

HONG KONG ARTS ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

PAPER ON

THE PROVISION OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR
ARTS ADMINISTRATORS OF DIFFERENT LEVELS EXPERIENCE IN HONG KONG

IN RESPONSE TO THE NEW \$150M FUNDING ALLOCATED FOR THE TRAINING OF ARTS
ADMINISTRATORS IN POLICY ADDRESS 2013

Submission to The Chief Executive, Mr C Y Leung,
and
Hon MA Fung-kwok, Member, Legislative Council
(Functional Constituency – Sports, Performing Arts, Culture and Publication)

29 January 2013

1. Introduction

It has been expected that there will be an increase in demand for Arts Administrators of different levels of experience and expertise in Hong Kong in the run-up to, and after the opening of, the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) Phase 1 facilities as well as other revitalized cultural venues. While the government is also putting more resources and emphasis on nurturing creative industries in order to face fierce competition from regional countries, administrators in the sector with both expertise in the arts and entrepreneurial mindset are more likely to help the arts ventures to thrive local and internationally.

Concerns have been raised about the availability of arts administrators and their capability to rise to the challenges of the WKCD project¹. Currently, even before the opening of WKCD facilities, there is a shortage of capable middle/ senior arts administrators, which is apparent in the difficulties faced by major arts organizations in recruiting suitable managers to fill senior job vacancies², and there is an increasing reliance on the recruitment of overseas arts managers to fill these posts.

The Hong Kong Arts Administrators Association (HKAAA) welcomes the additional funding of \$150 million allocated to strengthen the training of arts administrators with different levels of experience in the next five years, including internships, further studies and diversified professional training, as announced by the Chief Executive in his Policy Address 2013.

This paper will look into the current training opportunities available for local arts administrators and make recommendations on how to utilize the additional \$150M resources effectively.

2. Existing Training Opportunities for Arts Administrators

2.1 Arts/Cultural Management Academic Programmes Offered by Local Tertiary Institutions

2.1.1 There are growing numbers of Arts/Cultural Management award-bearing programmes available from local tertiary institutions in Hong Kong (which reflects the growing interest from the public in the arts industry), with currently at least 9 programmes³ producing around 200-250 graduates each year. There will be another new postgraduate programme targeted for in-service arts administrators to be offered by the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) in the 2013 academic year.

¹In the HKADC report in 2008, it has been roughly estimated that there will be a shortfall of 820 managerial, operation or administrative positions after the implementation of phase one core arts and cultural facilities, but there were, as estimated in 2008, roughly only 876 arts administrators currently in the field. (HKADC: "WKCD on the Horizon: Arts Administrators, the Key to Success", *Arts News*, March 2008, Vol 2)

²HKADC has commissioned Aon Hewitt, Hong Kong to conduct the *Survey of Workforce and Future Demand for Arts Administrators and Professionals of Arts Organisations & Venue Operators*, hopefully to be completed and announced by May/ June 2013 and shall add new insights to the current arts administrators manpower in Hong Kong.

³ For details of the various Arts/Cultural Management courses on offer, please refer to: http://hkaaa.org.hk/?a=group&id=arts_course

2.1.2 Out of the 10 programmes, only the *Advanced Cultural Leadership Programme* of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) and the postgraduate programme to be offered by HKIED targeted specially for in-service middle/senior level arts managers. For the other 6 postgraduate programmes on offer, only around 30% of students are currently working in the arts field (mainly junior administrators), and the other students are those who are interested in joining the industry⁴. While the 2 undergraduate courses are mainly for those with no experience.

2.1.3 Since 2012, the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) has been offering scholarships for in-service practitioners to further their studies in one of the above local programmes. West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCD) and HKU have also collaborated in providing scholarship/ fees reduction to talented practitioners to study in the HKU *Advanced Cultural Leadership Programme*.

2.2 Professional Training Opportunities – Intensive Courses, Seminars and Conferences

2.2.1 As the representative voice of local arts administrators, the HKAAA is one of the core providers of professional learning opportunities in form of intensive workshops and seminars, tailored for the needs of various levels of arts administrators, and providing a platform for knowledge sharing and communications, so as to promote, develop and support the entire scope of the arts administration community in Hong Kong. In May/ June each year, the HKAAA will also organize a *Cultural Leadership Summit* (2011-13 co-presenter: West Kowloon Cultural District Authority), aiming to bring together experienced international and local cultural leaders to share and discuss important issues of cultural leadership and management which are relevant to the Hong Kong arts scene, attracting more than 200 local arts managers and regional practitioners as well as guests and media to join.

2.2.2 Other organizations such as the Hong Kong Arts Festival, Hong Kong Fringe Club, Hong Kong Arts Centre, Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, HKADC, British Council and tertiary institutions have also been offering one-off seminars and conferences for in-service administrators.

