneurs to interact and start their businesses. It welcomes international and local design brands to rent the spaces to showcase or sell their products or services. World-renowned designers and artists are also invited to host exhibitions, lectures and sharing sessions on their creative experiences.

Arts and Technology in Performing Arts Venues

Performing arts venues under the LCSD have gradually installed high-tech equipment including immersive audio systems and real-time stage tracking systems, to support the development of arts technology. Live streaming systems and high-resolution cameras are used to broadcast live or recorded performances. The East Kowloon Cultural Centre is the flagship performance venue for arts technology and has an academy for arts technology to nurture talent for the industry.

Venue Partnership Scheme

The Venue Partnership Scheme fosters partnerships between the LCSD's performing arts venues and performing arts groups. It aims to enhance the image and character of individual

venues and their partners. The venue partners organised 777 stage performances in conjunction with 920 educational, promotional and audience-building activities in 2024.

Arts and Culture Funding

Recurrent Funding

In 2023-24, the government earmarked more than \$6 billion, excluding capital works expenditure, for arts groups, education and promotion, and administration. About \$399.6 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 Orchestra, Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, Hong Kong Sinfonietta and Zuni Icosahedron.

Cultural Exchange

The government sets aside around \$70 million every year to strengthen collaboration with government authorities and cultural organisations of Mainland provinces and municipalities as well as overseas, and to support arts groups and artists to perform and stage exhibitions outside Hong Kong.

With the support of Mainland Offices and Economic and Trade Offices in overseas cities, local arts groups and artists put on more than 70 programmes and exhibitions in 2024, spanning across many Mainland cities and countries in Asia, Australia, Europe and North America.

Arts and Sport Development Fund (Arts Portion)

The arts portion of the Arts and Sport Development Fund subsidises long-term arts and cultural development. The Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme seeks to develop the capacity of local artists and arts groups and to promote public-private partnership in local arts development through springboard grants with matching elements and project grants. In 2024, it supported 16 new projects with a total of \$45.22 million. Around \$30 million is also earmarked annually to support projects initiated or recommended by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council.

Art Development Matching Grants Scheme

The Art Development Matching Grants Scheme seeks to widen funding sources for arts groups and encourage community support for arts and cultural development. It matches private donations and sponsorships raised by eligible arts groups and organisations by providing corresponding grants and \$1.7 billion has been injected since its launch.

Mega Arts and Cultural Events Fund

The Mega Arts and Cultural Events Fund aims to attract and support international or large-scale arts and cultural events to take place in Hong Kong and 10 projects were approved during the year. It was announced on 30 November that the operation and application arrangements of the fund will be enhanced, with the new mechanism officially taking effect on 1 January 2025.

Intangible Cultural Heritage Funding Scheme

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Funding Scheme, established to engage the community in safeguarding Hong Kong's intangible cultural heritage, allocated about \$30 million to 31 community-driven and partnership projects in 2024.

Other Funding Schemes

The Cantonese Opera Development Fund supports the preservation, promotion and development of Cantonese opera. In 2024, it granted about \$11.5 million to support relevant projects.

The Lord Wilson Heritage 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. In 2024, it allocated \$3.04 million to support 12 projects.

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. Nine scholarships worth \$5.27 million were awarded in 2024.

Arts and Culture Organisations

Hong Kong Arts Development Council

The Hong Kong Arts Development Council operates grant schemes and plans, promotes, funds and supports the overall development of the arts. It is also a beneficiary of the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme and implements its own matching fund scheme to help small and medium-sized arts organisations.

The council nurtures artists, curators, arts administrators and other arts professionals by providing opportunities for training, cultural exchange, internship and attachment locally and abroad.

In October, the council organised the 5th International Arts Leadership Roundtable, bringing together cultural leaders from nine countries and regions to discuss issues such as revitalising and advancing the global arts ecosystem in the post-pandemic era, and supporting the development of both new and traditional arts. The event attracted nearly 500 participants.

The final two exhibitions of the council's second edition of the Arts•Tech Exhibition series were held in January and March. The exhibitions and 14 fringe programmes, covering theatrical performance and artificial intelligence (AI), attracted an audience of nearly 5,000.

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

The West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCD) presents arts and cultural programmes to showcase the best of the WKCD and to develop the capacity of the local arts and cultural sector, nurture young artists, build audiences and engage the community.

Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts offers professional education, training and research facilities in the performing arts including Chinese opera, dance, drama, film and TV, music, and theatre and entertainment arts. In the QS World University Rankings for Performing Arts 2024, the academy ranked first in Asia.

During the year, 909 students enrolled in undergraduate and post-secondary programmes in the six performing arts disciplines. In addition, 201 students were pursuing master's degree programmes in dance, drama, film and TV, music, theatre and entertainment arts, and performing arts studies. The academy also admitted 753 students to its junior programmes and 1,028 students to its Extension and Continuing Education for Life programme.

Hong Kong Arts Centre

The self-financing Hong Kong Arts Centre promotes contemporary arts and culture. It features the works of local and overseas artists, and provides facilities for performances, films and exhibitions. The centre's Hong Kong Art School runs higher diploma and degree courses on fine art, and offers short programmes on a wide variety of arts subjects.

Fringe Club

The Fringe Club is housed in a former cold-storage warehouse built in 1890, now listed as a Grade 1 historical building and adapted for use as a contemporary arts space. It houses three theatres and one exhibition hall and holds regular performances, exhibitions and arts festivals in different spaces throughout the building.

The club adopts an open-access policy to nurture budding artists and promote mature ones by providing venue and publicity support as well as opportunities for overseas tours. In 2024, 750 exhibitions, music and drama performances, talks and workshops were organised.

Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre

The Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre is an artist village and arts centre in Shek Kip Mei, an award-winning architectural conversion which preserved the former factory building's 1970s charm. As an incubator for creative talent, it accommodates 140 artists and cultural organisations representing a variety of art practices – mostly in visual arts – to set up studios. Other facilities include exhibition space galleries, a black box theatre and tea house and it is open to the public. There were 120 public programmes which attracted 150,000 visitors in 2023-24.

Major Performing Arts Groups

Chung Ying Theatre Company

The Chung Ying Theatre Company is a professional theatrical arts group dedicated to developing stage productions and drama education. To celebrate its 45th anniversary in 2024, it staged several productions, including the musical *Little Shop of Horrors*, and the plays *Fly Poor to the Moon* and *Twelfth Night*.

City Contemporary Dance Company

The City Contemporary Dance Company is a professional contemporary dance group that nurtures creative dance talent in the context of contemporary China. In the 2024 dance season, it created a number of new works, including *Ode to Joy Evolving*, *As If Snowing*, and *Certain Movements and Shadows*. It presented the Hotpot East Asia Dance Platform, featuring dancers from Japan and Korea.

Hong Kong Ballet

The Hong Kong Ballet is one of Asia's premier ballet companies. In 2024, it presented *The Rule Breakers*, *Swan Lake*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Butterfly Lovers*, the 45th Anniversary International Ballet Gala, a re-run of *The Nutcracker*, and staged *Alice (In Wonderland)* in Beijing. It won four awards at the Hong Kong Dance Awards 2024, and also received Unesco's 2024 Global Awards for World Heritage Education Innovative Cases and Spirit of Hong Kong Awards.

Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra

The Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra is the only professional, full-sized Chinese orchestra in Hong Kong. During the year, it brought together drum virtuosi from both overseas and Hong Kong to perform at the Hong Kong Drum Festival, the *One Beat, One World: Connecting through the Drum* carnival and to accompany a 5G live concert.

Hong Kong Dance Company

The Hong Kong Dance Company promotes Chinese dance with Hong Kong characteristics. In 2024, it staged performances of *Lands in the South*, *The Legend of Lanling*, *All about the Three Kingdoms*, *Fun Ride with Big Beard – Dancing Poems 2.0*, *After Snowfall* and *A Dance of Drumming Pulses*. The company also toured the winning work of the China Dance Lotus Awards, *Chinese Dance x Martial Arts – Convergence* in the Mainland and overseas cities.

Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is recognised as one of Asia's foremost classical orchestras. In 2024, the orchestra presented its 50th anniversary concert, performed with numerous world-class conductors and soloists, organised crossover concerts featuring prominent pop singers, and carried out tours in Europe and the Mainland. The orchestra appointed Finnish conductor Tarmo Peltokoski as its next music director.

