

April 30th, 2014

Association for Corporate Support of the Arts

Succession and Development of “New Compact” Cultural Creation of a Society ~ Approaches to the Year of 2020

1. Achievements and Future of Corporate Mécénat

Japanese corporations have been taking a lead for promoting cultures, particularly in arts. They have developed various practices to link culture and society such as maintaining cultural facilities, organizing international art festivals, designing training systems of human resource, and launching corporate foundations for sustainable subsidy. Compared to administrative bodies, private organizations such as corporations are privileged to follow their original principles for cultural support that allows them to comprise flexibility and mobility in their mécénat (support for the arts and culture). Consequently, they have significantly encouraged a number of artists, and cultural organizations to be active in their fields, and provided public with opportunities to integrate with culture.

Culture has its original value. Yet, the value of every culture is never the same. We, Association for Corporate Support of the Arts, always respect those diverse values, and carry out to stimulate mécénat by corporations. Besides, feeling empathy with citizens who actively participate with initiatives in culture, we endorse citizen autonomy as a key element of social revitalization. Our considerations also cover cooperation and networks among various sectors, which have directed us to function as a platform for promoting meaningful cultures.

Corporations, of course, appreciate the precious values of culture and understand its necessity in our society. They gather opinions not only from cultural professionals but also participants in their programs, and deepen discussions inside and outside of their companies, considering how they should support cultures from actual scenes. Their ideas are frequently adjusted through a number of trials. Based on these efforts, continuous improvements have been made over a period. As a result, corporate mécénat in Japan have grown to the greater extent in its diversity compared to the rest of the world. In fact, total amount of mécénat activity fee invested by corporations and corporate foundations has reached to be almost equivalent to the budget the Japanese government prepares for cultural policies and projects.

Culture appeals directly to our sensibility. It is true that it has power to change a society which enables to suggest creativity to solutions for various social issues. Our association

believes in this power and places our mission in building a creative society through promotions of arts and culture.

Today, there is no borderline between creators and participants, and no pattern for people's participation in arts and culture. Systems that everyone including children, the elderly, and the disabled can participate in today's projects of arts and culture have successfully opened up. In response to the systems, corporate mécénat expands activity fields in education, social welfare, environment, rural revitalization, creative cities and so on.

Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic in 2020 is not just a sport event. It has to consist of cultural elements to be the "Olympic and Paralympic Games". Here, it is important to mention that cultural projects held for the event should never limit the venue just in Tokyo, but all over the country. In order to do so, corporate mécénat have several tasks to face. First, how to enhance cultural activities and promotions in every region needs to be considered. Second, this Olympic and Paralympic is expected to be a great lesson for us to acknowledge, understand, and exchange diverse cultures of the world. We need to work towards an establishment of cultural world network, especially with cultural communications among Asian countries. Above all, as for the cultural programs, it is vital that they are not finished as temporary festivals. Outcome of the programs needs to direct establishment of effective systems for cultural support, and development of infrastructure for designing a society, which still remain as legacies after the Olympic Game is closed.

2. Focuses of Our Approaches

1) Revitalization of Rural Economy and Society

For revival of Great East Japan Earthquake, we frequently recognize how powerful traditional festivals and folk entertainment in a region are to regenerate its local communities. Within our "GB Fund," the fund for supporting the revival through arts and culture, we held "Hundred Festivals Revival Projects" to offer particular supports to the traditional festivals and folk entertainment, which has been approved and supported by many donators today.

There are a number of cases that corporations carry out their original cultural attempts for rural revitalizations through cultural attempts. Corporations like *Nakamura Brace Co., Ltd.*¹,

¹ *Nakamura Brace Co., Ltd.* is a leading firm in prosthetics and orthotics manufacturing whose products of, for example, silicone rubber artificial breasts *Vivify* are well known for its high quality from home and abroad. Taken a lead by Toshiro Nakamura, the founder of Nakamura Brace, the firm has contributed to invigorate the town of Ohmori by utilizing empty houses for a "medial art" studio and a museum, welcoming children to the town for summer holidays, and conferring awards to researchers and artists related to Iwami Ginzan near the town. "From Ohmori to the World." Their attempts do not stop attracting public and "vivifying" the town.

and *Chishima Real Estate Co., Ltd.*² are highly admired. In fact, the two corporations have received Grant Mécénat Awards. What is common among these corporations is that they focus on the “creativity” which brings us new forms of society and economy. These companies now receive great attention in how they utilize tangible and intangible rural properties as cultural resources, and enhance the value of the regions through creative integrations with residents and visitors.

