

Trend Report

**Creative Community revitalization
in the context of mainland China**



27/07/2023

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Preface

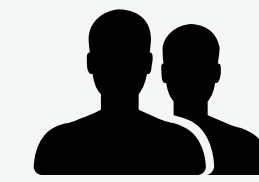
Focuses on the research context, research objectives, research methods, research framework and target audience of the report.

01 Section

Report objective

Based on the theoretical framework and methodological guidance of Cultural Studies and Trend Studies, this project aims to produce a trend report on creative community revitalization in the context of mainland China, hoping to provide relevant information, insights and strategic guidance for community-related organizations and practitioners, brands or businesses that want to work with the creative community, real estate developers, social workers, researchers and people interested in communities. It is worth noting that since most of the data in this report comes from mainland China, the findings or insights produced are also more applicable to inform and support future community development in mainland China.

Target Audience



Community-related organizations and practitioners



Brands or businesses that want to work with the creative community



Real estate developers, architects and designers



Social workers



Researchers and general public interested in communities

Research Context

With industrialization, many developing countries have entered into a process of rapid urbanization, but the human touch of acquaintance society is disappearing. As Tönnies (1887) puts it, the human world is moving from “Gemeinschaft” to “Gesellschaft”, becoming increasingly modern, independent, and rational, yet the ties and mutual trust between people in communities are gradually disappearing (p. 34). At the same time, the wave of urbanization, in which people in cities become atomized while villages lack vitality due to shrinking populations, has also received more attention.

The pandemic that began in 2020 has reinforced the importance of community and neighborhood as well as our relationship with them. Such a shift also prompts us to think: ***What kind of community is urgently needed in modern society? What kind of ideal communities do people want to live in? How can we make people live in ideal communities?***

With these questions in mind, we focus on the emerging “community revitalization” in the context of mainland China and try to explore the historical context, development status and future insights of “creative community revitalization”.

Research Framework

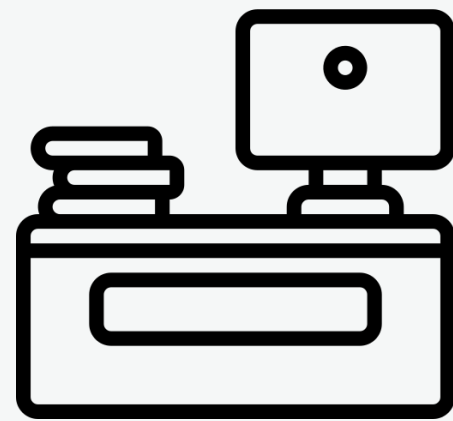
This thematic report is based on the research outcome of *Sociocultural Trends 2022* published by Trends and Culture Management Lab, University of Lisbon. It is known that the annual report, which has been published since 2020, is a collaborative effort between professors and students in the lab and is currently in its third year, with research findings added or subtracted each year based on dynamic sociocultural environment. In the report, the researchers conducted a long-term trend tracking and analysis through methods or techniques like Desk Research, Media Clipping, Coolhunting, Audiovisual Analysis, surveys and interviews, combining both quantitative and qualitative research. The findings include five developing or emerging macro trends, which are:

- Anchored narratives
- Protagonist identities
- Ergonomic Connections
- Sustainable systems
- Lifestyle Redesign

Specifically, we used the five macro trends and their micro trends from the Lab's research output as a framework, not only for the understanding of *zeitgeist*, the macro context of social, economic, cultural, environmental and social, but also as a trend map for the clustering and analysis of the information. For more information, please visit:

<https://creativecultures.letras.ulisboa.pt/index.php/gtc-trends2022/>.

Research Methodology



01.

Desk Research

The method aims to gather second-hand information without fieldwork. It's also a technique widely adopted by consultants or researchers in the world of business. In this report, we contextualize the research questions related to creative community revitalization by Desk research, incorporating the current situation of social, economic, cultural, environmental, political and technological aspects in mainland China.



02.

Cool hunting

As a market research method, it aims to new signals that have cool natures. By looking for signals, we can find the directions of change. Different research teams have different criteria for judging *cool*. In this report, the nature of the cool of the signal is analyzed using the criteria version from the the Trends and Culture Management Laboratory of the University of Lisbon proposed by Professor Nelson Pinheiro Gomes and their team in 2021.



03.

Interviews

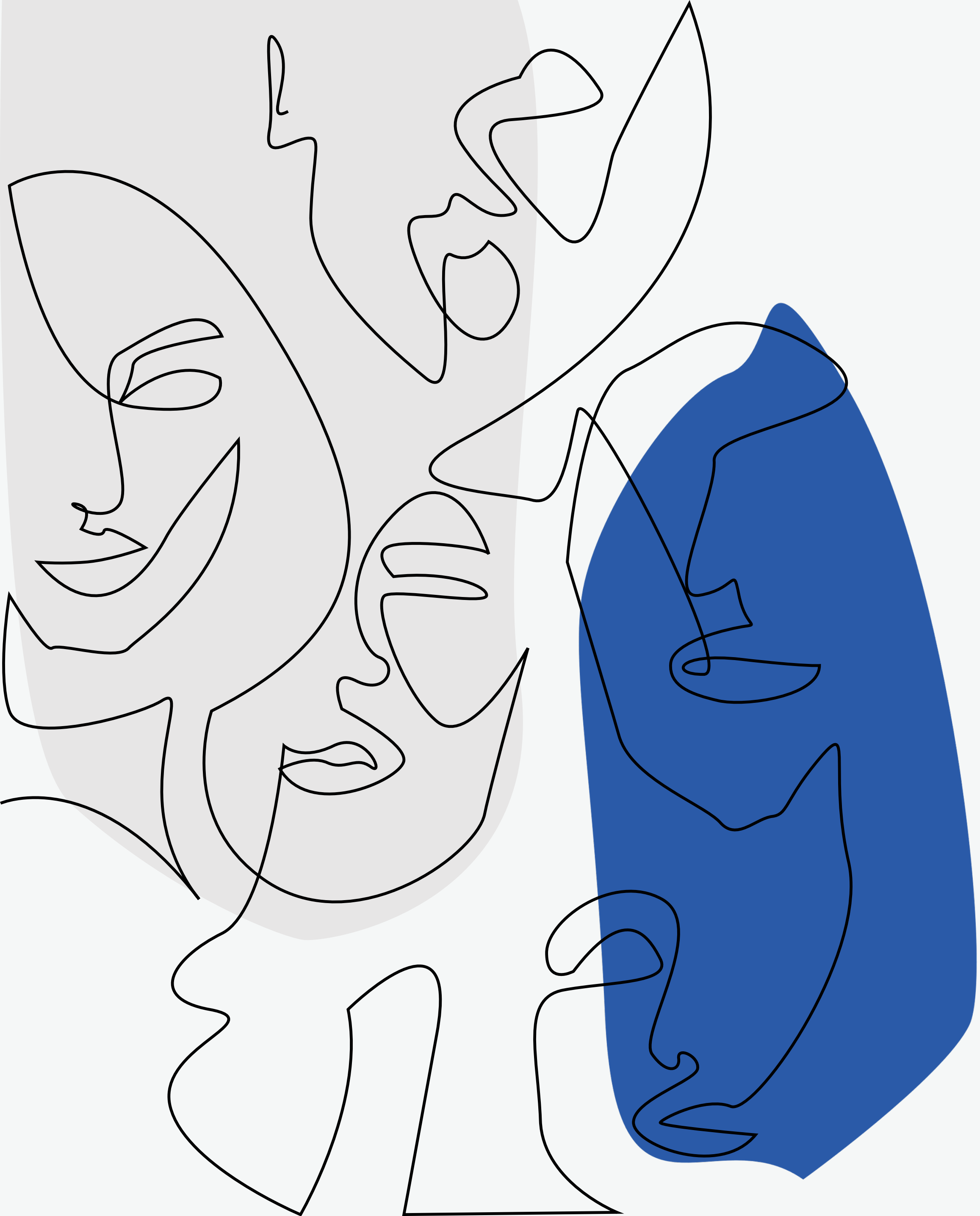
As a first-hand qualitative research method, interview aims to learn about the opinion and attitude of respondents related to research questions through a conversation. In this report, 9 people from a variety of geographic areas are semi-structured interviewed according to their role as community-related researchers, practitioners, and residents of creative communities.

* Note: The three main methods considered in this report, namely desk research, interviews and coolhunting, are not sequential. They are all ways of information gathering and are used interspersed in the course of the research.

Creative Community revitalization

Starting from the definition of creative communities, this section explores the development history and current status of creative community revitalization in **Japan, Taiwan** and **mainland China**. **Since the first two have great influence on mainland China, so their contexts are also very important to this topic.**

02 Section



Definition of Creative Community

There is a wide variety of discussions on creative cities and creative industries, but no clear, standardized definition of creative community exists. According to Darras (2018), it varies according to historical, geographical, economic, technological, operational, and political contexts (p. 2). Therefore, this requires us to understand the meaning of creative community in different contexts in the literature in order to arrive at an operational concept of creative community in this report. Through the literatures from Richard Florida (2010), Arlene Goldbard (2006), EF Rodriguez Gomez (2017), Sue Kenny, Brian McGrath and Rhonda Phillips (2018), we summarize the characteristics of *creative community* as follows:

- Openness and diversity
- Relevance to the arts
- Social change/social well-being
- Process sustainability (i.e., resilience and recovery)
- Aimed at promoting economic revitalization and equity

Creative Community Revitalization In Japan

The revitalization of creative communities in Japan has more of a bottom-up character embedded in it. Pilvi Posio (2019) defines *machizukuri* practice (i.e. Community revitalization in Japan) as various forms of bottom-up citizen-initiated participation in local place governance (p.41). Over the past fifty years, the government has also introduced top-down policies to support the revitalization of creative communities.

● 1960s | Bottom-up social movement

After World War II, Japan was in the process of urbanization. The large-scale urban development and industrial pollution caused an environmental crisis, leading to Japanese people's poor living condition and hundreds of deaths. All this has impacted their distrust of government and the launch of bottom-up civic participation and social movements.

● 1970s-1980s | Resident-oriented community

The left-wing government gradually lost power. The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) formulated new administrative measures to give higher priority to residents' concerns and quality of life issues, which promotes the development of *machizukuri* practice in Japan.

2000s | People connection

● *Machizukuri* practice has gradually formed a nationwide movement, and the focus has gradually shifted to "how to connect people", related to the social problems, such as lonely death, suicide, depression, etc., arising from the process of modernization and urbanization, as well as the development of technology and social media.

Creative Community Revitalization In Taiwan

In the beginning, the government also introduced relevant policies from the top down, but later, along with the rise of civic consciousness in Taiwan, a combination of top-down and bottom-up models was formed. The *comprehensive community revitalization program*, proposed by the Taiwan government in 1994, has responded to the current public opinion, which attempted to integrate the five major community development elements of "people, culture, land, scenery, and products". These five elements have been mentioned in many creative community revitalization projects in mainland China.

● 1960s | Introduced community development

The term community development was introduced from European or American countries.

● 1960s-1980s | Martial law

For 20 years, due to the influence of martial law, this phase of community building was top-down and government-led. There were mainly basic configurations such as the construction of community activity centers, the installation of childcare centers, and so on, characterized by a monolithic model that ignored the real needs of the residents.

● After 1987 | civil power

Martial law lifted after 1987. community residents continuously fought to save their surrounding endangered environment, as well as actively carried out community preservation campaigns.

● 1994 | comprehensive community revitalization

The Taiwanese government responded to the current trend and public opinion by proposing the comprehensive community revitalization project, which attempted to promote the consciousness and mobilization of residents from the perspective of cultural reconstruction.

Creative Community Revitalization In mainland China

Until 2010, state power remained absolutely dominant in the community. After that, the policy shift opened up the possibility of bottom-up participation in community building by civil society organizations or individuals. Architects, designers, community work, foundations, charities, real estate developers, and other groups gradually paid attention to the power of communities and began to focus on "creative community revitalization" and related concepts. Various related social organizations, social enterprises, and media platforms increased one after another. Under the influence of the pandemic, the rise of bottom-up self-organization, the formation of civic consciousness and the concern for "the nearby" have been spawned. The importance of society is increasingly emphasized.

● 1949 | Society of acquaintances

Before 1949, traditional towns and cities had relatively high level of acquaintance communities, continuing the blood and geographical relationship network.

● 1949-1970s | *unit* system of a planned economy

Before the reform and opening-up, the mainland implemented a highly centralized planned economy. People's production and living opportunities are limited to the places where their household registration was located, and there were few opportunities for free migration.

● 1970s-1990s | Initial phrase of community-based social services

The reform and opening-up initiated the economic development-oriented social transformation in mainland China, and the state began to consciously weaken its function and role in public welfare. The idea of "community-based social services" has also been nurtured.

● 1990s-2010 | Up-down community

The concept of "community building" emerged, and the community as a substitute for "units" became the basis for social management in mainland China, although the state power was always in an absolute dominant position in the community.

● After 2010 | Multi-coordinated community

The government, society, and the market cooperate with various forces, including non-profit organizations, intermediary organizations, and other public sectors and individual citizens.

Desk Research

Desk Research is a secondary data collection method or technique that is commonly used in the field of market research (Dadhe, 2016, p.77; Hague, 2016, p.53) and business world ([IPSOS](#), 2020; [Mindshare](#), 2021). This section is focused on secondary information related to creative community in the context of mainland China, collecting sources including news reports, podcast contents, social media contents, published books and magazines.

03 Section

Desk research in this report

In this report, the Desk research aims to **contextualize the research questions related to creative community revitalization**. Data collection and analysis start from the **definition of creative communities** (Refer to P. 9 of this report), incorporating the current situation of social, economic, cultural, environmental and technological aspects in mainland China.

The **data collection channels** will take into account the specific context in mainland China, and will be collected mainly from social media platforms such as WeChat, news websites, podcasts, books and magazines etc. Since trend studies require **a high degree of timeliness of information**, we have therefore also tried to use sources **from between January 2021 and March 2023** to ensure that the findings are more current.


As to **the process of doing Desk Research**, we firstly chose *creative community* as a keyword and searched on various platforms, but this expression was rarely discussed in the context of mainland China as a whole. Therefore, we decided to start with the broader term *community* and the more detailed terms *art community* and *community revitalization* to filter, collect and record contents with higher correlation with the characteristics of creative community, as well as analyzed their commonalities. In the following pages, we demonstrate **the eight clusters** based on the information collected through the Desk Research.

Main Media Sources

 微信公众平台



YiMagazine

 小宇宙

 三联生活周刊

 The result of Desk Research

The result of Desk Research

01 Stock Economy

Along with the increasing urbanization in mainland China, the more developed cities in the east (especially the urban centers) have found it difficult to carry out more new real estate development. Both the government and real estate developers have begun to focus more on the more microscopic transformation of public spaces such as neighborhoods and street corners. Some of such renovation and renewal only beautify rundown facades or streets, while others involve activities that promote community vitality in creative ways, the latter being the creative community revitalization that is the focus of this project.

03 Pandemic and quarantines

The growing recognition of the importance of community, the nearby and neighborhood, is also due in large part to the impact of the pandemic. In mainland China, where there have been varying degrees of closure and control over the past three years, people have been restricted from moving around. In areas where the pandemic is severe, people would not even be able to leave their homes or neighborhoods after the 2022 normalization of nucleic acid. A series of news happening during the 3-months quarantine of Shanghai last spring have caused public's dissatisfaction and long-standing anger of the government and policy.

02 Disappearance of the *nearby*

The nearby means the real connection between people and the world, focusing on the seeing around life. With the pandemic, people are unable to go out into the world and are forced to pay attention to what is around them, and this expression has triggered discussions and resonance within mainland China, becoming the buzzword of these three years.

04 Self-governance & Public Participation

In the midst of the chaos, we saw that communities in Shanghai were exploring a path of bottom-up self-governance during the pandemic, and shared three different cases of community self-governance and reflections. Other communities that had a certain foundation of public participation before the pandemic due to the long-standing roots of third-party community revitalization organizations, showed great resilience, adaptability and autonomy during the quarantine.

The result of Desk Research

05 Co-creation

Third-party community revitalization organizations use a number of ways to facilitate communication and connection among community residents, many times by hosting community events. In creative communities, these events or workshops have some commonality, i.e. co-creation.

07 Regional/community economy Revitalization

Community businesses that can invigorate or revitalize the regional area become a concern.

06 Community-based aging & parenting plans

Along with the deepening of aging in mainland China, community-based aging plans have become a concern. Apart from that, parents who work in the city do not have time to bring up their children, and they are torn between “how to provide a better material life for their children” and “giving their children better companionship and nurturing”. The community-based parenting may be a viable idea.

