

2020 TAIWAN LANTERN FESTIVAL IN TAICHUNG, THE DAZZLING CITY



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY, AND CREATIVITY
4. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
7. CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING, AND PUBLIC SPACE

CREATIVITY, INNOVATION, CLIMATE, DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABLE, TRADITION, CONSERVATION, HERITAGE, PUBLIC SPACE, TECHNOLOGY, COOPERATION, GROWTH, ATTRACTIVENESS, CULTURAL

1. Context

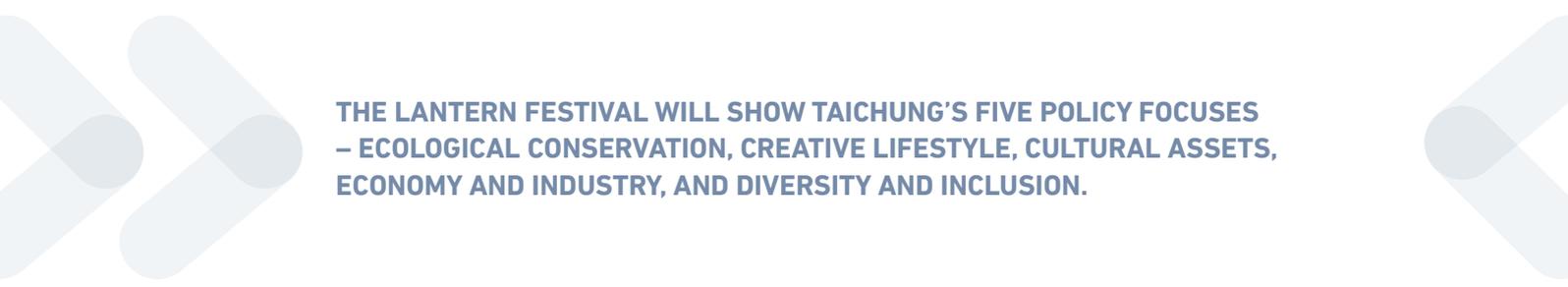
Taichung City, with 2.81 million inhabitants, is located in central Taiwan. It is a densely populated and economically powerful city. Taichung is among the top 100 most visited cities in the world and was named the most liveable city in Taiwan by a CNN report. Lonely Planet also mentioned that one of the secret wonders of the world is in Taichung.

2. Taichung and culture

Since 1990, Taiwan Lantern Festival has become an annual and national event. It displays folk culture and festive tradition as well as generates tourism revenue. Taiwan Lantern Festival enables citizens to gather together to experience the atmosphere of the folk Lantern Festival through lantern craft art. As technology has advanced, various media have been widely used in lantern festivals. Adhering to the value of traditional culture and demonstrating technological innovation are the concepts that the “2020 Taiwan Lantern Festival in Taichung” wishes to communicate to people.

Taichung City Government actively competed for the right to host the 2020 Taiwan Lantern Festival. Titled “Splendid Taichung under rays of the rising sun,” the organization integrates forest park and the image of dawn with traditional lantern craft to boost the energy of the Fantastic Forest, symbolizing the light to light up Taiwan like rays of the rising sun. The lantern festival will show Taichung’s five policy focuses - ecological conservation, creative lifestyle, cultural assets, economy and industry, and diversity and inclusion.

Field thematic curating is pioneering at the festival. Based on the characteristics of the forest field and the “Dazzling Taichung” theme, the “Fantastic Forest” at the forest park area merges sustainable ecology and aesthetic policy not only to reveal the biodiversity of the forest but also to highlight environmental education involving the design of videos, sound, stories and art installations.



THE LANTERN FESTIVAL WILL SHOW TAICHUNG’S FIVE POLICY FOCUSES – ECOLOGICAL CONSERVATION, CREATIVE LIFESTYLE, CULTURAL ASSETS, ECONOMY AND INDUSTRY, AND DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION.

Our new city agenda involves building an equal, sustainable and innovative city and facing the challenges of urbanization. Based on this, Taichung City Government actively looks forward to cooperating with the private sector in the promotion.

3. Project goals and implementation

3.1. Main and specific objectives

Taichung attracts 40 million tourists annually. The 2020 Taiwan Lantern Festival in Taichung attracted more than 1.280.000 tourists and brought in NT\$15 billion in business opportunities.



Specific goals

The festival attracts millions of people and creates business opportunities, including at the lantern venues or local attractions, so it is of great benefit to the government or private business. Taiwan Lantern Festival has cooperated with the private and public sectors to promote the festival and the objective “Folk culture roots, tradition internationalizing” globally. Based on the concepts of localization, tradition, technologization and globalization, it transforms a traditional folk event into a grand tourism event.

THE 2020 TAIWAN LANTERN FESTIVAL IN TAICHUNG ATTRACTED MORE THAN 1.280.000 TOURISTS AND BROUGHT NT\$15 BILLION IN BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.