The higher quality of creativity a region keeps by its citizen autonomy, the more originality its economy embodies. An independent economy of a region can be established when a new regional brand is born with its signature products, or from its traditional, agricultural and fishery industries. Compact local communities can find a way to develop and sustain in cultural creativity which consequently helps to establish “compact economy.” Therefore, we have to recognize once again the importance of work which requires time and effort because the work consists of rich diversity. Richness of the diversity offers residents identity and meanings in their lives. Especially in an aging society, the identity and meanings are crucial for a society to exist, as well as for reducing public cost of medical and nursing care. This is a real improvement of efficiency.

As for the cultural programs of Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic, they require to be instrumental in creation and promotion of regional cultures. Our association will address a role to guide local corporations to corporate mécénat and function as local associations of mécénat, which should advance to a cultural promotional platform by business and citizen sectors.

2) Establishment of the International Cultural Platform

It is not too much to say that corporate mécénat in Japan is cutting-edge in the world in terms of its quantity and quality. Corporations and corporate foundations have taken a lead prior to the government for supporting Japanese cultures. Their experiences, knowledge and networks have enabled them to practice original activities that do not limit in domestic scenes. Thus, one of our missions is to introduce their attempts towards the world. At the same time, by understanding and supporting various foreign cultures, we are willing to expand our activities to abroad.

Success in the cultural programs of Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic in 2020 will be counted for cross-fertilization of different cultures in the world. Therefore, encouraging corporations to cross-fertilization and communication is considered to be necessary, particularly with East Asian

² The almost 100-year-old firm in Osaka, *Chishima Real Estate Co., Ltd.* has succeeded to revitalize old factory sites of ship building industry and turn it to art space called Creative Center Osaka. Since 2004, many artists of various specialties gather in the huge space and produce creative works. Recently, the firm proposed an idea of “Kitakagaya Creative Village Project.” Young artists and creators have been invited to live in the residences in the center, and provided galleries to present their works. Currently, twenty of the art spaces exist in this village.

countries. It is our will to contribute to world's peace by respecting everyone's culture and establishing an international network of culture together.

For these purposes, we will hold international conferences in 2014 and 2015 with an intention to enhance momentum towards our will. The conferences will be taken place for the purpose of building a cultural network in business sectors. Having the network as a basis, our goal is to function as, what is called, "Business for Arts Asia (provisional title)."

3) Cultural Promotions, Policy for Cultural Creation of Society, and Infrastructure Development

Remarkable achievements from corporate mécénat are accumulated on the basis of continuous developments in several categories; in particular, children, disabled, rural revitalization, and creation of cities. Activities aimed for children to integrate with artists are provided in local communities or at schools that is now popular all over the country. Also, creative activities for disabled are now designed in variety.

Categories that need attentions and further developments are cultural creation from recovery of national disasters, identity and meanings in elderly's lives, and creative methods for environmental preservation. In actual, aspiring challenges are already seen in each category, and expected to broadly expand.

In response to such advanced approaches, existing cultural organizations and facilities have now begun reformations. They actually need a dynamic improvement in their infrastructures, and are expected to develop advanced software of the time.

To accomplish such reformation and infrastructure developments, they need a policy for a medium-to-long term. Besides, the policy should include education programs to be cultural professionals, establishment of a specialized organization for cultural policy. The fact that installation of "Arts Council" is now underway by national and local governments in Japan affects significantly to reform cultural institutions, and to shape a vision of the policy. Some are still testimonials, but we expect those Arts Councils to operate promptly and effectively by making a use of the Olympic Game in 2020.

In regards to our association, we are willing to advance our research of cultural policies, and enhance our function as an evaluation organization for cultural policies, in other words, "Arts Council" by a private sector.

For the purpose of improving an infrastructure for building a creative society, we will launch new funds for cultural creation of a society. Over the history, mécénat activities by corporations and corporate foundations have been conducted in a wide range of contents. Therefore, originality and individuality in their mécénat activities should be respected. The

funds intend to stimulate momentum of their creative approaches to others. Moreover, there are supporters who would like to financially contribute to those corporations undertaking mécénat activities on their own. Yet, there may not be an appropriate fund which meets the supporter's demands. The funds will function to solve the situations as we design funds for specific requests.

With all these attempts, we will be playing a role of a coordinator for cultural creation of a society, and a designer of cultural promoting platform.

3. Our Numerical Goal

We acknowledge that total amount of mécénat in corporate sectors, including corporations' individual engagements as well as corporate foundations, is more than 81.1 billion Japanese yen. Thus, we now target to reach one hundred billion Japanese yen in 2016.

1% of corporations' current profits have become a social standard for their philanthropy budget in order to show engagement towards creation of a society. According to this fact, it is considered that 0.3% of their current profits can be credited to cultural expense. Studying an analysis and data from our research for actual condition of corporate mécénat, we will be encouraging corporations in order to accomplish the numerical goal.