

Branding the Creative City of Design: Lesson from Singapore

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Abstract

Over the last two decades, creative cities have become an issue of interest as governments in several countries have worked to develop ecosystems where the creative class can innovate and share ideas. Many city governments focus more on developing creative cities and pay less attention to their city's branding. This study aims to see Singapore as a newly appointed UNESCO creative city brand, even though it already has a destination brand. There are challenges about which brand should come first or how to strategically brand a city and ensure all interests are accommodated in the branding process. This study uses a qualitative method with in-depth interview data collection techniques with the Head of the Singapore Polytechnic Department of Architecture and Design, literature studies through books, journals, newspapers, and related matters, as well as observations in the city of Singapore. The results of this study show that Singapore's branding as a creative city of design is a component of the city-state's leading branding. First, the city branding process includes identifying the uniqueness of the city brand. In this case, the emphasis on Singapore is built and grown by design. Next is the development of a brand identity that differentiates Singapore from other UNESCO design creative cities. Finally, the delivery of brand messages to all relevant stakeholders. This research contributes to the development of branding concepts related to creative cities.

Keywords: *City Branding; Creative City; DesignSingapore Council*

Abstrak

Kota kreatif telah menjadi isu yang menarik selama dua dekade terakhir karena pemerintah di beberapa negara telah berupaya mengembangkan ekosistem di mana kelas kreatif dapat berinovasi dan berbagi ide. Banyak pemerintah kota yang lebih fokus mengembangkan kota kreatif dan kurang memperhatikan branding kota mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan Singapura sebagai brand kota kreatif Unesco yang baru ditunjuk, meskipun sudah memiliki destination brand. Ada tantangan tentang merek mana yang harus didahulukan atau bagaimana merek kota secara strategis dan memastikan semua kepentingan diakomodasi dalam proses branding. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data wawancara mendalam kepada Kepala Departemen Arsitektur dan Desain Politeknik Singapura, studi kepustakaan melalui buku, jurnal, surat kabar, dan yang terkait, serta observasi di Kota Singapura. Hasil studi ini menunjukkan bahwa branding Singapura sebagai kota kreatif desain merupakan komponen dari branding terkemuka negara kota ini. Pertama, proses city branding meliputi identifikasi keunikan city brand yang dalam hal ini penekanan Singapura dibangun dan ditumbuhkan oleh desain. Selanjutnya adalah pengembangan brand identity yang membedakan Singapura dengan kota kreatif desain Unesco lainnya. Terakhir, penyampaian pesan merek kepada seluruh pemangku kepentingan terkait. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan konsep branding yang berhubungan dengan kota kreatif.

Kata kunci: *Branding Kota; Kota Kreatif; DesignSingapore Council*

Introduction

Cities play an essential part in the development strategy of a country. A city provides its residents with the means to move, innovate, and be creative. According to Evans and Shaw (2004) and Malcolm (2005), cities have made substantial investments in their infrastructure,

culture, and creative economies over the past two decades. The arts have been the means for urban revitalization. Scott (2004) comments on a city's economic growth. Nonetheless, as Comunian & Gilmore (2018) note, investing in creative economies has spawned a new type of urban competition between cities.

Essentially, the city serves as a hub for manufacturing and service-related activity. The implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community at the start of 2016 has given the government of ASEAN countries a crucial role in producing value and enhancing the competitiveness of cities within the global economy. Due to the region's susceptibility to economic, social, and cultural shifts, the importance of government is growing, particularly in cities located in developing nations. Government action in market regulation policies, employment, investment, infrastructure development, and cooperation with foreign parties can play a crucial role in financing development. If a city wants to design its competitiveness, some factors must be examined, including all of its potentials. As Anttiroiko (2015) states, in the context of global intercity competition, the primary objective of cities is to increase their competitiveness, with positioning and attractiveness playing a crucial role.

