

2020

Arts-ED Year in Review

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20 years of being the partner of choice for community-based arts and creative education for cultural sustainability and placemaking



Penang Heritage Idol

my **BALIK** Pulau
我的浮罗山背

Foreword

2020 – A YEAR TO REMEMBER OR TO FORGET?

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a year full of uncertainties, as well as cancellations and postponements of events. However, it has taught us to be more resilient and to care more about our communities. With the restrictions on movements and activities, and separation of families and friends, it has also helped us reflect on how much we know and can help each other – with the spirit of #kitajagakita.

To respond to the unforeseen disruptions to our programmes and projects, Arts-ED adopted a case-by-case approach for our activities accordingly. We monitored the rapidly changing situation and tried to maintain our face-to-face interactions as much as was possible by following the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and observing all the precautions set in place by the authorities. We resorted to the online or hybrid mode of learning as and when needed, especially during engagement sessions with community members.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

Even though we had to cancel the celebration of our 20th anniversary, we can be proud of our achievements in 2020, including those highlighted below.

- The **Cultural Heritage Education Programme (CHEP)** for schools had to put on hold this year since funding from the state had to be re-purposed for more essential priorities. Nonetheless, 2020 was also the first year Arts-ED began its **partnership with Yayasan Hasanah**.
- Our first training programme for 14 artists and cultural workers – **Community-Engaged Arts: Connecting People through Creative Approach** – was launched based on our past experiences of working with the community. The 7-month programme provided rich insights on the training framework and needs of the practitioners. The trainees planned and implemented a project each in Selangor and Penang. Knowledge in engaging community increased after intense engagement and interactions among the trainers, trainees, stakeholders and community. This experience also presented a ‘look beyond Penang-based’ pool of resources.
- **Capacity Building for Educators** continued with 2020 as the final year of the action research in **Introducing Place-based Learning (PBL)** to instil 21st learning skills in schools. Other efforts to incorporate the PBL approach included work with APCEIU Korea on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and a new initiative with Penang Green Council on environmental education. Approximately 80 educators raised their competency in theory and application of PBL.

REFOCUS AND REALIGN – REVIEW AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

After reviewing Arts-ED’s efforts and achievements over the past 20 years, we reaffirmed that the continuous training platforms we offered to various individuals and groups were most impactful, particularly by using our limited resources more efficiently and focusing on the quality, rather than the quantity, of our efforts and inputs. We are on the right track.

We are clearly a **people-oriented organization** – connecting and bridging people through different platforms, be it training or projects that work directly with the community. These platforms, in tandem with the interdisciplinary approaches used, can contribute to tremendous changes in our community. This year also reaffirmed our conviction that the value of community-based and hands-on/experiential approaches is exceptional and cannot be easily replaced by virtual communication and interactions.

KEY ACTIVITIES

Training Programme Community-Engaged Arts (CEA): Connecting People through Creative Approaches

1



2

CEA: Engaging Multi-Stakeholders for a Better Market's Waste Management

CEA: Developing Children's Leadership Qualities through Play and Activating Spaces

3



4

Capacity Building of Educators for the Transmission of Local Knowledge through Place-based Learning (PBL)

- * Local schoolteachers
- * Korean educators
- * Environmental educators

Knowledge Exchange & Networking

5



1. Training Programme - Community-Engaged Arts (CEA): Connecting People through Creative Approaches



This training programme received 32 applications from various parts Malaysia, of which 14 applicants who are artists, cultural workers, and educators, were selected for the 7-month theory and practical training in Community-Engaged Arts (CEA). From the concepts and principles, case studies from local and abroad, to hands-on tools and strategies, the trainees learned to plan, design, and later developed and implemented two CEA projects in a public market (Penang) and a low-cost flat community (Selangor) which served as the practical ground to utilise their skills and knowledge acquired. The trainees received continuous coaching from the trainers throughout the project.



The training was the first attempt by Arts-ED to consolidate years of hands-on experiences into a more structured training platform for young artists and cultural workers. The trainees demonstrated an increased understanding of the theory and practice of working in community-engaged arts projects.

For more details, read the [Summary Article](#) , [Photo Essay of Training at \(Penang\)](#) and [Photo Essay Training at \(Selangor\)](#).



“The baseline study and cultural mapping were very useful and inspiring. Therefore, this CEA training programme provided a precious chance for me to learn how to plan and design a CEA project from the beginning to the end. In the future, I know better the whole process and the roles needed to form a CEA team.” Cheng Yen Pheng, Visual Artist (trainee)



2. Community-Engaged Arts – Engaging Multi-Stakeholders for a Better Market’s Waste Management

A project by the 8 trainees from the CEA training programme was conducted from August to December using their skills and knowledge learned to help improve waste management issues at Chowrasta Market, Penang, with continuous coaching from Arts-ED’s trainers.