Hong Kong Repertory Theatre

The Hong Kong Repertory Theatre develops diverse theatrical productions of Chinese and Western works, and produces local originals. The company presented 10 productions during the year, including *The Doctor*, *Lumination of the Forgotten*, *After Life*, *Scapin in Jiānghú*, *Chap. 2024*, *Ambiguous* and *The Absolute Task*. The company won 13 awards at the 32nd Hong Kong Drama Awards; *Moscow Express* received the Best Playwright at the Chinese Theatre Awards and the Best Adapted Script award at the Shanghai One Drama Awards, where the company was also honoured with the Media Attention of the Year. *The Impossible Trial* garnered 13 accolades from several prestigious events in the Mainland.

Hong Kong Sinfonietta

The Hong Kong Sinfonietta symphony orchestra is renowned for its innovative programming. It presented numerous concerts with various artists in 2024, including soprano Juliane Banse, violinist Sayaka Shoji, didgeridoo master William Barton, sheng master Loo Sze-wang, drummer Senri Kawaguchi, and harmonica player Cy Leo.

Zuni Icosahedron

Zuni Icosahedron is Hong Kong's leading experimental arts group. In 2024, Zuni's theatre season, titled '2024 XATQ', presented Jin Yong *Xiqu* Theatre – *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer*, *The Birth of Tragedy*, *Left Unsaid*, and *The Monkey King: Havoc in Calligraphy Metaverse*.

Cultural Presentations

Performing Arts Programmes

The LCSD presented numerous visiting and local programmes in 2024 involving around 720 performances and online episodes attracting an audience of over 290,000. Highlights included Basel Chamber Orchestra, Violin Recital by Ray Chen, *ART! ON POP Concert*, *The Journey of a Legendary Landscape Painting* by China Oriental Performing Arts Group, Dance Drama *Awakening Lion* by Guangzhou Song and Dance Theatre, *Vuela* by Ballet Flamenco Sara Baras, *Schërzo* by Släpstick, *Princess Wencheng* by Guangzhou Cantonese Opera Theatre Company, *Atonement* by Malaysian theatre company MUKA Space and the annual Cantonese Opera Day.

Specially curated programmes provide performance platforms for local and visiting artists and opportunities for cultural exchange. In 2024, these series of programmes included Great Music, Hong Kong Artists, Dance On, Cheers!, New Energy and Solo Play.

Film Screenings

The LCSD organised 324 film screenings, online programmes and media arts programmes, attracting over 51,000 attendees and online viewers.

Arts Education and Audience-building Projects

The LCSD organised 13 major carnivals and 670 cultural programmes under the Community Arts Scheme, attracting over 1,461,000 participants and viewers. It also organised over 930 arts education and audience building activities in schools and public venues to encourage participation in cultural activities, including the Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme.

Greater Bay Area Cultural Exchange

The LCSD supported local arts groups and artists to organise cultural exchange programmes in different Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) cities. Over 80 touring stage performances and online programme of different arts forms covering Western and Chinese music, jazz, pop music, dance, theatre and Cantonese opera were held and attracted an audience of more than 21,000 and online viewers of 282,000.

Major Arts and Culture Events

Art Basel and Art Central

In 2024, Art Basel Hong Kong featured over 240 prominent galleries from around the world and attracted around 80,000 visitors. Art Central showcases avant-garde work by emerging artists from around 100 contemporary art galleries and attracted around 41,000 visitors.

Hong Kong Arts Festival

The 52nd Hong Kong Arts Festival showcased 48 programmes, featuring more than 1,400 international and local artists in more than 150 performances. The festival opened with Bavarian State Opera's *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and concluded with the Shanghai Ballet's exquisite performance of *A Sigh of Love*. In addition, it organised over 340 Festival Plus and education events.

The sixth edition of the No Limits project, promoting inclusion through the arts, presented 10 programmes in 29 in-venue performances and screenings, as well as four online programmes by local and international artists with different abilities.

International Arts Carnival

The International Arts Carnival brought family audiences fun-filled stage performances and online programmes. Over 33,400 participants and 170,000 views were drawn by over 100 festival activities and online episodes of varied programmes, including dance for babies, music theatre, magic, puppetry, acrobatics, theatre, music and multimedia theatre.

Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival

The second Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival, themed 'Arts & Action' was launched in April. The LCSD collaborated with around 60 organisations to bring a variety of over 20 programmes, including concerts, thematic exhibitions, film screenings, library and outreach activities. With the participation of around 150 performing units, the festival featured around 160 activities and online episodes, attracting an audience of more than 640,000 in person and 170,000 online.

The 4th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Culture and Arts Festival

The 4th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Culture and Arts Festival was held in the '9+2' cities in the GBA from 19 October to 24 November. The festival was jointly presented by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, the People's Government of Guangdong Province and the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region. Hosting the festival for the first time, Hong Kong brought together over 14,000 local and Mainland cultural and arts practitioners to stage more than 770 live performances and exchange activities in Hong Kong and other GBA cities concurrently, and rolled out over 70 online programmes, attracting more than 2.16 million participants and an online viewership of about 46 million.

Asia+ Festival

The second Asia+ Festival, held from September to November, showcased distinguished artists from nearly 30 countries from Asia, the Belt and Road Initiative regions and the Middle East.

More than 100,000 participants were drawn by over 100 festival activities, including stage performances, thematic exhibitions, outdoor carnival, and film screenings.

Chinese Culture Festival

The inaugural Chinese Culture Festival was held from June to September, bringing together over 4,000 artists from more than 150 outstanding local and Mainland arts groups and associations from different provinces and cities to stage over 250 performances and activities, covering music, dance, Chinese opera, multimedia, film screenings, exhibitions, talks, a carnival and other related extension activities. More than 900,000 participants joined the festival online and offline.

Muse Fest HK

Muse Fest HK 2024 was held from 1 to 30 November. It brought together all LCSD museums and art spaces to provide the public with more than 70 programmes, including a carnival featuring crossover programmes, fun days, talks, workshops, exhibitions, evening events and the Selected Museum Publications and Souvenirs Mega Sale. In addition, 12 Guangdong and Macao museums from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Museum Alliance joined the festival and the Shenzhen Museum introduced the Shenzhen Branch of Hong Kong Museum Festival 2024. The festival attracted more than 630,000 participants.

Hong Kong Performing Arts Expo

The inaugural five-day Hong Kong Performing Arts Expo was held in October bringing together over 1,600 art leaders and practitioners from more than 60 countries and regions. With over 150 performances, talks and activities featured, the total number of audience and participants surpassed 32,000.

Museums

Hong Kong Museum of Art and Branch Museum

In 2024, the Hong Kong Museum of Art presented various exhibitions, including 'Art Personalised: Masterpieces from the HKMoA', 'The Hong Kong Jockey Club Series: Fragrance of Time – In Search of Chinese Art of Scent', 'Boundless Universe: Calligraphy by Jat See-yeu', 'Life Planning of the Chinese Literati: Selected Chinese Painting and Calligraphy from the Xubaizhai Collection', 'Seeing Art Anew: Mounting and Conservation of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy' and the 'Wu Guanzhong Art Sponsorship Exhibition Series': 'Wu Guanzhong: Between Black and White' and 'Dialogue with 20th Century Chinese Art Series: True Likeness: The Art and Collection of Jingguanlou'. The museum also presented 'Art of Gift: The Fuyun Xuan Collection of Chinese Snuff Bottles' to feature the entire donation of snuff bottles received in 2023. The museum had more than 1,763,000 visitors in 2024.

The Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware, a branch of the Hong Kong Museum of Art, features tea ware and related artefacts as well as rare Chinese ceramics and seals. In 2024, the museum celebrated its 40th anniversary with special events, including an outdoor immersive light show titled 'Gentle Smoke of Tea', the 'Garden of Four Seasons' interactive installation and the 'Rendezvous with Tea' exhibition. During the year, the museum had over 96,000 visitors.

Hong Kong Museum of History and Branch Museums

The Hong Kong Museum of History launched three new exhibitions of the 'Multifaceted Hong Kong Exhibition Series', marking the completion of the first phase of the renovation of its permanent exhibition. More than 770,000 people visited during the year.