08 DAO

This type of creative community has more to do with the development of blockchain technology, namely communities organized in the form of DAOs. (decentralized autonomous organizations).



01

Stock Economy

Stock economy (Mandarin: “存量经济”) is a term that is more often mentioned when looking at urban community development from a macro perspective. Along with the increasing urbanization in mainland China, the more developed cities in the east (especially the urban centers) have found it difficult to carry out more new real estate development and [“have entered a more subtle stage of governance”](#).

Therefore, both the government and real estate developers have begun to focus more on the more microscopic transformation of public spaces such as neighborhoods and street corners. Some of such renovation and renewal only beautify rundown facades or streets, while others involve activities that promote community vitality in creative ways, the latter being the creative community revitalization that is the focus of this project.

01 Stock economy



For example, the renovation of Yuyuan Road carried out by urban regeneration service provider [CREATER](#) was initially focused on [beautifying streets and upgrading facilities](#). And in 2019, the service provider incubated the community revitalization organization [Shequgengxin](#) (Mandarin: “社趣更馨”), which focuses on three core modules: community creation, neighborhood creation, and brand design. It focuses on three core modules: community revitalization, neighborhood revitalization, and brand design, and works with local merchants, residents, and functional departments to build a community ecology. It is worth noting that they have hosted a series of creative activities to revitalize the community, such as the [Story Shop](#).

Source: [Shequgengxin](#). (Registered on 2023-05-15).

02

Disappearance of the nearby

In addition to the stock economy, many media and scholars often cite the disappearance of the nearby proposed by anthropologist Xiang Biao (2021, p.155) to bring out community-related discussions, including the True Meaning of Community (p. 1) in the February 2021 issue of [YiMagazine](#), Podcast [CityTells](#) in conversation with Professor [Wang Defu](#), [Podcast Wonderers](#) in conversation with Jin Jing in 2022.

The nearby is a concept, in Xiang's view, which means the real connection between people and the world, focusing on the seeing around life.

02 Disappearance of the nearby



Source: [NHK](#). (Registered on 2022-12-30).

Source: [Sanlian Lifeweek](#). (Registered on 2023-02-30).

With the pandemic, people were unable to go out into the world and were forced to pay attention to what was around them. The expression "the nearby" has triggered discussions and resonance within mainland China, becoming the buzzword of these three years. In fact, this lonely state of lack of human connection in big cities is also known as no-relationship society, a concept mentioned in a 2011 NHK film.

03

Pandemic and quarantines

In fact, the growing recognition of the importance of community, the nearby and neighborhood, is also due in large part to the impact of the pandemic. In particular, in mainland China, where there have been varying degrees of closure and control over the past three years, people have been restricted from traveling and moving around, staying in the same city most of the time. In areas where the pandemic was severe, people would not even be able to leave their homes or neighborhoods after the 2022 normalization of nucleic acid. In this context, a myriad of people have realized that only neighborly support is the solution.

03 Pandemic and quarantines



Source: [Reuters](#). (Registered on 2022-06-30).

The pandemic has not only affected people's attitudes toward their communities and neighborhoods, but also their relationships with them. The [3-months quarantine of Shanghai](#) last spring was an important turning point. Due to the spread of the New Coronavirus, Shanghai was closed to the public from March to June 2022, and everyone was locked in their homes for three months. During this time, people were in chaos with early morning food grabs, shortages of supplies, daily nucleic acid testing, and working from home. At the same time, the government's sweeping quarantine policy made it impossible to meet many humanitarian demands, such as the treatment of positive infected people, the forced separation of children from their parents, and the death of elderly people living alone in their homes due to lack of assistance and supplies. To some extent, the spontaneous protests that broke out in Shanghai and various locations across the country at the end of last year were also due to the public's dissatisfaction and long-standing anger over the policy. So, people started to find their own solutions.

04

Self-governance & Public Participation

In April 2022, Shequgengxin published an article entitled [Self-governance and self-help in the community as the smallest unit under the pandemic](#), saying that in the midst of the chaos, we saw that communities in Shanghai were exploring a path of bottom-up self-governance during the pandemic, and shared three different cases of community self-governance and reflections. He shares three different cases and reflections on community self-governance, hoping to give some references and lessons to those who are engaged in community work and involved in community affairs. Other communities had a certain foundation of public participation before the pandemic due to the long-standing roots of third-party community revitalization organizations, and showed great resilience, adaptability and autonomy during the quarantine.

04 Self-governance & Public Participation



In April 2022, He Jia started the "Xinhua Volunteer Fleet" initiative in the Xinhua Community and also served as a volunteer.

Source: [T China](#). (Registered on 2022-07-15).

In the same month, the article entitled "[Will this be the first year of community self-governance in Shanghai?](#)" was published by the cultural media TChinese (Mandarin: "T中文版") was published, stating that the community revitalization organization Big Fish created the [Xinhua Volunteer Fleet](#) in the Xinhua community, which was "the only known volunteer fleet in Shanghai that was initiated by the private sector. The fleet covered the entire neighborhood life cycle, and achieved a real collaboration between the street protection policy and the volunteer power of community. Co-founder He Jia considers the role of the Big Fish as a handshake platform. In an epidemic situation where there may be mistrust and resistance between official, semi-official and completely grassroots teams, third-party organizations could promote understanding of policies, collect and respond to the needs of the private sector, and promote community autonomy to a whole process of participation, consultation and dialogue. The third-party organizations can facilitate understanding of policy, collect and respond to civic needs, and promote community self-governance toward a holistic approach of participation, consultation, and dialogue. In fact, there has been an increase in the number of community revitalization organizations like Big Fish, an early third-party organization in China that serves as an intermediary between the government and residents, helping to communicate and coordinate many community issues, which is more in line with mainland China's long-standing top-down context.

05

Co-creation

Third-party community revitalization organizations use a number of ways to facilitate communication and connection among community residents, many times by hosting community events. In creative communities, these events or workshops have some commonality, i.e. co-creation.

05 Co-creation



Source: [Luxelakes](#). (Registered on 2022-05-15).

For example, Shunde Good Things Happen (Mandarin:“顺德好事发生”) is a cultural brand rooted in the local community of Shunde, and the platform initiated a participatory exhibition at the end of 2022, open to all residents who wanted to co-creation.

Commercial property Luxelakes Eco-City (Mandarin:“麓湖生态城”) held a Luxelakes Public Art Season in the fall of 2020, which featured not only community theater-themed art projects, but also a large number of community co-creations, with the expectation that Luhu residents would move from being temporary immigrants to residents with roots, and to live, create and share with each other, collectively building a common festival, with emotions and contemporary memories.

[Aranya](#) (Mandarin:“阿那亚”) , a real estate developer, held the first Anaya Theatre Festival in 2021, and one of the most unique sections was the Migratory Bird 300 program, which invited 300 theatre lovers (like migratory birds) to stay in a tent camp in the wetland park for 14 days of a total of 300 hours. The interaction, exchange, practice and co-creation of this activity explored the possibilities of theater from all angles.

06

Community-based aging & parenting plans

Creative communities imply more social well-being and communal considerations. Along with the deepening of aging in mainland China, community-based aging plans have become a concern. Wang Defu points out in a podcast CityTells published by the Papel that the radius of elderly people's activities will become smaller, thus requiring better community and community-based elderly care services (Hao, H., 2022, 07:05). Interface Culture spoke with Yang Fan, an associate professor at Shanghai Jiao Tong University who has long been involved in research on care service and public policy issues, who said that innovative public care services have been piloted, including community-based aid organizations, regular meditation and yoga classes, and time banks.

06 Community-based aging & parenting plans



In the community garden, children are having lessons.



Community residents as volunteers give lessons to the children.

Source: [Real Stories Project](#) (Registered on 2022-01-15).

Apart from that, parents who work in the city do not have time to bring up their children, and they are torn between “how to provide a better material life for their children” and “giving their children better companionship and nurturing”, and the community-based parenting may be a viable idea.

According to the non-fiction media Real Stories Project, the Wujiaochang community in Shanghai is one such place where mothers have formed “alliances” and take turns becoming “surrogate parents” to look after each other’s children. In the book entitled with *A Cultural Genealogy of Folk Parenting* (Mandarin: 《民间养育学的文化家谱》), the author An Chao points out, parenting in traditional societies is not dependent on the mother or a particular individual, but on the community. Countless adults and peers were involved in the child’s development. In the no-relationship society where all neighbors are strangers, the public power of creative community parenting may be a new attempt to have the warmth of acquaintance society in the modern big city.

07

Regional/community economy Revitalization

While creative communities provide new ideas for retirement and parenting, they can also provide a boost to the economy and business, mainly in terms of revitalization of the regional/community economy.

07 Regional/community economy Revitalization



リノベーションプロジェクト

machimoriが手がけた熱海のリノベーションプロジェクト



不動産オーナー様へ

ビル管理に関する管理・コンサルティング事業、サブリース事業

Next Vision for ATAMI.

自分たちの暮らしは自分たちでつくる、
自分たちの街も自分たちでつくる。
そして、100年後も豊かな暮らしができる熱海をつくる。

株式会社machimoriは、熱海の遊休化した物件を持つ不動産オーナーと、
まちで何かを始めたい「まち起業家」や「住み手」をつなぐことで、
まち内外の人たちが暮らしやすく、チャレンジしやすい場を作るために生まれました。

建物は使い手がいなければただの箱です。
想いを持って建物を使う「人」がいなければ、物件をどれだけきれいに再生しても意味がありません。
熱海のまちに興味を持ってくれる人、住み手、起業家など、まちなかに想いを持ったプレイヤーを増やし、
そのプレイヤーたちと共に、自分たちの欲しい暮らしやまちをつくっていきたいと考えています。

Machimori project in Atami City, Shizuoka Prefecture

Source: [Machimori](#) (Registered on 2022-11-05).

The February 2021 special issue of YiMagazine focuses on community business-related themes. It points out that the entry point of Japan's focus on community business is Social Business, which therefore places more emphasis on solving social problems by commercial means and is essentially a non-profit business that gives priority to solving local problems, with the remaining benefits mainly used for social investment and return. From this premise, the social issues addressed by Japanese community business are relatively diverse, including not only aging and childlessness, but also healthcare, education, environment, tourism, and local activation development, etc. Diverse subjects from different fields can participate in the project, and the government will also provide support and assistance.

For example, the machimori project in Atami City, Shizuoka Prefecture, is a joint venture between landlords and real estate developers who own unused properties to renovate old houses and develop various retail stores, cafes, accommodations, and event spaces for tourists, companies, and school training groups (p. 70).

08

DAO-Decentralized autonomous organizations

Another type of creative community that has more to do with the development of blockchain technology, namely communities organized in the form of DAOs.

08 DAO-Decentralized autonomous organizations



Source: [Twitter](#) (Registered on 2023-01-05).

For example, WBF (Women Buidl Foundation) is a women's programming community that was founded just last year. They believe that code is the language to build a new world, and Coder is the builder of this new world, yet at a time when new rules are being created in the web3 space, female programmers are severely absent or marginalized compared to men. Therefore, WBF plans to make its voice heard from Coding, providing women's thoughts and perspectives to deeply participate in the building of a new world. As a groundwork for this idea, WBF held an introductory-level, high-intensity Coding Camp for female participants in the Web 3.0 field at DAO Space in Dali, Yunnan Province from September 16-18 last year. DAO Space is a shared office space in Dali, and is one of the cool signals in this report. Another example is [Nomadverse DAO](#), a community that aims to connect digital nomads across time and space. It hopes to use Web 3 technology to empower offline communities, where like-minded partners can be connected in advance at various locations around the world to build a sustainable life model with second-hand exchange, co-learning, skill swap, and project co-creation to achieve parallel growth up and down the chain.

Cool Signals

Coolhunting is an important research method in Trend Studies, with which it is possible to identify manifestations, artifacts and practices of sociocultural changes (Gomes, Cohen, Cantú & Lopes, 2021, p. 252–254). This section focuses on the collection and analysis of 14 signals (including 10 from mainland China and 4 from Hong Kong and Japan). Each signal has associated macro trend(s).

04 Section

Coolhunting in this report

After determining the theme of the project, we selected a series of phrases defined around creative communities (such as community revitalization, creative communities, urban renewal, art communities, etc.) as **search terms**, conducted the first round of searches in Chinese Internet platforms and social media (mainly WeChat subscriptions, but also microblogs, podcasts, etc.). We recorded or secondarily searched the information collected that might be useful for the research.

It should be noted that since the research area of this report is targeted on mainland China, the majority of the cool (10 out of 14) signals collected are from this geography. However, **creative ideas do not come from just one place, but can emerge and ferment in all corners of the world at the same time. Therefore, 2 cool signals from Japan and 2 from Hong Kong are also kept in the report, in order to provide some inspiration for those who are interested in the creative community or who are working in this area.** Even though the contexts are different, they can still be used as a reference for community awareness and practice.

For the Japanese and Hong Kong Cool signals, we searched via **Google search, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram** for keywords in the corresponding contexts, such as *machizukuri* in Japanese, community revitalization (“社區營造”) in Traditional Chinese. Initially, we sifted and collected information, and then specifically looked at the content related to several characteristics of “creative community”.

At the same time, we have also maintained close contact with some Chinese experts in the field of community, so they will also provide some clues from time to time for the author to follow up the search, which is also a more important part of the Trend Studies to establish **networking** with professionals.



Coolhunting in this report

Due to the Trend Studies' high demand for timeliness of information, **the signals from mainland China all occur in 2022**. While the signals from Hong Kong occur in 2021, the signals from Japan are between 2019 and 2021. Because the origin of creative community revitalization in Japan is much earlier and more developed, it may provide inspiration for creative community revitalization in mainland China, even if it is weaker in terms of timeliness.

In the trend report, for each signal, there are five elements: **description, citation sources, analysis of cool nature, insights** and **related macro trends**, along with the **title** of the signal and several **representative images** at the beginning.

Specifically, the description is an introduction to the signal, and the references are usually two or more links from different sources.

In the following is the **macrotrend related to the signal**, each of which will be attributed to one of the five macrotrends belonging to the trend map of the annual [report](#) published by the Laboratory in 2022, to be studied within different domain perspectives in order to see if a similar pattern arises.



Coolhunting in this report

Next, the nature of the cool of the signal is analyzed using the new criteria version from the the [Trends and Culture Management Laboratory of the University of Lisbon](#), proposed by Professor Nelson Pinheiro Gomes and his team in 2021. The criteria for the nature of cool are as follows:

- Cool is first **relevant** since it reflects the spirit of time and resonates with the emergent mindsets with a potential to mark and impact through different abstract and sentimental associations.
- Cool is **viral** as innovative ideas contained within cool signals will disseminate at a rapid speed, reflecting from different objects, representations or practices.
- Cool is also **actual** or pertaining to present time, in the sense that it addresses urgent and crucial challenges of current time.
- Cool also **contains the characteristic of irreverence**, meaning that it is often avant-garde and provocative, different from cultural orthodox.
- Cool is **instigating** in that a cool signal can be seductive, attractive and causing excitement.
- Cool contains within itself **a proposal of discontinuity**, and in some cases it may represent a rupture with the current pattern.

Finally there is an **insight** that addresses the corresponding signal, sometimes combined with a business and branding perspective.



List of Cool signals

mainland China | Asia

List of Cool signals

Cool Signals in mainland China

- Dali Hub 2.0 Digital Nomad Co-work Community(2022-12-01)
- Digital Nomad Anji (DNA) Community and Anji Creative & Design Center (ACDC) (2022-05-01)
- DAO SPACE - the local co-work space in Dali (2022-09-15)
- Bottle Dream's Basecamp (2022-08-10)
- 345 Social Innovation Lab (2022-12-16)
- Golden Era Co-creation Space (2022-06-10)
- Chitchat Lab (2022-11-25)
- Residents co-creation along the Yanqing Road (2022-02-25)
- Borrow a seat exhibition (2022-12-20)
- Comupage - Metaverse community applet (2022-11-23)

Cool Signals in Asia

- Chiica - Community token electronic payment Platform (2022-05-10)
- Revisit: A Tiny Art Festival in Sanya 2022 (2022-11-29)
- Hong Kong To Kwa Wan Ceramic Plate Workshop (2022-02-19)
- Via North Point - Hong Kong Community Artistic Project (2022-02-25)

** Note: In parentheses is the date on which the registration signal was marked.*

Dali Hub 2.0 Digital Nomad Co-work Community



Source: [Dali Hub](#). Registered on 2022-12-01.

