
CREATIVE HUBS MAPPING: BANGKOK



Creative Hubs Mapping: Bangkok

Research Team

Kwan Phonghanyudh

Asst. Prof. Dr. Peeradorn Kaewlai

Design

Chakraphan Hiranwongwira

Onuma Pinijsupo

Khotchakorn Lueangrungra

Published by

British Council Thailand

254 Chulalongkorn Soi 64

Phayathai Road Pathumwan,

Bangkok 10330 Thailand

www.britishcouncil.or.th

Introduction	1
Defining Creative Hubs	2
Mapping Creative Hubs	3
Impact	9
1. Alternative places to learn	10
1.1 Library and Resource Centre	10
1.2 Knowledge Sharing Platforms	12
1.3 Arts & Design Experiment	13
2. Nurturing artistic development	15
2.1 Merging Art and Science	15
2.2 Showcasing Space	16
3. Promoting sense of belonging and self-fulfilment	17
4. Community building	19
5. Increasing number of creative entrepreneurs	21
6. Networking	23
7. Igniting, catalysing, and redefining creativity	26
8. Creating social impact	29
9. Driving the local economy	31
Challenges	33
1. Funding	34
2. Knowledge and experience	36
3. Public awareness	38
4. Space and location	40
5. Hub leads / Hub staffing	41
6. Mindset and culture	42
Sustainability	44
1. Right business model	45
2. Partnership building	46
3. Branding and sense of community	47
4. Understand audiences and communities	48
Conclusion	50
Directory	52
Footnotes and References	56
Acknowledgements	57

INTRODUCTION



Creative industries have played an important role in enriching Thai culture. Different forms of arts and design including visual arts, performing arts, crafts, fashion, advertising, film, broadcasting and architecture, have long been the reflections of the Thai way of life, local wisdom, and hand skills. However, prior to the introduction of the so called ‘Creative Economy’ by the United Kingdom in 1998, the practices and the use of creativity in Thailand were only common among creative communities. The new concept of economy has not only shed some light on the future of the country during the economic crisis, but also transformed the way people think and do business. The emphasis on an integration of individual creativity, skill, and talent with cultural assets and technology has shifted the role of creative industries from providing day-to-day services and productions into economic drivers for the country as well as enabling individuals to become entrepreneurs. The phenomenon led to a demand for a new type of space; both physical and virtual, where people with similar interests can meet, exchange their knowledge and work together. This new type of space is called “a creative hub”.

In the past decade, a number of hubs have emerged in Bangkok and other major provinces in Thailand as places to foster creative enterprises and strengthen creative communities. Nevertheless, none of them is alike. Each has its own specific purposes, offers curated Programmemes in certain ways for the selected targets audiences and embodies distinct values, which may as well evolve over time. Therefore, the objectives of this publication is to provide an overview of creative hubs, draw attention to their impacts, challenges that they have to overcome and reveal keys to success of the pioneer hubs. We started with an exploration of various types of hubs across Bangkok Metropolitan Region including co-working space, makerspace, art and community space, resource centre, studio and office rental and cluster. In order to gain better insight, we interviewed hub managers and users of 10 representative cases. The lessons learned are not only providing a better understanding of their diverse roles and value but also acting as case studies for emerging hubs.

DEFINING CREATIVE HUBS

Definition

A creative hub is a place, either physical or virtual, which brings creative people together. It is a convener, providing space and support for networking, business development and community engagement within the creative, cultural and tech sectors.

"Creative HubKit: Made by hubs for emerging hubs", British Council

Creative Hub Models in Bangkok



STUDIO

Small collectives of individuals and/or small businesses, in a co-working space.

- Hubba
- Factopia
- Charm-Learn Studio
- Draft Board
- Cho Why



CENTRE

Creative spaces which may have other assets such as a cafe, bar, cinema, makerspace, shop, exhibition space.

- PINN Creative Space
- Head in the Clouds
- Naiipa Art Complex
- Glowfish
- TCDC
- FabCafe
- Tentacles
- Yelo House
- C-ASEAN



NETWORK

Dispersed group of individuals and/or businesses – tends to be specific sectors or places.

- Thailand Tech Startup Association
- SE Thailand: Social Enterprise Thailand
- University Creative Counsel Network (UCCN)



CLUSTER

Co-located creative individuals and businesses in a geographic area

- 33Space



ONLINE PLATFORM

Uses only online methods – website, social media to engage with a dispersed audience.

- PINN Creative Space facebook group
- TCDC connect



ALTERNATIVE

Focused on experimentation with new communities, sectors and financial models.

- Ma:D
- Bangkok Swing Dance
- Bangkok Screening Room

MAPPING CREATIVE HUBS



TCDC EVENT: Bangkok Design Week 2018

Creative hub is a movement for and by new generations and creative communities. For members and visitors, hubs are perceived as safe places, where they can explore and try new things, meet new people, become a part of the group and fulfill themselves.

About 20 years ago, there was a major incident that triggered several changes in Thailand, 'the Asian financial crisis'. After the Thai government decided to float the Thai baht in July 1997, a great deal of companies that had taken loans in a foreign currency were facing bankruptcies, causing numbers of people to lose their jobs. The general public started to lose their trust in the government and the system. In order to reform the economy and regain a national security, a national policy was enacted to enhance the competitiveness of the nation in order to shift from a manufacturing and exporting industry that relies heavily on low-cost labour and natural resources to

a knowledge-based, innovation and value creation economy. A number of government organisations were established along with several plans that were imposed in order to direct the nation into this new path. As a result, there has been a rising number of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) emerging, by starting a business building on their expertise and assets. At the same time, creative industries started to play an important role. There were an increasing number of various types of design firms, which led to a high demand for spaces and resources, especially to cater for this group of people.

According to the research conducted by the Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Thammasat University, several creative clusters have organically emerged in various low-rent properties around Bangkok, where landlords were affected by the crisis. Some of the examples are **media and production industries at Town in Town area, Wang Thonglang district**, **music industries at Royal City Avenue (RCA) in Huai Khwang district** and **fashion industries at Siam Square, Pathum Wan district**¹. Unlike those unintended clusters, “33Space” was established in 2002 and offered 40 sq.m. office rental space at an affordable price. Its size and price attracted new creative entrepreneurs, enabled them to establish themselves and set up their companies. Three years later, the **Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC)**, a government organisation, was opened to the public in 2005 as a specialised library and a learning centre to promote the use of creativity and high quality production combined with local wisdom and cultural assets to create additional value for Thai products and services.



33Space: Kaniit Textile



Techsauce Summit: Thailand Startup Conference

STARTUP WAVE

The beginning of the 21st century marked the starting point of the digital era in Thailand. The use of technology has been incorporated widely in business and enabled any individual to become an entrepreneur. In 2010, the startup wave has emerged in the country and resulted in a growing number of millennials who want to start their own business. The government along with several big corporations such as AIS, Dtac, Kbank, True and SCB were not only aware of the significance of the phenomenon, but also offered financial support and invested in various startup companies. The recently developed working culture of the new generations brings about the needs for new workspaces, which are compatible with their business and lifestyle.

Glowfish was founded in 2010 as a serviced office for small companies with a maximum of 12 people. Its location at Wattana district with a walking distance from BTS sky train and MRT subway along with its suitable size attracted a number of expanding startup firms. **Hubba**, a co-working space that was established in 2012, offered a workspace with facilities and a wide range of activities related to business and technology to become a destination for freelancers, digital nomads and those interested in startups. Around the same time, **FabCafe** and **PINN Creative Space**, makerspaces that provided a variety of machines for digital fabrication have turned into workstations for creative entrepreneurs that produce handmade products and digital crafts. Moreover, **Ma:D**, a community space founded in 2014 that hosted a number of events and activities related to current social issues, has become a meeting point for those who want to create a better society. These diverse types of spaces are later known as ‘creative hub’.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE

In 2017, the importance of this new type of spaces is recognised by the government as a major driver for the creative economy. **The University Creative Counsel Network (UCCN)**, a network led by nine major universities across Thailand, was founded with the objective to establish creative hubs called “UCCN Innovation Hubs” at the universities in order to support the local creative economy. These hubs will act as centres for training and transferring knowledge, technology and expertise from regional universities to their local communities, which will be integrated with the local wisdom and resources to create more valuable local products and services.

Nowadays, there is a broad spectrum of hubs in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region ranging from co-working space, makerspace, art and community space, studio and office rental, resource and learning centre, cluster to network, which supports a wide variety of sectors (i.e. technology and startup, art and design, culture, social innovation, creative business and enterprise). They are different in sizes and features. Most of them are for profit organisations, operated by individuals and corporates. However, there are also some non-profit hubs that are initiated and run by the government. The majority of the hubs are located in vibrant areas of the city. Each of them has its own agenda and offers tailored products and services for its targets.

BANGKOK CREATIVE HUBS

Creative hub is a movement for and by new generations and creative communities. For members and visitors, hubs are perceived as safe places, where they can explore and try new things, meet new people, become a part of the group and fulfill themselves.