Jointly organised with the Henan Museum and in collaboration with the Chinese Culture Promotion Office, 'The Hong Kong Jockey Club Series: The Ancient Civilisation of the Xia, Shang and Zhou Dynasties in Henan Province' exhibition was staged from April to July, receiving more than 176,000 visitors. The museum also staged the 'Leapfrog Development' exhibition of the 'Glorious Voyage: Splendid Achievements of the People's Republic of China in Its 75 Years' Exhibition Series, which presented the developments and achievements of the economy, infrastructure, culture, sports and ecological conservation initiatives of China.

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

The Hong Kong Museum of the War of Resistance and Coastal Defence was converted from the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence on 3 September – the Victory Day of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. Within its permanent exhibition 'The Story of Hong Kong Coastal Defence', there are four galleries named 'The War of Resistance Galleries', and the Lyemun Fort Historical Trail is also featured outdoors. The museum organises educational programmes to deepen visitors' understanding of the history of the War of Resistance and coastal defence in Hong Kong. The museum had over 154,000 visitors in 2024.

Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, housed in the declared monument Kom Tong Hall in Central, runs two permanent exhibitions about Dr Sun's life, and organises public and educational programmes relating to Dr Sun and the history of modern China. It attracted over 32,000 visitors before its temporary closure from May 2024 onwards for upgrading, maintenance and renovation works.

The Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery displays the decommissioned fireboat, as well as relics and materials related to the history of the fireboat and sea rescue services in Hong Kong. Some 58,000 people visited the gallery during the year.

Hong Kong Heritage Museum and Branch Museums

The Hong Kong Heritage Museum promotes the city's culture and connects people with global heritage through exhibitions on pop culture, art, design and history. To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Dr Louis Cha (Jin Yong), the museum partnered with the Guyu Cultural Development Foundation and presented the exhibition 'A Path to Glory – Jin Yong's Centennial Memorial, Sculpted by Ren Zhe'. Sculptor Ren Zhe brought 22 of Jin Yong's characters to life, immersing visitors in his imaginary world of martial arts. Five talks and a Han costume event were also held to celebrate the centenary, attracting nearly 3,600 participants.

Other exhibitions included 'A Laugh at the World: James Wong' – for which the museum collaborated with the Hong Kong Film Archive – 'Breaking New Ground: Donated Works of

Chan Wing-sum, 'Buddhist Pilgrimage: Treasures from the Donation of The Tsui Art Foundation' and 'Multiverse – Hong Kong International Poster Triennial 2024'.

To coincide with Muse Fest HK 2024, the museum held Fun Day@Hong Kong Heritage Museum on 16 November. The long-standing MuseKids membership scheme and the MuseTeens: Youth Leadership scheme encouraged participants to explore Hong Kong's history and culture. The museum also supported local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in hosting programmes for target audiences such as teachers, students, families and persons with disabilities.

The museum manages two branch museums. The Hong Kong Railway Museum is situated in the old Tai Po Market Railway Station, a declared monument built in 1913, which held a series of talks and a fun day in 2024. The Sheung Yiu Folk Museum, originally a 19th-century Hakka village and now a declared monument in Sai Kung, celebrated its 40th anniversary with a fun day, special guided tours and workshops on Hakka culture.

In 2024, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong Railway Museum and Sheung Yiu Folk Museum received over 700,000, 240,000 and 33,000 visitors respectively.

Hong Kong Science Museum

In 2024, the Hong Kong Science Museum staged the 'Glorious Voyage: Splendid Achievements of the People's Republic of China in Its 75 Years' Exhibition Series, comprising the 'Scientific Breakthroughs' exhibition which showcased the patriotic spirit and steadfast beliefs of Chinese scientists, and the 'Era of Intelligence' exhibition that illustrated the rapid development of AI and its applications with interactive exhibits.

To accompany the visit of the polar research icebreaker, Xuelong 2, the museum organised the 'Polar Research and Climate Change' exhibition from March to June, showcasing the polar regions, China's polar research facilities and collaborative efforts by the Mainland and Hong Kong to combat climate change.

The museum and Education Bureau jointly organised the SciPOP Science Demonstration Contest to nurture students' science communication skills and creativity. Outstanding participants joined the 'Young Scientists Study Tour', where experts led them on field trips to Inner Mongolia and Beijing.

The museum also organised a series of outreach programmes including tours of the outreach vehicle 'Gear Up – Nano World', 'QK Kitchen' cooking workshops, QK Post Roadshows, the online QK Post and the French Science Festival to promote science in daily life. The museum had more than 1,490,000 visitors during the year.

Hong Kong Space Museum

The Hong Kong Space Museum organises regular astronomy activities and special exhibitions on-site, and holds stargazing and family programmes at its Astropark and iObservatory in Sai Kung. The Space Theatre's hemispherical screen is equipped with digital planetarium projection and sound systems. Public and school shows were screened in 2024 and in addition to the permanent exhibition, special exhibitions titled 'Explore and Ask About Space' and 'China's Lunar

and Mars Exploration' were held. During the year, more than 1,000,000 visitors visited the museum while its educational and extension programmes had more than 25,000 participants.

Hong Kong Film Archive

In 2024, the Hong Kong Film Archive presented several exhibitions, including 'Cinderella and Her *Qipao*', 'Coming to a Theatre Near You — Gems of Hong Kong Film Trailers', 'Restored Treasures — *Last Romance* Photo Exhibition' and 'City Portraits: Hong Kong Film and Literature', while an online monograph sharing the same title was also released to complement the exhibition of 'City Portraits: Hong Kong Film and Literature'.

The archive organised thematic screenings such as 'Of Fists and Swords – Kaleidoscope of Hong Kong Martial Arts Films', 'Integrating Traditional Morality with Modern Reality: Sil-Metropole Retrospective' and '*Hairpin, Butterfly* and Tong Tik-sang Revisited' as part of the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival and inaugural Chinese Culture Festival.

It also held other screenings, such as 'Restored Treasures – *Last Romance* (1988) (4K Digitally Restored Version) World Premiere', 'The 4th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Culture and Arts Festival: *Warriors Two* (1978)', 'Dancing Between Words and Images – Hong Kong Film and Literature' and 'Movie Talk – Terence Chang'.

During the year, the archive acquired over 273 film titles and 3,663 film-related materials. More than 96,000 visitors were attracted to its exhibitions and over 248 screenings, seminars and post-screening talks.

Public Libraries

The LCSD operates 71 static and 12 mobile libraries, and a books registration office. The libraries hold 13.69 million books and 1.67 million multimedia items, serving 4.9 million borrowers and lending more than 29.84 million books and other library materials in 2024.

Hong Kong Central Library

Hong Kong Central Library is a major information and cultural centre, with over 2.89 million library materials for reference and lending, a central reference library, an arts resource centre, a Hong Kong literature room, a young adult library and a toy library. It offers for hire a 1,540 sq m exhibition gallery, a 290-seat lecture theatre, two activity rooms, a music practice room and eight discussion rooms.

Reference and Information Services

Professional reference and information services are available at Hong Kong Central Library and six major public libraries, namely City Hall, Kowloon, Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai, Sha Tin, Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun Libraries.

Information Technology and Digital Library Services

Online services are integral to the public libraries' reference and information services. The libraries provide more than 2,000 computers for public access to their electronic resources and the internet. More than 545,000 e-books are available to registered borrowers.

The libraries also subscribe to 81 e-databases, some of which are accessible over the internet. About 12,000 hours of digitised audio-visual recordings and over 6.5 million digitised pages of printed library materials, including old newspapers, photographs, maps and manuscripts, in the digital collections are available for public use at all static libraries and online.

Promotion of Reading and Literary Arts

In 2024, Hong Kong Public Libraries organised more than 21,700 reading and literary arts promotion activities, including the first Hong Kong Reading Week in celebration of the first Hong Kong Reading for All Day, along with the ‘Self/Library’ publicity campaign to rekindle the joy of reading.

Books Registration Office

The Books Registration Office registers local publications and monitors the use of the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) system. A Catalogue of Books Printed in Hong Kong is published in the Government Gazette every three months. The catalogue can also be viewed online.