Branding the city is one of the attempts to form the city's competitiveness, and it is currently the primary emphasis and an urgent requirement. Branding can also be said as the image of a city that is needed so that the appearance of the city is fresher, more attractive, and more memorable to people, and in the end, people will come to visit this city (Prayudi & Herastuti, 2018). The requirement for a regional brand will result in a robust regional positioning, particularly in the global tourism industry. Local governments and stakeholders must actively participate in city branding to effectively package cities and regions. This includes the infrastructure, the population's preparedness, and the amenities or features that define the city or region.

City branding is a method for urban economic growth taken from city planners, designers, and other stakeholders marketing practices. Cities, like products, services, and organizations, require a solid and distinct image and reputation to compete for local, regional, national, and international economic resources. For a city

to have a brand identity that is representative, harmonious, and accurately reflects its social, economic, and cultural reality, a strategy (method) is required. Singapore is one of Unesco's creative cities committed to growing its creativity.

Singapore is a modern, cosmopolitan, and bustling city-state in Southeast Asia, where design has always played an essential role in its development. Singapore, a densely populated city of 5.5 million people, incorporates intelligent solutions to meet its citizens' housing, healthcare, education, and transportation needs. The design remains the primary driver of the local creative economy, contributing approximately \$2.13 billion annually to the city-gross state's domestic product and employing between 5,500 and 29,000 people. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong stated in 2018 that "design is a core element of our nation-building. Singapore is a nation by design. Nothing we have today is natural or happened by itself." (Unesco, 2020).

In 2003, the Ministry of Culture of Singapore established the now-prominent DesignSingapore Council. It is then the DesignSingapore Council that is responsible for the development of Singapore as a creative city. In 2015, Singapore became a City of Design member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN).

The city serves as a platform for its residents' mobility, innovation, and creativity. Therefore, creativity is essential to the economic growth of a city. Thus, the city government, economic actors, and the community must collaborate to encourage creative behavior in the city's economy (Carta, 2007).

Ideas for creative cities based on the principles of the creative economy emerged alongside other new economic approaches ('knowledge economy,' 'creativity') at the end of the 20th century. (Landry et al., 1995) were among the first to assert that cities could and needed to be more inventive to effect change. This concept was first used in cities in the United Kingdom in 1996, and it later spread to developed countries in

Europe and America in the early 2000s (Prayudi et al., 2017). One of the reasons for the emergence of the concept of creative cities was the response to global conflict and restructuring among cities, which shifted global trade conditions to Eastern countries because of their inexpensive labor force. Thus, as developed nations lost their competitive edge, creativity and high-quality, knowledge-based innovation became a crucial societal factor (Hospers, 2003). It was determined that business subjects whose activities and products are based on individual creativity flourish and significantly impact global culture and the economy. As a result, knowledge, and innovation are now at the center of all business activities.

Landry (2012) suggests several actions a city can take to develop urban space as a catalyst for creative individuals and groups to become a Creative City. Creating an urban area is also a means of attracting community participation by providing a location or locations conducive to activity. For a city to realize the creative city concept, three essential aspects must be considered: the growth of the creative economy, the maintenance of the creative class (creative groups or individuals), and the provision of an environment conducive to developing creativity. There is a connection between the three aspects; specifically, the Creative Class plays a role in developing the creative economy because they are clever enough to produce products in the form of intellectual property with commercial value. Creative Class also requires a conducive and inspiring environment to engage in creative endeavors. Finally, the atmosphere is also necessary to develop creative economic activities in which individuals can develop their innovative products. This connection is what makes these three factors significant.

The concepts of city brand and branding lack precise definitions at this time. Kavaratzis (2004) says that cities are comparable to corporate brands since they are complicated entities with many identities, multiple stakeholders, and social

duties. Consequently, cities can be marketed similarly to business brands. Similar to products that are marketed under a single brand, distinct characteristics of cities can also be promoted. For instance, a city may be advertised as a place to live, work, visit, and invest (Kavaratzis & Asworth, 2006). Meanwhile, within the framework of urban policies, the notion of creative cities is often explored. As a result of economic and social development, it also provided the basis for several promotional tactics to recover the standing of cities in decline (Brzozowska, 2016).