3.2. Project development

Beneficiary population

Taichung has hosted the Taiwan Lantern Festival twice within five years and actively promotes Taichung and central Taiwan to stimulate consumption. It also launches cross-border cooperation among seven counties in central Taiwan to boost tourism in neighbouring areas and increase tourism revenue. In this way, the counties in central Taiwan share in the benefits of tourism and are willing to work together to boost economic growth.

Main actions developed

Based on the theme “Dazzling Taichung,” the Taiwan Lantern Festival in Taichung contains three lantern areas. The “Mysterious Forest” focuses on the biodiversity of the forest and merges ecological sustainability, art and aesthetics policies. It highlights sustainability and environmental education, using multimedia presentation of images, sound, stories and art installations. The “Art World,” integrates traditional lantern craft, dynamic mechanical devices, hi-tech and multimedia to create the best lantern art. Themed as fun for parents and kids, the “Children’s Paradise” in Wenxin Forest Park, is the supporting exhibition area. Many lantern sections and performances are arranged to present the park as a children’s paradise in a forest in the city center. It displays the unique ecosystem, green technology, ethnic diversity, folk culture, traditional arts and crafts and religion in Taichung.

On the other hand, in terms of lantern craft display or scheduling a local itinerary, the government cooperates with the counties in central Taiwan and with local businesses, organizations and schools, especially the tourism industry such as resorts, hotels, gift shops and amusement parks. Through resource integration and the combination of industry, officials and universities, it ensures co-existence and co-prosperity for all industries. Taichung City Government is also establishing matches among travel agencies and the hotel resort industry to form a cross-industry alliance to manage featured and attractive package itineraries, which aims to draw more tourists from home and abroad and even make them stay longer. Promoting Taichung tourism involves working with the tourism industry to engage in cross-selling activities, including private tours or projects, an in-depth tour, launching lantern festival events or creative promotion, and highlighting local characteristics. Tourists are encouraged to explore Taichung City during the daytime and watch lanterns at night.

Obstacles

Establishing the legacy can lead to highlighting Taiwan's soft power, as well as the innovations in Taichung, was one of the main challenges. Therefore, it is important to choose venues after winning the right to host the event. For the main venue, we have to consider the facility, mass transportation and the post-usage of the flora expo venue.

Results

Due to the efforts of various work partners, the City Government launched a fantastic lantern event within ten months, with limited preparation time, the longest duration and particularly, during outbreak prevention. The number of visitors was beyond expectations. On February 22, 850,000 visitors arrived and broke its one-day attendance record. The total number of visitors to the lantern festival had shot up to 11,820,000. Especially during the period of outbreak prevention, cooperation work revealed that Taiwan plays a key role in public health and digital art. Optimizing the urban lighting environment shows not merely the connection between art and the environment but the coexistence of tradition and technology.

4. Impact

4.1. Direct impact

Impact on local government

Taiwan Lantern Festival in Taichung successfully promoted a unique local culture and the friendly Taiwanese people, which not only wins global recognition and good reputation but effectively promotes Taichung.

Broader impact on the city and its population

Taiwan Lantern Festival is a grand and important festive event in Taiwan, able to draw a large number of visitors. Through promotion, it usually gives a good impression to consumers and wins their recognition and hearts. Visitors from abroad often take the opportunity to visit other attractions and taste delicious food, which can boost the local economy.

ONE THE THREE LANTERN AREAS, THE "MYSTERIOUS FOREST", FOCUSES ON BIODIVERSITY AND MERGES ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY, ART, AND AESTHETICS POLICIES, HIGHLIGHTING SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION USING IMAGES, SOUND, STORIES AND ART INSTALLATIONS.



4.2. Evaluation

High-level political representatives of Taiwan have stressed that the excellent preparation for the Festival sets a good example of cooperation between the central cabinet and local government. Hosting this festival was confronted with many challenges due to the need to prevent the outbreak of the novel coronavirus during preparation time, with the implementation of the epidemic prevention and a stricter implementation of infection prevention. By doing so, visitors could safely participate in the festival and were quite satisfied with the event.

4.3. Key factors

We overcame a huge challenge due to coronavirus. As for epidemic prevention in a big city, we are supposed to have a stricter implementation of infection prevention. The city government thanked all the colleagues and more than 5,000 volunteers. We appreciated the staff's willingness, ability and efficiency to complete this challenging task.

The key for the success of this festival was the guidance, instructions and collaboration of the Tourism Bureau and the ministries of the central government, the city cabinet, the volunteers, the city's and county governments around Taiwan, domestic and international performing groups, and private organization sponsors.

4.4. Continuity

Future trends will stress sustainable development and local travel. Thus, the lantern festival will upgrade and transform its brand based on the principles of "environmental protection", "art", and "local". The specific measures include the inheritance of event brands, the participation of international curating teams, post-usage of the archive, incorporating landscape features, announcing extending the preparation time, integrating regions and taking turns to host the event. Moreover, it will involve more Taiwanese culture, local features and concepts of environmental protection to make Taiwan Lantern Festival more sustainable and brilliant.

5. Further information

Taichung was a candidate for the fourth “UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award” (November 2019 – May 2020). The jury for the award drew up its final report in June of 2020, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

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