● Related Macro Trends: Lifestyle Redesign

● Description

Dali Hub is a co-work community located in the city of Dali, Yunnan Province, Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. [Founded in October 2020](#), it re-upgraded the space after a year, which is [now version 2.0](#). They hold regular sessions/salons to share their experiences with digital nomads or those who want to become a digital nomad across the country. They also incubated the Wave Travel Project, a travel-while-working program that joined digital nomads to live the life of a sojourn together in various regions of the country. The current version 2.0 space has been upgraded to include a coffee bar, terrace bar, rooftop, meeting room, yoga room, fitness area, entertainment area and book bar. Considering the weather, some of the digital nomads in the community will also travel to Hainan for the winter en masse, working while sojourning. In addition to Dali, the founding team has also opened Hub branches in [Zhangye, Luoyang](#) and [Hainan](#), China.

● The analysis of Cool Nature

The pandemic has profoundly affected and changed our lives, and people are increasingly looking to redefine their lifestyle. In this context, a variety of work forms such as remote work, freelancing and digital nomadism have received more attention. Therefore, Dali Hub is relevant to the spirit of the times due to its reflection and resonance with people's emerging mentalities and aspirations. Moreover, the community represented by this lifestyle is also instigating, envied and aspired to by many people. It is also viral because the Dali Hub community is growing in size, and three more digital nomad co-work spaces have been established in other cities across mainland China within three years. Although Dali hub 1.0 was established in 2020, its upgraded version and the newly established co-work spaces in other cities are both less than 2 years. Therefore, it is current. Rather than living on the move in different cities while working at the same time like digital nomads, settling in one city for a long time is still the choice of the mainstream. That's why the community contains irreverent and discontinuous characteristics that are avant-garde and provocative, different from the cultural orthodoxy.

● Insight

Digital nomadism and remote working are not fresh to the world, but with the pandemic profoundly changing our lives, the practice and desire for this lifestyle is rapidly emerging in mainland China, especially among the younger demographic. At the same time, digital nomads or remote workers are tending to choose to live in smaller cities with more pleasant weather conditions outside of first-tier cities, not only for cost savings, but also for a chance to easily get access to nature. This way of life is characterized by the integration of life and work while living and working in a more flexible location, without the restrictions of a fixed workplace. Currently, Portugal and Spain have both opened visas for digital nomads, so this change in lifestyle is not limited to mainland China.

Digital Nomad Anji (DNA) Community and Anji Creative & Design Center (ACDC)



Source: [DNA](#). Registered on 2022-05-01.

- Related Macro Trends:
Lifestyle Redesign; Protagonist identities

- Description

Digital Nomad Anji (DNA) is located in Anji County, Huzhou City, Zhejiang Province, within a three-hour drive from first-tier cities such as Shanghai and Hangzhou. Transformed from a disused factory, the community is now a combination of a co-work space and a dormitory area with all the functions needed for work and living. In short, it is a campus built according to the co-working and co-living necessities of digital nomads. DNA is based on the idea of inclusivity and integration, supporting individual digital nomad to be more powerful. Not far from the community is the [Anji Creative & Design Center \(ACDC\)](#), a public facility dedicated to creative design work, which includes an area of design and art library and a large area of co-work space.

The community began internal testing in December 2021 and officially opened to the public in May 2022.

- The analysis of Cool Nature

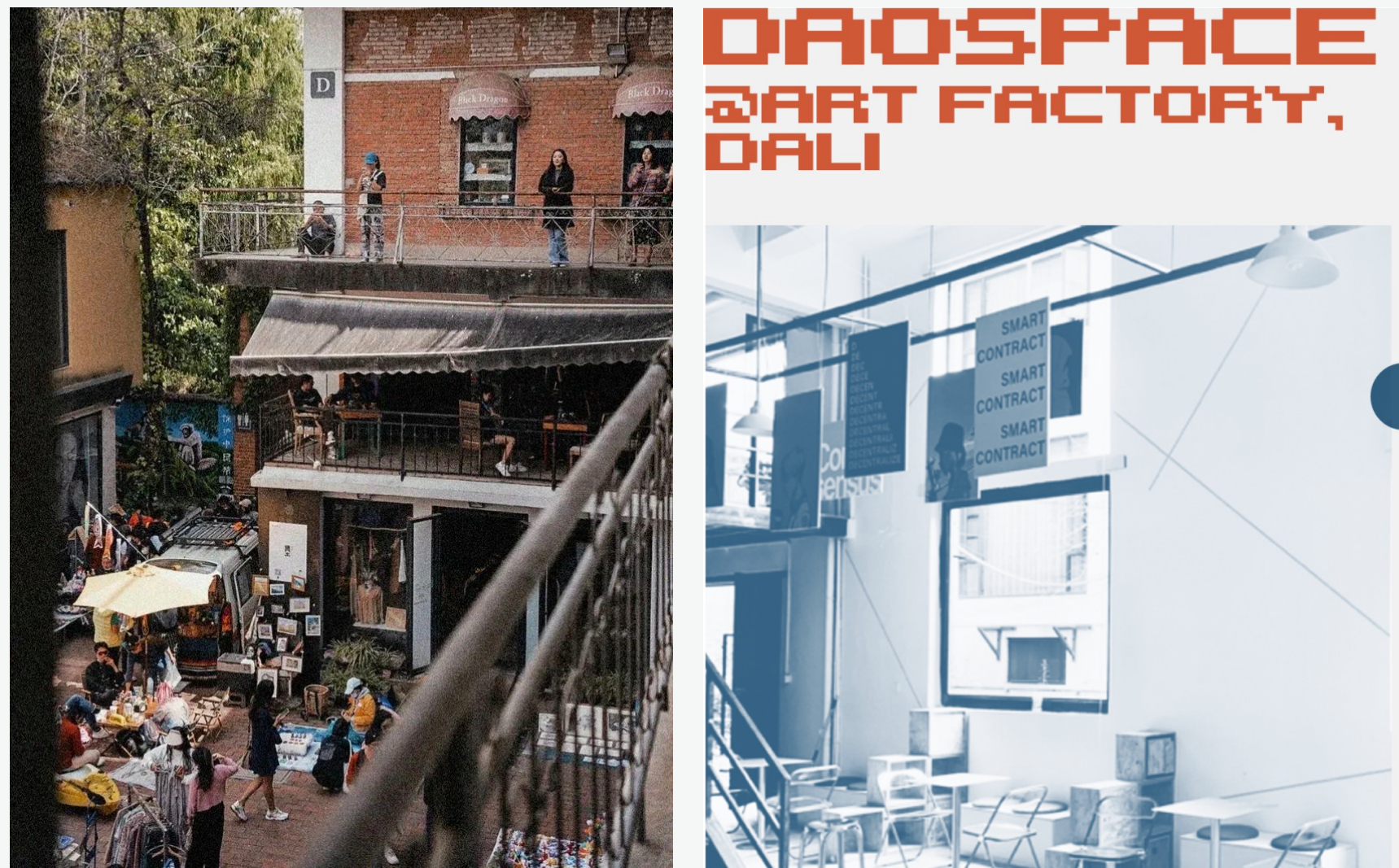
DNA and ACDC are closely relevant and significant to the spirit of times, as they respond to the digital way of working that more people are choosing, while the pandemic of the past three years has accelerated this trend. At the same time, with the high level of urbanization and all the urban maladies that come along with it, there is a tendency that people are longing to escape from big cities and search for new possibilities in other places, among which countryside are one of those options. It is also viral, as the commune has already attracted hundreds of residents since it opened for internal testing at the end of 2021 for five months. According to the [media platform Sandwich](#), demand for DNA's dormitory was already outstripping supply. Moreover, it is also instigating and causing excitement. For example, since the official opening of the community, its media platform has been rotating one resident per week to share his/her life or art creation in DNA, which is called the Digital nomad Takeover Project. As of November 29, 2022, twenty five residents have participated. This decentralized rotation plan, where the residents are the subjects of the practice, not only draws more attention to this interesting center, but also stimulates more creativity and energy. The DNA community and ACDC are very current as the internal test was opened in December 2021 and officially opened to the public five months later, less than a year ago. Finally, it also contains irreverence and discontinuity, since the DNA is the first commercially operated digital nomad-oriented community in mainland China, and the ACDC is the first public facility in mainland China built in the countryside specifically to serve creative workers.

- Insight

In a time of evolving technology and media, digital nomads have chosen to work and travel as a way of life. Many of this group are creative workers. They live in low-cost rural areas, while forming creative communities that attract more talented residents. They will also take over the community as an owner-principal, with a certain degree of self-expression of subjectivity. For business and brands, firstly, Anji can become a replicable business model and land in more villages around big cities, and secondly, this new lifestyle is attracting more people's attention, and more products and services can be produced and designed to meet the greater demand in the future.

DAO SPACE

- the local co-work space in Dali



Source: [DAO Space](#). Registered on 2022-09-15.

- Related Macro Trends:
Sustainable systems; Ergonomic Connections; Lifestyle Redesign

- Description

Founded in September 2022, DAO SPACE is a co-work space located in the Bed Sheet Factory Art District of Dali Old Town, aiming to provide a comfortable, free, inspirational and creative community for new immigrants to Dali such as Web3.0 practitioners, digital nomads and freelancers, supporting community members interact with the local humanities. Compared with other co-work communities such as Dali Hub, it has the following differences: (1) It is not only a space, but also a DAO. (2) It is equipped with a new Web3.0 social system [Social layer](#). In this system, everyone can issue badges for community members, and every

community member has an equal opportunity to create and issue non-quantifiable badges (tokens), which can transform the impact that one brings to others into recordable identity information. (3) More embodied sociality. The introductory tweet states that urban living represented by modernity encourages a productive, separated lifestyle, but DAO SPACE hopes to break this pattern. To achieve this, the community regularly organizes various events such as knowledge-sharing sessions and dance parties, as well as inspires each member to initiate activities through a variety of rewards. In this way, they hope to make everyone in the community live in an environment where they are appreciated and supported by each other. In the latest tweets, DAO SPACE is also continuing to promote [the Dali Community Alliance](#), which contains different types of communities in Dali, aiming to complete the economic self-circulation within the whole alliance, in the form of community token. They consider it may be a solution to counteract global economic problems.

- The analysis of Cool Nature

DAO Space is current, since it was founded in September 2022, less than a year from now. The community is relevant to the zeitgeist because it responds to the growing number of remote workers, digital nomads, and other freelancers in the context of the pandemic by providing them with a public space that integrates work, life, and social interaction. It is also viral, as similar co-work communities/spaces are springing up all over mainland China, with both different characteristics. DAO Space is also unique in that it is the first community in mainland China to combine the technology of web3.0 and digital nomads. This is why it contains irreverent characteristics with avant-garde. As the name suggests, DAO Space implements the spirit of [DAO](#), using the Social layer as a new system of socialization, and badges as non-quantifiable tokens to visualize the value of members' contributions to the community, thus better enabling everyone to be seen and respected. This is very different from previous co-work communities, so it can be said that it is a breakthrough from the old pattern and has a discontinuity. In addition, the community has held a series of events since its inception, and many people have come to participate, which shows its attraction and seduction.

- Insight

The pandemic has profoundly affected the way we live, work, socialize and play. Against the background of the increasing number of digital nomads and remote workers, work-life social integration communities for such groups are increasing with a variety of forms. At the same time, we can see that some communities have started to adopt Web 3.0 technology to bind the digital identity of community members with their real/physical identities, forming an online and offline linked community support system to achieve better community development. In addition, although the Dali Community Alliance is still in the early discussion stage of the proposal, there are many correlations between its consideration for economic self-cycling and sustainable systems.

Bottle Dream's Basecamp



Source: [Bottle Dream](#). Registered on 2022-08-10.

● Related Macro Trends: Sustainable systems

● Description

In July 2022, BottleDream, a social innovation company, transformed its 500-square-meter office into a creative community that responds to public issues, and named it Basecamp. Its introduction reads, "In an age where nothing is certain, a space should exist where people can freely express their doubts and concerns about the world, where prejudices between people dissolve and wariness dissipates, where they can discuss the possibilities of making the future better, and where they can gain the inspiration, knowledge and power they need." BottleDream hopes to create more and more authentic links and make it a "Think Tank for ordinary people". At the same time, the open space combines a library, a cafe and an exhibition space, through which they are able to shift to the direct C-side, allowing people to play, consume, feel and touch the subtle sustainable actions in the space through the medium of coffee, kitchen and balcony garden. Through this internal presentation, they hope to explore the possibility of promoting social innovation as a cultural context, or even as a way of life in the lives of the ordinary people.

● The analysis of Cool Nature

The [Basecamp](#) was founded in July 2022, less than a year ago, so it is current and fresh. It is very instigating and attractive that [Bottom Dream](#) opened up its office space that had been limited to their employees to the public, allowing people to be exposed to more tangible sustainable practices. At the same time, in a series of experiences and activities, people may also quickly internalize this sustainable innovation in their lives and spontaneously spread it to their friends around them, so it is viral in nature. More importantly, in an era of uncertainty, Basecamp provides a space where people can freely express and respond to public issues, and encourages everyone to gain inspiration, knowledge and power through communication and connection. It can be seen that its philosophy and actions respond to the current discussion on environmental and social sustainability issues. At the same time, it combines individual innovation with social change, believing in the possibility and power of every ordinary person to change the world. For the mainstream, innovation may be limited to a small group of people, such as experts, policy makers, or employees in large corporations, so the community also contains irreverent and discontinuous characteristics that distinguish it from cultural orthodoxy.

● Insight

Creative communities are becoming incubators that stimulate the creativity of ordinary people. These creative communities usually have a physical space on the ground. Through a series of discourses, objects, experiences, representations and practices, they stimulate the creativity of normal people and promote communication or connection between people, thus leading to greater possibilities for social change.

345 Social Innovation Lab



Source: [Big Fish Community Revitalization Organization](#). Registered on 2022-12-16.

● Related Macro Trends: Sustainable systems

● Description

345 Social Innovation Lab is “a crowdsourcing world on your doorstep” (Mandarin: “家门口的众创天地”), located in the Xinhua community in Shanghai. According to the initiators, we human beings are encountering more and more problems in an uncertain city, but the solutions are far from enough, and innovative people who want to do something about it always stop for various reasons. What the Lab aims to be is an experimental platform for ideas rooted in the community, where problems and ideas meet and solutions are obtained through experimentation. The directions of the Lab include but not limited to future life, urban life, creative art, sustainable cities and communities, rural revitalization, etc. [Xinhua Community Revitalization Center](#) will provide venue support, creative experiment support, design interaction section, cross-border communication and dissemination actions. The initiator hopes to create a youth creative community with a sense of scene, creativity and brand power based on physical space and a series of innovative activities, and to support more creative ideas of youth to have a chance to land.

● The analysis of Cool Nature

The Lab was founded in December 2022 and is therefore current and fresh. It is also viral and instigating because the kernel it contains to inspire community members' creative ideas and support them to get their ideas off the ground has a high degree of spreadability. And at the same time, according to Richard Florida, creative people are aggregative, and when ordinary people's ideas are inspired, more people with ideas will gather over as a result, forming a special energy field that promotes wider diffusion. In addition, the Lab is an attempt to address the challenge we face today, namely the paradox between the multiplicity of social problems and the scarcity of ideas for solutions. It supports the implementation of ideas by ordinary residents through a series of approaches, which in itself is very important and meaningful, in line with the spirit of the times. Finally, unlike the traditional thought that ideas are generated by professionals and employees of large enterprises, it boldly chooses to believe in people with certain ideas in neighborhoods or communities “at the doorstep”, through supporting their ideas via platform building and resource provision. That why it is irreverent and novel in itself. Meanwhile, this point also breaks with the mainstream of the current pattern, forming a discontinuous proposal.

● Insight

Creative communities are getting closer to ordinary people and their daily life. In such a community, it makes individual innovative actions easier to generate, experiment and land, through cross-border communication, resource matching and dissemination and promotion. Therefore, creative communities as an incubator to stimulate the creativity of ordinary people is on the horizon.

Golden Era Co-creation Space



Source: [Golden Era](#). Registered on 2022-06-10.

● Related Macro Trends: Sustainable systems (micro - urban collaborative organisms)

● Description

Golden Era is a Co-creation Space established in April, 2022 on Yulin Road, Chengdu City. The co-creation space was founded by Dada, who was inspired by topics related to community revitalization and urban renewal while studying in Japan, and wanted to create a space that is both personal and open to the public in the form of co-creation. The space is divided into two floors, the first floor is used as a private space for individuals and the second floor is open to the public. In the public space on the second floor, she designed a small [private library named Baichuan](#) (Mandarin: “百川”), from the Chinese idiom “Hai Na Bai Chuan”(Mandarin:“海纳百川”), which means that everyone is different and the river carries different knowledge. She has collected all her books and her friends’ books together and innovatively categorized them by person rather than by subject. In the future, Dada hopes that in this public, open and shared space, people will have more opportunities to interact with each other, create various activities together and explore life and the world together.