In more contemporary usage, a brand refers to a name or symbol that describes goods and services reaching consumers and separates itself from others (Orhan & Kaplan, 2018). So, when a brand is associated with a city, it must communicate what the city is like, what it has, and why it deserves attention (Christin, 2015). Consequently, anyone who visits the city, or even residents of that city, can briefly describe the image of the city. Thus, before promoting a product, a branding strategy is a procedure used to develop the value or perception of the product in the consumer's mind (Prayudi & Ardhanariswari, 2019). The ability to keep the public's trust is essential to the success of any brand.

City branding can change a person's perception of a city or see the potential difference between one city and another. According to Anholt (2006), there are six components of city brands that marketers must pay attention to as a frame of reference for understanding, analyzing, and designing strategies for creating city branding according to the target market. City branding consists of the following six components: (a) Presence is a stage to understand the advantages and characteristics of a city. Visitors will have a perception different for a city. Usually, they go around the city to see the uniqueness that exists; (b) The place relates to the physical aspects of a city, such as a climate and location. Therefore, a city must prioritize comfort and cleanliness of the environment to become a positive value for

visitors. In addition, visitors see what is interesting about the city's facilities, such as buildings and parks; (c) Potential relates to economic and educational opportunities. Again, the government is vital in reading the situation and whether the city can be used as a business opportunity; (d) The pulse is related to the lifestyle development in a city; (e) The people component pays attention to the attitude of the city's people towards a change and how safe they get from the city. In addition, the hospitality of the city's people can make visitors happy to visit the city; (f) The last component is prerequisites, which question the perception of the quality of life in a city. Things must be considered so a city can stay alive, for example, through events, public infrastructure, accessibility, and other supporting facilities.

Study on city branding of the creative city is still scarce. Some emphasize the creative city as a creative space for its residents (Michels et al., 2014; Moțcanu-Dumitrescu, 2017). These two studies focused more on how relevant stakeholders were concerned with creative city development; they needed to emphasize establishing an ecosystem where creative ideas and innovations could grow. Thus, these studies focused on the creative city development process. Meanwhile, studies by Fernández-Cavia, (2013) and Wibawanto (2015) looked at whether a city is well-known since it plays a crucial role in the construction of a city's brand, hence attracting tourists and investors. These two studies did not talk about the creative city as this concept was relatively new when these two studies took place. However, city branding and creative city studies received little attention (Gathen et al., 2020). Gathen et al. examined an exploratory perspective on the role of gastronomic city networks in city branding. Therefore, this research attempted to fill the gap left by previous studies. Branding a city is intended to boost its competitiveness and offer a more distinct image that can set it apart from other cities (Roostika, 2012).

As a growing creative city of design,

Singapore then faces a challenge in branding the city. Some of them include how to provide environments where creative ideas for experiments, choices, and innovation can grow. Thus, the research question this paper attempt to answer includes how the Singapore government, through DesignSingapore Council, brands its Creative City of Design.

Research Methods

This research employed a qualitative research method. Shank sees qualitative research as a systematic empirical investigation to understand a phenomenon's meaning (Shank, 2006). Qualitative research is a scientific method of surveillance to collect non-numerical data (Babbie, 2016). This type of research can provide a wide range of qualitative data with thorough descriptions and nuances. This data is more valuable than just a numerical statement of the amount or frequency. This research took place in Singapore in June 2022. Preliminary contacts were made with relevant stakeholders so that data collection could take place. The adopted data collection was as follows:

An in-depth interview took place by asking the informant questions based on an interview guide. For this study, the interview took place with the Head of the Architecture and Design Department of Singapore Polytechnic.

Library studies employed a wide range of data and theories from books, journals, newspapers, papers, seminars, internet information, and other textual sources as the basis for their work.