In 2024, the office registered 11,189 books and 3,826 periodicals, and issued 656 publisher prefixes totalling 10,160 ISBNs.

Heritage

Chinese Culture Promotion Office

The Chinese Culture Promotion Office was established in April. It is responsible for coordinating activities, exchanges, and collaborations related to Chinese culture and history within the LCSD, thereby actively promoting Chinese culture and patriotism education.

The office held the inaugural Chinese Culture Festival from June to September, which attracted over 900,000 participants through more than 250 performances and activities. It also presented the ‘Glorious Voyage: Splendid Achievements of the People’s Republic of China in Its 75 Years’ Exhibition Series.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Office organises activities to enhance public knowledge of Hong Kong’s intangible cultural heritage. It launched the sixth round of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Funding Scheme in 2024 to engage the community in safeguarding and promoting intangible cultural heritage.

The Hong Kong Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre at Sam Tung Uk Museum holds exhibitions and other education and extension programmes to enhance public understanding of intangible cultural heritage. The ‘Lost and Sound – Hong Kong Intangible Cultural Heritage’ exhibition series showcases the wisdom of folk craftsmanship and vibrancy of folk culture. It recorded over 131,000 visitors in 2024.

The office also established the ‘Traces of Human Touch’ exhibition in the former CLP Group headquarters, highlighting 10 local items of intangible cultural heritage and inviting

practitioners of intangible cultural heritage to participate. As at end-2024, the exhibition had attracted more than 100,000 visitors since opening in 2023.

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the People's Republic of China's founding and align with the 4th GBA Culture and Arts Festival and the 2024 GBA Intangible Cultural Heritage Show, the office hosted the Celebrating National Day – Auspicious Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Greater Bay Area exhibition. It was the first roving GBA-themed intangible cultural heritage exhibition, featuring creative art installations and experiential activities with intangible cultural heritage elements. The office also participated in various exhibitions and events in Mainland cities and regions, such as Beijing, Chengdu, Guangxi, Guangzhou and Shenzhen.

Cantonese Opera

The government preserves, promotes and develops Cantonese opera in Hong Kong. The Cantonese Opera Development Fund aims to support projects and activities relating to the preservation, promotion and development of Cantonese opera. Projects include performances of new and traditional plays, cultural exchanges, arts education and community activities, children/youth training and performances, professional training and research and publication projects.

The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts runs the city's first Chinese opera degree course. The Arts Development Council funds training programmes conducted by the Cantonese Opera Academy of Hong Kong.

Conservation Office

The Conservation Office provides preservation and conservation services for museum artefacts, including paintings, prints, historical documents, textiles, metals, ceramics, sculptures, organic objects, archaeological finds and motion picture films. Scientific research and analyses were conducted to complement the conservation work for 150 artefacts in 2024. The office also held 44 extension activities, including educational workshops and laboratory visits, with a total of 2,393 participants.

Nurturing Talent

Arts Administrator Trainee Scheme

The Arts Administrator Trainee Scheme aims to nurture young arts administrators and stage management staff to support the development of performing arts. The LCSD also sponsored 22 of its venue partners and the Hong Kong Arts Festival Society to run similar programmes.

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. The office arranges training courses and activities, which attracted 7,600 trainees and around 263,000 participants in 2024.

Visual and Public Art

Art Promotion Office

The Art Promotion Office aims to raise the public's interest in art creation and appreciation, allowing everyone to experience the fun of art. The office organised the 'teamLab: Continuous' exhibition and jointly featured the 'Science in Art' exhibition with the Science Promotion Unit at Tamar Park and the Central and Western District Promenade (Central Section) from March to June as part of the 'Art@Harbour 2024' project. The interactive installation spanned across Tamar Park and extended to Victoria Harbour, creating an immersive sensory experience for the public.

In addition, the office creates new opportunities for cross-regional collaboration and supports artists in participating in outbound art events. These included working with the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale Executive Committee to showcase works by Hong Kong artists at the Hong Kong House in Tsunan, Japan facilitating international artistic exchanges.

The office also collaborated with the Shenzhen Fringe Art Center to present the 'Ink Art Ensembles' Exhibition Series in the Greater Bay Area, showcasing the works of artists from Hong Kong and the Mainland at the Shenzhen Art Museum to foster art collaboration in the region.

Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre

The Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre (vA!) is an open, multidirectional art space that focuses on art learning, research and exchange. It organises arts activities and provides facilities for hire. Major programmes during the year included the art project 'vA! Spotlight – Park Solo', 'vA! Residency – Reimagining the Ordinary' and the art learning programme 'vA!cademy'.

Oil Street Art Space

To connect the community by art, the Oil Street Art Space (Oi!) provides a diverse platform for art practitioners to showcase their work. In 2024, its annual flagship project 'Oi! Spotlight' featured both local and international artists and fostered cultural exchanges between regions.

Oi! also introduced the Artist-in-Residence and Exhibition Programme to promote local art through 'Oi! Onsite' exhibitions for local artists. It organised the 'Archaic Curator Series: The Charm of Colour – Travel with Ceramics through Time and Space' exhibition to celebrate Chinese art and culture.

Creative Industries

Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency

Hong Kong's creative industries cover eight sectors: advertising, architecture, design, digital entertainment, film, music, printing and publishing, and television. The government supports their development through the CCIDA, which was restructured from Create Hong Kong in June. The agency promotes the development of arts, culture and creative sectors as industries under the industry-oriented principle.

Support for Film Sector

Film Development Council and Film Development Fund

Through the Film Development Fund (FDF), the CCIDA supports film productions and other film-related projects to promote the sustainable development of the film industry. It consults the Film Development Council on film development matters, including policies, strategies and arrangements to promote and develop the film industry, and strategies for the fund's use.

The government has injected around \$2.9 billion into the FDF since 2005. Around \$256 million was committed to 69 film productions and other film-related projects in 2024 to nurture talent, enhance local production, expand markets and build audiences.

Nurturing Talent

The First Feature Film Initiative identifies new directors through a competition of screenplays and production proposals, and subsidises the winners to make their first feature-length commercial films. In 2024, four winning films were released commercially in Hong Kong.

The Directors' Succession Scheme invites experienced directors to partner with one or two up-and-comers to co-produce films, aiming to nurture young talent and enhance the quality and quantity of local productions. In 2024, one new proposal was approved.

Two new schemes were launched in 2024. The Hong Kong-Europe-Asian Film Collaboration Funding Scheme subsidises projects co-produced by filmmakers in Hong Kong and European or Asian countries, to create films rich in regional culture and make it easier for them to enter overseas' markets. The Film Financing Scheme for Mainland Market supports Hong Kong film companies and Mainland cultural enterprises to invest in and promote the productions of Hong Kong directors. The scheme aims to boost the release of Hong Kong films in the Mainland market and nurture more Hong Kong directors to enter the Mainland film market.

The Content Development Scheme for Streaming Platforms recruits teams to develop content that can be broadcast on streaming platforms through a competition, with a view to nurturing cross-sectoral production teams and facilitating the film industry to enter new distribution markets.

The FDF also supports the industry to provide local training to nurture film talent.

Enhancing Local Production

In 2024, eight films, engaging four new directors, were approved under the Film Production Financing Scheme and its relaxation plan. Seven funded films were released commercially.

Expanding Markets and Building Audiences

The annual Entertainment Expo Hong Kong 2024 drew an audience of around 470,000.

The FDF subsidises screenings, seminars and film appreciation courses held by industry organisations for the local community, especially young people.

In 2024, the CCIDA supported the screening of over 80 Hong Kong films at over 50 international film festivals overseas or Mainland/overseas film events through the FDF or a direct subsidy, in collaboration with Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices and industry organisations. The CCIDA also signed a memorandum of understanding on audiovisual co-operation with France's Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée to work together in promoting film and television activities and exchanges.

Support for Other Creative Sectors

CreateSmart Initiative

The CreateSmart Initiative (CSI) supports promotional and nurturing projects from seven non-film creative industries, providing about \$629 million to 74 such projects in 2024.