● The analysis of Cool Nature

Golden Era Co-creation Space was established in April 2022, less than a year ago, so it is very current. The space is meaningful and relevant to the spirit of times, because as part of the city, it provides a public space for discussion of public issues and civic engagement, and encourages people to share, co-create and co-construct. Its combination of private and public attributes also allows it to be preserved in mainland China's restrictive environment of speech censorship, allowing a portion of cutting-edge people's ideas to be expressed in a safe space of communication. This space, which flows between the private and public boundaries, contains irreverent characteristics. It is also viral because the core of this kind of community lies in sharing and co-creation, which means people will be involved in it through a series of experiences and practices, thus expanding its spread. The blurred boundary between private and public makes it both inclusive and private, easily arousing people's curiosity and inspiring them to come to this space to generate more interesting conversations or other creative practices. That's why it is instigating. Finally, it also contains a discontinuous character, as the creative community encourages co-creation among people in the city, and the discussion of public issues has a certain social well-being implication, unlike interest-based community groups.

● Insight

In the city, creative communities have become a new platform for people to share knowledge, seek collaboration, and create together. And, the shape of the community is in the stray zone between private and public, distinguishing it from some more public communities that are oriented to stimulate the creativity of ordinary people. In the context of mainland China, this may also be a consideration to circumvent censorship and to discuss public issues more safely and freely.

Chitchat Lab



Source: [Chitchat](#). Registered on 2022-11-25.

- Related Macro Trends: Lifestyle Redesign
- Description

Located in Xiamen's Haicang Lotus Village, [the Chitchat Lab](#) was established by four young people from different professions in October 2022 and is still in need of preparation. They pointed out that when the three-year [pandemic](#) turned their lives into a "[non-essential](#)" one, they began to re-examine the meaning of work, refused mental internal friction, and started to focus on the quality of life and return to their heart's desires. Therefore, they hope to become new villagers in the countryside, to practice a new way of life that accompanies the city and the countryside, to talk to and care for each other through "Chitchat", to regain the warmth of door-to-door, to reconstruct the disappearing nearby, and to bring back human feelings and vivid places. In addition, they plan to make a village magazine, cooperating with their friends to find the relationship between solar terms, land, culture, history and people, and record the daily life memories and thoughts in the village. Their vision is to become a community with social value: linking urban and rural life through the ecological model of content-design-industry in the long term, among friends and local neighbors. In a larger sense, it is about altruism and sharing, casting light on rural revitalization.

- The analysis of Cool Nature

The lab was an initiative launched in October 2022, and the preparation is still ongoing, so it is in an early stage and very current. The launch of the lab had something to do with the three-year pandemic, as people began to think more inward, reflecting on the meaning of work and what is necessary to live because of mobility restrictions in mainland China. The founding team members resigned from their former companies and chose to start a new way of life in the countryside was also influenced by it, so it is relevant and resonates with the emerging mentalities. At the same time it is viral at its core. Because this kind of local innovation can be practiced not only in one village, but also in villages in other parts of China as a practice of a new way of life for people to start a new exploration. Moreover, the Lab is also very avant-garde and irreverent, and has a certain discontinuity that breaks with the mainstream model. In the past, rural revitalization in mainland China usually focused on economic revitalization, and even with creative projects, they were mostly short-lived art festivals (such as the [Art in Fuliang](#)), but the founders of Chitchat intend to be new villagers based in the countryside for a long time, and to record their thoughts and memories via a cultural media "magazine", which is quite innovative and thought-provoking. Finally, according to their tweets, the idea of the lab has received a lot of attention since it was made public, and even now, before the lab has been renovated, there are many people commenting below the article, saying that they are ready to go for a small stay, which can somehow show that it is attractive and instigating.

- Insight

Under the influence of the pandemic, more and more people are beginning to re-examine their lives and reflect on the meaning of their work. As a result, people are escaping from big cities and going to the countryside to explore a new possibility of life. The choice of the countryside location is not so far from the city that it affects the convenience of life. At the same time, the concept nearby has been repeatedly mentioned, as young people who come to the countryside desire to build a connection with the countryside and the land, to rebuild warm human relationships and a community with social values.

Residents co-creation along the Yanqing Road

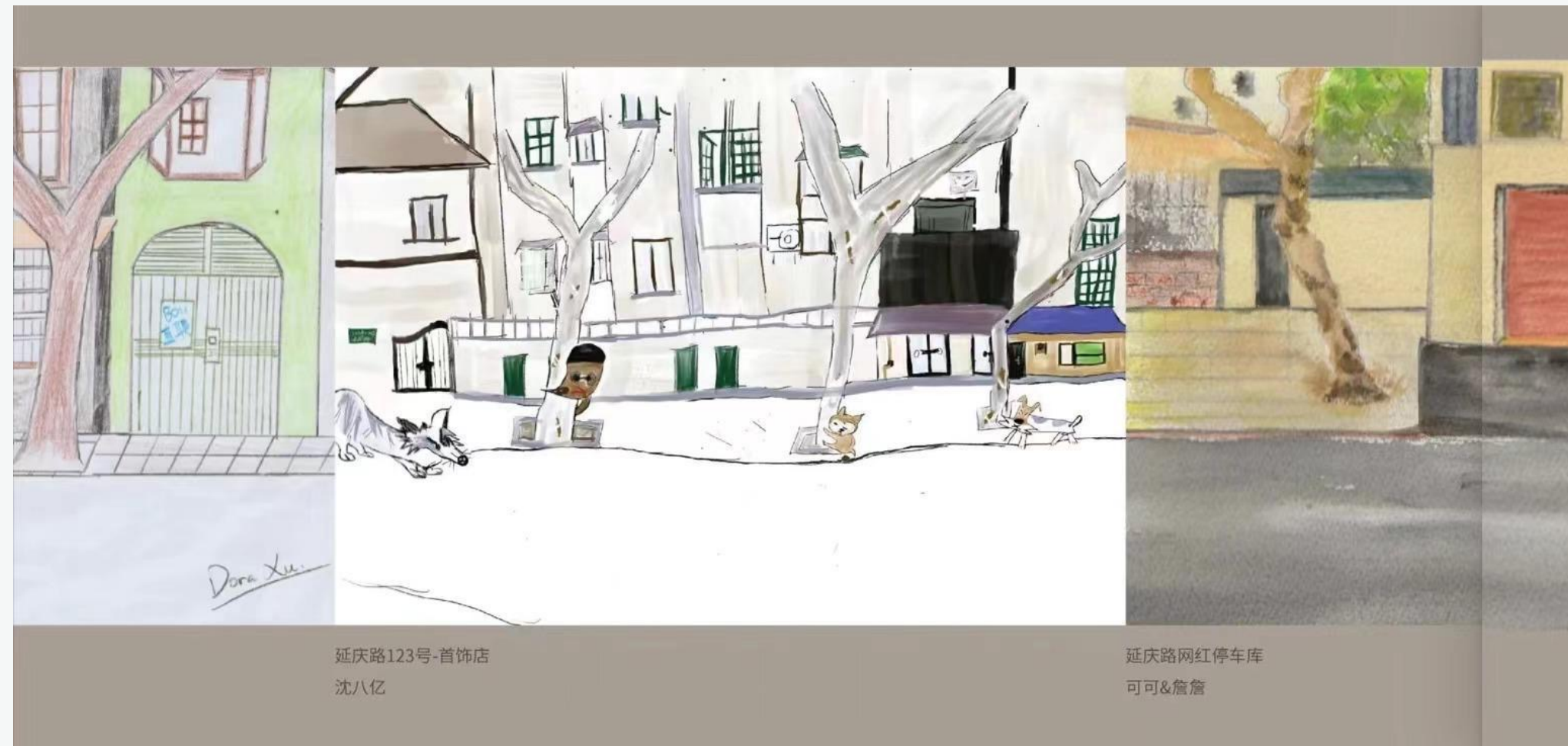
The creation of the first half of the road has been completed. The initiators said in a tweet that the process was arduous but everyone was working hard to complete it with their free time. "The moment we put residents' drawings together, they felt a sense of accomplishment. It was a small thing, but through this activity, we really felt the support of neighbors for each other".

● The analysis of Cool Nature

This co-creation is current because it was drawn by the community of Yanqing Road, just about a year ago. The drawing was attended by more than thirty residents, and its artistic co-creation kernel can be practiced not only in the Yanqing Road community but also in other communities, making it viral and instigating. The event also contained an irreverent and avant-garde character, as it was a self-organized art co-creation by the residents, which was different from previous officially organized events. A painting along with the road where residents live in a form of co-creation, representing the neighborhood's landscape and spirit, reflecting the emotional connection between neighbors and their sense of belonging to that community. It is an anchoring of a new narrative content and style, and is therefore relevant to the zeitgeist and resonates with the emerging mentality of resident's self-expression. Finally, this attempt to preserve and record local memories, create the representation of community scenes, and enhance community connections in a creative manner may symbolize a break with the current pattern, characterized by discontinuity.

● Insight

Co-creation seems to be an increasingly prominent keyword in creative communities. This co-creation is not only a kind of collaborative creation, but a more novel one. To be more specific, it is carried out more in the artistic form as well as content, which adopts more cultural symbols related to local culture and community identity. Moreover, the event has an unofficial, de-authoritarian character, and is a spontaneous action by residents to express their identity to the community. This connection to the community narrative and the more subjective voice of the residents is worthy of follow-up tracking.



Source: [CityParty](#). Registered on 2022-02-25.

● Related Macro Trends: Anchored Narratives; Protagonist identities

● Description

In February 2022, 30 neighbors on Yanqing Road in Shanghai each painted a section of the street scene on Yanqing Road, in an activity organized by Comer and Peng Peng, residents of Yanqing. The introduction to the event indicates that Yanqing Road has a 100-year history, and many famous people such as painters, architects and doctors have lived here and left behind many buildings of historical significance. The promoters organized this event to record what Yanqing Road would look like in 2022 as part of history.

Borrow a seat exhibition



Source: [NOWNESS](#) Registered on 2022-12-20.

● Related Macro Trends: Anchored Narratives

● Description

The young artist Chen Fanwan and the members of his Wan Studio initiated the [exhibition Borrow a Seat](#). The curatorial inspiration for the exhibition comes from the various small stools in the old downtown area of Foshan City, the Zhuihong community. Many of the stores facing the street have small ramshackle stools in front of their entries, which constitutes an important scene in the public life of the neighborhood.

In the view of the members of Wan Studio, the stool has a subtle attribute at this moment, a piece of furniture that blurs the boundary between public and private, widening the limits of life. They hope that by borrowing stools, they can establish a relationship with the old residents. Chen feels that not only have the young people lost the nearby, but also the old residents are not curious about new things in the community any more. In order to make the neighbors feel more involved, they left a loaner's card for each store owner, so that they can come to the exhibition for free.

● The analysis of Cool Nature

In the process of urbanization, the problem of “no-relationship” in modern communities is serious. People are increasingly lonely and lacking in the seeing of the nearby. Through a daily object that is both private and public, the activity was organized in an unintentional, interactive and intimate way to promote communication between old and new residents. That's why it is relevant to the spirit of the times and responds to people's anxiety. The event was held from July to October 2022, less than a year from now, and is therefore very fresh and current. It was also viral, in the sense that the event contained a core of art as a way to foster connections between old and new residents, an idea that can be applied by other communities, and not only through curation. The exhibition was initiated by a few young and influential artists, and while it continued to attract young people through exposure on social media, they also invited elderly residents to visit. As such it was instigating and provocative. This use of everyday objects from the surrounding, public-private ambiguity is actually irreverent, since these objects are often overlooked, while artistic interventions can make them visible. In other words, they may seem insignificant, but they are in fact important condensed collective memories of the community. Finally, this way of telling community cultural stories is also different from the previous ones, as the latter focuses more on aspects such as visual design and facilities hardware. That's why it contains a proposal of discontinuity.

● Insight

Creative communities become centers of discourse, storytelling and narrative, while daily objects in the ambiguous zone of public and private become symbols, through which community memories are recorded, stories are circled and narratives are anchored. Similar innovative ways of using art to revitalize may emerge in different communities.

Comupage

- Metaverse community applet



Source: [Comupage](#). Registered on 2022-11-23.

● Related Macro Trends: Ergonomic Connections; Protagonist identities

● Description

[Comupage](#) was founded in June 2022 by a group of academics, architects, designers, artists, and cryptographic engineers in Shanghai. Real community, digital badge and value social interaction are its three key-words. The core function of Comupage is to mint NFT (digital badges) for the community on the Conflux chain. Each community contribution can be recorded with a digital badge, and rewards for community contributions are not commended by the authority or official organization, but are self-motivated by the connection of community members. There are also various types of digital badges, such as a child-friendly badge, a tech-friendly badge, a delivery helper badge, etc.

Currently, users can access Comupage's interface in the WeChat applet, where we can see various community self-organizations (DAOs) that have partnered with Comupage. For example, Xinhua Community is one of the larger DAOs that have been established earlier, within which there are different small DAOs such as Xinhua Volunteer Fleet (see the second picture of the signal above). The volunteer Fleet was initiated by the residents of Xinhua Community during the four-months quarantine period in Shanghai this year. When all public transport stopped, this fleet of more than 120 volunteers helped other residents in need of medical treatment, making more than 200 trips between hospital and where they live. This digital badge was proposed by the team members as a testimony to this special community.

● The analysis of Cool Nature

Comupage was initiated in June 2022, so it is relatively current. Less than four months after its launch, the tool has already attracted three communities to join, and digital badges for various events and projects continue to be issued online. It is also featured in the 5th season of [Xinhua-Beautiful Community Festival](#), one of the largest community events in Shanghai 2022, attracting the attention of more ordinary residents in different communities, so it is instigating and viral. This is fundamentally different from the awards given to contributors by superiors or officials, which indicate that members are officially recognized as individuals, while the former indicates that the proof is made by the community members together, via the chained digital badge. In this case, the community self-organization is a subject, and each community member in the organization is also subjective in nature. It can be said that the combination of blockchain technology, or specifically NFTs, with creative communities is innovative, and therefore also has the character of irreverence and discontinuity. Under the influence of the pandemic and long-term closure and control, it is increasingly difficult for people to trust official and authoritative discourse. A small group of people have seen the power of community spontaneity and formed a bottom-up self-organization for more self-empowerment and self-expression. The Comupage acts as a tool for creative community revitalization, connecting online and offline, real and virtual, which is significant and relevant to the spirit of the times.

● Insight

Comupage is not only a metaverse product that spans the real and the virtual, but also connects community members and unites their social values. At the same time, it is organized in an autonomous and decentralized way, enabling members to feel more involved in community activities and to belong and identify with their community identity through the digital badge as an object (thing).

Chiica - Community token electronic payment Platform



Source: [Chiica](#). Registered on 2022-05-10.

- Related Macro Trends: Ergonomic Connections; Sustainable systems
- Description

[Chiica](#) is a local currency platform service supported by blockchain technology launched by Trust Bank in May 2019. As of May 2022, 31 regions in Japan have joined the service. District governments and organizations can contact trust banks to open Chiica services and create their own regional currency to promote the circulation of the local economy. Residents can earn e-tokens by topping up money, participating in health activities or volunteering activities, and after downloading mobile apps or storing e-money with a regional currency card (for those who are not good at using smartphones), they can shop at local supermarkets, restaurants, groceries Stores and other indicated locations to use. According to the platform, the original intention of creating the service is to make the connection between local communities and people stronger, wider and larger, so as to better develop the community. According to the [Google Play Store](#), the app has been downloaded more than 100.000 times as of May 2022.

- The analysis of Cool Nature

Chiica is instigating and attractive as the app has been downloaded more than 100,000 times on the Google Play Store after its launch in mid-2019, with 31 regions in Japan joining the service. It is the first app that combines multiple regional currencies/tokens into one digital platform, helping local governments and organizations to issue regional e-currency in a one-stop shop. In this way, it stimulates the circulation of regional economies and promotes interpersonal communication in regions through blockchain technology, thus Chiica has the characteristics of irreverence and discontinuity. As an innovative platform for comprehensive business of regional token management, it is also attracting more regions to open their own regional currencies. Meanwhile, the kernel of gathering regional currencies in one platform for management is spreadable and can be adopted in other countries. That's why it is viral. Although the platform was created in Japan more than 3 years ago, the nature of its innovation is still relatively new to other countries such as mainland China, which can be seen as a current thing. Besides, Chiica is also significant and relevant to zeitgeist. For one thing, we can see the consideration for a more sustainable environment behind the promotion of regional economic cycles. When we emphasize more local production and consumption, we can reduce the large amount of carbon emissions caused by large-scale logistics circulation under globalization. For another, the border between reality and virtual is becoming increasingly blurred, and blockchain technology is increasingly being integrated with the real world to solve the challenges and problems of modern society in innovative ways.