The observation principally took place in the DesignSingapore Council. It helped to acquire behavioral data in their typical settings. The technique helped to identify how the DesignSingapore Council branded Singapore as the City of Creative Design.

The research aimed to obtain a complete description and deep understanding of how the Singapore government, through the

DesignSingapore Council, brands its city as the city of design. Further, this study also looked at how the city branding process incorporated the fact that there has already been a national branding for Singapore organized by Singapore Tourism Board.

Results of Research and Discussion

Singapore as the City of Design

Singapore has written its playbook in almost every aspect of governance, whether in housing, education, healthcare, water management, or transportation, to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all people. Although Singapore faces many challenges as a nation, such as a lack of natural resources and a small economic market, Singapore is better in these and many other ways because of its #betterbydesign initiative.

Since independence, Singaporean design has been characterized by an indomitable will to transform constraints into infinite possibilities. The DesignSingapore Council is the organization that represents Singapore at the UCCN. It has also established solid relationships with other creative city governments to elevate the role of culture, creativity, and design innovation in the development of sustainable cities of the future.

The DesignSingapore Council was created in 2003 to advance the design industry. Its work is concentrated in three areas. First, it assists businesses and organizations in employing design as a strategy for corporate expansion and delivering superior public services. Second, the Council cultivates industry-ready design and innovation talent and a design-oriented workforce for the future economy. Thirdly, it promotes the Singapore brand by increasing design appreciation at home and forging emotional ties with people worldwide.

The city's designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Design has made it possible for it to connect with a large number of individuals from all over the world, and there are many more

opportunities for the design industry in Singapore to work together with the design industries of other member cities. This will then benefit Singapore as follow: (a) Raise the company's profile on a global scale as an innovator and thought leader in design; (b) The government increases its collaborations with cities and design-related organizations with the same core values as Singapore; (c) It also opens doors for Singapore Designers and the Singapore design sector. This will provide the city with exposure on an international scale, opportunities to refine its abilities, and access to new markets.

Singapore's support industries rely heavily on services and solutions provided by the design sector. However, the vast majority of design firms are micro and small-sized enterprises that lack scale. Some may also lack the knowledge and experience necessary for effective development. Singapore assists our design businesses at various phases of business growth to strengthen their talents and internationalize. In addition, numerous government entities have contributed assistance to address the industry's common difficulties. Thus, some steps were taken to strengthen the competitiveness of the design industries. First was nurturing a more robust design industry. The DesignSingapore Council has funded several programs to find and promote the next generation of design entrepreneurs in Singapore. For instance, the 2019-launched Ampersand Pre-Accelerator Programme provides a framework for up-and-coming designers to establish a customer-centric business and grow and sustain it by learning from industry leaders and veterans in relevant industries. The Bridge Fashion Incubator, run by Singapore's Textile and Fashion Federation, is another example of a design entrepreneur program. It is the first fashion and fashion-tech incubator in Southeast Asia that crosses the divide between fashion, technology, and sustainability.

The second was launching Singapore design overseas. There are initiatives to assist

Singaporean design firms in overcoming the country's limited market by expanding internationally.

DesignSingapore Council collaborated with Wallpaper magazine in 2018 and 2019 to commission 15 Singaporean designers for its annual Wallpaper Handmade show, which celebrates craftsmanship and design. Each designer was teamed with a manufacturer to develop one-of-a-kind furniture and lifestyle goods displayed during Singapore Design Week and Milan Design Week. Two young Singaporean designers that won the Wallpaper Handmade Next Generation Singapore Designer competition were among the participants.

The third was improving design procurement. DesignSingapore Council has enhanced the purchasing policies and procedures of the public sector to promote the industry's growth. In 2018, the Council developed procurement guidelines for design services to educate users and establish standards. This highlights measures to enhance the tender process for design-focused projects, implement a more effective evaluation of the design part of proposals, and compensate shortlisted tenderers fairly for their time and work.

