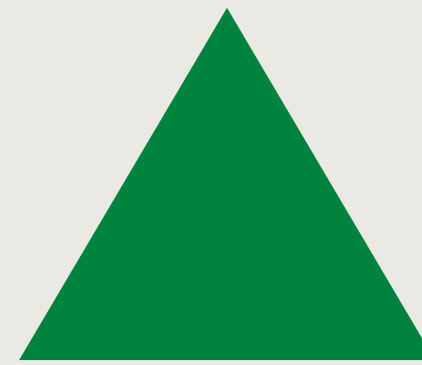
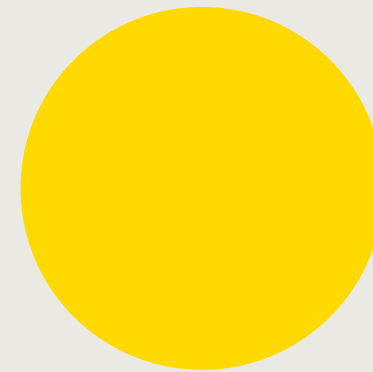




デザイン都市・神戸



City of
Design
KOBE



Member of the UNESCO
Creative Cities Network
since 2008



デザイン都市・神戸

City of Design KOBÉ

Member of the UNESCO
Creative Cities Network
since 2008





BE KOBE

What is “City of Design KOBE”?

Kobe is home to many incredible resources and attractions – the nature-rich cityscape, surrounded by seas and mountains; the lifestyle, created through an open-hearted and accepting people that work actively to incorporate foreign cultures; and manufacturing technologies, made famous by products like chemical shoes, cakes and pastries, sake, and pearls. Kobe is also known for its recovery from the Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995, which was made possible through the cooperation and community development efforts of the locals. “BE KOBE,” a message of civic pride established on the 20-year anniversary of the disaster, embodies the belief that the charm of Kobe lies within its people.

“City of Design KOBE” represents a new vision of Kobe, one in which the locals reevaluate the city’s characteristics through the five design perspectives below, and then create new points of charm for Kobe through participation and cooperation.

1. Design that enriches daily life
2. Design that utilizes individuality and charm
3. Design that vitalizes the economy
4. Design that heightens creativity
5. Design that helps cultivate the soul and connect the city to the next generation

“Design” as conceptualized by Kobe City isn’t just about visible colors and shapes – It’s also about the various creative efforts and systems that help make a city more livable.

Kobe City will work to create an environment that is joyful and fulfilling for all, where each and every resident can use their creativity to develop the community; and tackle issues that are close to home – like industrial development, disaster prevention, welfare, and childcare – from a design-based perspective.

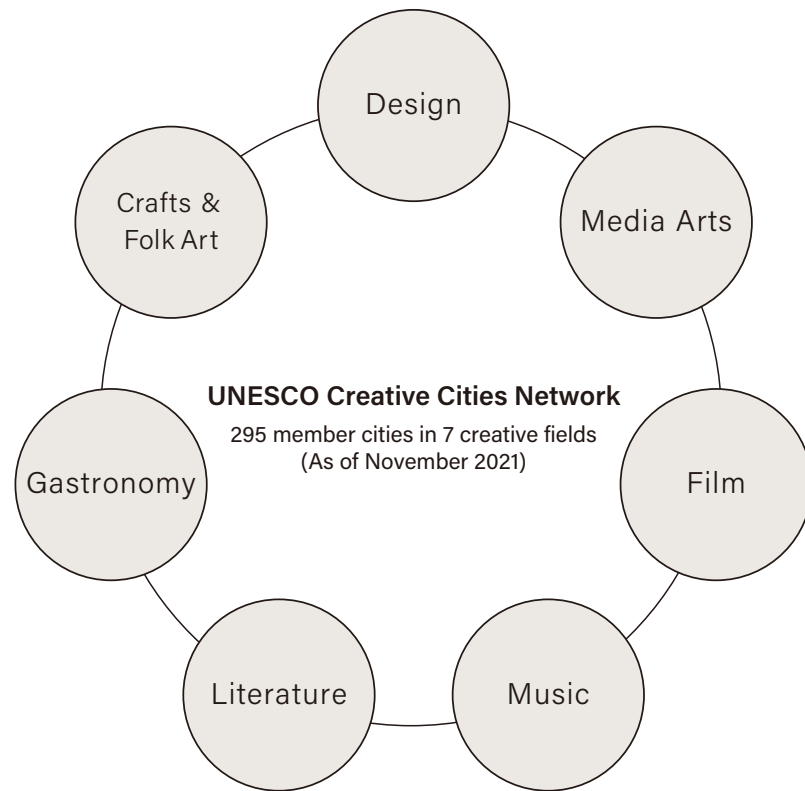
The “City of Design Kobe” Network

Cooperation and mutual exchange among Creative Cities¹ worldwide

Kobe City was certified as a City of Design by the UNESCO Creative Cities Network² on October 16, 2008, in recognition of the city’s boundless creativity – as evidenced by the city’s incorporation of foreign cultures in community development since it first opened its port in 1868, as well as the large role the local residents played in the recovery from the Great Hanshin Earthquake.