- Insight

Regional economies have been the focus of recent issues related to the Japanese community, and regional tokens are an integral part of the regional economic system. On the one hand, the circulation of regional economies can significantly reduce carbon emissions in the global transportation of commodities, which has a positive impact on environmental sustainability. On the other hand, we can see a greater use of blockchain technology into the real world and more attention among community builders or practitioners. However, while the issue of regional currencies may not be realistic for mainland China, there are still lessons to be learned in the direction of individual communities or regions using points/tokens to facilitate the circulation, communication and exchange of all aspects of a geographic area or community.

Revisit: A Tiny Art Festival in Sanya 2022



Source: Baoguangziwaixian. Registered on 2022-11-29.

- Related Macro Trends: Anchored Narratives; Protagonist identities
- Description

Revisit: [A Tiny Art Festival in Sanya](#)* 2022 is a community artistic program. [The first edition](#) was held in October 2021 and the second edition in the same month of 2022 for 2 days. The festival invited artists who have an interest in regional art to participate in a study that create works in the context of the Sanya region, examining the region's way of life through the lens of foreigners/others. Participating artists from multicultural backgrounds asked questions about the local living situation and worked with local residents to develop artistic festival plans. It was explained that in the Sanya area, on the one hand, the former day laborers are becoming older and need care and welfare. On the other hand, the area is also becoming a destination for young backpackers. That is why the organizers hope that this festival will make people feel the diversity of the region and encourage them to rethink the differences in society, thus eliminating to some extent the discrimination that comes from different origins, ages, disabilities and economic status.

● The analysis of Cool Nature

Revisit: A Tiny Art Festival in Sanya has only been held twice in total, with October 2022 being the most recent one, so it is very current. Moreover, the first festival has attracted the attention of some Japanese and overseas media since its launch, so it is instigating and provocative to hold the second festival this year. The festival was initiated by international students from Tokyo University of the Arts, who also invited artists of different backgrounds and nationalities, as well as residents of the Sanya area to participate in this local art creation. The project has such a diverse and inclusive composition of people, which is relatively uncommon in Japanese community artistic projects, with discontinuous and irreverent characteristics. In terms of relevance to the spirit of the times, the festival focuses on long-neglected and even stereotyped immigrant groups in Tokyo and the communities they inhabit. The project started from their lifestyles, telling their own stories in a creative and artistic way, expressing their sense of identity and belonging in a form of co-creation. It can be seen that individuals are increasingly eager to express themselves in a way that is different from the official discourse. The Art Festival in Sanya is a self-identification and self-expression of the long-neglected residents/immigrants. It is unique in itself, with its inclusive artistic expression and co-creation qualities, a spiritual core that can constitute a viral spread and be learned and practiced by people in other parts of the world.

● Insight

People's constructions of identity are not limited to race and gender, but extend to the particular place, neighborhood or community in which they live, as well as reflections on stereotypes and inequalities in the history and culture they experience. Business should see an increasing number of people who are not satisfied with the limitations of official discourse. People's growing need for personal expression and identity requires a deeper understanding of the attitudes and perceptions of the segments in marketing. However, the context of the signal is in Japan, where the main consideration is the diversity of nationality or cultural background. As in mainland China, the appropriate diversity and inclusion adaptation factors need to be chosen to meet the identity expression needs of different residents/community members according to the characteristics of the region where the community is located.

*Note: [Sanya](#) (さんや), is an urban village area in Tokyo. In the 1950s, when Japanese society was growing rapidly after World War II, the demand for labor for civil engineering and construction as well as port handling increased, and day laborers from all over the country poured into the valley in search of work. They gathered in Sanya, and thus turned this place into a lively and prosperous urban area. But after the bubble economy burst (1990s), people who lost their jobs flowed in, and Sanya became the only place for them to go, and therefore became synonymous with the low-income group and the homeless.

Hong Kong To Kwa Wan Ceramic Plate Workshop



Source: [MakingOnLoft](https://www.makingonloft.com/). Registered on 2022-02-19.

- Related Macro Trends: Anchored Narratives
- Description

In November 2021, Hong Kong's [MakingOnLoft](https://www.makingonloft.com/) Community Organization and the [Hong Kong Design Center](https://www.hongkongdesigncenter.com/) organized Unearthed Artifacts [activities](#) (In Chinese 出土文物), including a series of guided tours, workshops and sharing sessions, to take participants to discover hidden unearthed creative groups in downtown To Kwa Wan to promote historical stories and traces of culture and art. One of the important activities is the ceramic plate workshop. They worked with more than 40 neighbors to make a To Kwa Wan-themed ceramic plate. They painted and printed their impressions and cultural characteristics of the area on the hand-made ceramic plates. Above, the memories of everyone in To Kwa Wan are recorded in the form of art. After the glaze firing, 40 ceramic plates with unique colors were exhibited in the Sparrow Inn in January 2022, so that more neighbors could appreciate these works and connect everyone's community memory.

- The analysis of Cool Nature

In the “no relationship” society, what is more important than simply designing a community is the connection between people. Forty neighbors made a To Kwa Wan-themed ceramic plate together, reconstructing the community memory in a creative way and promoting the formation of a cultural community, which is relevant to the spirit of the times. Understanding communities in a cultural way, creating shared meaning in the form of artistic co-creation, and building connections with each other has also emerged in other community projects, is viral and has the potential to continue to emerge in the future. It is current since the series of activities for the unearthed cultural relics was launched in November 2021, and it has not been more than a year. The MakingOnLoft Community Organization was established in 2017, but in the first three years, the focus was on courses such as design, maker thinking education, and handicraft workshops. In 2020, activities and ideas about building community culture began to emerge, and the activities also focused more on creating a community shared by community residents through common memories, historical stories and cultural imprints. That's why this contains the characteristic of irreverence. The creation of the pattern on the ceramic plate is based on the common memory of the neighbors of To Kwa Wan, which condenses their feelings for the local culture. At the same time, after the ceramic dishes are fired, there will be a community display event to connect everyone's community memory, and at the same time to promote local history, culture and art, so it is attractive and instigating. The ceramic dish workshop is not an ordinary pottery workshop, or a hand workshop for the purpose of cultivating the maker spirit. The purpose is to allow residents to recall the cultural symbols of To Kwa Wan in the process of co-creation, and gradually form a sharing system of cultural significance in the process. Therefore, this also has the characteristics of discontinuity compared with the model of mainstream culture.

- Insight

With the rapid development of modern society, the original society of acquaintances no longer exists. In its place is the “No-relationship Society”, where people's living conditions, neighborhoods and social networks are separated, and people's identities are separated from the community as well, which manifests an increasingly atomized relationship. In To Kwa Wan community, the art co-creation activities initiated by community organizations link up the meaning system shared by community members, and to some extent, help build the community identity and sense of belonging for residents. In this sense, it is a kind of narrative re-anchoring and story retelling.

Via North Point - Hong Kong Community Artistic Project



Source: [Via North Point](#). Registered on 2022-02-25.

- Related Macro Trends: Anchored Narratives
- Description

[Via North Point](#) is a community art project initiated by the Hong Kong Arts Centre and the community in late 2021. The project was designed as a series of community engagement workshops and creative artworks to connect new and existing residents, enhancing their awareness of the public space and showcasing the unique local cultural charm of North Point. In this way, residents' awareness and sense of community belonging can be cultivated. According to the project website, they include a community magazine [Via Community Zine](#), [Community Recipe](#), which documents community food, and [Shoreside Planting Crew](#), which can create a series of films through design. Moreover, there were a series of sustainable art-making workshops and community tree-planting activities, as well as the [Community Wanderer](#), a themed guided tour created by neighborhoods. For example, [Community Wanderers](#) organized eight community walks, including City and Architecture, Arts and Culture, Recreation and Crafts, and Community Treasures.

There was also an online [exhibition Our City Our Home](#), which examined Chun Yeung Street in North Point and the surrounding communities through a number of community-themed research workshops and co-learning design workshops to understand the quality of urban life by focusing on the community through an empathetic lens.

● The analysis of Cool Nature

In the introduction to the first issue of the magazine [Via Community Zine](#), the director-general of the Hong Kong Arts Center, Lin Shuyi, said that the most important thing about the project is to connect people and people, people and regions through art, as well as establish a kind of unique cultural landscape of the community. In this sense, this is related to the background of the no-relationship society where people are too rational, indifferent and alienated in the modern era. In this case, most people actually expect more connection, so this project is relevant to the zeitgeist. Likewise, the project is viral, as many of the activities within the project are aimed at connecting people in artistic and creative ways, such as neighborhood guided tours, community magazines, and film recordings. The number of activities with this as the core is increasing in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan and other places. In addition to that, [Via North Point](#) launched by the Hong Kong arts center is mainly focused on 2021. According to its Facebook and Instagram tweets, some of the activities are still ongoing, so it is current. At the same time, the signal also contains the characteristic of irreverence, because the revitalization project in this area is to revive the old area with art, which is completely different from the nature of many previous activities led by social welfare organizations and cultural conservation organizations. The difference is a new attempt with a pioneering meaning. To this extent, it also means that it is different from mainstream culture and has discontinuous qualities. This signal is also seductive, and has provocative and appealing qualities, since North Point is an old district in Hong Kong, the local residents are relatively older, and there is also a low penetration rate of social media. Even so, the project has more than 5,000 [Facebook](#) followers.

● Insight

The event is a series of artistic and creative activities to show the local cultural charm of North Point. In the different creative activities, residents of North Point get to know more about the neighborhood they live in and enhance their sense of community belonging in various practices. Meanwhile, the series of community activities such as documentaries, recipes, magazines also have a certain external public nature that allows people from other regions or communities to learn about North Point as a place with a unique cultural charm. Therefore, it is also a kind of re-anchoring of the narrative, not in the sense that people make friends based on hobbies or interests as before, but in the sense that they see the community as a part of their belonging, and see the collective memory shared among the residents of the community.

Interviews

Interviews are a common qualitative research method used in the social sciences to collect first-hand data in order to understand the perceptions and attitudes of the respondents towards the research question (Dadhe, 2016, p. 69-70; Dragt, 2017, p. 82). Through semi-structured interviews with 9 research experts, community practitioners, and community residents who are highly relevant to creative communities revitalization, this section categorizes and analyzes the data from the interviews.

05 Section

Interviews in this report

For the theme creative community revitalization, the most important thing for the objectivity and reliability of the study is to find interviewees who are highly relevant to creative communities, i.e., community research experts, community practitioners, foundations, real estate agents, community residents, etc. Interviews with this diverse group of people can help the researcher to validate the research hypotheses and finally draw conclusions or insights.

From the demographic point of view, there are three male and six female interviewees (two of them were from *Shunde Good Things Happen*), covering multiple regions such as **Shanghai, Shenzhen, Shunde, Anji, Dali and Hainan**, making the data sources as diverse and comprehensive as possible.



Source: Pinterest

Interviews in this report

Prior to the formal interviews, we had some informal conversations with potential respondents to better understand the target research questions. **The formal interviews took place between October 2022 and January 2023.** Due to specific conditions, face-to-face on-site interviews were used in Shanghai (Sun Zhe, Ji Danwen and Jie'er), while respondents from the remaining geographic regions were interviewed in online *Tencent Meeting*.

Given the different types of respondents, we interviewed two **community-related researchers** (including a postdoctoral professor and a current PhD student), four **community practitioners** (one of whom worked closely with real estate companies on community projects), and three **community residents** from diverse backgrounds. **The total length of the interviews was 11 hours and 25 minutes, averaging 1 hour and 16 minutes per group/person.** A series of **semi-structured interview** questions were designed based on the [five macro-trends](#) of the Laboratory of Trends and Cultural Management, and informing interviewees in advance of the purpose of the research.

Once the information was collected, we coded and categorized the content with commonalities mentioned by the interviewees, and **structured and analyzed the information according to the frequency of occurrence of commonalities**, from high to low, presenting a total of **nine different clusters**, justifying with the relevant citations of interviewees.



Interviewees

Experts | Community practitioners | residents

Interviewees



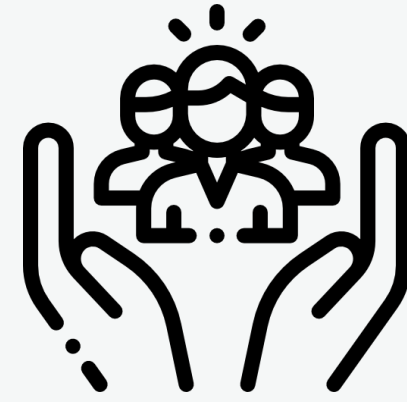
EXPERTS

- Sun Zhe

Sociologists,
Long-time community researcher
(Interview on December 9, 2022.)

- Ji Danwen

Doctoral student studying community
from a design perspective
(Interview on November 30, 2022.)



COMMUNITY PRACTITIONERS

- Yang Sanshi

Long-time community issue thinker and practitioner,
who has worked on community revitalization in Shanghai
and Shenzhen
(Interview on November 2, 2022.)

- Jie Er

Former project manager of the community revitalization
organization *Shequgengxin*, representing perspectives
from a real estate side.
(Interview on December 10, 2022.)

- Emma & Lu Sha

Co-founders of *Shunde Good Things Happen*, a
community revitalization organization from *Shunde*.
(Interview on October 14, 2022.)



RESIDENTS

- Huhu

Resident of the Xinhua community in Shanghai
who has actively participated in co-creation.
(Interview on December 3, 2022.)

- Lin An

The founder of a Freelancer Community
Freedom Lounge, lived as resident of Digital
Nomad Anji Community.
(Interview on January 28, 2023.)

- Dane

Freelancer designer, lived in Digital Nomad Anji
Community (DNA), Dali Hub, and Hainan
Nomadhouse.
(Interview on November 21, 2022.)

The result of Interviews

01 Co-creation

- Sense of belonging and connections
- Expanded potential
- Community support

02 Autonomy and subjectivity of residents

03 community as the center of the narrative

04 Business and creative community

05 Era of stock

06 web3.0 and creative community revitalization

07 Concerns about political factors

08 Sustainability

09 Digital nomad or freelancer

01

Co-creation

Sense of Belonging and
Connection

“I participated in Xinhua Magazine co-creation activity and got to know many of the surrounding neighbors, merchants... connections with these stores of this kind, which I think is also quite meaningful and interesting.”

By Huhu

01 Co-creation Sense of Belonging and Connection



Xinhua Lu is a local life magazine created by Xinhua residents as a neighborhood publication.

Source: [Xinhua Magazine](#) (Registered on 2022-02-30).

All the 8 interviewees mentioned CO-CREATION.

7 of them directly mentioned the expression.

The remaining 1 expressed a similar concept by giving an example of their own practice in a creative community.

For residents or community members, co-creation makes them feel **closer** to the community, meaning that they are **connected** to other community residents through co-creation process in the community, and as they become more **involved**, they also feel **a greater sense of identity and belonging** to the community.

However, if the co-creation process involves the issue of economic distribution, it **may cause disagreement** among the co-creation team, which may have some negative impact.

01

Co-creation

Expanded potential

“It is important to see that the residents involved in co-creation have their own autonomy and peoplehood, and even though only a small number of people are now envolving in, this group of people is actually the critical mass, and by them more residents can be reached again.”

By Sun Zhe

01 Co-creation Expanded potential



Big Fish Community Revitalization Organization Co-creation activity

Source: [Hi Futurecity](#) (Registered on 2022-08-30).

6 interviewees mentioned CO-CREATION is now only accepted by a small number of people in the community.

While acknowledging it, we can also see that CO-CREATION has the potential to expand, whether by having more people join participate and contribute in, or simply by attracting more people to watch.