The design has played a significant part in making Singapore one of the most livable cities in the world, and it has the potential to play a role in making Singapore one of the most loved cities in the world as well. In addition, it has a vast potential to assist the city in moving toward being an economy driven by innovation. Thus, there must be a general rise in both the appreciation and application of design. As a result, Masterplan Design 2025 encourages a higher level of appreciation and utilization of innovation among the Singapore workforce, businesses, the government, and the community. This will allow for a transformation in how people in Singapore learn, work, and play. The Masterplan explained how the nation would utilize design to transform itself into an economy driven by innovation and

a city that people would love by 2025 (Cities of Design Network, 2015).

Branding the Creative City

Singapore has initiated an ambitious plan to become a significant role in the global creative economy. As a result, the nation has repositioned itself as a creative city. In a creative economy, the atmosphere must be friendly to experimentation and invention. Accordingly, creating new social and political spaces is crucial to stimulate Singapore's nascent creative sector and signal the nation's increased transparency and tolerance (Ooi, 2008).

The Cabinet, most notably the Prime Minister's Office, meticulously and centralized, directs the overarching features of Singapore's Branding. The Singapore Tourism Board is responsible for external marketing and overseas campaigns. The total sum of government efforts to perpetuate its on-brand message to single-mindedly accrue a plethora of boards carries outgrowth, state-owned (or dominated) companies, including its globally iconic Singapore Airlines, and community associations, ensuring that the daily news also reflected this (Stevens, 2011).

The Branding of Singapore as a city of design is part of the overall branding known as Singapore Passion Made Possible. The Singapore Tourism Board launched the new brand in 2017. Singapore Passion Made Possible is an outgrowth of YourSingapore, Singapore's prior city branding. Singapore Passion Made Possible was positioned as Singapore's capacity to promise visitors a personal travel experience, given the country's degree of efficiency, control, and comfort. Positioning Singapore as a destination that can deliver its promises was a way to achieve this. A destination that makes such a promise also provides its guests with the psychological pleasure of increased autonomy and independence. Under a cooperative branding campaign between its tourism and business government agencies to

advertise the country to tourists, consumers, investors, and businesses will display the city's entrepreneurial and innovative characteristics to the globe (Sim, 2017).

There are some arguments why Singapore's branding as a creative design city is a component of this city-state's prominent branding. First, Singapore's recognition as the Unesco creative city is relatively early. Consequently, many policies and ecosystem development are still taking place that aligns with the city's grand design. Second, the government, through Singapore Design Council, is still engaging all relevant stakeholders to ensure their involvement in implementing the creative city Masterplan Design 2025.

The development of the creative city branding itself is through the understanding that there should be the expansion of the Creative Economy, the preservation of the Creative Class (defined as creative groups or individuals), and the creation of an atmosphere that is receptive to the maturation of creative potential are all goals of this initiative (Landry, 2012) which include six components of Anholt's city brands (Anholt, 2006). The Singapore Design Council then focuses on three areas. First, assisting businesses and organizations in employing design as a strategy for corporate expansion and delivering superior public services. Second, cultivate industry-ready individuals proficient in design and innovation; and engender a design-minded workforce for the future economy. Thirdly, promote the Singapore brand by increasing design appreciation at home and forging emotional ties with people worldwide (Shenzhen Design Award, 2021). Thus, design has automatically become the uniqueness of the creative city brand.

The creative city of Singapore is guided by the Masterplan Design 2025 to strengthen brand uniqueness. Launched in 2015 (DSG, 2020), this Masterplan Design consists of 5 policy strategies as follows:

(1) Infuse design into our national skillset.