The city utilizes this network to promote cooperation and exchange with Creative Cities abroad, such as deploying creators to these cities (and vice versa) and sharing information about its various initiatives.

The city also works to stimulate mutual development domestically, by promoting exchange amongst the Creative Cities and Creative Villages that are part of the Creative City Network of Japan³.



1: Creative City: Cities that “use culture and the arts in a cross-sectoral manner to promote tourism and industry and revitalize local communities.” (Source: Agency for Cultural Affairs official website)
 2: UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN): Established by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), an organization that promotes mutual understanding amongst different cultures, in order to encourage coordination amongst the world’s Creative Cities and thus drive mutual exchange. See image above.
 3: Creative City Network of Japan (CCNJ): Made up of local governments and other organizations that promote the efforts made by Creative Cities

Creativity and Exchange Hub

Design and Creative Center Kobe (KIITO)

The Design and Creative Center Kobe opened in August 2012, following the renovation of the former Kobe Raw Silk Testing Center, as a base for creativity and exchange for City of Design Kobe.

Its nickname, KIITO, comes from the building’s history as a former quality inspection center for raw silk exports. (kiito means “raw silk” in Japanese.)

The building retains its historical appearance and houses halls, galleries, meeting rooms, and office spaces available for rent. Various design- and art-related lectures, exhibitions, and events are held on its premises.

KIITO has become a promotional hub for the city’s creative efforts, helping drive exchange not only amongst artists and designers but amongst people of all types and generations, and helping solve social issues through the ideas created as a result of this exchange.



Building plan for Design and Creative Center Kobe (KIITO)
 Address: 1-4 Onohama-cho, Chuo-ku, Kobe-shi
 Structure:
 (Old Building) Four-story reinforced concrete building
 (New Building) Four-story steel-framed reinforced concrete building
 Floor Area: 8,601m²
 Lot Area: 13,779m²
 Year Completed: (Old Building) 1927 / (New Building) 1932

Public Relations that Get Through to the Public

Creative Directors

Kobe City proposes policies and solves issues in the city through the use of imagination and originality. However, even attractive measures can sometimes fail to get through to the public. Many such challenges can be solved through the power of design. This is why design thinking is so important in city employees who in their everyday work must communicate messages in a way that gets through to the public. The city began hiring experts who have been active in the field of design as Creative Directors in FY2015. Since FY2022, this has been expanded to include the fields of design, videography, and copy. The main roles of Creative Directors are hosting design/video production training programs for city employees, providing consulting for measures overall, and producing promotional materials. In this way, experts in various fields work with city employees to produce promotional materials, thereby working to boost the design skills of Kobe City officials.



Design for the Cityscape

Working towards a city that thrives off of its unique local characteristics, a charming space full of joy and activity, where residents feel secure and comfortable.

A Comfortable, People-Oriented City: Redevelopment of the Sannomiya City Center



Sannomiya Cross Square

The Sannomiya area, known as the “gateway” to Kobe, is a hub of activity and home to many railway lines. This area will be redeveloped to make it a more exciting space for its residents – more comfortable, more convenient, and with more hustle and bustle – under the themes “People-Oriented City” and “A Comfortable City.”

Road areas will be redesigned to create spaces for relaxation and activity. This includes the transformation of the Sannomiya intersection into Sannomiya Cross Square, a space that prioritizes people and public transportation, and the establishment of KOBE Parklets, in which wooden decks are placed on top of former parking spaces to create places where people can relax. The city is also working to improve overall convenience and accessibility, for example through the establishment of convenient and stylish pedestrian bridges that would help relieve the sense of disconnect between different parts of the city caused by the national highway.



KOBE Parklet

A City Accessible to Everyone



Information signage



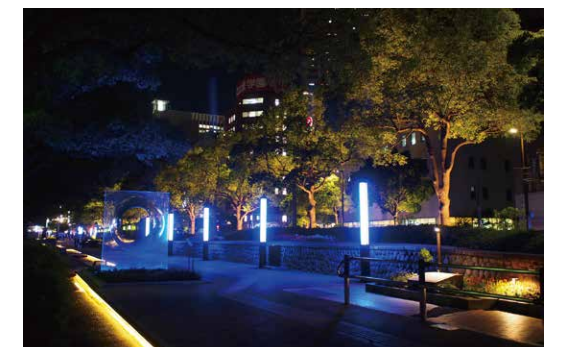
“Port Loop” articulated buses

Kobe City strives to be a city that is accessible to everyone – where first-time tourists, people with disabilities, and foreign residents and visitors can all feel comfortable. The images, font, and other aspects of information signage have been designed to be easy to understand so that people can move easily around the city. The signage also have a consistent design that help shape the Kobe cityscape. Since April 2021, the city has also been operating the “Port Loop” articulated buses as part of its deliberative efforts towards the implementation of a new public transportation system. The goal of these efforts is to make it easier for people to go from the city center to the waterfront area.