01

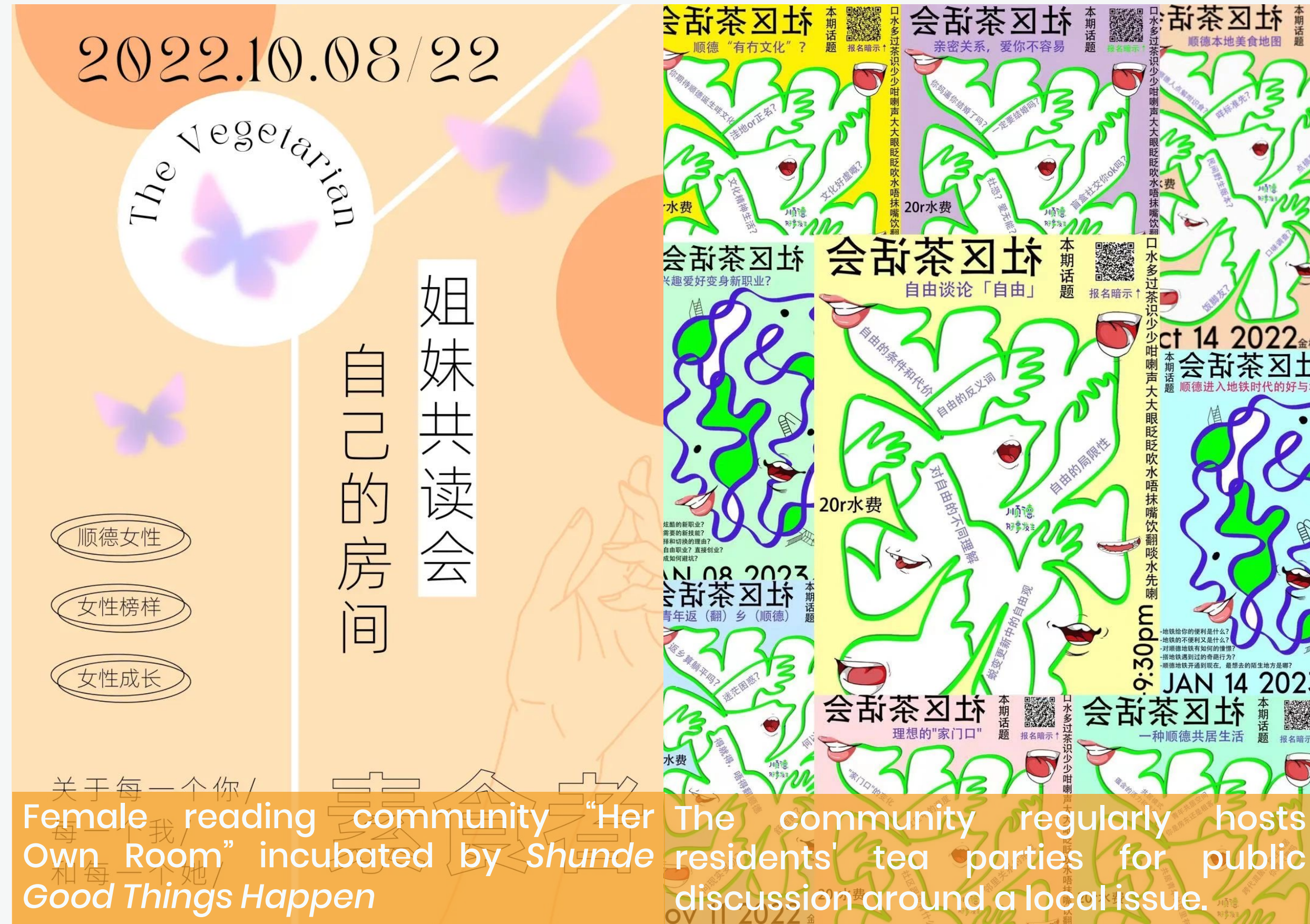
Co-creation

Community support

“We may step back and become a supporter behind the local youth in *Shunde*, to accompany them and try to put some ideas and actions they want to take into better practice.”

By Lu Sha

01 Co-creation Community support



4 interviewees mentioned the creative community's support for community residents' CO-CREATION, which includes idea stimulation, help with resources, and support for dissemination.

For example, Lu Sha from *Shunde Good Things Happen* helped their member Candy to incubate a safe space for women to express themselves freely in the creative community, and they supported her to start activities and spread the word, and keep growing this community, which is part of *Shunde Good Things Happen's* position itself.

Source: [Shunde Good Things Happen](#) (Registered on 2022-12-10).

02

Autonomy and subjectivity of residents

“The nearby is not something that is physically close, but a tangible physical participation in public discussions and actions that are relevant to you.”

By Yang Sanshi

02 Autonomy and subjectivity of residents



Yang Sanshi opened his home as part of the city's public space.

Source: [Ourhome](#) (Registered on 2022-02-20).

4 interviewees mentioned the autonomy and subjectivity of residents, and the power of bottom-up and the publicness embedded in creative communities.

Combined with the situation of communities in mainland China, residents are usually objects to be served or consumed, while Prof. Sun Zhe emphasized, “When we talk about creativity, it is not for the purpose of consumption, but a maker, a creator, to make the community more valuable and fun.” For him, the subjectivity and creativity of the residents are closely linked; everyone in the creative community is a creator and artist, and creative communities make up the society of the future.

02 Autonomy and subjectivity of residents



Jie Er mentioned the creative community revitalization event *Story Shop* (“故事商店”). Interested residents came to be shopkeepers for a day and invited people who pass by to share their stories and creative works.

Source: [Shequgengxin](#) (Registered on 2022-02-20).

Another interviewee, Jie Er, who works as a practitioner for a community revitalization organization, believes that **non-standardized master businesses** “非标准化的主理人特色经济” will become more prominent in the future. In her words, masters are actually a small number of people with ideas and spontaneity.

“Masters, together with the businesses/stores and residents, a community can gradually self-blood and self-run, just like an ecosystem.”

03

**community as the center of
the narrative**

“Art is a public education in which those who participate can contribute their abilities and those who watch can contribute their time.”

By Sun Zhe

03 community as the center of the narrative

韧性社区 1m²
一平米行动成果展
改变身边的一平米

2022 11/19-11/24
新华路345弄4号楼
新华·社区营造中心

2022一平米大事记

- 8/19 「韧性社区」一平米行动正式启动**
第三届“新华HOW”人文新华原创设计大赛「韧性社区」一平米行动计划启动，期待支持新华在地居民发起面向未来韧性社区建设的点滴微小善行。
- 8/31 提案收集截止**
大赛共收到50多份提案，行动者身份多元，关注议题涵盖代际沟通、儿童友好、无障碍生活、可持续生活、社区商业、城乡联动、社区互动、文化创生等方面。
- 9/3 如何共创一个有韧性的社区?**
1. 行动者Talk
邀请四位社区行动者元元、朱瑾、徐嘉迪、夏意兰和大家分享「如何共创一个有韧性的社区」。
2. 共创工作坊
30多名工作坊参与者现场共创100个韧性社区提案，小组共创五个提案，并产生一个直通方案——「奥话抒」。
- 9/18 方案线上路演**
27组提案进入路演环节，邀请得译工作室夏意兰老师、东华大学环境艺术系黄更老师、处处志张诚老师以及新华路街道的张老师、范老师，从方案的落地性、在地性等维度进行评选，并给出了建议！
- 9/24 入选提案公布&新华·美好社区节公众展示**
11组「韧性社区」一平米行动提案入围者来到现场，和大家分享自己的提案。在社区节的舞台上，「韧性社区」一平米行动的四位代表：元元、傅铭、Alan、Nikko，和大家分享他们眼中的韧性社区以及他们的行动项目。
- 10/1-11/13 一平米行动落地中**
新华院子游戏场搭建中。
- 11/19 新华玩具交换展 一平米行动成果展 正式开幕**

● **新华社区游戏场创建计划** | 新星之火团队 (元元、黄梦、小羽、茵、柏茹、长脚、三公子、麻进、胡了耶、Shelly)
● **红细胞可持续坐垫计划** | 王美曦 & DHU小黄人团队 (赵云青、廖子璇、叶俊杰、陈俊宇、谢晓尚、周寒晗、王星雨)
● **移动的一平米** | 行动者: 1%团队 (傅铭、白磷、王萌、桃子、Tracy、金鱼、Ellen)
● **一平米的城乡联动** | 行动者: 莫干山白云美术馆团队 (老庙、顾忠升、绿绿、满足、李文希)
● **奥话抒** | 行动者: 许家豪、Zoey、Joy、孙哲、Itsuki、倩倩、加西、复旦大学纪录片团队、Nikko
● **美美好好的拥抱** | 行动者: 麻进、Momo、小鹏、高建宏
● **点一盏心灯** | 行动者: 范小幼
● **造点烟火气** | 行动者: Lili & Amber & Rebecca
● **我的社区餐盘** | 行动者: 明日之路
● **Citywalk_新华剧本杀** | 行动者: P+ Architects
● **社区玩具交换屋** | 行动者: 兔子&花农&花花

Residents and local stores exhibited their community contributions in *Big Fish community revitalization organization*.

5 respondents* also mentioned content creation that uses the community as the center of the narrative, including:

- community publications
- community exhibitions
- community events
- community stories recorded and co-created by residents.

* two of them from the same organization

Source: [Big Fish Community Revitalization Organization](#) (Registered on 2022-11-20).

03 community as the center of the narrative



”Dimdong“, the community magazine of Shunde Good Happens.

Source: [Shunde Good Things Happen](#) (Registered on 2022-04-10).

Local symbols, representations and discourses are also present in the artwork.

For example, Shunde Good Things Happen used Cantonese dialogue in its living room conversations, and the theme of the 2022 community exhibition used the very local word “gacang” (Mandarin: “嘎仓”), which means “tool for making a living” in Cantonese. Another example is the community magazine of Shunde Good Thing happens is called Dimdong, which combines the Cantonese word for “appreciation and proper” with the meaning of “small community store”, and is dedicated to the stories of the stores and residents in the community.

They believe that in addition to the mainstream Mandarin that we all use day-to-day, they “still want to say that there will be [other] language preservation as much as possible”.

04

Business and creative community

“When I share some of the co-creation activities in the Xinhua community, I get friends who want to buy or rent a home are impressed with the atmosphere of the community and want to live nearby.”

By Huhu

04 Business and creative community

4 interviewees talked about the possibility of combining creative communities with business.

Attracting the youth in a fun way became their concern, and creative experiences, participation and interaction integrated with the local community are increasingly important. At the same time, non-consumerist creative community activities are also one of the important factors influencing the degree of people's willingness to live there. For example, when Huhu retweeted the creative activities of Xinhua community, some of her friends who live in other districts realized that this seems to be a treasure area, and it may become one of the target places for them to rent or change apartments next time.

* two of them from the same organization



Big Fish community revitalization organization invited local stores and residents to participate in #buylocal activity, supporting local business.

Source: [Big Fish Community Revitalization Organization](#) (Registered on 2022-11-10).

05

Era of stock

“Shanghai and Beijing are stock cities that have reached their limits in terms of constantly expanding onto new land for building construction. To facilitate further growth, it is imperative to focus on urban renewal within existing areas.”

By Jie Er

05 Era of stock



Shanghai Yuyuan Road renovation plan is considered by the industry as a typical case of urban renewal in the stock era.

Source: [Urban Design](#) (Registered on 2022-12-10).

3 interviewees pointed out that the background of creative community revitalization in cities in mainland China is because we are in the “era of stock”(Madarin: 存量时代).

This is the result of a certain stage of urban development, as there are no more plots of land for new developments and spaces in the heart of big cities, so upgrading old neighborhoods and combining various businesses to bring more experiences becomes the focus.

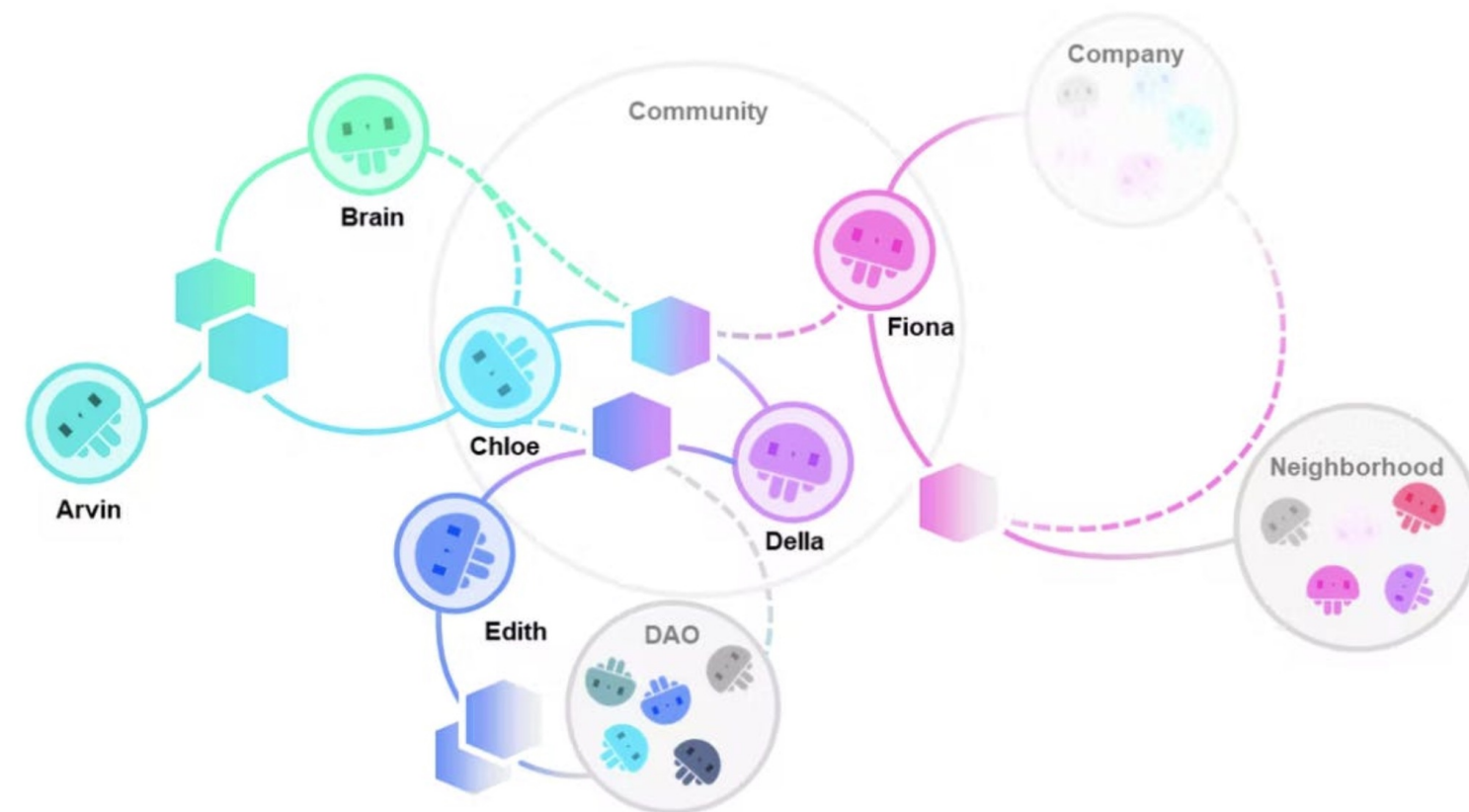
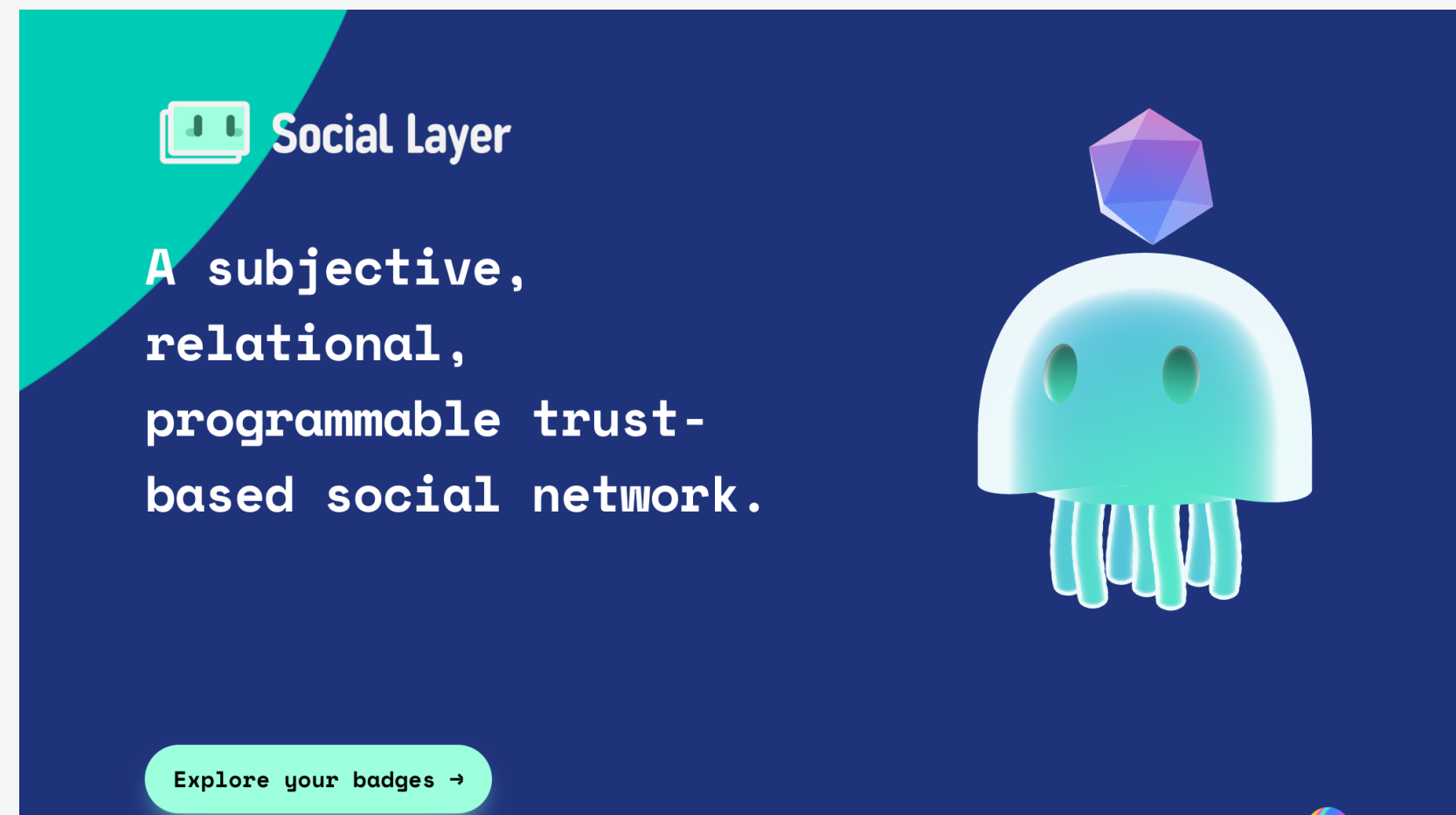
06

web3.0 and creative community revitalization

“What we aim to accomplish is to establish a strong bond between diverse communities and collaboratively construct an enduring composite community, both online and offline. This form of meta-community entails fostering a consensus that genuinely unites various communities.”