Nurturing Talent and Facilitating Start-ups

The CSI supports multiple projects to nurture creative talent and start-ups, including the Design Incubation Programme and the Fashion Incubation Programme, for design start-ups and up-and-coming fashion designers; the nurturing programme under the DFA Hong Kong Young Design Talent Award, which provides funding support to awardees to pursue work attachments or further studies overseas; Hong Kong Comics Development and Promotion Support Programme, providing training and mentoring for comic start-ups and artists with production and promotion subsidies; Animation Support Programme, funding original animations by start-ups and small companies; AI-assisted Animation Production Pilot Scheme, funding local creative companies to produce animation shorts with the assistance of AI; Hong Kong Game Enhancement and Promotion Scheme, funding game start-ups to enhance the quality and profitability of their products; and Make Music Work – Music Creation and Production Talents Nurturing Scheme, supporting and inspiring local youth music talent. Creative talent is also sponsored to participate in digital entertainment events, such as DigiCon6 Asia and international book fairs, as well as illustration or picture book competitions.

Exploring Markets

The CCIDA supports creative sectors to bring high-value customers to Hong Kong, and takes local talent and products to the Mainland and overseas markets. CSI-sponsored projects in 2024 included establishing a Hong Kong pavilion at the Augmented World Expo EU, various international book fairs, the China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair, the Hangzhou Cultural and Creative Industry Expo, the China International Cartoon and Animation Festival in Hangzhou, the China International Animation Copyright Fair in Dongguan, the Tokyo Game Show and the Comic Fiesta in Malaysia; supporting picture book illustrators to participate in Mainland and overseas international book fairs, as well as relevant illustration or picture book competitions; supporting the fashion trade to participate in Paris Fashion Week and Shanghai Fashion Week; promoting digital fashion in Paris Fashion Week; and organising a large-scale toy exhibition in Jakarta. The bureau also organised Hong Kong's participation in the 25th Shenzhen Reading Month with over 30 activities in November.

Promoting Cross-sectoral and Cross-genre Collaboration

The CCIDA seeks to encourage cross-sectoral and cross-genre collaboration on creative and culture programmes. CSI-sponsored collaboration projects in 2024 included the Hong Kong

Digital Advertising Start-ups x Publishing (Writers) Promotion Support Scheme; Microfilm Production Support Scheme (Music) and Hong Kong Art Toy Story 2024 @ Thailand Toy Expo and Jakarta. The CCIDA signed agreements with three prominent cultural and creative brands in the Mainland in June and will work with them to devise programmes to fund Hong Kong brands to create more products featuring the characteristics and culture of the National Museum of China, the Palace Museum and Great Wall, as well as Hong Kong's unique charms.

Promoting Hong Kong as Asia's Creative Capital

Hong Kong works with Mainland and overseas cities to raise the profile of its creative industries locally and internationally. CSI-sponsored projects in 2024 included supporting local television stations to co-produce television variety programmes with Mainland/Asian production teams; establishing the AniCom Sports Park at Wan Chai Temporary Promenade; presenting the opening programme of the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival; staging the first exhibition curated by Maison&Objet in Hong Kong; setting up the World of Art and Culture at the Hong Kong Book Fair and enhancing its art gallery; the international design event Business of Design Week; and organising the 2024 Hong Kong Reading+ carnival to dovetail with Hong Kong Reading for All Day. In addition, the CCIDA organised the inaugural Hong Kong Fashion Fest, which ran in November and December.

Sports and Recreation

The bureau and LCSD promote sports in the community, support elite sports, promote Hong Kong as a centre for major international sports events, enhance professionalism and develop sports as an industry. They develop and coordinate the provision of quality sports and recreation facilities for leisure enjoyment, including parks, landscaped open spaces, sports grounds, playgrounds, sports centres, holiday camps, water sports centres, swimming pools and beaches; and organise and support a wide variety of sports and recreation programmes to promote community sports, identify sporting talent and raise sporting standards.

The bureau and LCSD work closely with the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, China Hong Kong Paralympic Committee, national sports associations (NSAs), district councils, district sports associations and schools to promote sport for all.

The LCSD also issues and renews licences for billiard establishments, public bowling alleys and public skating rinks. In 2024, it processed a total of 62 applications.

Sports and Recreation Facilities

The LCSD manages 25 sports grounds, 105 sports centres, including the Hong Kong Velodrome, 61 11-a-side football pitches, 250 tennis courts, 291 squash courts, four driving ranges and two public riding schools. Works for 10 other major projects are under way.

Hong Kong Coliseum

Hong Kong Coliseum is a major multi-purpose indoor stadium which holds major international sports events, including the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball's Volleyball Nations League

Hong Kong, Hong Kong Open Badminton Championships and Hong Kong World Taekwondo Poomsae Championships in 2024.

Hong Kong Stadium

The 40,000-seat Hong Kong Stadium is one of the territory's largest outdoor sports venues. It is used mainly for football and rugby matches and large-scale community activities. Events held during the year included the Hong Kong Sevens, a qualifying match for the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup 2026 and Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Asian Cup 2027, an East Asian Football Federation (EAFF) Football Championship preliminary round match and international football friendly matches.

Queen Elizabeth Stadium

Queen Elizabeth Stadium is a major multi-purpose indoor stadium which held many major sports events in 2024, including the World Table Tennis Youth Contender Hong Kong, Asian Eastern Zonal Women's Volleyball Championship, Asia Rapid Chess Team Championship, DanceSport Asia Asian Youth Single Dance Championship – Hong Kong and East Asian Muaythai Championships.

Mong Kok Stadium

The 6,000-seat Mong Kok Stadium is a major venue for Hong Kong Premier League and international matches. Events staged in the year included a qualifying match for the FIFA World Cup 2026 which was also an AFC Asia Cup 2027 preliminary competition second round match, the Jockey Club Youth Football Academy Summit, AFC Champions League Two group stage matches, EAFF Football Championship preliminary round matches and an international football friendly match between Hong Kong and Mauritius.

Kai Tak Sports Park

Opening in 2025, the Kai Tak Sports Park will provide modern and multi-purpose sports and recreation facilities, including the 50,000-seat Kai Tak Stadium, 10,000-seat Kai Tak Arena and 5,000-seat Kai Tak Youth Sports Ground, allowing more sports and entertainment mega events to be staged in Hong Kong.

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 drew about 101,000 participants in 2024.

The LCSD 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, where various sports and recreational activities are provided, including climbing, archery, American pool, Chinese billiards and karaoke. In 2024, over 343,000 campers had joined the day, evening and residential camp services.

The LCSD subsidises 11 NGOs to run 24 holiday camps and sea activity centres, which registered around 820,000 participants in 2024.

Beaches and Swimming Pools

Swimming is one of Hong Kong's popular summer pastimes. The LCSD manages 42 gazetted public beaches and 46 public swimming pool complexes.

Sports and Recreation Organisations

Sports Commission

The Sports Commission, comprising government officials and representatives from the sports sector, advises the government on all matters relating to sports development and oversees committees on community sports, elite sports and major sports events.

Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China

The Sports Federation & 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 Committees (ANOC) and the East Asian Olympic Committees. In November, the federation won its bid to host the 2026 General Assembly of ANOC in Hong Kong.

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 and Asian Games. In July, Hong Kong, China sent a delegation of about 80 people to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, brought home two gold medals and two bronze, and ranked 37th on the medal standings – the highest in the city's Olympic history.

The federation has a membership of 85 NSAs and sports organisations. Most members are affiliated to their Asian federations (AFs) and international federations (IFs). The NSAs coordinate and conduct activities related to their sports, including recreational programmes for the community, and training and competitions for novices and elite athletes locally. They organise participation in overseas competitions, train coaches and referees, enforce local and international rules and regulations and also represent Hong Kong at IF and AF meetings. In November, the federation released the Code of Governance to the member associations, providing them with a framework to raise the corporate governance level.

The federation organises three major local annual events. The presentation ceremony for the 2023 Hong Kong Sports Stars Awards was held in April. The Festival of Sport held around 60 sports activities between April and August with the support of NSAs. The Olympic Day fun run in June attracted about 4,000 participants.

Through the Hong Kong Olympic Academy, the federation organises educational programmes for sports leaders, administrators, coaches and technical officials, while the federation's Hong Kong Athletes Career and Education Department helps athletes obtain educational qualifications and a career after retiring from athletic life, which includes employing retired and soon-to-retire athletes as coaches for underprivileged students via the Sports Legacy Scheme.