HUBBA: HUBBA Stadium (2016)



Head in The Clouds: Watercolour workshop

MAP AND TIMELINE

- STUDIO
- CENTRE
- NETWORK
- CLUSTER
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- ALTERNATIVE



Creative Hubs

1

33Space

2

TCDC

3

Glowfish

4

Bangkok Swing Dance

5

HUBBA

6

FabCafe

7

PINN Creative Space

8

Ma:D

9

Charm-Learn Studio

10

Tentacles

11

Cho Why

12

C-asean

13

Naiipa Art Complex

14

Draft Board

15

Bangkok Screening Room

16

Head in the Clouds

17

Factopia

18

Yelo House

Government organisations

1997

Asian Economic Crisis

2000

Office of Small and Medium Enterprise Promotion (OSMEP)

2001

Thailand Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Master Plan

2002

Ministry of Tourism and Sport
Ministry of Culture
Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT)

2003

National Innovation Agency (NIA)
Software Industry Promotion Agency (SIPA) (closed down in 2017)
The National Nanotechnology Center (NANOTEC)

2004

Office of Knowledge Management and Development (OKMD)

2005

2010

2011

Electronic Transactions Development Agency (ETDA)

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

Ministry of Digital Economy and Society
(formerly known as MICT)
Thailand 4.0 (industrial policy)

2017

Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA)
University Creative Counsel Network (UCCN)

IMPACT

Since 2002, at least 19 creative hubs have emerged in Bangkok with a wide ranging variety of mission and vision. Ranging from government, corporate, and individual involvement, profit or non-profit, these organisations have changed Bangkok's lifestyle and economy. The changes as the result of creative hub operations were evident for the local in terms of investment, tourism, and the livelihood of communities. Hubs also change the way the general public perceive art and design. More importantly, they provide a platform for future entrepreneurs. Empowered networks and collaborations have been established. The impacts are as follows:



Alternative place to learn

Creative hubs are alternative places to gain more knowledge, explore new areas and have a hands-on experience in a form of non-formal learning, which may lead to a new profession.

A lot of hubs host numbers of events and workshops along with creating their own contents and publications, which are available for members and non-members regardless of age.



HUBBA: HUBBA Stadium (2017)

1.1 Library and Resources Centre

Some hubs offer a specialised library. The Mind Space library at **C-ASEAN** provides a wide selection of books, magazines, and e-resources on business, arts, culture of ASEAN. The **Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC)** was opened to the public in 2005 as a one-stop service learning centre for the general public and creative communities. It is considered one of the first specialised libraries that paid close

attention to atmosphere and the subsequent learning experience of the users. The shop and exhibition are located in the front to stimulate public interest. For those who want to explore further in certain areas they are able to visit the resource centre and Material ConneXion®², which offers all kinds of media covering various interests in design disciplines and collection of innovative materials. Moreover, there have

been various workshops and talks that have taken place at the auditorium. Besides that, since 2006, TCDC has been hosting an annual international symposium called “Creativity Unfold”, focusing on the latest global trends and cutting-edge technologies that have been transforming our lives and changing the business world. It brings together influencers and innovators from different professions from all around the world to share their experiences. Each year, the symposium presents different themes and is attended by more than 500 audiences from different age groups and backgrounds. In the past years the events were broadcast live to 35 miniTCDC Centres at local educational institutes nationwide. In

addition, TCDC also publishes Creative Thailand magazine, a free magazine that aims to inspire and inform the general public about the importance of “creativity” as one of the main factors that drives the Thai economy.



TCDC: Material ConneXion® at TCDC Charoenkrung

Creative hubs are alternative places to gain more knowledge, explore new areas and have a hands-on experience in a form of non-formal learning, which may lead to a new profession.



1.2 Knowledge Sharing Platforms

With its mission to act as a channel for the general public to have access to new technology and conduct hands-on projects, **FabCafe** initiated several hands-on workshops regarding art, creativity and technology. Some examples are “software workshop” that allows participants to learn how to use different software (i.e. Grasshopper, Rhino3D), and “digital fabrication workshop”. This workshop focused on the use of different machines to create various products such as using 3D printers to create cookie cutters and digital prints and laser cut machines to create custom totes. Furthermore, there are several activities tailored for kids such as Lego smart fun and drawing bot. On a regular day, without any events, kids are also welcome to walk-in and initiate their own projects.

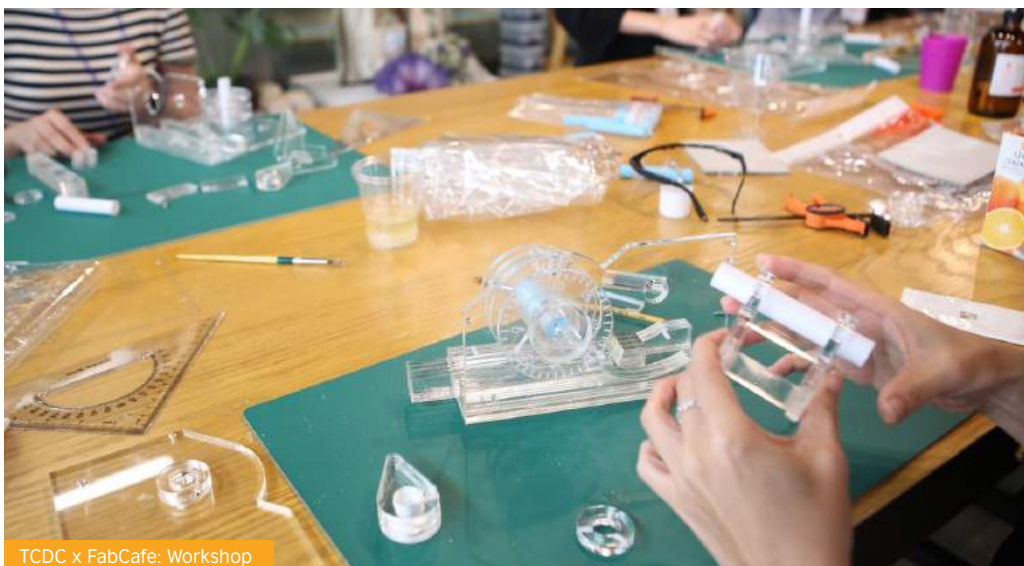
Ma:D club for a better society, hosted series of events emphasising on how an individual can contribute to a better society, for example, “Zero waste day”, a one-day event that aimed to demonstrate how to live without creating waste. It featured many activities such as repair station, packaging-free dining, second-hand shop and panel discussion sharing experiences on how to manage waste and live an urban life without creating one. There were also events concerning current issues in urban society such as “Depression” and “Learning and working in the near future”.

- STUDIO
- CENTRE
- NETWORK
- CLUSTER
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- ALTERNATIVE

1.3 Art & Design Experiments

Art community spaces act as a platform and offer physical spaces for artists and designers to showcase their work and meet audiences. Moreover, services and activities offered by creative hubs lead to a number of improvements in art and design related disciplines. The makerspaces provide machines and equipment, which allow people to have hands-on experiences and to be able to turn their sketches into prototypes. Furthermore, some places also offer internships for students. Therefore, the existence of creative hubs can be perceived as a complement to the practice of the disciplines. They give new generations an opportunity to explore and experiment, which are a crucial learning process often missing from universities. For those that already graduated and work in the fields, hubs act as a place where they can obtain continuing education in order to stay current with latest developments, knowledge and technology, which are crucial for advancing and improving professions.

Art community spaces act as a platform and offer physical spaces for artists and designers to showcase their work and meet audiences.



Art and design education in universities still has many of limitations, due to a large number of students and limited resources. Most institutions do not have access to the latest machines and technology, therefore, instructors only emphasise on concepts and generate a number of ideas but not on making tangible prototypes for idea testing. As a result, the students are missing skills that are vital in the design process. Makerspaces such as **PINN Creative Space** and **FabCafe** offer internship for design and art students. At PINN Creative Space, art and design students are welcome every year for internship. Bussaya Tejasen M.D., Managing Director of Art and Technology / operator of PINN Shop Chain, envisages the space to be an academy where people can come in to learn. She would accept interns so

they can learn things not taught in universities. *"We expect that they will not only improve their skills but also learn the thinking process and have a chance to meet with clients. To be a designer, they have to be able to sell their ideas and their design,"* said Ms. Prasatbuntitya, General Manager of PINN Creative Space. In addition, an apprentice at the hubs also helps shaping the interns' characters, changing their attitudes and mentality and preparing them for the real world.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE



PIN Creative Space: Workshop

Nurturing Artistic Development



FabCafe: Graffiti Bot

2.1 Merging Arts and Science

At **FabCafe**, a makerspace that focuses on integrating art and creativity with technology, there are always students working on their thesis. Mr. Phantagan Putsui, one of the fashion design students from Bangkok University explained that his advisor recommended him to come here as he could use digital fabrication machines for his fashion thesis. *"When I started my thesis, I only knew about fashion and had no clue about machine and technology. So first, I had to learn about different machines and how to Programmeme them. I have been using a lot of laser machines, as my thesis involves the use of laser to create texture and volume. There is still a lot more that I have to learn, for example, different levels of heat that can be used with different types of fabric. It was about creating*

a prototype and test. None of these were offered in my university. It is very beneficial to be able to experiment and the outcome is very surprising," added Mr. Putsui. Furthermore, FabCafe also works on numbers of projects that demonstrate how art and design can be integrated with technology, for instance, 'Graffiti Bot', a collaboration project between graffiti artist (Mr.Rakkit Kuanhawate), software engineer (Delcame) and robotic engineer (ABB). It aimed to test out whether a robot usually used in the manufacturing industry can be used for an artistic purpose and the result was the mural graffiti on the cafe wall. The project is an example of how technology can be a part of the creative process and one of the tools for artists and designers to create additional value.

2.2 Showcasing Space

Head in the Clouds, an art community space, was founded by a group of four friends who were classmates from the Faculty Decorative Arts, Silpakorn University. It has a mission to bring art closer to the general public. Its first floor is a cafe decorated with pieces of artworks, which can be purchased, while the second floor is a gallery with the exhibition rotating every two months. Ms. Titival Chalernsangsakul, co-founder of Head in the Clouds, mentioned that most of her colleagues have changed their profession, as they cannot survive as an artist. *“If there is an art space, artists would be able to exhibit their works instead of keeping them at home. And if the works are purchased then it is great, of course artists want to make a living from their artworks,”* said Ms.Chalernsangsakul.