By Ji Danwen

06 web3.0 and creative community revitalization



Along with other team members, Ji Danwen developed the web3 application, an online blockchain-based trust network where everyone can give everyone an "e-badge".

3 respondents mentioned that they have recently been focusing on ways to combine web3.0 and creative community revitalization, such as

- Developing NFT based on community
- Accumulating points/token through members' contribution to the community
- Acting as a meta-community revitalization in a post-globalized mobile society to realize the rapid connection between resources and identity.

In terms of the relationship between virtual and reality, the impact of the pandemic is very strong, making the community revitalization that was originally focused on offline transform more to online. However, two interviewees also mentioned that creative communities revitalization combines gradually an online form with an offline form, but the latter one is still the main way.

07

Concerns about political factors

“If there is a policy direction or some mandatory measures to make some changes one day, a team may not function quickly. I would be concerned about that vulnerability.”

By Emma

07 Concerns about political factors



On July 24th, 2021 the Chinese government introduced a policy known as “double reduction”. As a result, the tutoring industry faced an existential crisis, followed by a series of lay-offs in educational companies. *Image showing English language training organization that were shut down.

Source: [BBC News](#) (Registered on 2021-08-06).

2 respondents had concerns about political factors affecting the space for public expression, and the consequent fragility of the industry’s and team’s ecosystem.

This **shrinking publicness** has been an increasingly prominent feature of recent years in mainland China, where **distrust of systems and structures**, and **doubts about officialdom and authority** are on the rise and expanding. However, under the increasingly intense and ubiquitous censorship of information on the Internet, these parts of publicness can only shrink into more everyday and private lives.

08

Sustainability

“The biggest problem facing humanity now is the problem of sustainability. The real change makers are closer to everyday life, they may be ordinary people who have no idea of how to make creative thing step by step.”

By Ji Danwen

08 Sustainability



NICE Commune, where Ji Danwen is doing her doctoral research, aims to “to make communities a source of innovation”. They believe that “the biggest problem facing humanity now is the problem of sustainability”, and that it is ordinary people rather than only the so-called professionals or creative workers who can solve this problem.

Source: [Nice Commune](#) (Registered on 2022-02-06).

2 interviewees also mentioned the relevance of the **creative community vision to sustainability**.

Not only in terms of ecological sustainability in specific activities,

such as focusing on the use of recycled materials or promoting sustainable diets

But also in terms of social sustainability, the connection between communities and the values formed by interconnectedness, the focus on the resilience of human relationships, and the ability to inspire innovation among community members.

A good example of this is the vision of Nice Commune mentioned in the interview with Ji Danwen. According to her, the Nice commune is in tandem with a variety of resources, as well as to help ordinary people’s ideas into some specific small prototypes, including activities, events, etc. “In this process, for one thing, is to release the social innovation, for another, is to let these part of the innovation solve the problem of sustainable development.”

09

**Digital nomad or
freelancer**

“If you have a good working state all day, a good output, and at the same time it meets the social needs of the atmosphere environment, it is actually very good.”

By Dane

09 Digital nomad or freelancer



Source: [Freedom Lounge](#) (Registered on 2022-05-09).

2 respondents referred to the practice of being a digital nomad or freelancer outside of big cities. Among them, the pandemic had a greater impact on lifestyle.

Lin An was originally working as a freelancer in Shanghai, but after the city was “closed” in 2022 due to the quarantine in Shanghai, she remained in a state of not going out and working from home day after day for a long time, which was very depressing. Therefore, she decided to explore a new possibility of life in and around Hangzhou. She spent a few weeks working and living in the Anji Digital Nomad Community, where she was very impressed by the excellent infrastructure, interesting people and natural environment. In particular, she referred to that “for freelancers, [DNA] can balance work and life socially better”, and she also expressed her willingness to go back. As for Dane, another freelancer, compared her experience of being a digital nomad in Dali, Anji and Hainan, she also shared similar views with Lin An.

09 Digital nomad or freelancer

数字游民海岛共居

来过海边的夏天!

NomadHouse海南共居快闪(6.30结束)



Dane used to live in the Hainan digital nomadic co-living community "NomadHouse".

Source: [NomadHouse](#). (Registered on 2023-03-10).

Creative communities where socializing, entertainment, living and working are integrated become the focus of people (especially freelancers), and living in such communities means satisfying one's personal life while ensuring that one is not disturbed at work.

As it is in the **countryside**, it saves the expenses of various costs such as transportation, food, rent, etc, as well as more opportunities to get contact with natural environment. It fits the requirement of lifestyle change and work-life balance in the context of the increase of freelancers and digital nomads during and after COVID-19.

Conclusions

By analyzing the results derived from three different research methods, the findings are presented in bullet point format and categorized under the five macro trends of [Sociocultural Trends 2022](#), published by Trends and Culture Management Lab, University of Lisbon.

06 Section

Summary

Creative community, serving as a medium, has incubated numerous innovative ideas pointing towards future changes, manifested across various aspects such as narrative, identity, technology, sustainability, and lifestyle. We observe that the creative community is not only a breeding ground for the creativity of ordinary individuals but also embodies the potential to inspire residents' subjectivity from the bottom up. The significance of symbols between public and private, the historical and cultural stories of the community itself, and public art are highlighted in creative community revitalization. The application of blockchain technology is quietly sprouting in its role of recording the contributions of community members. Simultaneously, creative communities are not confined to urban areas; they are also emerging in picturesque, habitable small cities or villages, becoming a new lifestyle choice for individuals whose workspaces are not limited by location.

Next, I will present detailed conclusions within each of the five macro trends outlined in the socio-cultural Trends 2022. They are Anchored Narratives, Protagonist Identities, Ergonomic Connection, Sustainable systems and Lifestyle Redesign.

01 - Anchored Narratives

- Telling community stories in an innovative way becomes the center of the narrative., in a way to strengthen community residents' sense of proudness, belongingness and identity. **Everyday objects that lie between the public and the private become cultural symbols for depicting community stories and constructing shared meaning in the practice of recording, creating and exhibiting** in their communities.
- In the context of mainland China, residents in communities with physical boundaries have long been the objects to be served as part of administrative planning. In recent years, however, with the development of creative community revitalization, **public art that does not aim at consumption has the potential to become a kind of public education in the community, serving to stimulate the subjectivity of residents and transforming more people into conscious creators, starting with telling community stories and transmitting community culture.**
- Communities that are cosmopolitan or have a high immigrants rate tend to exhibit more complexity. People of different backgrounds, races, ethnicities, nationalities, genders and identities come together, and various cultural symbols and meanings flow through them, coupled with the fact that some communities have strong historical and cultural imprints. Therefore, in the process of creating creative communities, **we can consider incorporating the perspectives of people from different backgrounds and identities.** In this way, **the recoded symbols and meanings can be integrated into the narrative of the community through practice**, thus making it more likely to create a community atmosphere with diversity and harmony.

02 - Protagonist identities

- **Creative communities usually have many co-creation practices that carry the symbols of the community's own culture and history.** This leads to the transfer and sharing of meaning among residents, a greater sense of connection among them, a greater sense of identity and belonging to the community, and the gradual development of an identity as a member of a certain community.
- We have observed that some products are already **using web3.0 blockchain technology** for creative community revitalization, condensing the individual value contributions of community members through digital badges that **enable the act of contributing back to the community to be recorded.** This approach reverses the more centralized and authoritative official way of recognizing individuals at the top, and **instead turns residents into individual digital subjects, allowing their positive and spontaneous practices to be recorded.**

02 - Protagonist identities

- In some creative communities with commercial nature, **decentralized operation and communication has become a novel form**. Such operation characteristics can fully respect the subjectivity and self-expression of residents. At the same time, content created by own community residents can be spread to more people on social media, as an effective marketing communication.
- Under the grassroots administrative jurisdiction model in mainland China, residents have long been the object of service. In recent years, **more third-party creative community service organizations** have gradually emerged in Shanghai, Chengdu, and Shenzhen, **taking on the role of bridging the gap between the government and the private sector by organizing a series of workshops, community co-creation, and other activities to stimulate residents' sense of agency and participation in public life.**

03 - Ergonomic Connections

- The connection between blockchain technology and creative communities is getting closer. It can be seen that various explorations under the web3.0 concept have emerged, such as DAO¹, token, etc. However, the current practices in mainland China are still at a very early stage. In the future, with the gradual development of web3.0 and metaverse, **there may be more creative communities connecting the real and virtual borders and managing things inside and outside the community by blockchain.**

Note 1: DAO is an abbreviated form of Decentralized Autonomous Organization, which is a more decentralized form of community organization. It is said here that the practice in mainland China is still at an early stage because some creative communities claim to be practicing DAO, but they only remain at the conceptual level of understanding and do not really adopt the very core element of DAO: the adoption of smart contracts for the administration of the organization in a de-trusted way, including the distribution of ownership, the calculation of charter votes, the distribution of revenue, etc. (Ball, M., p. 277)

03 - Ergonomic Connections

- **Tokens, regional currencies, points²** and other expressions with similar qualities have **become the focus of some creative communities**. And a currency platform service (APP) has even emerged in Japan that allows for the storage and consumption of regional currencies.
- **Non-Fungible Token (NFT) have a special significance in the creation of creative communities**. The chained digital badges become virtual symbols that condense the individual value contributions of community members and **become part of the subjective value evaluation system in digital identity, intertwined with the real world**.

Note2: Token becomes a digital material as a circulation within the creative community; regional currency becomes a digital material passable within the region; and points, a proxy for currency in the creative community under the censorship mechanism of mainland China. Tokens are divided into homogenized tokens and non-homogenized tokens. Community members can get homogenized tokens by contributing to the community, and can also use tokens to spend or exchange services within the community; non-homogenized tokens are unique records on the blockchain, condensing community members' inputs and contributions to the community.

04 - Sustainable systems

- Globalization is slowing down under the influence of the pandemic, and **people are starting to pay more attention to geographic, regional, and local development.**
- **Many areas have introduced regional currencies** (often using blockchain technology), which can, to some extent, **enhance the contribution of residents to the local area and facilitate the circulation of the local economy** (production and consumption) **and reduce the negative environmental impact of global logistics.** Due to censorship, some creative communities in mainland China use tokens as a proxy for points, but serve the same purpose as a regional/communicative currency.
- **Sparking the creativity of ordinary people and supporting them to carry out their ideas have become important concerns in creative community revitalization.** In the past, large companies, such as Silicon Valley, were considered to be the concentration of creativity, while it was difficult for ordinary people to get support in resources if they had some innovative ideas. And now, creative communities have become incubators that inspire creative ideas and support the realization of activities, products or services that ordinary people with ideas want to do, like providing idea guidance, human and material support, perhaps even a portion of financial support.

04 - Sustainable systems

- Recent years have witnessed an increasing tightening of speech, restricted public expression, and pervasive censorship on social media in the context of mainland China. In the process of investigating the present theme, it can be found that some of the **youth with ideas and actions open their private space, invite friends to join them in a screening way**. In this way, friends bring other friends together, **gradually form a public discussion spaces semi-privately in the city**.

05 - Lifestyle Redesign

- The problems of pollution, congested traffic, and high housing prices in large cities have become more and more serious in recent years. Meanwhile, during the 2022 pandemic, people were subjected to long periods of quarantine due to political factors, such as the four-month-long quarantine period in Shanghai, which triggered many mental health problems and even trauma. Therefore, people's perceptions and attitudes toward big cities have changed very dramatically. **The big city is no longer a representative of the good life, people increasingly expect to escape from big cities**, and “Run”(Mandarin: “润”) has become the most popular cultural expression or meme.
- As a result of the pandemic, **more and more remote workers and digital nomads are starting to emerge**. Creative spaces for live-work integration have emerged in some places as a commercial solution.
- **In livable, lower-cost-of-living areas of mainland China (such as Dali), a number of shared office spaces have sprung up** specifically to serve remote workers, freelancers and digital nomads, which are attracting a growing number of young people. These spaces often bring together a diverse group of participants who work together, play together, and sometimes co-create events or projects.

05 - Lifestyle Redesign

- With the increasingly sophisticated infrastructure development in mainland China, such as a convenient logistics system, public transportation that connects urban and rural areas, and the development of the Internet, ***the vast countryside outside the big cities is beginning to be noticed by more people.*** People are moving away from big cities to the outskirts of cities or villages, working remotely through the internet, exploring the relationship between the local environment, culture, festivals, land, history and people, and forming socially innovative creative community explorations with friends from different industries.

Insights

In the final section, insights with more practical guidance for creative community revitalization are presented in terms of content, formation, people, location and technology.

07 Section

Content

New community narrative

For communities (usually physical ones) with a distinctly international or immigrant character, community practitioners should pay more attention to the differentiated perspectives of people of different backgrounds, identities, races, ethnicities, nationalities and genders when creating creative communities.

For brand and business that are interested in community, whether it's a physical or virtual community, you can find a community that matches your tone (or within your own community), select objects that carry both public and personal meaning, and invite consumers/users to co-create them. In this way, you can be more approaching your consumers, and also have the opportunity to tell them a more attractive brand story.

