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Creative City Yokohama

— Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan
2004—

Implementation of a branding strategy for an international
port city that delivers “civic power and creativity”

Key Issue

The city of Yokohama was one of the first cities in Japan to open their international port for trade. With 160 years of history since the opening of the port, the city has built its historical cityscape and unique culture through interactions with many different overseas cultures. However, amid the reorganization of the port spaces associated with the introduction of containers and piers and the sophistication and service orientation of industries in coastal areas, the city faced challenges in reviving the attraction of the port area and fostering new business. Hence models of creative urban development were sought under which the city, developed as Japan's gateway to the world, can be fostered through collaboration among its citizens, businesses and government.

Project Approach

Living Lab*¹ Project combining people and businesses

The Yokohama City Government carries out the Living Lab Project, which acts as a platform for open innovation*² through citizen' s collaboration with active utilization of urban spaces and the environment. By capturing the activities under this project as opportunities for creating new business for small- and medium-sized enterprises and business ventures, the project not only develop new services and products that help resolve issues concerning lifestyle and the local area, but also bring about new industrial revitalization through local branding, nurturing civic pride, and urban regeneration.

Strategy for Creative City of Culture and Art and city branding through the MICE*³ strategy

The Yokohama City Government has pushed ahead with evolution into a Creative City of Culture and Art by operating a creative hub that disseminates creative activities while making use of historical buildings and public spaces. To foster the creative industry, strategies included the invitation of a university with a department of film and video production to relocate to the city, and matching the creativity of locally active artists and creators with the high technical strength and capabilities of local businesses. Furthermore, the city is endeavoring to increase its competitiveness and brand appeal as an international port city through the integrated development of facilities for meetings, incentives, conventions and events/exhibitions [MICE], with urban functions.

The port area has been transformed into an urban space with new attractions following the port redevelopment in harmony with historical buildings and the construction of MICE facilities. It attracts a large number of visitors from home and abroad.
Source:YOKOHAMA VISITORS' GUIDE



Set in a specific zone and serves as a space for actual activities, Living Lab has been launched as an experimental activity space for creating efforts to resolve local issues.



Improve creativity of citizens by introducing art into their living environments, for example, painting artworks to house walls.

Data

Area: 186 ha in the Minato Mirai 21 district*

Project implementing bodies: Yokohama City Government and private business operators

Planned population: 10,000 residents and 190,000 workers in the Minato Mirai 21 district

Main facilities introduced: (1)YCC Yokohama Creativecity Center, (2)Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts, (3)Pacifico Yokohama

* The Minato Mirai 21 district is a central district of the project activities presented. Among the main facilities introduced, (1) and (2) are developed outside the Minato Mirai 21 district.



To the Next Phase

The promotion of public-private-partnership (PPP) has led to widen activities using advanced technologies such as AI and IoT. PPP projects such as development of AI support system to create care plans, as well as chat bot that provides guidance on the sorting of waste are being developed. With the measures utilizing different data owned by local governments within Yokohama City, their application are anticipated to resolve new social issues such as medical and childcare, as well as to create services.