Information gathered from a baseline study was used to conduct cultural mapping and engage the various stakeholders – market vendors, local council and state assembly persons, market management company. Creative strategies were used to identify and investigate the issues in detail, as well as the cultural practices of the seafood sellers and stakeholders, through multiple meetings to discuss, find solutions, and suggest actions for upgrading the hazardous dumpbin and creating a seafood waste upcycling system.

This pilot project successfully resulted in a waste collection system and led to positive behavioural changes among the stakeholders. After 7 months of operation, the number of participating vendors and frequency of waste collection increased. creative approaches used by the trainees were effective in encouraging the community to adopt a better market waste management system.

For more details, read the [Summary Report](#) and [Video](#).



“Sebelum ini ada juga orang datang buat projek... apa yang mereka buat berpihak pada mereka sahaja tetapi kamu semua lain...projek ini ada kelebihan untuk kamu dan ada juga kelebihan untuk pihak kami. Itu yang saya suka.”

Mohd Yasin Haja Moideen, fish vendor from Chowrasta Market

“Using creative approach to engage vendors was a real plus especially for people who have fixed habits in the market. Through creative approaches, it can affect psychological change in the vendors.”

*Joseph Teh,
farmer who turn seafood waste to organic fertilizer*



3. Community-Engaged Arts – Developing Children’s Leadership Qualities through Play and Activating Spaces



From June to October, 6 CEA trainees from the CEA training programme engaged 30 children aged 10-15 years old from Idaman Apartment in Damansara Damai, Selangor, to map the positive and negatives practices at their play spaces, using play/games as a tool and creative pedagogy to build leadership quality among the participants to activate the three public play spaces which are under-utilized.

Through the series of 15 sessions of weekly engagement sessions in mapping, video, drawing, and game development, the children confidently presented their findings and suggestions to the adult residents. They made their voices heard and acted to improve their play spaces. The children are now skilled to be the toy librarian, activating and facilitating the gym usage to other kids in a safer way. A sense of ownership among the children increased as they took on a more active role in improving and taking care of their play spaces.

For more details, read the [Summary Report](#).



“Realised the importance of not just focusing on providing physical facility to a community, building the child user skills will ensure a more sustainable future of the physical facility in the long run. We are looking into developing similar programmes in our future toy libraries.”

Wong Poai Hong,
President of Toy Libraries Malaysia



“Kami nak menjaga ruang mainan kita, sebab kalau tidak jaga, macam mana kita semua nak main?”

Alisha Bt Redzuan,
Project participant

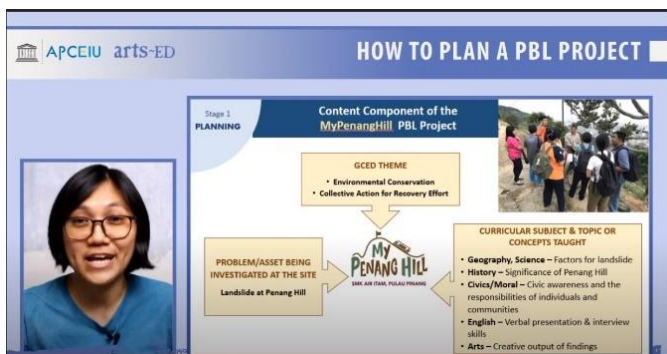
4. Capacity Building of Educators for the Transmission of Local Knowledge through Place-based Learning (PBL)

(a) Local School Teachers - PBL approach as an effective way to develop 21st century learning skills

2020 is the third year of this pilot project to concretize the design and content of the teaching training programme for schools. The programme was revised to better suit the different levels of training. For awareness raising, **300 local schoolteachers from 12 primary and secondary schools** were exposed to the basic concepts, principles and case studies of PBL as a pedagogical approach. A more focused series of training workshops was conducted for **34 teachers from 3 schools** who signed up to further develop their competency in incorporating PBL pedagogy into their curriculum or co-curriculum design. With coaching from the trainers, the teachers then applied their acquired skills to plan and implement their own PBL projects that connect their students' learning to the real-world context.

In 2020, 2 schools had completed their training, but efforts will continue in 2021 to conclude the project with a showcase of the PBL projects.





(b) Korean Educators - Advanced Training Workshop on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) through PBL Approach

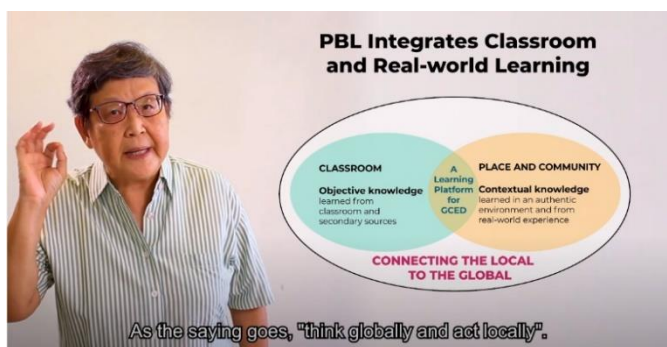
This year marked the fourth year of collaboration with APCEIU in introducing PBL method as a transformative teaching approach for GCED to Korean teachers.