2.3 In-bound On Job Training/ Internship

2.3.1 The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has launched its 1st and 2nd cohort of *The Arts Administrator Trainee Scheme* in 2010 and 2012. The 2-year scheme has so far offered 56 training places (23 in the first round, 33 in the second round), providing training and internship opportunities for people aspired to a career in the performing arts and museum

⁴ Prof. Tseng Sun-man (2011): *Some Thoughts on Training of Arts Administrators in Hong Kong*, from: <http://www.hkaaa.org.hk/?a=doc&id=109>

administration⁵. Out of the 23 trainees who completed the first cohort training, 19 of them either joined the arts and cultural industry as practitioners or further studied in the area.

2.3.2 The HKADC has re-launched its *Internship Scheme* in July 2011 for music, dance, drama and visual arts organizations to recruit artists and arts administrations interns. Under this one-year scheme, there was a total of 12 arts administration interns recruited to gain work experience at the small/ medium arts organizations (Grantees under HKADC 1 and 2 Year Grants). The Scheme provided young arts administrators to gain valuable working experience and insight into the work of local arts groups and at the same time soothe the manpower constraints in 12 of the local arts groups participated in this Scheme.

2.3.3 The HKAAA was invited to collaborate with HKADC in the *Young Administrators Advancement Programme (YAAP)*, with the goal of supporting arts administration interns recruited under the HKADC *Internship Scheme* (as detailed in 2.3.2). By providing mentorship and a series of professional trainings, the programme nurtured the next generation of cultural practitioners and assisted the development of small and medium size arts groups in Hong Kong. Through regular contact and workshops, candidates of the programme have also established rapport and network, which is very meaningful for the future career development of these young practitioners.

2.4 Out-bound On Job Training / Overseas Internship

2.4.1 The HKADC has launched the *Cultural Internship Scheme* with the support from the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) to sponsor promising arts professionals to take up work attachments at overseas arts groups. This includes the *Clore Leadership Programme*, the *Germany House of World Cultures Internship*, *Sage Gateshead Internship*, the *Whitechapel Gallery Internship* and the *Japan Mori Art Museum Internship*, supporting around 1-2 practitioners in each programme.

2.4.2 In view of the training needs of middle level administrators, the HKAAA is launching a two-year *Fellowship for Arts Management Experience (FAME)* programme for talented candidates with the support of HAB *Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme*. The *FAME* Fellows will have the opportunity to receive 12 weeks full-time attachment at internationally renowned arts organizations, developing professional knowledge on areas to meet their training needs, widening perspective overseas, and finally contributing their expertise to the local arts field. Allowance will also be given to the participants' employers to engage temporary staff covering the participants' attachment period, so to encourage employers to release their staff to participate in the Scheme. The programme will be launched in February 2013, supporting 4 fellows to gain work experience in Taiwan, Singapore and Australia.

⁵Monthly salaries of LCSD Trainees in the 1st and 2nd cohort are \$12,300 and \$13,690 respectively.

3 Views to the Current Situation

- 3.1 Currently, there are quite a number of academic courses on offer to train those with no prior experience in the field to join the arts and cultural industry. However, as there are only limited new openings at the current point of time, before the opening of the WKCD Phase 1 facilities and other revitalized cultural sites. Therefore those who are trained and interested to enter the industry found it hard to find suitable opportunities.
- 3.2 According to reviews from arts organizations, there can be a huge theory and practice gap on the actual practicum for young arts administrators in arts organizations even after their arts management training. Internship/ hands-on training opportunities are needed to fill such gap.
- 3.3 There are also high turnover for junior arts administrators and limited mobility for middle and senior arts administrators, which cause limitations to the future development of the industry⁶:
 - 3.3.1 Senior level – serious shortage of suitable staff at CEO level. Very difficult to recruit when vacancies arise. Middle-ranking staff are either not ready or not interested. Most candidates from outside the field have little knowledge of arts management (high risk when they are appointed).
 - 3.3.2 Middle-ranking administrators – limited career mobility when few posts of similar levels are available and few pursue training. Their management expertise is narrow which also makes it difficult for them to ascend to a higher level. Quite a few capable ones chose to leave the field for more promising careers.
 - 3.3.3 Junior administrators – not easy to recruit staff who have a passion for the arts and knowledge to work in the industry. Turnover fairly high due to working conditions and workload. Staff turnover is especially high in small and medium arts organizations where resources allocated for manpower are very limited.

⁶Prof. Tseng Sun-man(2011): *Position Paper on Arts Management Training in Hong Kong - For the Hong Kong Arts Administrators Association* (unpublished)

4 Recommendations

The HKAAA recognizes there are a number of options available through which the Government can facilitate development and nurture arts management talents of various experience levels, utilizing the addition \$150 million over the coming 5 years:

4.1 For Junior Level Arts Administrators

- 4.1.1 Provide arts groups, especially small and medium ones for having 1-3 arts administration interns per year, enabling the young administrators to get first hand training and benefiting arts groups who are generally unable to locate extra funding. Contracts should be for a minimum of 2 years to maximize learning and ensuring continuity. This can be done by expanding the current HKADC *Internship Scheme* from 12 arts administration interns quotas to 50⁷, extending it to more art forms and arts groups. This will also provide openings to those who are trained and wanting to join the industry. Top-up training programme and mentorship can be offered to these young administrators⁸. This will open up job and precious training opportunities to those who are passionate in joining the industry, as well as helping the growth of small/medium arts organizations enormously, allowing artistic personnel to focus on the creation of art works. These 150 trained interns (in 3 cohorts, 2 year per cohort) will be able to contribute in different roles to the development of the arts and creative industries in Hong Kong in the long run.
- 4.1.2 Expand the current LCSD *Arts Administrator Trainee Scheme*, to accept 40 and 45 trainees in the 2014 and 2016 cohort respectively (increased from 33 trainees in the 2012 cohort)⁹. As LCSD is the owner of many cultural venues, these trainees will be able to receive training particularly on venue management which is especially valuable after the opening of the WKCD and other cultural venue facilities.
- 4.1.3 To continue offering intensive professional development programmes for in-service arts administrators and practitioners to promote good arts administration practice in the industry.

⁷There are currently 39 HKADC One and Two Year Grantees (not including literary organizations), and another 10 grantees receiving the HAB *Arts Capacity Development Fund* (1st round) who are not HKADC One and Two Year Grantees. If including the subsidized literary organizations and the 2nd round grantees from the HAB *Arts Capacity Development Fund*, there will be more organizations competing for this *Internship Scheme*. Yet, we strongly suggest that there should be a selection process of arts organizations applying for the *Internship Scheme*, similar to the current arrangement of HKADC, to ensure the interns are working in arts organizations with the vision and capacity in nurturing these young practitioners.

⁸For 50 interns, the annual budget will be approximately: \$15,000 (including leave pay and MPF) * 12 months * 50 interns: \$9,000,000. The top-up training and mentorship programme will cost around \$350,000 per year. There will also be an \$8,000 equipment subsidies for computer, software & furniture for arts organizations per year * 50 interns: \$400,000. The cost for 5 years will amount to: \$48,750,000

⁹For 40 LCSD trainees will cost per year: \$15,000 (including leave pay and MPF) * 12 months * 40 interns: \$7,200,000. For 45 LCSD trainees will cost per year: \$15,000 (including leave pay and MPF) * 12 months * 45 interns: \$8,100,000. The cost for 2 further cohorts (4 years) will be: \$30,600,000

4.2 For Middle and Senior Arts Managers

- 4.2.1 Continue funding overseas training/ mentorship opportunities targeted for middle and senior managers as those currently offered by HKADC and HKAAA, with the aim to provide around 12 places for training in various areas of arts administration (venue operation, programming, arts learning etc) and in different art-forms per year.
- 4.2.2 To continue offering 5-8 scholarships through HKADC for in-service arts administrators to further study in local tertiary institutions¹⁰.
- 4.2.3 To support intensive executive in-service training programmes for up-coming arts leaders, ideally programmes offered by local organizations in collaboration with overseas training institutions, to attract experienced managers from the arts field, assisting them to ascend to a higher level. This biennial programme can be in form of a live-in retreat / intensive module over 3-4 days. The programme can also open to regional participants, so to increase income to the programme and provide opportunity for exchange and mutual learning.
- 4.2.4 To continue supporting the organization of an annual conference, which is a meeting point for local and international leaders to discuss issues that are relevant to the development of the arts industry and offers networking opportunities.

4.3 For the Senior Arts Leaders/ Head of Arts Organizations

- 4.3.1 To provide financial support and endorsement to the work of the Senior Arts Leaders/ Head of Arts Organizations in promoting the arts of Hong Kong internationally, through presenting papers in recognized international conferences, or taking crucial roles in international arts markets, and other exchange opportunities. This should not require extensive funding, but more of a recognition of the work they are doing.
- 4.3.2 To provide support to the governing bodies of arts groups (i.e. boards and committees) as they are instrumental in setting the course for their organizations. The support can be in the form of strategic planning workshops and programmes, or inviting trainers to provide meeting or retreat facilitations, which are quite common with the overseas counterparts, with the aim in supporting 2-3 governing bodies of arts organizations per year.

¹⁰In the past 2 rounds of ADC scholarship applications, a total of 3 scholarships were offered to arts administrators to further their studies in local tertiary institutions.

4.4 Other recommendations

- 4.4.1 To allocate training funds for HAB and LCSD Staff, as well as organizations funded directly by HAB/ LCSD, i.e. the Major Performing Arts Groups, WKCDA, HKAPA, HKADC, HKAF etc.
- 4.4.2 To research and document the development of local arts management, especially successful cases, for training and learning purposes. This will help the practitioners to understand and learn from the history, so to make effective developments in the field.
- 4.4.3 To liaise with the Mainland arts organizations for mutual learning and exchange opportunities, allowing local practitioners to understand the operations of arts organizations in China and vice versa. This will facilitate further collaboration between local and Mainland arts institutions, and hopefully to promote Hong Kong arts to China.

The HKAAA stands ready to play an active role in such manpower development.