Head in the Clouds: Gallery



Head in the Clouds: Event: It's blooming

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE

Promoting sense of belonging and self-fulfilment

Creative hubs are a part of the culture of new generations. This group of people develops their personal interest and looks for a place where they belong to. Hubs become one of their destinations. Instead of going to shopping malls, they visit hubs to seek for self-actualisation. As mentioned by Ms.Preekamol Chantaranijakorn, co-founders of **Ma:D**, most of its members are millennials (generation Y), in particular those who have just graduated or first jobbers. *"These people are searching for meaning and purpose in life. Some of them are successful with their work but not fulfilled. Therefore, they are exploring alternative activities and new knowledge, which might lead to self-improvement,"* added Ms.Chantaranijakorn.

Creative hubs are a part of the culture of new generations. This group of people develops their personal interest and look for a place where they belong to. Hubs become one of their destinations.



Bangkok Swing Dance x TCDC: Co-Creato Charoenkrung

Ms. Pachara Sungden, one of the visitors at **Ma:D**, mentioned that she has always been interested in social issues related to education, human equality and human potential development. After not being able to continue working in these areas, she participated in activities hosted at the hub about social enterprise, well-being and book club in order to explore the areas further and fulfil herself. She added that Ma:D is a melting pot, it allows her to meet people from different backgrounds and areas of expertise. Moreover, its curated programme act as a natural filter system that sorts out people with similar interests, makes it easier to connect and jump right to a deep conversation. *“The new kind of relationship is formed. It is based entirely on a common topic of interest, unlike other typical relationship that is based on expectation and benefit,”* said Ms. Sungden.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE



Each creative hub has its own mission and vision. They offer activities and services which attract different groups of people. Mr. Chakraphan Hiranwongwira, one of the members of the **Thailand and Creative Design Center (TCDC)** and **Hubba**, mentioned that he has attended a number of art, design and technology related events in order to become a part of the creative community. *“In 2015, when I came back from studying design abroad, all my friends are in science fields and I knew nobody who works in a design area. Therefore, I decided to join all kind of events so I would meet people and have connections. I got my first freelance job working with the people I knew from workshop,”* said Mr. Hiranwongwira. Today, he still visits **Hubba** regularly to hang out with members and staff.

4

Community building

Community is one of the core elements of the creative hubs. In one way or another, hubs play an important role in fostering a community of people with similar interests and purpose regardless of their backgrounds. A strong community leads to an exchange of knowledge and information (i.e. supplier, contact), broadens individual perspectives and inspires one another. In many cases, it also leads to a work collaboration.



Glowfish: 1st Anniversary Networking Event

A strong community leads to an exchange of knowledge and information (i.e. supplier, contact), broadens individual perspectives and inspires one another. In many cases, it also leads to a work collaboration.

Glowfish, a serviced office, where expanding local and international startup companies are situated, focuses its attention on fostering a strong community. With its motto, “*work. play. grow*”, Glowfish makes sure that its members are able to work smarter, play harder and also grow stronger as an individual company with a sense of community. Mr. Parin Sarasin, total experience manager at Glowfish, explained that he and his team are responsible for fostering a community by organising networking events, which he calls “a companionship activity”. *“We will invite our customers to eat and drink, sometimes even exercise (Yoga) together. So, they will meet and connect with one another. Their companies obviously have to grow otherwise they can’t stay with us, but we want to build a sense of community amongst the members, that is, one company meets with another, get inspired and starts something new. We see ourselves as a coral reef, where big fish (companies) and small fish (SMEs) help one another and grow together.”*

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE

33space and **Factopia** are studio and office rentals consecutively, which are transformed into creative hubs as cluster of people in related fields work next to one another. These two hubs are not focusing on creating events but instead providing common spaces where tenants can meet and interact. Ms. Tithirat Kutchamuch, the owner of Factopia, who had worked in a studio at Sunbury Workshop in London for three years, mentioned that one of the improvements that she had made at her hub was providing a common space. *“At Sunbury Workshop, there is no common space, so people would meet only when they are going to toilets. Here there is a common space where they can meet, have lunch, wash dishes and welcome guests. It might only be a small improvement but it has conjured up some changes,”* said Ms. Kutchamuch.

Unlike Factopia, common spaces for tenants at 33space are a coffee shop, a cafeteria and an outdoor parking lot, located in the middle of the facing offices. Most of the tenants in the low-rise building are those who just started their businesses and wanted to have their own offices to exhibit their designs and express who they are. There are about 40 offices in total covering design, art, architecture, event organisers, media and information technology (IT). *“We are in the same community so we understand each other. When I get bored from work, I usually go talking to people in other studios. I feel like they are colleagues. Sometimes I consult them about work and exchange supplier contacts. Every time I walk pass other offices and see their works, I feel inspired,”* said Ms. Pimm Chongcharoen, creative director of Teaspoon Studio, one of the tenants at 33Space. Besides that, another tenant, Ms. Sarin Tasnathepgamol, textile designer of Sarin Tgamol Textile Design, also revealed that her first textile installation project was brought to her by one of the interior design studios in the cluster as it was commissioned to renovate Jim Thompson shop and needed to recruit textile designers to design the installation.

Moreover, community can also be virtual. **PINN Creative Space** created “Creative Laser Cutting & Engrave Thailand” and “Friendly 3D Printing for family” Facebook group to exchange knowledge, technique and share inspiration among members to promote the use of the machines.



Factopia: New Year Party

Increasing number of creative entrepreneurs

There are a number of ways that creative hubs can contribute to the growth of creative entrepreneurs. Some hubs offer knowledge and require machines, some provide the opportunity to meet new people and form new ideas, while others offer spaces which are necessary for young artists and designers to establish themselves and transform from freelancers to entrepreneurs.



33Space: Sarin Tgamol Textile Design

30 years ago, **33Space** was a motel called "Motel 55" until the contract expired in 2006.

Mr. Sornsongkram decided not to renew the contract, instead he renovated and transformed one of the units into his architecture office. From then on, many offices in a related field (i.e. art, design, architecture, event organiser) started to move into the area. The space is rented out in a unit with the area of 40 square metres, which is the perfect size for artist studios or firms that just starting. *"Price is of course a major key for the new generation. Here, they can design their offices as they like to express who they are,"* Mr. Sornsongkram added. One of the tenants, Ms. Khanittha Nualtaranee, textile artist and designer of Kaniit Textile mentioned that setting up her own office was a major step towards establishing and making herself visible as a textile designer. However, the monthly extra fix cost is also one of the main challenges. She spent quite sometimes visiting many co-working spaces and studio rentals before deciding to stay at 33Space. *"The size of the room here is perfect and the price is reasonable, especially for a designer who works alone like me. The space allows me to experiment with new ideas and produce prototypes, unlike working at home,"* said Ms. Nualtaranee.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE

For those who want to be an entrepreneur without investing a large amount of money, **PINN Creative Space** makes it easy to be one by providing not only machines and equipment but also contents and inspirations. The main objective of space is to be a hub for a new generation of entrepreneurs who want to start a business. The staff with rich backgrounds in art and design are always available for consulting and assisting when using machines. *“Our customers know what a 3D printer is but they still have no idea what to do with it. So our team demonstrates how 3D printers can be used to make different types of moulds for candle and soap casting. We also have a two*

day workshop for those who want to have a hands-on experience. A 3D printer is a modern handicraft which you can make a living out of it,” said Ms. June Prasatbuntitya, general manager of PINN Creative Space. Furthermore, she added that there is an example of a creative entrepreneur who was supported by the hub, Ms. Kewlin Pimsorn or Kru Aun. *“She started her career as an illustrator and a water colour artist but now she is one of our instructors and the owner of the brand ‘Did you see any pattern?’, which affiliates to Pinn. Today, many department stores have approached her as they want to sell her products. We can see that an ecosystem for designers is emerging,”* said Ms. Prasatbuntitya.

Some hubs offer knowledge and required machines, some provide the opportunity to meet new people and form new ideas, while others offer spaces which are necessary for young artists and designers to establish themselves and transform from freelancers to entrepreneurs.



PINN Creative Space: Watercolor & Surface Pattern Design Workshop

Networking

Frequently, connections and collaborations that took place inside and outside hubs have grown into networks that expand without boundary. There are many different levels and types of networks ranging from peer-to-peer connections among hubs users, connection between one hubs and others, to connection between hubs with other sectors: businesses, organisations and institutions. In many cases, hub owners' personal connections are also parts of the networks. These intertwining networks benefit both hubs and their members in many different ways. They can be used as a platform connecting between people with the same interest, same type of business for exchanging knowledge and support along with sharing ideas and resources.

One of the missions at **C-ASEAN** is to build an effective ASEAN network and community through a number of activities and events that focus on business, art and culture of the ASEAN community. "Hump Day", for example, started in July 2015, as an alternative learning session on every third Wednesday of the month. Only 15 people participated in the first session. Nowadays, a number of audiences and networks have grown to 6,000 members ASEAN wide. *"Last year, we started Hump Day in Vietnam. This year we will do it in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia,"* said Dr. Karndee Leopairote, the hub manager. Moreover, C-ASEAN's domestic and international networks and partnerships also benefit the startup companies that are resident at "Dream Office", C-ASEAN's co-working space.