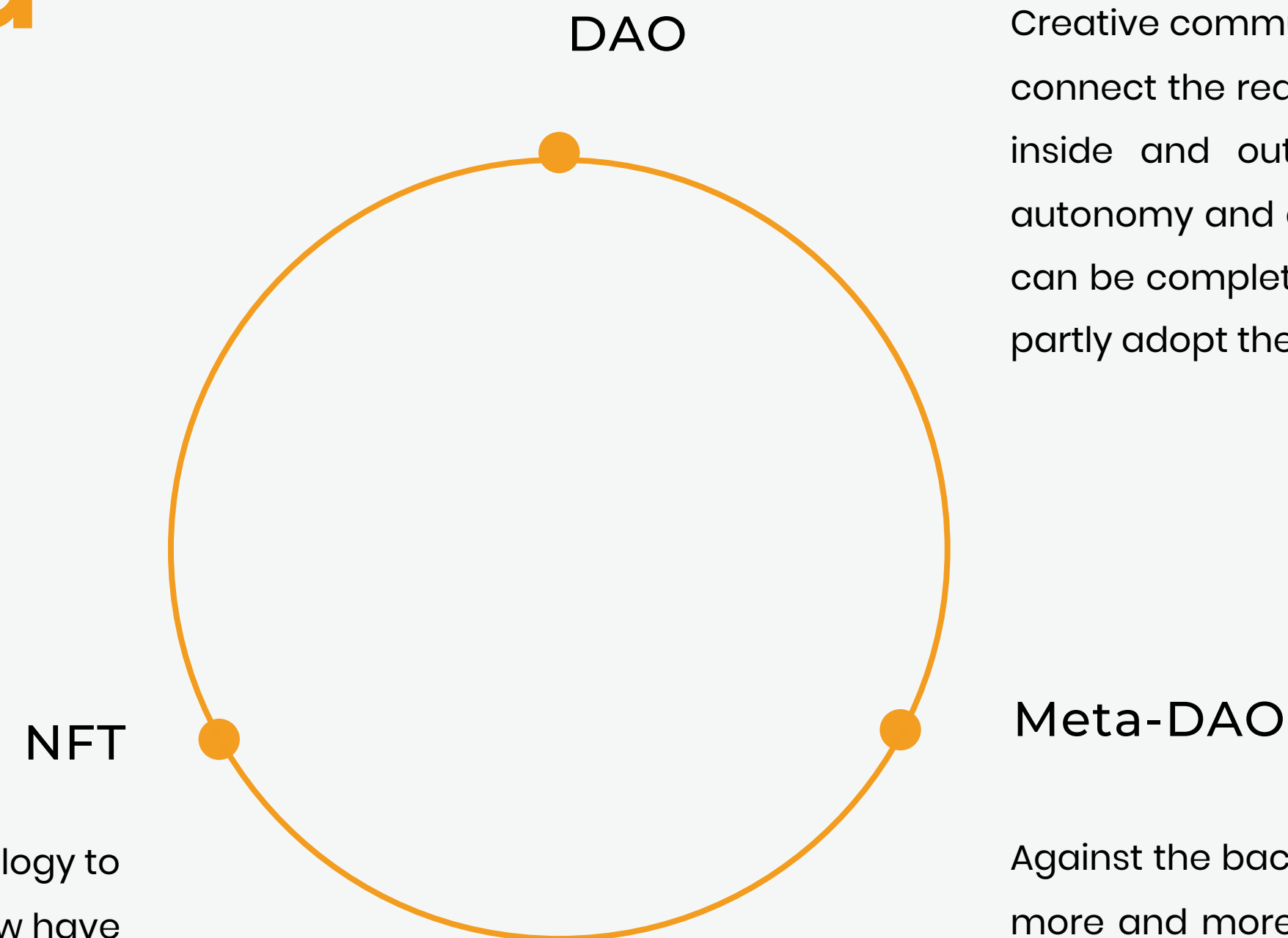


Community industry practitioners can consider designing more co-creation practices related to the community's own culture and historical symbols to stimulate community members' sense of belonging and identity to the community, and can also consider organizing public art projects or co-creation projects for the public.

The reconstruction of community stories can be told or recreated from the perspective of daily life and ordinary people, using everyday objects with both public and private attributes as part of the story.

Technology

Decentralized Update



Some brands have already started to use blockchain technology to create their own meta-universe communities, but few have considered using NFT as a way to record the value contribution of an individual user as a digital subject with a way to give back to the community. This may be a way for businesses or brands to consider in the future to revitalize their communities.

Creative communities can consider using blockchain technology to connect the real and virtual borders for the management of things inside and outside the community in order to stimulate the autonomy and creativity of community members. In other words, it can be completely transformed into a DAO form of organization, or partly adopt the DAO form for small-scale experiment.

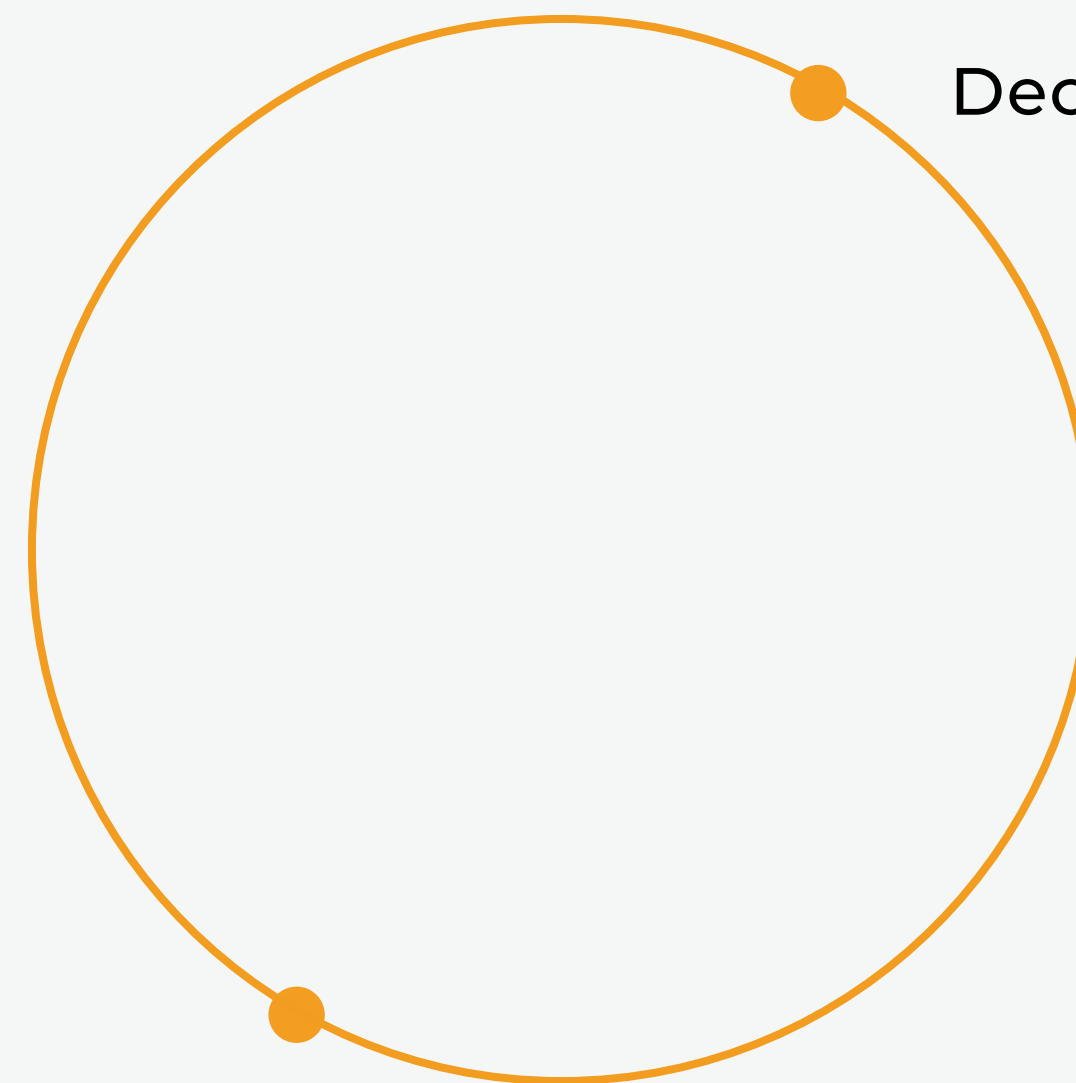
Meta-DAO

Against the background that the development of the nearby is getting more and more attention, it is suggested to consider uniting multiple local creative communities to form a cluster of meta-creative communities (or a more decentralized form of organization, i.e. meta-DAO), so that the regional currency by means of blockchain can flow sustainably in the production and consumption of local residents and form more exchanges and communications between various creative communities.

Formation

Community-based form of marketing communication

Businesses and brands are more likely to consider holding offline communication activities that build interpersonal connections, with the following two points to consider: one focuses on activities that give people a sense of security, privacy and support; the second is co-creation activities that stimulate community members' autonomy and creativity.



Decentralization

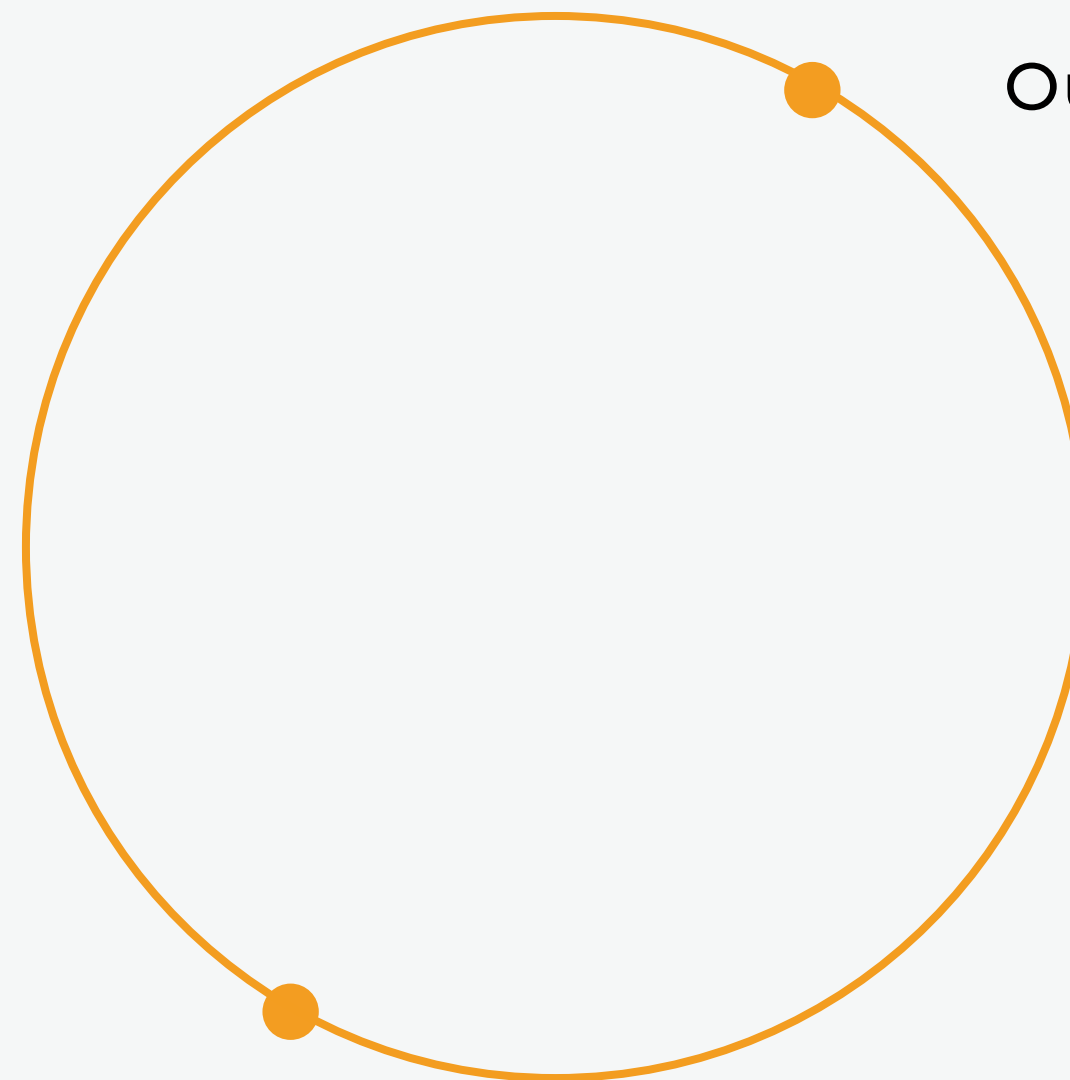
Decentralized operation and communication has already started to be adopted in few creative communities with commercial nature, and it has formed effective and warm marketing communication. This means that brands and businesses can give more consideration in the future to a form of communication that is mainly based on community members.

Offline

Location

The future of work and living

In the context of everyone wanting to “escape” from big cities, most people still have to stay in big cities to work and live. Community practitioners can create a sense of “neighborhood” in big cities, and brands’ marketing campaigns should also take note of people’s changing emotions and attitudes, and make some changes in public communication.



Outside big cities

Considering the trend that emerging work patterns such as hybrid work, remote work, flexible employment and digital nomads may gradually become popular in the future, business can consider establishing creative communities that meet the emerging model of work, life and entertainment integration, especially on rural areas within 3 hours’ drive of first and second-tier cities with lower cost of living and pleasant climate. Co-living is also a direction that can be considered.

Inside big cities



People

Creative Incentivization

For community residents

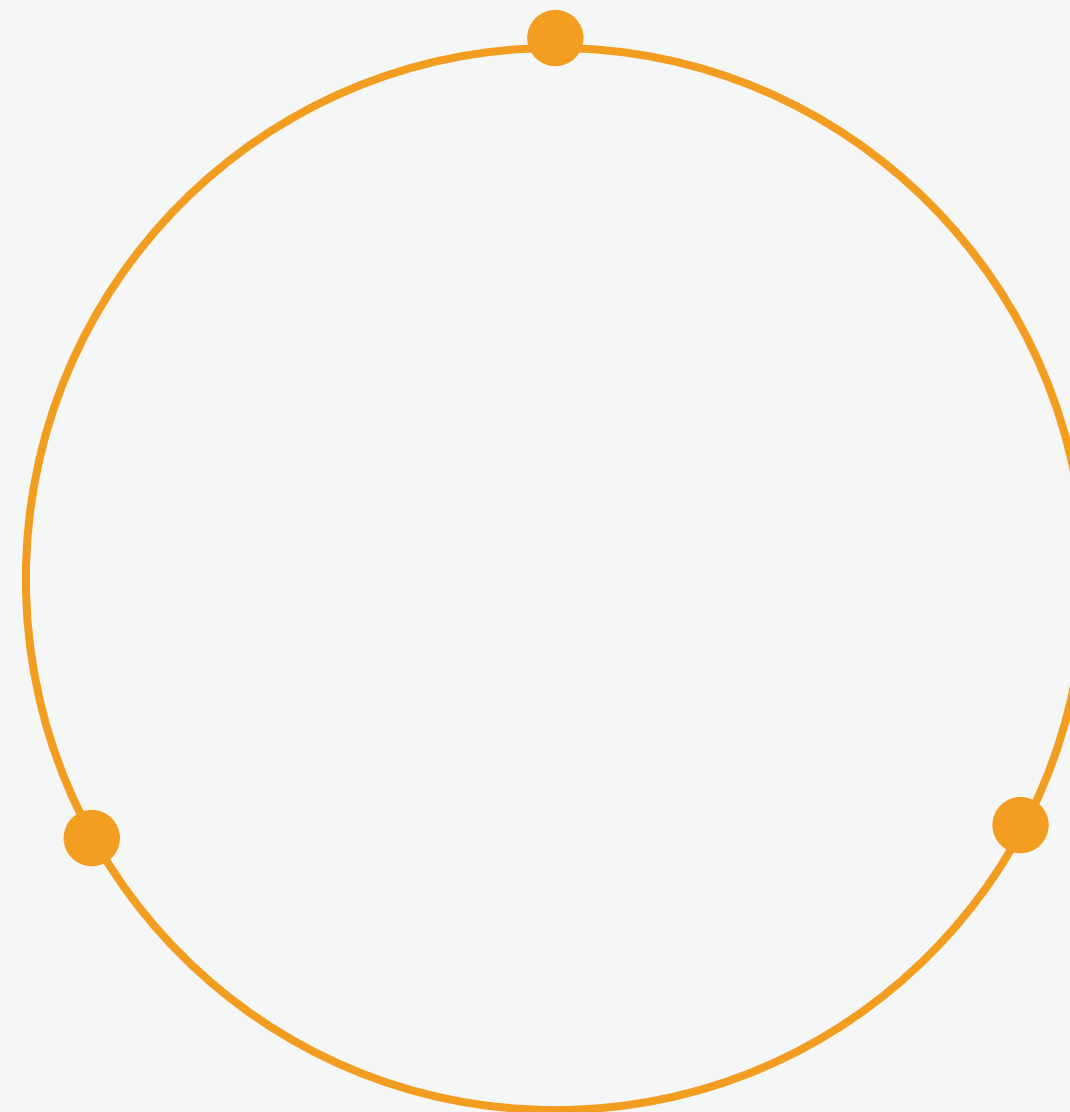
They can always resort to creative communities when they have any ideas. Any ordinary person can inspire creativity through community co-learning and co-creation. And the creative community has all kinds of resources and support to help them get their ideas off the ground and become part of social innovation.

For brands and businesses

They can also cooperate deeply with such creative community revitalization organizations, such as opening a series of competitions and co-creation workshops, so that ordinary people with ideas can also participate in product innovation. This can also serve as a gateway to a better understanding of brand concepts.

For community practitioners

They should realize that people are the most critical element of a community. Any ways and practices that enable community members' contributions to the community to be better documented, displayed and preserved should be emphasized. They can also consider the use of new and emerging technological tools with a human-centered approach.



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Trend report

Creative Community revitalization in the context of mainland China

*Project researched, written and typeset
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