

Science Sub-committee, Museum Advisory Committee

8th Meeting held on 9 April 2021

Summary of Discussion

1. Science Museums under the New Landscape

- Members noted the update on the expansion project of the Hong Kong Science Museum (HKScM) and Hong Kong Museum of History.
- Members made the following suggestions:
 - The solar panel system and green features of the permeable façade were good teaching resources for science education. HKScM could also consider developing a green educational path and curating a mini-exhibition on the expansion project, detailing the process from conception to completion;
 - The design of the new HKScM building should be flexible in functionality. The partition design in the building should allow flexibility in staging different kinds of exhibitions in the future;
 - The design should enhance accessibility to the complex while retaining more outdoor space. The entrance should also be made more noticeable to the public;
 - Applications of local innovation and technology could be incorporated into the building design to emphasise that HKScM was “the science museum of Hong Kong”; and
 - HKScM could consider showcasing special and large-scale exhibits to establish connectivity with its surrounding environment in Tsim Sha Tsui.
- A representative of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) thanked members for the fruitful suggestions on the schematic design and would take the advice into consideration.
- Members noted the positioning and collection / programming focuses of HKScM and the Hong Kong Space Museum (HKSpM).
- Members made the following suggestions:
 - HKScM should consider attracting the younger generation by introducing new technologies with parents and teachers as the primary target of promotion. Collaboration opportunities with local tech enterprises should also be explored in organising future programmes;

- The expansion project could be a good example of project learning for the youth. A member appreciated the idea of citizen engagement and makerspace, and suggested HKScM organising social innovation competitions and designating some space to showcase the winning entries; and
 - HKScM could consider utilising more interactive exhibits in future exhibitions and to renew some existing exhibits such as the Energy Machine. HKScM could also consider curating a permanent exhibition on palaeontology in the future.
- Representatives of LCSD responded as follows:
- HKScM had been collaborating with tech start-ups of the Hong Kong Science Park in organising exhibitions with their robots and would continue exploring opportunities for collaboration in the future;
 - HKScM might consider establishing a Science Academy focusing on STEM education for students and teachers, and would collaborate with overseas institutions when opportunities arose; and
 - A permanent exhibition on palaeontology was being planned and would be opened in mid-2022. Feedback from the public revealed that the Energy Machine was considered an icon of HKScM and a collective memory to visitors.
- Members appreciated the efforts of LCSD in curating the online programmes and put forward the following suggestions:
- LCSD Museums could consider interacting with audiences through online Q&A games on social media platforms with gifts or souvenirs as prizes; and
 - The hybrid approach that integrated online and physical programmes should continue even when the COVID-19 pandemic subsided.
- An LCSD representative thanked members for the suggestions and replied that LCSD would closely monitor the response of the online programmes and boost the viewership through various social media platforms and leveraging on other media when necessary. Featuring programmes in both online and physical formats would continue even after the COVID-19 pandemic had abated. Nevertheless, online initiatives should always be treated as a tool for connecting the public instead of an attempt to replace physical exhibitions as the main business of museums.