C-ASEAN: Hump

Mr. Jirayod Theppipit, Managing Director of Infoted Co. Ltd., one of the members at Dream Office mentioned that **C-ASEAN** has been supporting his company through its networks. *“My company works with Virtual Reality (VR) technology and eSport. So, whenever C-ASEAN is attending a fair related to our area, they will ask us to join them. Occasionally, we would set up a company booth to showcase our products and services. It is one way for us to create awareness among ASEAN communities. Besides that, a number of events happen at C-ASEAN all the time. There is always an opportunity for us to meet and connect with many people from all over the region. C-ASEAN also helps us connecting with them. Recently, we had just signed MOU with Ngee Ann Polytechnic, an institution of higher learning in Singapore, to exchange interns and staff along with knowledge in related area,”* said Mr. Theppipit. He also added that next month, Infoted will be opening an eSport arena at *“The Street Ratchada,”* a shopping mall across the street from C-ASEAN, which belongs to Thai Beverage Public Co. Ltd., the founder of C-ASEAN.

In addition, the global network allows the exchange of knowledge, expertise, lesson learned, and collaboration between different units. In 2012, Ms. Kalaya Kovidvisith and her group of friends from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) founded **FabCafe**, a global collaborative network of those who are interested in the fabrication concept. At this moment, there are 10 FabCafe around the world (Barcelona, Toulouse, Strasbourg, Tokyo, Hida, Taipei, Singapore, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Beijing). *“When we work, we work online with the global team. We share facility and knowledge. Once FabCafe Japan had a request from Shiseido to design a cosmetic packaging targeting LGBT, Japan team discussed with us and we conducted the focus group here, while FabCafe in Toulouse works for Airbus and the one in Strasbourg focuses on music and media. If there is a request from a client in Bangkok on related areas, we can connect with them or pass on the project to them,”* said Ms. Kovidvisith.



Hubba x CU Asia: Coworking Unconference Asia

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE

In some cases, platforms created by hubs are used to connect those with the same interest and expertise. Four years ago, Ms. Preekamol Chantaranijakorn, a co-founder of **Ma:D**, had founded an Social Enterprise Thailand facebook group as an online platform for connecting social enterprises and those who are interested in creating social impact in Thailand. Today, there are more than 5,000 members in the group. It is now used as a communication platform for the SE Thailand Association, comprising leading social enterprises such as Change Fusion, Mae Fan Luang, Abhaiherb and Ma:D. Furthermore, the existence of Ma:D also inspired one of its members to establish “**Ma:D Esan**” (Northeastern Ma:D). *“We have known each other for a while. He is a lecturer from Udon Thani Rajabhat University who is interested in social enterprise. One day he came to me and asked if he could establish “Ma:D Esan” at Udon Thani Province,”* said Ms. Preekamol Chantaranijakorn, co-founder of Ma:D. The two Ma:D serve as community spaces for those who are interested in social issues. However, Ma:D Esan is mainly focusing on developing spaces in city, while Ma:D is focusing on many social issues.

Networks among the same type of hubs allow an exchange of knowledge and experience. **Hubba** is one of the founder of the Co-working Space Alliance of Asia Pacific (CAAP), the largest co-working association joined by more than 20 co-working spaces from countries all over the Asia Pacific region. Its annual conference, “Co-working Unconference”, aims to bring together the hub’s operator, investors, researchers and members in order to discuss, expand learning and share best practices. Last year, the conference was held in Chiang Mai and was attended by more than 200 spaces around the region. Besides that, Hubba was recently joined Google for Entrepreneurs’ global network, which allows Hubba members to have access to Google resources, Programmemes (i.e. training, mentorship) and products.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE



Igniting, catalysing, and redefining creativity

Creative hubs play a very crucial role in promoting and educating the general public about emerging areas that were new to the society such as co-working space, startup and FinTech (financial technology). **Hubba**, the pioneer co-working space in Thailand, is considered one of the major catalysts for co-working space and startup scene. It was founded in 2012 because the two brothers (Mr. Amarit Charoenphan and Mr. Charles Charoenphan) wanted to be a startup. *“During that time, the idea of being a startup was very new to the country and government organisations also had not done anything to promote it yet. So, I did some research on how to run it in other countries. I found out that this group of people would not set up an office. They would look for a co-working space where they could exchange and share their ideas with friends and the community. At that time,*

this kind of place did not exist in Thailand. So, we thought that before starting to design an application, we should first open a co-working space,” said Mr. Charoenphan. To publicise the new culture many activities and events were organised, including the first networking event and Bangkok’s first official tech startup gathering, ‘Start it up. ‘Power it up’, occurred in collaboration with Mr. Ruangroj Poonpol, partners of 500 startups. **Hubba** was also one of the co-founders of **Thailand Tech Startup Association (TTSA)**. In the past six years, Hubba has created the ecosystem for startups and redefined the concept of co-working spaces in the Thai perception. *“Co-working space is not just a space. It provides space and home along with resources and community for entrepreneurs and startups to reach the fullness of their potential,”* said Mr. Charoenphan.



Hubba: Co-working Space



C-ASEAN: Positioning Thailand's FinTech Ecosystem

C-ASEAN is one of the major agents that ignite and stimulate “Fintech” in the ASEAN region. Two years ago, the term “FinTech”, a portmanteau of financial technology, was already known to some groups of people, however, the understanding about FinTech was still undefined. Therefore, C-ASEAN organised its first forum “Positioning Thailand’s FinTech Ecosystem” to raise awareness about disruptive financial technology and its framework among all stakeholders. It was attended by policy makers, private sectors, startups and young generations from Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and other countries in the region. The event was documented and published into a report available in both print and digital format. Another outcome was the establishment of Thai FinTech Club (TFTC), which incorporates by more than 40 companies in the industry. In addition, C-ASEAN also launched a FinTech collaboration Programme with Singapore and Malaysia later on.

Hubs are not only promoting new areas of knowledge, but also redefining existing areas such as design. The discipline has been taught in the university level for more than 30 years. However, the lack of conceptual understanding is evident. People often associate design with aesthetic and in their opinions, it can only be practiced by designers. To redefine the concept, the **Thailand and Creative Design Center (TCDC)**, a government organisation, was established in 2005 with a mission to use design and creativity to improve the Thai economy and elevate the quality of life of Thai people. A number of activities, Programmes, events, and workshops were aimed to make design and creativity accessible to the general public. Besides that, an exhibition is also used as one channel of communication to trigger creative thinking and encourage people to recognise the value of design. The activity was attended by an average of 60,000-70,000 people.

Mr. Pichit Virankabutra, Director of Creative Space Development Department, explained that the exhibition focused on “Value Creation”, which is the process of using creativity and sufficient technology to build on cultural assets in order to create more value. “The first exhibition, “Isan Retrospective: Deprivation,

Creativity and Design,” was focused on people in the Northeastern part of Thailand, who is normally perceived as underdogs and were taken for granted. However, this group of people is one of the main drivers of Thai economy as they are skilful, very adaptive and creative,” said Mr. Virankabutra.



TCDC: New Aged Citizens Exhibition

Moreover, “Design Thinking” process and “Service Design” principles have been largely promoted by TCDC as tools for business and the general public to practice design. “They democratised the exclusiveness of creativity and design to the general public. During the workshop, participants would share their ideas and be proud of themselves when the idea was selected. Later on, they would start to realise that design is about problem solving and finding new solutions. “Design Thinking” process and “Service Design” principles allow people without design background to become a part of the creative industry,” said Mr. Virankabutra.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE

Creating social impact

Creative hubs not only drive economic growth but also bring about social improvements. Some hubs have missions to initiate social projects, some collaborate with other organisations, while some support those who do. **Ma:D** was established in 2014 with a mission to create a better society. Ms. Preekamol Chantaranijakorn, one of the co-founders of Ma:D, explained that her motivation for founding the hub was because there are many people who are interested in certain social issues and would like to tackle them. However, these people are not able to do it because they work in other fields or have not yet found anyone who would like to join the team. *"I would like to create a*

space or a platform that connect those with the same dream. I believe that when people with different expertise come together with the same objective, great social projects will surely happen," said Ms.Chantaranijakorn. For more than four years, Ma:D has been facilitating and fostering various social impact projects by inspiring and connecting communities, providing support and required resources. *"I remembered connecting one student who is very into amulets with another student who works on designing GPS tracking device. Together they came up with an idea to create a GPS tracking amulet for senior citizens with dementia,"* said Ms.Chantaranijakorn.



Ma:D: Voluntary Event



FabCafe: Farm Hack

Beside a social hub, other types of hub can also lead up to social projects, for example, **FabCafe**, a makerspace, usually initiates one project per month based on personal interest and current topics. One of the social projects was 'Farm Hack'. The objective of this project was to design new equipment and tools that are more affordable by co-designing between designers, engineers and farmers. The event was joined by local participants and also those from neighbouring countries, such as Vietnam and Indonesia, as problems regarding agriculture are not only critical in Thailand but also in the region.

Furthermore, the **Thailand Creative Design Center (TCDC)**, as a government organisation, has been initiating a number of projects and working with public and private sectors to

improve the quality of life of Thai people. For inclusive local developments, TCDC collaborated with King Prajadhipok's Institute on introducing design thinking process and co-creation model to local administrators from all over the country. The new approach promotes a shift of role from an administrator to a network coordinator and a facilitator, providing opportunity for everyone to engage in creating shared visions and become active citizens. TCDC also pays close attention to enhance quality of health and public services by using service design principle, which focuses on creating a pleasant user experience while operating effectively and efficiently. It has been working with the State Railway of Thailand and Thai Post to improve existing services and creating new services that would serve the unmet need among people.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE

Driving the local economy

Charoenkrung district, located not far from the old town area of Bangkok, was once one of the most prospering districts in the late 19th century to the early 20th century. During that time, it housed foreign settlements and businesses such as embassies, department stores, luxury hotels and shophouses. The prosperity had continued until around 1990s. Not long after that, the country began to face an economic as well as a political crisis, which continue until today. As a result, several local businesses have shut down, leaving the district with an abundance of vacant shophouses and run-down historical buildings.