China Hong Kong Paralympic Committee

The China Hong Kong Paralympic Committee coordinates Hong Kong, China's participation in international Para multi-sports games including the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games and the World Abilitysport Games in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand in 2024. It also promotes the Paralympic movement, disseminates professional knowledge, builds relationships with NSAs and coordinates the Para Athletes Career and Education Programme, to provide comprehensive and personalised support services to support serving, retiring and retired athletes.

Anti-doping Organisation of Hong Kong, China

The Anti-doping Organisation of Hong Kong, China is an independent organisation, governed by a board of directors. It is the national anti-doping organisation of Hong Kong.

Sports Association for the Physically Disabled of Hong Kong, China

The Sports Association for the Physically Disabled of Hong Kong, China was established in 1972, with the aim of enabling local Para athletes to achieve sporting excellence. The association develops and promotes 11 types of Para sports, including archery, athletics, badminton, boccia, lawn bowls, shooting, swimming, table tennis, tenpin bowling, wheelchair basketball and wheelchair fencing.

Hong Kong, China Sports Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability

The Hong Kong, China Sports Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability develops, promotes and organises sporting activities to help people with intellectual disability to develop their potential and cultivate a positive attitude through sport, and to facilitate their integration into the community. Its training programme caters for all levels of ability.

Intellectually disabled athletes won 117 medals during the year including five golds, three silvers and four bronzes at the Singapore 2024 Citi Para Swimming World Series; and seven golds, four silvers and two bronzes at the eighth China Ice and Snow Sports Season for Persons with Disabilities – Special Olympics Snowshoeing and Cross Country Skiing Competition.

Hong Kong Sports Institute

The Hong Kong Sports Institute Limited is the city's elite sports training centre, providing an environment in which sports talent can be identified, nurtured, and developed to pursue excellence in the international arena. In addition to world-class training facilities, a comprehensive range of support is provided for athletes, including elite training programmes formulated by professional coaches, financial support, sports science and sports medicine services, as well as educational, social and personal support to cater for the athletes' whole-person development.

The institute supports 20 Tier A sports and six Tier A Para sports and also extends its resources to 13 Tier B sports and three Tier B Para sports. Outstanding athletes who are not covered under Tier A sports, but meet the specified criteria are included in the Individual Athletes Support Scheme to meet their training needs.

In November, the institute signed an agreement with the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine to raise the professional skills of healthcare practitioners and provide athletes with advanced medical services. The institute's New Facilities Building opened in December, featuring table tennis and karatedo halls, and two fitness training centres. The building also houses state-of-the-art sports science and medical facilities and laboratories.

Outward Bound Hong Kong

Outward Bound Hong Kong is a registered charity which aims to provide challenging outdoor experiential education for participants so that they can discover and develop their potential to care for themselves, others and the world around them. It is accredited by the Association for Experiential Education, and as part of Outward Bound International, it benefits from the network of over 37 schools around the world.

More than 300,000 young people have participated since its founding in 1970 and its educational framework focuses on well-being, social inclusion and future skills. Reports find it boosts resilience, confidence, compassion, social competence and environmental responsibility in participants.

Sporting Achievements

Hong Kong athletes excelled at international sports events in 2024. The Hong Kong, China delegation clinched two gold and two bronze medals in fencing and swimming at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games – the best result in Hong Kong's history. It was the first time Hong Kong had won more than one gold medal at the same Olympics. Fencer Vivian Kong won gold in the women's épée individual, while fencer Cheung Ka-long won a gold medal in the men's foil individual, successfully defending the title he won in the last Olympics in Tokyo. In swimming, Siobhan Bernadette Haughey – a two-time silver medallist in Tokyo – claimed two bronze medals in the women's 200m freestyle and women's 100m freestyle respectively.

At the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, the Hong Kong, China delegation won three gold medals, four silver and one bronze in boccia, badminton and swimming. Boccia athletes Tse Tak-wah and Ho Yuen-kei won a gold medal in the mixed BC3 event, while Ho Yuen-kei also won gold in the women's individual BC3 event. John Loung also won gold in the boccia men's individual BC1 event. Leung Yuk-wing and Cheung Yuen won a silver medal in the boccia mixed BC4 event, with Cheung Yuen also winning silver in the women's individual BC4 event. Chan Ho-yuen won a silver medal in the men's singles WH2 badminton event, while in swimming, Chan Yui-lam won silver in the women's 100m butterfly S14 event and Ng Cheuk-yan won bronze in the women's 100m breaststroke SB6 event.

Major Sports Events

The government promotes Hong Kong as a centre for major international sports events. The 'M' Mark system supports local NSAs and other organisers to hold major sports events in Hong Kong through providing matching funds and direct grants.

In 2024, a record-high number of 25 major international sporting events supported by the 'M' Mark system were held.

Sports and Recreation Programmes

The bureau together with other government departments and related organisations, including the LCSD, Department of Health, Education Bureau, Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, China Hong Kong Paralympic Committee, NSAs, district sports associations and schools, provide community sports activities at various levels, encouraging people of different backgrounds, ages, abilities and interests to participate in sports regularly so as to promote the culture of sport for all. In 2024, the LCSD organised about 37,000 sports and recreation programmes for about 3,022,600 participants.

Sports Training Programmes for Persons with Disabilities

The Sports Training Programmes for Persons with Disabilities is a scheme designed to encourage people with disabilities to get involved in sports. These programmes are free for anyone with physical or intellectual disabilities, hearing or visual impairments, those suffering from chronic illnesses or autism, and those recovering from mental illness. In 2024, about 100 training programmes were held for over 1,200 people with disabilities.

Community Sports Club Project

The project, organised by the LCSD in collaboration with the NSAs, subsidised about 430 community sports clubs in organising 3,207 sports programmes for 64,946 participants in 2024. Seminars and management development programmes were conducted for over 350 sports volunteers to help them run the clubs.

Promotion of School Sports

The School Sports Programme provided 8,006 sporting events for 602,105 students at 936 primary and secondary schools through seven subsidiary programmes: the Sport Education Programme, Easy Sport Programme, Outreach Coaching Programme, Joint Schools Sports Training Programme, Sport Captain Programme, Badges Award Scheme, and Sports Award Scheme.

The Student Athlete Support Scheme, a collaboration between the bureau and the Schools Sports Federation of Hong Kong, China, helps students with financial needs develop their sporting potential and pursue their goals. In the 2023-24 school year, around \$7.9 million was allocated to 610 participating schools, benefiting about 18,788 students.

The Opening-up School Facilities for Promotion of Sports Development Scheme provides subsidies to encourage schools to make their facilities available to sports organisations. In the 2023-24 school year, 535 sports programmes were held by 70 sports organisations at 116 schools under the scheme.

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

The 'Healthy Exercise for All Campaign' is organised jointly by the LCSD and the Department of Health to encourage regular exercise. In 2024, a total of 1,424 programmes were organised for more than 115,464 participants.

The LCSD's 'Sport For All Day' held every August promotes sport for all in the community by holding free sports and recreation programmes at designated sports centres in all 18 districts

and opening most of the fee-charging leisure facilities to the public for free. Online sports demonstrations were featured in a live webcast via a dedicated webpage and the 'LCSD Plusss' Facebook page to encourage the public to exercise at home. In 2024, the event registered more than 210,000 participants.

Hong Kong Games

The Hong Kong Games promotes a sporting culture in the community through competitions and community activities. The ninth Hong Kong Games was held from 2023 to 2024, registering 4,673 athletes. An attendance of over 940,000 was recorded for the sports competitions and related community programmes.

Sports Funding

Recurrent Government Funding

The government promotes sports development by nurturing sports in the community, supporting elite sports, promoting Hong Kong as a centre for major international sports events, enhancing professionalism and developing sports as an industry. In 2023-24, over 80 per cent of the \$7.22 billion in overall government spending on sports development went into community-level sports promotion.

Arts and Sport Development Fund (Sports Portion)

The sports portion of the Arts and Sport Development Fund supports athletes' preparation for and participation in major international competitions; the local hosting of international sports events by NSAs and other sports organisations; the upgrading of school and district programmes to boost community participation; the development of local football and team sports; and one-off initiatives that are important for the development and promotion of sport in Hong Kong. In 2023-24, the fund approved \$307 million for 208 sports projects.