The first strategic objective is to build a national design mindset and ability. Design sensitivities must be inculcated in the young so that our future workforce has the perspective and skill set required for the future economy. In addition, we desire that our design workers acquire cross-disciplinary training and be industry-ready;

(2) Expand the role of design in businesses and government. For companies and governments to be better able to respond to the fast-shifting operating environment, both locally and worldwide, the second strategic thrust aims to develop the design capabilities of our enterprises and our government;

(3) Strengthen the competitiveness of design firms. By addressing the inadequate opportunities for scalability and promoting experimentation to stay ahead of the curve, the third strategic thrust intends to assist our design businesses in growing and expanding internationally. This will be accomplished by addressing these opportunities;

(4) Bring design into the community. By implementing the fourth strategic thrust, the community will be better able to appreciate good design, the process of people-centered design, and how design can help improve the people of Singapore's day-to-day experiences and contribute to the formation of our national identity;

(5) Develop the Singapore Design brand. The fifth strategic thrust's goal is to increase Singapore's worldwide mindshare as a design thought leader and rally the local design community to achieve more significant international influence and impact. This will be accomplished by expanding Singapore's mindshare as a design thought leader.

Pouring the vision of a creative city into policy provides a clear direction for city branding. Further, the above five policies of Singapore Masterplan to become the creative city of design indicates the seriousness of the city-state.

The second step of the branding process was the creation of brand identity. Singapore,

which has been UNESCO's the Creative City of Design since 2015, is now a part of the expanding network of cities that recognize creativity as a component in achieving sustainable development. To differentiate Singapore from other creative cities, the Singapore Design Council introduced a brand identity that best represented Singapore's accomplishments in design.

The creation process of brand identity involved interviews with the public and local designers. This process discovered two primary contributors that impacted the design: It is impossible to sum up Singapore's status as a City of Design in a single, all-encompassing noun. Local designers deemed the little red dot the most appropriate symbol to symbolize Singapore because of its uncomplicated and recognizable nature. The end product was a logo in the shape of a polished and cut diamond, which reflected the many facets that make up Singapore's society. Today, that design is ingrained in every aspect of Singaporean life and helps uphold our values, represented by five stars. It took fifty years of struggle and careful preparation for Singapore to become a nation; this process is analogous to the tremendous pressure of charcoal to transform it into a diamond (APT811 Design & Innovation Agency, 2015). The final logo, as shown in Figure 1, was introduced to the public for the first time during the launch of Singapore Design Week and the National Design Strategy 2025.

The last step was ensuring that all relevant stakeholders received the message that Singapore has a strong commitment and determined itself



Figure 1. The brand identity of Singapore as the creative city of design

as a creative city of design. Thus, some activities were carried out during the implementation of the Masterplan Design 2025. For instance, Singapore designers could participate in international discussions and show their work in other UNESCO Creative Cities of Design, such as Detroit, Graz, Puebla, and Seoul. Additionally, they could present their work in Bandung, Adelaide, Helsinki, Wuhan, Torino, and Seoul. Besides, Singapore gained knowledge from other cities, such as Helsinki, regarding the policies and programs they have implemented in design education. The discussion includes what had been done toward growing design and building capacity for the design sector with delegates from cities such as Helsinki, Graz, Kortrijk, Geelong, Bandung, and Ambon, who have traveled to Singapore. These cities include Helsinki, Graz, Geelong, and Bandung (DesignSingapore Council, 2020). One of the highlights activities was Singapore Design Week.

From 2018 to 2019, Singapore cooperated with the Australian cities of Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, which are members of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, to co-create inclusive community design projects influenced by music, literature, and film. Singapore funded these initiatives. During Singapore Design Week, which took place in March 2019, representatives and design professionals from 15 Cities of Design were in attendance. Singapore Design Week is one of the most prestigious design festivals in Asia. They participated in its programs, such as the business and design conference Brainstorm Design and the indigenous creative festival Street of Clans, and they also interacted with government officials and business and design industry professionals (DesignSingapore Council, 2020). Finally, with a focus on the creative economy, the government has begun reimagining Singapore as an innovative country.

The brand communication of Singapore as a creative city of design was attractive. DesignSingapore Council emphasized more

activities to engage relevant stakeholders and cooperate with other creative cities under Unesco Creative Cities Network. The Council promoted the activities or events through its social media accounts and websites. By doing this, the DesignSingapore Council delivered the brand message of Singapore as the city of design through events that incorporated all relevant stakeholders and featured the brand identity.