The relocation of the **Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC)** to the Grand Postal building in Charoenkrung district brought in a large number of people (TCDC staff and 30,000 members) along with infinite opportunities, which stimulate economic growth and increase different forms of investments in the area and its vicinity. Significant numbers of vacant shophouses decreased from 23% in 2013 to 17.9% in 2015³. In addition, social interactions and engagements among local communities are fostered through creative projects. One of them was "Co-Create Charoenkrung" (2015-2016). The research project aimed to transform Charoenkrung into a creative district by co-creating with 10 different groups of stakeholders in the area.



TCDC: Bangkok Design Week 2018



TCDC: Co-Creato Charoenkrung

The findings suggested five pilot projects: Re-Creating Public Riverfront, Adaptive Reuse of Abandoned Shophouse, The Green Pocket Landscape, Reconnecting Local Alleys and Signage for a Walkable District. The life-size prototypes were created to test the ideas, present the possibility of the district and raise awareness among related stakeholders. Consequently, a private developer saw an opportunity and developed old warehouses next to the former Grand Postal building into retail spaces, 'Warehouse 30', that offers a wide range of selected design products, creative spaces, and public Programmemes. Moreover, a private property, which lies between Charoenkrung 30 and 32, is now opened for public access. Furthermore, 'Creative District Foundation' was founded in 2017 by a group of entrepreneurs that own businesses in the area with an agenda to develop Charoenkrung and Klongsarn into a Creative District.

One of the district development Programmeme by **TCDC** was 'Bangkok Design Week 2018' (BDW 2018), which took place between 27th January to 4th February 2018. It was attended by approximately 190,000 people, both Thais and foreigners. The event highlighted the potential of the district. Numbers of showcases, Programmemes, and talks located throughout the area allowed visitors to explore and experience the district. During the event, sales of local shops and restaurants increased more than four-times. Due to the success of BDW 2018, local communities started to recognise the potential and possibility of their assets. Several public and private organisations had an interest in becoming partners with TCDC and hosted similar events in the area.

- STUDIO
- CENTRE
- NETWORK
- CLUSTER
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- ALTERNATIVE



CHALLENGES

As aforementioned, many creative hub managers started these new businesses with passion for art and design and the sense of community to share knowledge and help. However, to start a creative hub is not only of passion and vision but of business management. The obstacles that the hub managers have been confronting are quite overwhelming, as follows:

Funding

Generating enough income to cover operational costs is one of the daily challenges a number of hubs have to face, especially those led by passion of the founders, where there is often more concern on missions and visions than generating profit. The types of hubs that are more likely to struggle are art space, community space and makerspace, as their source of income is not reliable. An art space depends on a sale of artworks, which may or may not happen. A community space relies on entrance fee of an event and activities, while a makerspace earns from service fee. Co-working space and office rental, on the other hand, have a fixed minimum income from membership fee and rent, which is a greater amount of money and hence more stable.

Ms. Prasatbuntitya, general manager of **PINN Creative Space** revealed that the space is not yet financially sustainable. Currently, the earning from workshop and service fee has been just enough to cover rent and instructor fee. *“A makerspace in Thailand is not a high profitable business, due to a high investment cost on machines and staff. Customers also have a limited amount of money that they can afford to pay and the profit margin is very little as staff often needs to spend lots of time creating and fixing the file for the machine,”* said Ms. Prasatbuntitya. In addition, Ms. Kalaya Kovidvisith, co-founder of **FabCafe** noticed that there were several makerspaces opened around the same year as FabCafe (2012), however, many of them did not survive. Later on in 2017, some of them were reopened again with different business models.



PINN Creative Space: Workshop



Ma:D: Banpu Champions for Change

Besides striving to survive financially, creative hubs also need to pursue their visions. Concerning about income is one of the obstacles that distracts hub managers from focusing on their missions. Ms. Preekamol Chantaranijakorn, co-founder of **Ma:D club for a better society**, revealed that in order to earn enough money to host activities and events, she has had to work on several corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects sponsored by private sectors and foundations. Examples of projects are “Banpu Champions for Change” with Banpu Public Co. Ltd., “Camp for Developing Social Entrepreneur” with SCB Foundation and “KFC

Community Hero” with KFC. “They are *good projects with lots of social impact. However, the community that I would like to see at Ma:D has not yet happened because I spent lots of time working on those projects. I would like to focus more on fostering the community, but without the service fee we cannot survive,*” said Ms. Chantaranijakorn. In addition, Dr. Karndee Leopairote, hub director of **C-ASEAN** also stated that even though C-ASEAN has to live up to expectation, businesswise, it is also very important to balance between generating profit and delivering impact.

- STUDIO
- CENTRE
- NETWORK
- CLUSTER
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- ALTERNATIVE

Knowledge and experience

A number of hub founders and managers are from the younger generations. Many of them do not have background and experience in business and management, while some shift their roles from being artists and designers themselves to hub managers. Hub businesses are complicated. They often require an extensive set of knowledge to operate and mix a business model to generate enough income.

Factopia provides office spaces for rent and venue spaces for exhibition and events. Ms. Tithirat Kutchamuch, owner of the hub, wants to offer reasonable price for her tenants, therefore she has to find more opportunities for the spaces. She added that promoting and managing the property is quite a new area for her. *“There were shootings of music video, fashion and advertising once in a while. They know about the space from word of mouth. Although they pay a good amount of money, shootings can sometimes damage the property. I still was not sure about the extent of damage which is acceptable and which is not,”* said Ms. Kutchamuch. She added that next year she would like to focus more on promoting the space and also hosting interesting events such as fashion show and chef’s table.





Head in a Clouds: Cafe Area



Head in a Clouds: Gallery

Head in a Clouds is an art space with a cafe and gallery. Ms. Titival Chalermangsakul, one of the founders, mentioned that running a hub is absolutely a shift of role for her and her friends. *“We are all Arts graduates. In the university, we learned how to create artworks, but now we have to run the space and act as a go between. We need to learn about the artists and how they create different pieces of artwork. More importantly, we have to learn how to negotiate deals with them and prove to them that we really want to be their brokers, so they could make a living out of it. It really takes time to build trust with artists and also buyers,”* said Ms. Chalermangsakul. She added that the hub aimed to target collectors and foreigners who would like to buy small-to-medium size artworks from Thai artists. However, the hub is located in the old town area where most of the foreigners who visited the space are tourists and backpackers.

Therefore, there is a need to revise the business plan. *“Next year, we will be focusing more on the cafe by creating an art theme menu, serving drinks and snacks in handmade ceramic sets, which are inspired by famous artworks. We would like to generate income from the cafe to sustain the space. And for the shop, we will provide more interesting small art pieces to speed up the sales,”* said Ms. Chalermangsakul.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE

Public Awareness

Like other businesses, creative hubs need to reach out to their targets and draw new users. However, the task is more challenging for hubs as their purposes are still unclear to many people. A lot of activities and services provided by hubs are new to the society. Consequently, hubs have to promote and educate their targets and also the general public about their function.

Ms. Prasatbuntitya, general manager of **PINN Creative Space**, mentioned that whenever she tells people that she works at PINN Creative Space, they always get confused and ask her what a creative space is as its purposes are still unclear to them.



PINN Creative Space: Workshop

"The concept of creative space is still very new to Thailand. Thai people often associate the word 'creative' with designers. For that reason, people without design background would think that they do not belong here as they are not able to draw and use any Programmeme available," said Ms. Prasatbuntitya. She mentioned that Bussaya Tejasen M.D., Managing Director of Art and Technology / operator of PINN Shop Chain would like PINN Creative Space to be a hub for new generations and creative entrepreneurs who would like to start a business. *"However, high school and university students have limited budget but this kind of activities require a certain amount of investing fund. For designers, many of them already have suppliers. Therefore, they do not need to make things by themselves. I would like designers to gather here, bring their computers and work together. I always tell my seniors and juniors to come and work here, but no one has ever come,"* said Ms. Prasatbuntitya.



PINN Creative Space: Workshop



TCDC: Creative Business Service

Since 2004, the **Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC)** has been offering numbers of training workshops and business related activities to draw more entrepreneurs to the hub. Despite numbers of activities, there are still only a fair number of entrepreneurs that have visited the hub and engaged in the networks. *“My assumption would be because we are not benefiting them manifestly. We offer training workshops and different Programmemes that integrate the use of design thinking and service design to enhance their competitiveness, but only a few of them are able to attend. They are fully occupied with their works and to come all the way here may be a burden for them,”* said Mr. Pichit Virankabutra, Director of Creative Space Development Department. For the New TCDC at Charoenkrung district, several Programmemes and services catered especially for entrepreneurs were added ranging from business consultation, incubation Programmemes to makerspace. These would enable entrepreneurs to generate game changing ideas, start a business and commercialise. It is a one-stop solution for creative business.

“Co-working space is a known concept but quite new in Thai culture,” said Mr. Amarit Charoenphan, co-founder of **Hubba**. Even though co-working space has been around in Bangkok for more than five years, its purposes are still unclear for targets. Moreover, space operators themselves also do not understand the roles that they have to play. Mr. Charoenphan added that one of the main reasons that many co-working spaces have closed down is because they did not have their own content and were not able to provide resources and supports that their customers needed. Therefore, when customers (freelancer and startup companies) are not able to survive financially, the space and the ecosystem will be affected. There is still a need to raise an awareness to both the providers and users.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE

Space and location

The location is one of the factors that contributes to the success of hubs. Most hubs are located in vibrant areas; Ekamai, Ari and Siam, where their targets are situated. **Glowfish**, a serviced office for expanding startup companies, sees itself in a real estate business. Their two branches are located in central business districts; Asoke and Sathorn. Mr. Amarit Charoenphan, co-founder of **Hubba**, mentioned that he selected Ekamai road as the location of the first Hubba because the neighbourhood was already a destination. *“I do not want to change people’s lifestyle. If they like Thonglor and Ekamai, then we want to be there. In the area, there are already good cafes, chic shops and restaurants, community malls and fitness centres. These are assets we cannot create,”* said Mr. Charoenphan.