This year’s training was divided into 2-parts: Part 1 was a 2-day online lecture in August to broaden the participants’ perspectives on PBL. Part 2 provided teachers with guidelines, tools and feedback to incorporate PBL into their curriculum, thus strengthening their skills to plan and design their GCED projects utilizing PBL methodology.

Although the online format was less effective compared to a face-to-face workshop, the 19 participants were engaged and gained new insights to design and execute GCED projects focused on local issues.

Watch the recorded online lectures [HERE](#).

Arts-ED also produced a 30 mins [educational video - Introductory of PBL for GCED](#) as a resource to the on-going work in PBL approach as a pedagogy.



*“I learned how to operate a curriculum that is connected to local community and culture of the village community, as a place for learning, how to **Implement actions rather than being theoretical** (promoting activity/action-oriented, process-oriented, learned-oriented).”*

PAK Hyon-ok, teacher participant

(c) Environmental Educators (EE) – PBL as a Pedagogical Approach

Arts-ED conducted 4 online classes for the Train the Trainer for Environmental Education Programme organised by Penang Green Council in October. This was the first time PBL was introduced to the EE participants alongside with another game-based pedagogy approach. Through the online classes, the training sessions covered knowledge delivery, workshop exercises and consultation for group project planning and a mock project pitching to the students.

PBL is relatively new to the participants. Nevertheless, they expressed their appreciation in learning this new technique for their EE practice.

5. Knowledge Exchanges

We shared and exchanged experiences with local and regional practitioners in the area of youth & community engagement, creative tools for social engagement, etc.

- Artivate HOPE Creating Safe Spaces for Socially-Engaged Arts Forum Discussion
- Buku Jalanan Chow Kit
- Kajang Heritage Center
- Penang Green Council
- Bakudapan (Indonesia)
- Centre for Applied Theatre (Taiwan)
- Drama Box (Singapore)
- Makhampom (Thailand)
- Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Tongyeong (Korea)
- YCAM (Japan)



The Team Behind the Scene

We are a group of facilitators who are passionate in creating positive change in community utilising creative arts and culture.



Staff Chen Yoke Pin, Foo Wei Meng, Adeline Chua, Radziah Bt Othuman

Interns Kong Pin Rou and Ooi Win Wen

Committee (2020-2022) Tan Pek Leng, Abel Benjamin Lim, Heng Zhi Yee, Tan Lay Cheng, Toh Lai Chee, Molly Lee, Charis Loke and Choo Poh Lean

Arts & Culture Education (ACE) Team - Trainers & Facilitators Janet Pillai, Foo Wei Meng, Chen Yoke Pin, Adeline Chua, Josephine Chan, Molly Lee, Tan Lay Cheng, Ooi Win Wen

ACE Team - Trainees Abdul Shakir Abu Samah, Firdaus Nisha Muhammad Faizal, Elaine Foster, Ali Alasri, Jeannie Low Yen Leng, Ili Nazurah Khairul Anuar, Choong Jian Ming, Leong Yoke Mee, Cheng Yen Pheng, Nurul Shahira Jamalluddin, Sydney Lee, Chong Ley-lynn, Yee Sue Ki and Liu Yong Sean.



The team comprises people from diverse backgrounds who contribute their strength and experiences towards every project and contribute in spreading our methodology.

Supporters, Partner and Funders



and individual contributors who could not be named one by one here.

Thank you all who supported us in many ways and be part of the work that builds cultural sustainability for our community.

Media Highlights



"Project WE is a bottom-up effort by the community at Chowrasta Market in reducing waste via a creative approach in the hope of achieving economic sustainability. The way the vendors dump waste from their stalls has changed since they participated in the programme called Projek WE organised by Arts-ED"

"Arts-ED's most recent Community-engaged Arts (CEA) programme in Chowrasta Market brought together artists and cultural workers interested in community engagement to help vendors at the market improve their surroundings. The idea was that artists with different skills would creatively find solutions for issues".





-艺术是座沟通桥梁 - 艺术介入社区 (Community-Engaged Arts) 就是借各创意艺术手法，把难懂的政策以平易近人，生活化方式表达出来，不走政策下达单行道，让社区成员以舒服自在的方式吸收政策内容，引导意见以参与互动。

Art is a bridge of communication-Community-Engaged Arts is an approach to use various creative artistic techniques to communicate difficult policies in an approachable and life-like way, so that community members can understand the policy content easily and also be guided to participate under this process approach.