Thus, compared to the previous research, this study strengthened the research finding, as Anttiroiko (2015) shows that city branding can respond to global intercity competition. Globalization radically alters urban populations' settings and the underlying assumptions of urban development policy. In the context of global intercity rivalry, the primary objective of cities is to strengthen their competitiveness, with positioning and attractiveness playing a crucial role. Attraction-focused development methods seek to efficiently absorb external resources from the global flow space. Business promotion efforts with attractive incentives are at the heart of the attraction strategy. However, such a competition is considered dangerous and may result in a race to the bottom.

Consequently, the emphasis is shifting toward less expensive and more synergistic city marketing, which uses city branding and "city profiling" to attract high-value-adding services or high-tech companies. This study provides a city attraction hypothesis according to which global intercity rivalry is primarily about a city's capacity to draw the highest potential value from global flows of values to support urban growth. The outcome of such a worldwide intercity rivalry affects cities' functions and positions in the global division of labor and, consequently, in the international urban hierarchy, as well as their capacity to boost urban community prosperity and welfare.

Further, this study has proven that even a new concept, such as a creative city, can be well developed and bring the city's uniqueness

without colliding with its branding process with the existing brand. This study also proves that investing in a creative city and its ecosystem is worth doing, as Vanolo & Lombardi (2015) shows. Branding a city requires deep comprehension of internal potentials while considering external factors, which becomes the city's uniqueness and later makes it able to compete with other cities.

In terms of the creative city, choosing the right economic sub-sector, as suggested by Howkins (2013), can lead to the right branding strategy. It will bring the city's uniqueness and root to its society's creative ideas and innovation, which in the case of Singapore is the design sub-sector.

Conclusion

Branding a city requires a strong commitment from all stakeholders, including the government through critical agencies and the general population. Successful branding may make a city desirable to live, work, and visit. Even though there are restrictions on people's ability to express themselves freely in Singapore, the country's creative sector is experiencing expansion. As a result, the degree of officially sanctioned social and political openness in the city-state has been modified, and the authorities are adapting to meet the requirements of the developing creative economy. This condition is a prerequisite for an innovative city ecosystem, which becomes the basis for a creative economy to grow. Furthermore, the provision of Masterplan Design 2025 shows the government's seriousness in supporting Singapore to become a creative city.

The DesignSingapore Council, which serves as Singapore's national body for promoting design and expanding the design industry, is in charge of putting Design 2025 into action, and it does so by following the five strategic thrusts outlined in the plan. In addition, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) has tasked the DesignSingapore Council with the responsibility of coordinating and implementing programs that

contribute to the mission of the UCCN.

The important branding of this city-state includes Singapore's branding as the creative city of design, which is a component of Singapore's branding. The overarching branding effort for Singapore is known as *Singapore Passion Made Possible*. Singapore strives to achieve *Singapore Passion Made Possible* as effectively as possible through meticulous and well-documented planning. A component of Singapore's branding is making first-time visitors feel like they are no longer foreigners in Singapore.

As the city of design, Singapore is a contemporary, multicultural, and busy city-state. Therefore, design plays a crucial part in the urban development of Singapore. Accordingly, its urban plans contain innovative solutions to suit its residents' requirements in various areas, including housing, healthcare, education, and transportation, to name a few.

This research contributes to the use of creative city and city branding concepts. In particular, this study identifies the city branding process within the creative city of Singapore and how the DesignSingapore Council engages with relevant stakeholders in introducing the new city brand. Through various events and programs written in a long-term Design Masterplan, Singapore communicates its brand as the creative city of design.

Acknowledgments

This research has been made possible due to support from some parties. First, we want to thank the Ministry of Cultural and Education of the Republic of Indonesia, which has provided us with the funds needed to conduct this research in 2022. We also thank the Institute for Research and Community Service at Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Yogyakarta, Indonesia, for helping us complete administrative matters.

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