Sports Subvention Scheme

The LCSD subsidises NSAs and other sports organisations in sports promotion and development. In 2024, subventions totalling about \$628 million were allocated to 62 NSAs and 41 other sports organisations, which held 11,342 programmes for 913,962 participants.

Local and international events staged during 2024 by the subvented NSAs, included the Asian Open Figure Skating Trophy, 15th Asian Dragon Boat Championships and Fédération Internationale d'Escrime Epee Junior World Cup.

To enhance the NSAs' corporate governance, the LCSD organises thematic seminars to raise awareness among NSAs office bearers and management staff of their roles and responsibilities in effective board practices, strategic planning and risk management. Around 120 NSA representatives attended the seminars in 2024.

Pilot Scheme on Subvention for New Sports

The Pilot Scheme on Subvention for New Sports supports the promotion and development of new sports in the community, so that the public can have more opportunity and choices. In 2024, a total subvention of about \$2.5 million on a project basis was granted to 20 eligible

sports organisations, including cheerleading, curling, dodgeball (two organisations), functional fitness, futnet, health qigong, kabaddi, kin-ball, kurash, kyudo, mölkky, nunchaku, paragliding, pétanque, pickleball, sport stacking, standup paddle, tchoukball and VX ball. The subvention was used to organise 319 programmes for around 13,800 participants in total.

Other Sports Funding

The Sir David Trench Fund for Recreation (Main Fund) supports NSAs, district sports associations, schools and NGOs to buy equipment and build facilities for physical education and sporting activities. It places emphasis on generating long-term benefits, encouraging the purposeful use of leisure by young people and promoting sports in the community. In 2024-25, the fund approved \$11.23 million for 231 sports projects.

The Elite Athletes Development Fund provides a stable financial source for the Hong Kong Sports Institute to develop elite sports. The funding allocated in 2024-25 was \$941.6 million, alongside an additional \$53.5 million from the institute's fund reserves.

The Hong Kong Athletes Fund provides education grants for eligible athletes, one-off grants for eligible retired athletes at the time of retirement from sports training through the Elite Athletes Performance Recognition Scheme, and cash incentives through the Youth Athletes Scholarship Awards for junior athletes participating in major sports events.

Parks and Greenery

The LCSD manages over 1,600 parks and gardens, including 26 major parks. It is responsible for planting and maintaining plants at the public parks, sports and recreation venues, and roadside amenity areas. In 2024, the department planted 3.03 million trees, shrubs and other plants, and enhanced the landscaping at about 24 hectares of park and roadside amenity areas.

Hong Kong Park

Hong Kong Park occupies 8.16 hectares at the former military barracks in Central. The park features flowing water as its central motif and has artificial waterfalls, streams and ponds. Its main facilities 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 540 birds of 61 species are kept. The conservatory's three sections have adjustable environmental control equipment to simulate different climatic conditions for plants from arid and tropical regions. About 500 edible flowers and herbs from over 30 species and about 700 fragrant flowers from over 40 species were featured in two exhibitions, from April to June, and from September to October respectively.

Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens

The Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens, developed between 1861 and 1871, is the territory's oldest public park and occupies 5.6 hectares overlooking Central. In 2024, the animal collection comprised about 160 birds of 39 species, about 20 reptiles of five species, and about 80 mammals of 16 species, mainly primates. More than 1,000 species of trees, shrubs, creepers and foliage plants thrive in the gardens, where the medicinal plant collection and a greenhouse

promote public interest in about 500 species of herbs, orchids, ferns and indoor plants. An education and exhibition centre offers guided visits and displays zoological specimens.

Green Hong Kong Campaign

The Green Hong Kong 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 2024, the districts conducted 70 community garden programmes. Over 7,000 people joined the Green Volunteer Scheme to promote community greening and 892 schools and kindergartens took part in a Greening School Subsidy Scheme to promote environment-friendly initiatives. About 373,000 students from 1,221 schools participated in the One Person, One Flower Scheme, receiving seedlings to plant at home or school.

Hong Kong Flower Show

The Hong Kong Flower Show provides an opportunity for hundreds of thousands of people and horticultural lovers to appreciate the beauty and diversity of flowers and to share their experiences in flower cultivation. More than 220 organisations from Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas took part in the flower show at Victoria Park in March, attracting over 650,000 visitors.

Inclusive Park for Pets

The LCSD opens up some existing parks as Inclusive Park for Pets to enable pet owners and other park users to use the facilities together. There are 177 such parks across the territory.

Travel and Tourism

Since the resumption of normal travel in February 2023, Hong Kong's tourism industry has been recovering. In 2024, the number of visitor arrivals was close to 45 million in total, with a daily average of over 120,000, representing a year-on-year increase of 31 per cent.

The government published the *Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0* in 2024, updating the one released in 2017, which sets out the direction and strategies for Hong Kong's tourism development in the next five years focusing on new and improved attractions, enticing more visitors, using technology to enhance experiences and providing better service to visitors, to consolidate the city's position as a world-class tourism destination.

Inbound Tourism

MICE

Hong Kong is a premier Meetings, Incentive Travels, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) destination, offering world-class convention and exhibition facilities and a diversified range of tourist attractions. In 2024, Hong Kong welcomed 1.42 million MICE visitors. During the same period, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) successfully bid, assisted in the successful bidding, or subsidised the staging of around 1,200 international MICE events, which are expected to draw about 260,000 visitors.

Cruise Tourism

Cruise tourism in Hong Kong is recovering and there were 150 ship calls and a total passenger throughput of 517,000 in 2024.

In December, the government published the *Action Plan on Development of Cruise Tourism*, in tandem with the updated tourism blueprint. It included five strategies to consolidate Hong Kong's position as Asia's cruise hub, including attracting more ships calls, enhancing visitors' experiences, elevating Kai Tak Cruise Terminal's functionality, promoting green cruises initiatives and nurturing more cruise industry specialists.

Mega Events

The government supports staging large-scale events to drive culture, sports and tourism integration, product diversification and promoting a positive local ambience and international tourism image while meeting travellers' demand for in-depth tourism experiences.

In 2024, the HKTb organised various events including International Chinese New Year Night Parade, Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races, Hong Kong Cyclothon, Hong Kong Wine & Dine Festival and Taste Around Town, Hong Kong WinterFest and Hong Kong New Year Countdown Celebrations.

It also supported other citywide events such as the Hong Kong Sevens, Art Basel Hong Kong, Art Central, French May arts festival, ComplexCon Hong Kong, LIV Golf Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Marathon, the Tai Hang Fire Dragon Dance, Clockenflap music and arts festival and many more. Moreover, the HKTb staged drone shows, pyrotechnic displays and city events to boost the city's ambience during various festivities and celebrations.

The government set up the Mega Events Coordination Group, chaired by the Deputy Financial Secretary, to provide high-level steer in relation to mega events. The HKTb established the Mega Events Development and Advancement Division, as the first point of contact for mega events to reach out to local, Mainland and international event organisers.

The public and tourists can obtain information on upcoming mega events in the city through the websites of the Information Services Department and the HKTb, which also allow the tourism, hotel and catering industries to plan ahead.

Over 240 mega events were held throughout 2024, with approximately 2 million tourists participating. Their spending was estimated to be about HK\$7.5 billion, bringing about HK\$4.5 billion in value added to the economy.

Green Tourism

The HKTb's Hong Kong Great Outdoors platform showcases the city's scenic vistas by featuring a number of hiking trails, outlying islands, sightseeing places, outdoor activities and trail running events.

International athletes are invited to participate in renowned cross-country races, such as the Trans Lantau Hong Kong by Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc and Oxfam Trailwalker, both in November, which attracted 1,200 Mainland and overseas participants.

To enhance facilities at hiking trails with tourism appeal, the government continued to carry out improvement works at Tai To Yan Country Trail, Aberdeen Reservoirs Walk, the path from Twisk to Shek Lung Kung and Lantau Trail Section 3, and commenced those at Luk Keng War Relics Trail, Wang Tsat Ancient Trail, the path from Pak Tam Chung to Tai Tun and Shing Mun War Relics Trail.