A City that Highlights the Unique Kobe Scenery



Preservation and utilization of historical structures



Flower Road at night

Kobe City works alongside its residents to protect, cultivate, and create the sceneries that make Kobe what it is – from the nature of the Rokko Mountains and the Seto Inland Sea, to the cosmopolitan townscape, to the city’s night view as seen from Mt. Rokko. The city also works to preserve and utilize structures through various designations – for instance Kobe City Designated Scenic Assets – whether this be for the many modern structures in Kobe or the traditional Japanese homes that help carry on the local culture. The city also endeavors to use local landmarks to create new night sceneries, including Flower Road, the Former Foreign Settlement of Kobe, and Harborland.

Design for Daily Life

Working towards a city where residents live their lives joyfully, encountering high-level design and developing their creativity to foster a respect for diverse lifestyles and an attachment to the local area.

Exchange Amongst Diverse Groups of People and Cultures



FARMERS MARKET

Kobe is a city with both agricultural and urban areas, rich with many cultural elements like jazz, movies, golf, bread, and black tea brought over from foreign countries. This kind of environment encourages exchange amongst diverse groups of people and cultures.

Through events like the EAT LOCAL KOBE FARMERS MARKET – a produce market held in Kobe East Park (Higashi Yuenchi), in front of Seishin-Chuo Station, and more, that focuses on “local production for local consumption” – and events like 078 Kobe – a cross-media event that brings together residents, creators, engineers, and more from all fields and age groups – the city strives to create new value for Kobe.



078KOBE

Cultivating Creativity in Children



CREATIVE WORKSHOP Chibikkobe

photo@otaro Sakashita



KIITO:300 sign-making workshop

Children are the future of Kobe – and as such, the city works to cultivate creativity amongst children, so that they may survive and thrive in the future.

The city provides children with various creative opportunities, such as Chibikkobe, an experiential program in which children work with creators from various fields to learn about their professions and come up with their “dream town”; programs involving hands-on experience; workshops where children can engage in open-ended arts and crafts; and more.

People from various fields, including individuals and organizations working in education and childcare, school staff, and companies that run programs geared towards children, have also come together to do research on ways local society as a whole can help cultivate creativity in children.

Tackling Local and Social Challenges



KIITO:300

photo@Ito Photo



Bread making classes for senior men (Otoko: Honki-no-Pan Kyoshitsu)

“KIITO:300” was established on the third floor of KIITO in 2021. It is home to both “KIITO:300 CAMP,” a hub for fostering creativity that explores children’s sense of curiosity and exploration, and “KIITO:300 FARM,” a hub open to all that allows people to engage in social contribution efforts and interact with one another.

“KIITO:300 FARM” offers support for residents so that they can engage actively in social contribution efforts and community activities, hosting workshops, seminars, joint projects with universities, and more, in order to drive interaction amongst various personnel.

The city also hosts “Otoko: Honki-no-Pan Kyoshitsu,” a bread-making class for the elderly, as a measure against some of the issues that have arisen out of Japan’s super-aging society. The aim is to allow the elderly to utilize the skills they learn for the betterment of their neighborhoods, connect with others in the community, and make the city a livelier place.

Design for Manufacturing

Supporting manufacturing efforts that utilize good design practices to make high value-added products, for a city with a thriving industry, capable of creating new markets.

Promoting the Kobe Brand



KOBE COLLECTION

photo©KOBE COLLECTION Production Committee

The city works to promote the fashion industry through well-known Kobe lifestyle and culture industries, such as apparel, chemical shoes, pearl processing, sake, Western pastries, bread, coffee, and sports-related goods, disseminating information about the appeal of these products.

The city hosts a number of events such as apparel, food, living, and leisure-related events like the KOBE COLLECTION and Nada Sake Brewery Exploration, as well as various events hosted by local commercial facilities under the concept, "cruising the city," promoted under the banner "Kobe City Cruise Weeks."



Nada Sake Brewery Exploration

Platform for Creators and Companies



Kobe Creators Note



Kobe City x Makuake Feature Page

The city provides opportunities for creators and companies to come together to create networks and develop new creative businesses. The city works to cultivate creative companies and support local creators by operating Kobe Creators Note, a web portal that introduces creator activities, information about creative projects, and more. The city is also working with Makuake, Inc. to operate the Kobe City x Makuake Feature Page in order to promote innovation and support the expansion of sales channels for small- and medium-sized enterprises. The page lists the projects that companies in Kobe are currently taking on. The city also subsidizes part of the costs incurred when small- and medium-sized enterprises create project pages for Makuake.

Vitalizing Small- and Medium-Sized Manufacturing Enterprises



Mirai Keiejuku Wonders



Project "englobe"

The city helps vitalize small- to mid-sized companies by providing support – in terms of management strategy and product development – to companies that incorporate Design Thinking.

This support takes the form of programs like the training school Mirai Keiejuku Wonders, which matches designers to small- and medium-sized enterprises and allows these companies to try incorporating design perspectives in their management strategy. Another program is Project "englobe", in which teams of creatives from all over the country, with diverse experiences and skills, team up with local companies to implement ESG perspectives that will help them develop sustainable businesses.

See the latest initiatives and other updates from
City of Design KOBE online:

City of Design KOBE 

<https://design.city.kobe.lg.jp/>