Hubba: Event at Glass House

For certain, to be situated in a prime location would cost a lot of money. Ms. Preekamol Chantaranijakorn, a co-founder of **Ma:D**, which is also located in Ekamai area, mentioned that a large portion of the hub expenditure was on rent, electricity and space maintenance. *“I like this space a lot. It is very peaceful with lots of trees. The homelike atmosphere of an old house is perfect for exchanging ideas among people in the community. However, besides paying the rent, every month there is a lot of maintenance expense like fixing a roof leak and changing tiles,”* said Ms. Chantaranijakorn. She added that even though it is good to have a physical space for members to conduct any experimental projects, it is also a possibility for Ma:D to transform into a virtual hub. *“I am also considering visiting our partners once in a while, so people do not have to come here all the time. After all, Ma:D is a community, not a location,”* said Ms. Chantaranijakorn.

FabCafe, a makerspace, which is located in Ari; a so-called “creative district”, is facing the same challenge. In the recent years, the area became gentrified. Many new condominiums, offices buildings and shopping malls have been developed. Ms. Kalaya Kovidvisith, co-founder of FabCafe, mentioned that FabCafe has to be relocated next year after the contract expires. *“Actually the contract expired last year (2017) and in order to renew, the landlord was asking for 100% raise. After negotiating with her, she agreed to raise only 50% and renew the contract for two years. Imagine what we have to do to pay this high rent?”* said Ms. Kovidvisith.

Hub leads / Hub staffing

Many hubs have limited number of staff due to an inadequate income. As a result, one staff member must be capable of doing all kinds of tasks in the hubs. Sometimes hub managers are also responsible for daily tasks.

In the first year of **Ma:D club for a better society**, Ms.Preekamol Chantaranijakorn, co-founder of the hub mentioned that a lot of her friends were helping her setting up the hub by funding and volunteering. *“My friends helped me with renovating the space, creating logo, marketing and hosting events. Nowadays, there are only five staff and two founders. Everyone has to do everything. In a way, it helps us learn many things in such a short period of time,”* said Ms.Chantaranijakorn.

A similar situation is happening with an art space, **Head in the Clouds**, which is run only by the four founders. They are in charge of all kinds of works ranging from renovating the space, curating artworks, negotiating deal with artists, exhibiting artworks, organising an event, taking care of food and beverage in the cafe area, producing small pieces of artwork to sell in the space, to promoting the space via social media. As there is no staff, the four founders have to take turn coming in the space and looking after the cafe and gallery. *“Besides running the space, four of us are also freelance artists specialising in different areas. We felt that we are not 100% with our works, both with the art space and our personal projects. Whenever we focus on one, we will be less focussed on the other. At the end, both might fail. These careers are still new to us,”* said Ms. Titival Chalernsangsakul, co-founder of Head in the Clouds.



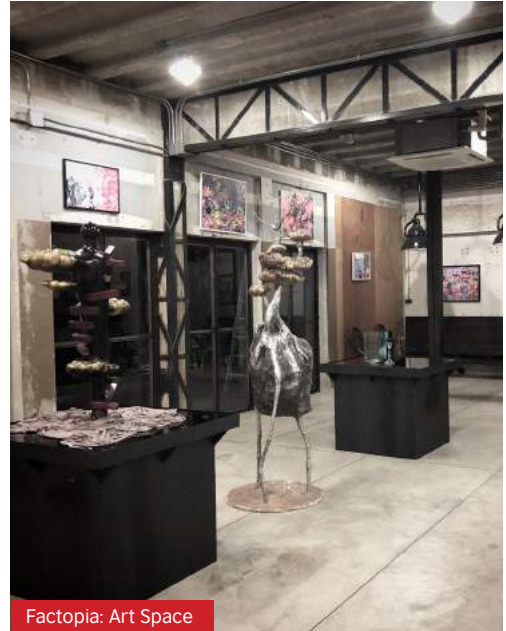
Head in the Clouds Event: It's Blooming

6

Mindset and culture

Thai culture and perception towards arts, designers, makers and social enterprise prevents a number of people from visiting hubs and participating in hubs activities. Not everyone knows how to appreciate art, therefore, it is perceived as inessential and exclusive for those with particular taste. Ms. Tithirat Kutchamuch, owner of **Factopia**, mentioned that when she exhibits her work, artists and people related with art would come, read the description and try to understand, while those without the backgrounds would not. *"They are afraid, afraid that they will not understand and not be able to discuss about it with anyone. Therefore, they develop a barrier, which protecting them from being involved with art and stop trying to understand,"* said Ms. Kutchamuch. Furthermore, she added that at the very beginning she would like Factopia to be an art community space with a variety of spaces covering cafe, art and design shop, gallery, design studios and artist in residence. However, after she realised that it is not Thai culture to visit an art space, she changed her mind. *"I would like the gallery to exhibit any kind of flat art pieces and small art objects. Nevertheless, it is not typical for Thai people to spend their weekend checking out new galleries. They usually go to shopping malls. Opening an art gallery in Thailand is like trying to go against Thai nature,"* said Ms. Kutchamuch.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE



Factopia: Art Space



FabCafe: Experimental Space



33Space: Sarin Tgamol Textile Design, Jim Thompson Home Furnishings Showroom

What has happened to art is somewhat similar to design. Instead of being solutions for a better society and quality of life, it is perceived as fashion and luxury, which is only available for those who can afford it. *“People often hire an architect to design a house and use designs to produce fashionable and luxurious objects. The recurring conception misleads the society. Design should equal social value,”* said Mr. Apisit Laistrooglai, former hub director of **Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC)**.

In Thailand, handmade products and those who create and make things by hands such as craftsmen, artisans, mechanics, carpenters and tailors are less valued. Moreover, a number of Thai people, especially those living in Bangkok, are not familiar with making and creating things by themselves, as there are a variety of services being offered at a low price. *“In Japan, makerspace is successful because the cost of living is high and to do things by themselves is cheaper. However, in Thailand the labour cost is not so expensive, therefore, hiring someone does not cost a lot of money,”* said Ms. Prasatbuntitya, General Manager of **PINN creative space**. Ms. Kalaya Kovidvisith, co-founder of **FabCafe** stated that the reason she targets children aged 10-14 is because she would like kids to have hand skills and experience in making things. *“If we give kids hand skills they would know that it is difficult. They would notice the difference between buying things and making things. Then they would value the time that makers spend on thinking and making a product,”* said Ms. Kovidvisith.

- STUDIO
- CENTRE
- NETWORK
- CLUSTER
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- ALTERNATIVE

Sustainability

Different hub types, structures, and missions have affected the sustainability of creative hubs. In order to be financially sustained, hubs need to have various sources of income. Some of the examples are funding from private or public sectors, venue and space rental, cafe and restaurant, consultation services and event fee. Keys of success are the following:

Right business model

Same types of hub may have different business models. A makerspace, **PINN Creative Space**, is a retail business. Its income is mainly from the sale of sewing and embroidery machines and various handicraft materials. **FabCafe**, on the other hand, earns from four different products and services: cafe, meeting room and venue space rental, service fee from using machines, and consultation fee from projects.

Choosing the right models, which correspond to hub missions are very important. Ms. Preekamol Chantaranijakorn, co-founder of **Ma:D**, mentioned that in the early years of Ma:D she used a co-working space model, which offered different pricing for a 1-day and monthly usage. However, after six months of operation, she realised that it hindered a fostering of the community. *"We aimed to target people in social sectors, so our price is quite low. Consequently, people who came to the space were those who wanted a cheap workspace and were not interested in any social issues, while those interested were hesitant to come in when they did not want to use the space but wanted to consult. Our goal is to initiate social*

projects and connect the people, but what happened was contrary to our missions," said Ms. Chantaranijakorn. Later, the co-working space was changed to a living room, where anyone is welcome to use the space anytime and pays as they like. After that more people started to come in for consultation. Besides earning from the donation, Ma:D generates revenue from rent (venue space, meeting rooms and office space), entry fee (events and workshops) and service fee from working on projects for organisations. However, although Ma:D represents a good example of hubs with interesting business models, the recurring challenges that the hub had to face led to its closure in August 2018.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE



FabCafe: Cafe Area

Partnership building

The background of hub founders and managers along with their personal connections may give hubs a head start, while partnerships with public and private sectors can help support hubs to tackle challenges, such as money, knowledge and space. Furthermore, partners can enhance competitiveness and draw more users to hubs. At its new branch in Sathorn district, **Glowfish** aims to create an ecosystem of a lifestyle workspace for the new generations by partnering with lifestyle and entertainment partners such as Physique 57 (fitness), Base (fitness), eventpop (event organizers) and Funjai (music community). *"We have entertainment partners, which will be hosting events at Glowfish Sathorn such as artist talks and concerts. And there are two fitness studios located at the space. Our members will probably go there and their members are more likely to rent our offices. We drive traffic to one another. It is a symbiotic relationship,"* said Mr. Parin Sarasin, Total Experience Manager at Glowfish.