Characteristic Tourism

The Characteristic Local Tourism Incentive Scheme encourages the travel trade to design more in-depth itineraries and develop more thematic tourism products with a view to promoting the long-term and sustainable development of the tourism industry.

Creative Tourism

The Tourism Commission held an event in Tsuen Wan and Sha Tau Kok under the 'Design District Hong Kong' (#ddHK) creative tourism project, leading visitors to understand the local culture and characteristics of Hong Kong through design elements. The event attracted more than 470,000 visitors.

Sai Kung Hoi Arts Festival 2024 opened in November on Yim Tin Tsai, Sharp Island, Kau Sai Chau and High Island and will run to January 2025. Apart from displaying artworks, free guided tours and programmes were offered to visitors during the festival and most of the artworks will be retained afterwards.

Panda Tourism

In 2024, the Central Government gifted two giant pandas, An An and Ke Ke, to the HKSAR, while giant panda Ying Ying gave birth to twin cubs in August, raising Hong Kong's giant panda family to six. A series of promotional activities under the theme of 'Come and Enjoy a Pandastic Hong Kong' was launched in September, with different sectors encouraged to launch giant panda themed promotions. This sparked a citywide craze for giant pandas, created business opportunities, attracted more visitors and fuelled the development of panda tourism.

Tourism Infrastructure, Facilities and Attractions

Hong Kong has many popular sightseeing spots including the Peak, which provides a panoramic view of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula and Victoria Harbour; theme parks; temples; heritage sites; natural landscape; and a wide range of shops. Accommodation options are also extensive. As at the year end, 330 hotels and 1,255 licensed guesthouses provided about 92,900 and 10,800 rooms respectively.

Hong Kong Disneyland Resort

Hong Kong Disneyland Resort is one of the most popular themed resorts in Asia, reaching an all-time high attendance of 7.7 million in its fiscal year, ending on 28 September 2024.

Ocean Park

Ocean Park is taking forward its development strategy to transform into a destination focused on conservation and education, grounded in nature and complemented by adventure and leisure elements to enhance visitor experience. Seizing the opportunity presented by the new giant pandas, Ocean Park launched various promotional campaigns, merchandise, cultural and creative products and tourism products to attract more visitors. It also completed the outsourcing exercise of an adventure zone in its upper park, with development expected to complete in 2028.

Ngong Ping 360

The Ngong Ping Cable Car offers a spectacular 25-minute journey with views of North Lantau Country Park, Tung Chung Bay, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) and Hong Kong International Airport. It takes visitors to Ngong Ping Village, which is designed in a Chinese architectural style with attractions including the Cable Car Discovery Centre, Motion 360 and Walking with Buddha. Visitors can also visit the Tian Tan Buddha, Po Lin Monastery, Ngong Ping Piazza and Wisdom Path on Lantau Island. The Crystal+ cabin has fully transparent sides and bottom, offering unobstructed views of Lantau Island.

Peak Tram

Operating since 1888, the Peak Tram is a funicular railway offering a unique view of the ridgeline and skyscrapers of the city. Following an upgrade in 2022, visitors can enjoy tramcars with enhanced capacity; an expanded, covered and temperature-controlled waiting area at the lower terminus in Central; and a renovated upper terminus at the Peak.

Hong Kong Wetland Park

The 61-hectare Hong Kong Wetland Park is home to an assortment of wildlife. The recreated wetlands, exhibition galleries, theatre and other facilities all underline the importance of wetlands to civilisation and biodiversity conservation. Works to upgrade the exhibition and visitor facilities continued in 2024 to enhance the park's appeal as an eco-tourism attraction.

A Symphony of Lights

A Symphony of Lights is a nightly light and sound show staged on both sides of Victoria Harbour. It symbolises Hong Kong's dynamic energy and contrasting culture. A special edition was staged to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic of China from 1 to 31 October.

Hong Kong Tourism Board

The HKTb is a statutory government-subsidised organisation that markets Hong Kong around the world as a preferred travel destination. It comprises 20 members who represent various tourism-related sectors and communities. In addition to its Hong Kong head office, the board has 15 offices worldwide and representatives in six source markets.

The board has seven visitor centres locally: two at the airport and others at Tsim Sha Tsui Star Ferry Pier, Hong Kong West Kowloon Station, HZMB Hong Kong Port, Kai Tak Cruise Terminal

and Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point. Travel information is also available via HKTb's website (in 13 languages), DiscoverHongKong.com, and social media channels.

In 2024, the HKTb invited over 2,000 media and travel trade representatives, celebrities and key opinion leaders to visit the city to generate positive word-of-mouth and tell the good stories of Hong Kong.

In addition, the HKTb led trade partners in hospitality, aviation, attractions and other tourism-related sectors to participate in various trade fairs and travel shows outside Hong Kong, promoting the city's tourism appeal to audiences in visitor source markets.

Service Quality

Honest and Quality Tourist Services

The government works closely with the tourism industry and related organisations to promote honest and good quality services for tourists.

The Travel Industry Authority (TIA) is a statutory authority which regulates travel agents, tourist guides and tour escorts. Its work aims to protect consumers' interests and ensure the tourism market's healthy development and operation. Legislation protects consumers' legitimate interests by prohibiting unfair trade practices and preventing coerced shopping.

The TIA also operates an Administrative Scheme for Registered Shops, which allows tour group participants who are not satisfied with their purchases to return the goods concerned and seek refunds within 180 days of purchase, provided that the goods are in proper condition.

The HKTb's Quality Tourism Services (QTS) Scheme encourages shops, restaurants and visitor accommodation facilities to offer good service. As at December, 1,222 establishments with 8,039 outlets and 228 rooms had earned QTS accreditation.

Hospitality Initiatives

Hospitality is essential to sustaining tourism. Every year, the government runs a Hong Kong Young Ambassador Scheme to train about 250 young people to instil in them a sense of courtesy and helpfulness to visitors and to develop a strong hospitality culture in schools and the community.

The government launched the Hospitality Campaign in June with the HKTb and the tourism and related sectors to promote the spirit of hospitality service. HKTb also launched its new promotion on hospitality themed 'Let's Go the Extra Mile' to encourage the trade and public to receive every visitor with enthusiasm and friendliness.

Easier Entry for Visitors

Hong Kong is a visitor-friendly city. Visitors from some 170 countries and territories enjoy visa-free access for stays of seven to 180 days. The Mainland's Individual Visit Scheme permits residents of 59 designated Mainland cities to visit Hong Kong on their own instead of travelling in tour groups.

Protection of Travellers

Under the Travel Industry Ordinance, travel agents and tourist guides must obtain a licence from the TIA to carry on travel business and receive inbound visitors respectively. As at end-2024, Hong Kong had 1,603 licensed travel agents and 5,320 licensed tourist guides.

The statutory Travel Industry Compensation Fund provides ex gratia payments of 90 per cent of the loss of outbound fares to outbound travellers in the event of travel agents' default. In 2024, ex gratia payments of around \$1.38 million were paid to 605 travellers affected by 166 default cases. The fund also offers aid in cases of outbound travellers who sustain injuries or die in accidents in the course of activities arranged by a travel agent. No such payments were made in 2024.

Tourism Cooperation

The Culture and Tourism Development Plan for the GBA supports Hong Kong in developing into an international tourism hub and a core demonstration zone for multi-destination tourism.

The HKSAR Government, the Macao SAR Government and the governments of the nine Mainland cities in the GBA jointly established the Tourism Federation of Cities in the GBA and the Joint Regulatory Alliance of the Tourism Market of 9+2 Cities in the GBA to promote tourism cooperation and development within the region.

Hong Kong is a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Tourism Working Group and the Pacific Asia Travel Association, and an associate member of the United Nations World Tourism Organization.

Websites

Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency: www.ccidahk.gov.hk

Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau: www.cstb.gov.hk

Film Development Council: www.fdc.gov.hk

Film Promotion and Facilitation Section: fpf.ccidahk.gov.hk

Flower Appreciation: www.fa.gov.hk

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

Hong Kong public museums: www.museums.gov.hk

Hong Kong Tourism Board: www.discoverhongkong.com

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

Meetings and Exhibitions Hong Kong: www.mehongkong.com

Tourism Commission: www.tourism.gov.hk