Frequently, partners provide hubs with financial support when they have the same objectives. This year **Ma:D** received funding for its projects from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), as they both focus on the sustainable consumption and production. *"WWF heard about our campaign "Zero waste", so they approached us. They provided us with funding and allowed us to keep doing what we are doing but with some certain issues added on to it,"* said Ms. Preekamol Chantaranijakorn, co-founder of Ma:D. She stated that working with WWF benefits the hub in different ways.

In terms of content, WWF supports Ma:D with knowledge and a network of experts in the area. The financial support leads to a continuity of events and activities and also allows her to focus more on hub missions as she doesn't have to be concerned about the money making.



Glowfish x Mglobemall: Workshop

Hubba also partners with number of private business corporates. They are not only sponsoring activities and events such as hackathon, pitching, talk and workshop, but also supporting an opening of new spaces. In 2016, two new branches of Hubba were opened: The Discovery Hubba opened at Siam Discovery (partnered with Siam Piwat) and Hubba-to opened at Habito Mall (partnered with Sansiri Public Co., Ltd.). Besides that Hubba also partners with "Thumbsup", a media company, to establish "Techsauce", an online content provider for startup community that focuses on latest and insightful technology and business news in Thailand and Southeast Asia.

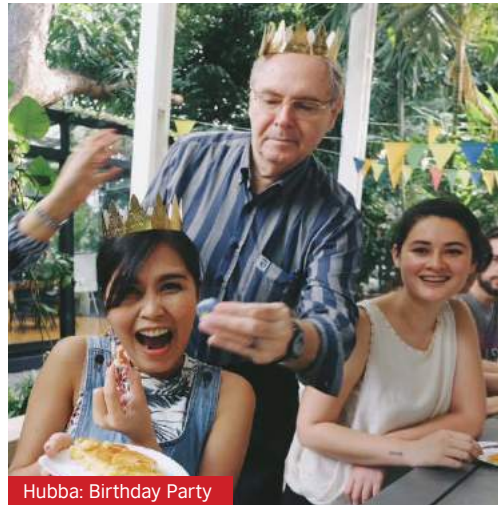
3

Branding and sense of community

Hubs need to have distinct purposes, missions and visions, along with a strong brand identity and unique culture to draw their targets and build the community. A sense of belonging may prompt a person to recommend and revisit the hubs. Furthermore, established brand and community also lead to various collaborations and partnerships.

Glowfish pays close attention to the unique design of space and Programmemes, as a way to curate the community. *“People should know right away when they walk in whether or not they belong here. If an uptight person sees our funky meeting room with a screen on a ceiling, he will not want to be here. Therefore, people in our community are more likely to have the same attitude,”* said Mr. Parin Sarasin, Total Experience Manager at Glowfish. He also added that even though Glowfish regularly advertises online, word of mouth is the most effective marketing tool that brings more and more people to the community. Those recommended by the tenants are often staying longer. Besides that, many organisations also approach Glowfish for franchise opportunity because of its strong brand identity.

- STUDIO
- CLUSTER
- CENTRE
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- NETWORK
- ALTERNATIVE



“The name “Hubba” came from Hub + Ba. “Ba” in Thai means craziness. We are friendly, approachable, fun, with a lot of movement and full of spirit. The uniqueness of Hubba culture is that it is not entirely created by us, but there are rooms for our members to co-create,” said Mr. Amarit Charoenphan, co-founder of Hubba. He added that sometimes the members would host their own events, invite staff to their parties, volunteer to help out at reception, invite their friends to join the hub and give them a tour. Mr. Chakraphan Hiranwongwira, one of the members of Hubba, still remembered his first time attending a three day hackathon called ‘Hubba Stadium’. *“Hubba is very good at organising the networking party. Usually people would get bored and try to sneak out during this time. However, at Hubba it was very fun. I got to know many people in the startup industry, not only those taking part in the event. I occasionally visit Hubba to hang out with the staff,”* said Mr. Hiranwongwira. Furthermore, there are several companies that would like to host events and collaborate with Hubba as its community is their target groups.

Understanding their audiences and communities

The understanding of user needs would allow hubs to tailor their products, Programmemes and services to maintain existing users and entice new users. As an architect himself and the owner of the first office at **33Space**, Mr. Jitas Sornsongkram, owner of the hub, understands exactly the work habits and needs of creative entrepreneurs. As a result, he offers a competitive price, 24-hour, 7 days a week access with a high security and parking spaces. Moreover, the hub is pet-friendly and the tenants have freedoms to design their own space. *"I like the homey atmosphere. There are lots of trees and many cats. I also know many people here. It is safe with high security and opens 24 hours, which allows me to focus on my work. I often come here at night and on a weekend to work. Working in such environment brings up my creativity, unlike working in an office building,"* said Ms. Khanittha Nualtaranee, textile artist and designer of Kaniit Textile, one of the tenants at 33Space.



33Space: Studio Space

PINN Creative Space targets anyone with or without design background and aims to enable them to become modern handicraft entrepreneurs. Therefore, Pinn provides all kinds of products and services required including inspiration, knowledge, skill, equipment, material and market. For those who do not know what to do and still look for ideas, Pinn has in-house designers and a content team in Chiang Mai, which is responsible for generating new ideas and inspirations. Anyone who visited **Pinn facebook page** will be inspired by a variety of craft works which will be updated regularly. For those who do not know how to do and want to learn from experts and have a hand-on experience, there are a variety of workshops available, such as Repeat Pattern Design, Basic 101 Sewing Tote Bag, Basic 101 Laser Cut and Basic 3D Printing Autodesk Fusion 360. These workshops will guide them through every process from coming up with ideas to producing a prototype. For those who want to use machines without possessing one, Pinn provides various types of machines and materials along with assistance to support throughout the process.



PINN Creative Space: Provided Materials



Glowfish: Networking Party

Glowfish, a serviced office for expanding startups, offers a lifestyle workplace with all kinds of facilities needed by the community to work harder and grow stronger. Its location along with space designs and Programmemes also benefits the tenants as they enhance the competitiveness for recruitments of new generation employees.

Moreover, it is absolutely vital for hubs to have purposes and set their objectives along with missions and visions that are specific and relevant to their audiences. This would enable hubs to proceed with directions, meanwhile,

building strong communities. Even though, the impact of hub is not easy to measure and far beyond a number, some measurable indicators are required to assess hubs' performance and achievement such as number of users, events and collaborations. The indication of improvement not only allows hubs to be certain in their course of actions, but also can be used to communicate with both private and public organisations in order to raise funding and form new partnerships.

- STUDIO
- CENTRE
- NETWORK
- CLUSTER
- ONLINE PLATFORM
- ALTERNATIVE

Conclusion

An emergence of creative hubs in Thailand was triggered by many factors, including the economic crisis in 1997, government policies and organisations, survival skill of creative professions, the use of technology and new type of business. In Bangkok Metropolitan Region, creative hub is a movement for and by new generations and creative communities. Hubs are vital drivers for the economic growth and they enhance competitiveness of creative industries and strengthen the creative community. Moreover, they reflect a mixture of Thai culture with the contemporary lifestyle of new generations and shape them at the same time. Hubs are safe places for new generations to discover themselves, express who they are and become who they want to be.

IT'S

BLOO

om

ing



Based on the research, hubs can be classified into two types: 1) Static hub - This type of hub offers specific products and services in response to demand of users. It often arises from a business opportunity. The examples of hubs are office and studio rentals.

2) Dynamic hub - This type of hub transforms itself during the time in order to be financially sustainable and pursue the hub's missions. The examples of hubs are art space, community space, co-working space and makerspace. It is much harder for dynamic hubs to survive as there are no obvious demands. Therefore, they need to create awareness, battle with long existing culture and mindset of Thai people and connect with their communities by understanding their needs and building relationships in order to sustain the hubs and at the same time create impact. Interestingly, this type of hub is the one that shapes the culture of future hubs.

Hubs are safe places for new generations to discover themselves.



FabCafe: Space and Service

Creative hubs in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region are in different stages. Some are expanding their communities and networks, while some are still struggling to identify themselves to their users. Even though there

are no fixed formula or models for successful creative hubs, lessons learned from the pioneers would allow emerging hubs to be more aware and prepare for the challenges.

For more information on how to operate creative hubs, please check out 'Creative HubKit: made by hubs for emerging hubs'. Read more about creative hubs and creative economy at <https://creativeeconomy.britishcouncil.org>.

DIRECTORY

33Space 1

- **Programme:** Studio and office space rental, Cafe
- 📍 **Address:** 33 Pradipat 17 road, Samsennai, Phayathai, Bangkok 10400

Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC) 2

- **Programme:** Library, Co-working space, Fabrication laboratory / Makerspace, Material centre, Training / Education, Artists / Maker talks, Workshop and Events, Consultation / Mentoring, Research, Content creation, Hacks, Cafe, Meeting room and event space rental, Design shop
- 🌐 **Website:** web.tcdc.or.th
- ✉️ **Email:** info@tcdc.or.th
- 📍 **Address:** 1160 Charoenkrung road, Bangrak, Bangkok 10501

Glowfish 3

- **Programme:** Co-working space, Hot-desking, Office rental, Virtual office rental, Networking events, Meeting room / Venue space rental
- 🌐 **Website:** www.glowfishoffices.com
- ✉️ **Email:** info@glowfishoffices.com
- 📍 **Glowfish Asoke Address:** 2nd floor, Asoke Tower, Sukhumvit 21 (Soi Asoke), Khlongtoey Nuea, Wattana, Bangkok 10110
- 📍 **Glowfish Sathorn Address:** 2nd floor, Sathorn Thani Building 2, 92 Sathon Nuea road, Silom, Bangrak, Bangkok 10500

Bangkok Swing Dance 4

- **Programme:** Social dance, Dancing courses
- 🌐 **Website:** www.bangkokswing.com/
- ✉️ **Email:** info@bangkokswing.com
- 📍 **Address:** The Hop on Silom road (between Soi 18-20, Suriya Wong,

HUBBA 5

- **Programme:** Co-working space, Hot-desking, Studio space rental (Hubba-to), Makerspace (Hubba-to), Training / Education, Artists / Innovators talks, Consultation / Mentoring, Networking events, Hacks,
- 🌐 **Website:** www.hubbathailand.com
- ✉️ **Email:** connect@hubbathailand.com
- 📍 **Hubba Ekkamai Address:** 19 Soi Ekkamai 4, Sukhumvit 63 road, Prakanong Nua, Wattana Bangkok 10110
- 📍 **Discovery Hubba Address:** 4th floor, Siam Discovery, 989 Rama I road, Pathum Wan, Bangkok 10330
- 📍 **Hubba-to Address:** 3rd floor, Habito Mall, Phra Khanong Nuea, Sukhumvit 77, Wattana, Bangkok 10110

FabCafe (Makerspace) 6

- **Programme:** Fabrication laboratory / Makerspace, Training / Education, Artists / Maker talks, Workshop and Events, Consultation / Mentoring, Research, Content creation, Hacks, Cafe, Meeting room and event space rental (indoor and outdoor)

🌐 **Website:** fabcafe.com/bangkok

✉ **Email:** info.bkk@fabcafe.com

📍 **Address 1:** Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC), 1160 Charoenkrung road, Bangrak, Bangkok 10501

📍 **Address 2:** 77/1 Soi Ari 1 / Ratchakru, Bangkok 10400

PINN Creative Space (Makerspace) 7

- **Programme:** Co-working space, Fabrication laboratory / Makerspace, Training / Education, Artists / Maker talks, Workshop and Events, Research, Content creation

🌐 **Website:** www.pinncreative.com

✉ **Email:** pcs.rama9@pinncreative.com

📍 **The Shoppes Grand Address:** 2nd Floor, The Shoppes Grand Rama 9, 1/33 Rama 9, Huai Khwang, Bangkok 10310

📍 **Siam Discovery Address:** 3rd Floor: Creative Lab Zone, Siam Discovery, 989, Rama I road, Pathum Wan, Bangkok 10330 Thailand

📍 **ZPELL Address:** 1st floor, ZPELL Future Park Rangsit, 94 Paholyothin Rd. Prachathipat Thanyaburi Pathumthani 12130

Ma:D 8

- **Programme:** Hotdesk (Living Room), Office rental, Training, Workshops and Events, Meeting room and event space rental

🌐 **Website:** madeehub.com/

✉ **Email:** info@madeehub.com

📍 **Address:** Sukhumvit 63 Ekkamai Soi 4, Bangkok, Thailand 10110

remark: The hub was already closed

Charm-Learn Studio 9

- **Programme:** Ceramic studio, Workshop and Course, Ceramic Shops, Cafe

🌐 **Website:** www.facebook.com/charmlearnstudio95

✉ **Email:** charmlearnstudio@gmail.com

📍 **Address:** 95 Phraeng Sanphasat road, San Chao Pho Sua, Phra Nakhon, Bangkok 10200

Tentacles 10

- **Programme:** Residency Programme, Internship & Cultural Exchange Programme, Gallery and Exhibition, Training / Education, Workshop

🌐 **Website:** www.tentaclesgallery.com/

✉ **Email:** info@tentaclesgallery.com

📍 **Address:** 2198/10-11 Soi Taweewattana (Narathiwass22), Chan road, Chongnonsee, Yannawa, Bangkok 10120

Cho Why 11

- **Programme:** Gallery Space, Project and Workshop Space, Events

🌐 **Website:** www.facebook.com/chowhybkk

Email: chowhybkk@gmail.com

✉ **Address:** Soi Nana 17, Pom Prap Sattru Phai, China town, Bangkok, Thailand 10100

C-ASEAN (Makerspace) ¹²

- **Programme:** Library, Office space rental, Co-working space, Training / Education, Artists talks, Workshop and Events, Research, Content creation, Hacks, Cafe, Meeting room and event space rental
- 🌐 **Website:** www.c-ASEAN.org
- ✉ **Email:** askme@c-ASEAN.org
- 📍 **Address:** 10th floor, Cyber World Tower, 90 Ratchadapisek, Huai Khwang, Bangkok 10310, Thailand

Naiipa Art Complex ¹³

- **Programme:** Co-working space, Office rental, Exhibition space, Meeting room and event space rental
- 🌐 **Website:** www.naiipa.com/
- ✉ **Email:** info@naiipa.com
- 📍 **Address:** 46 Sukhumvit 46 Bangkok 10110

Draft Board (Co-working space) ¹⁴

- **Programme:** Hotdesk, Co-working space, Office rental, Shooting studio, Chill Room (recreation area)
- 🌐 **Website:** draftboard.co.th
- ✉ **Email:** info@draftboard.co.th
- 📍 **Address:** 26/-47 12A Floor Orakarn Building, 46 Chit Lom Alley, Khwaeng Lumpini, 10330

Bangkok Screening Room ¹⁵

- **Programme:** Cinema (50 seats), Cafe & Food, Events
- 🌐 **Website:** bkksr.com
- ✉ **Email:** hello@bkksr.com
- 📍 **Address:** Level 2, 1/3-7 Sala Daeng Soi 1, Silom, Bangkok, Thailand

Head in the Clouds (Art Space) ¹⁶

- **Programme:** Cafe, Artists talks, Workshop and Events, Gallery and Exhibition,
- 🌐 Art shop
- 🌐 **Website:** <https://www.facebook.com/headinthecLOUDS.artspace>
- ✉ **Email:** headinthecLOUDS.artspace@gmail.com
- 📍 **Address:** 365/9 Phra Sumen Rd, Khwaeng Wat Bowon Niwet, Khet Phra

Factopia ¹⁷

- **Programme:** Studio and office space rental
- 🌐 **Website:** <http://www.factopia.info>, www.facebook.com/factopia
- 📍 **Address:** Bang Kraso station, Nonthaburi

YELO House ¹⁸

- **Programme:** Gallery and Exhibition, Workshop Space, Office rental, Events, Cafe, Art and Design Shops
- 🌐 **Website:** www.yelohouse.com/
- ✉ **Email:** contact@yelohouse.com
- 📍 **Address:** 20/2 Soi Kasemsan 1 (Opposite MBK shopping mall) on Rama 1 Road, Bangkok 10330

FOOTNOTE AND DIRECTORY

1. Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Thammasat University. (2009). '6 Creative Spaces in Bangkok', In: AR652 Research Seminar Report. Bangkok: Thammasat University; Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC). (2009). '6 Creative Spaces in Bangkok: Jatujak, Thonglor, Siam Square, Town in Town, RCA, and Sukhumvit', In: Bangkok Creative City Skills Mapping Symposium. Bangkok: Thailand Creative and Design Centre (TCDC); Kaewlai, P. (2010). Reinigorating City: Striving Bangkok's Creative Assets to Enhance the City's Competitiveness in South East Asia Region. Spaces & Flows Conference, 4-5 December, University of California, Los Angeles.
2. www.materialconnexion.com
3. Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC). (2013). The preliminary study of the potential and feasibility of settling the permanent office of Thailand and Creative and Design Center (TCDC) at the Grand Postal Building in Bangrak district. Unpublished; Kaewlai, P. (2015). Survey of Businesses and Vacant Spaces in Charoen Krung Creative District. Unpublished

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

33Space 1

Mr. Jitas Sornsongkram, owner of 33space

Ms. Sarin Tasnathepgamol, textile designer, Sarin Tgamol Textile Design

Ms. Khanittha Nualtaranee, textile artist and designer of Kaniit Textile

Ms. Pimm Chongcharoen, Creative Director, Teaspoon Studio

Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC) 2

Mr. Pichit Virankabutra, director of creative space development department of TCDC

Mr. Apisit Laistrooglai, former hub director of Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC)

Glowfish 3

Mr. Parin Sarasin, total experience manager of Glowfish

Hubba 5

Mr. Amarit Charoenphan, co-founder of Hubba

Mr. Chakraphan Hiranwongwira, one of the member of Hubba and TCDC

FabCafe 6

Ms. Kalaya Kovidvisith, co-founder of FabCafe

Mr. Phantagan Putsui, one of the visitors at FabCafe

PINN Creative Space 7

Ms. June Prasatbuntitya, general manager of PINN Creative Space

Ma:D 8

Ms. Preekamol Chantaranajakorn, co-founder of Ma:D

Ms. Pachara sungden, one of the visitors at Ma:D

C-ASEAN 12

Dr. Karndee Leopairote, hub director of C-ASEAN

Mr. Jirayod Theppipit, Managing Director of Infoted Co. Ltd.,

Head in the Clouds 16

Mr. Yapon Promnorakid, co-founder of Head in the Clouds

Mr. Wasit Chindaporn, co-founder of Head in the Clouds

Mr. Bhunnawat Uraiwong, co-founder of Head in the Clouds

Ms. Titival Chalermksangkul, co-founder of Head in the Clouds

Factopia 17

Ms. Tithirat Kutchamuch, owner of Factopia,



The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. Using the UK's cultural resources we make a positive contribution to the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Each year we reach over 20 million people face-to-face and more than 500 million people online, via broadcasts and publications.

Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. The majority of our income is raised delivering a range of projects and contracts in English teaching and examinations, education and development contracts and from partnerships with public and private organisations. Eighteen per cent of our funding is received from the UK government.

We have been in Thailand since 1952 and currently established six offices in Thailand; five in Bangkok and one Chiang Mai. We are committed to developing relationships between UK and Thailand and creating opportunity through our work English, education, examinations, the arts and society.