



Date: July 22, 2022

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HiKR Ground, a Playground Welcoming Visitors at home and abroad, Opens on July 22

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (Minister PARK Bo Gyoon, MCST) will open HiKR Ground, a tourism promotion hall designed to offer an immersive experience, in collaboration with the Korea Tourism Organization (Acting President SHIN Sang-yong, KTO) at KTO's Seoul Center on July 22 for tourists from around the world, especially younger generations.

HiKR is a portmanteau of “*hi*” and “*Korea*” expressing “A big hello from Korea to visitors from around the world.” It offers space and programs to make their stay more memorable and exciting. MCST and KTO spent more than a year renovating the previous K-Style Hub into HiKR Ground equipped with a wide range of immersive content, which enables visitors to dynamically explore the multifaceted charms of Korean culture, to more effectively appeal to young tourists.

On the first floor, HiKR Wall showcases a variety of video content introducing Korea's tourist attraction highlights, including *New Urban Landscapes* portraying glittering scenes of the five tourism hub cities, including Gangneung and Mokpo, by media artist LEE Ynam. The large media wall is expected to draw the attention of passers-by as it can be viewed from the outside. On the second floor, K-Pop Ground offers visitors the chance to experience and generate their own Hallyu content using eXtended Reality (XR) technology. *My*

Studio, where users can plan and create their own music videos, is anticipated to become a popular attraction.

HiKR Art Museum on the third floor stages special exhibitions on Korean tourism reinterpreted by Korea's leading artists. The first exhibition features artist KWON Oh-sang's works themed around five local festivals of Korea. Dramatic Trip allows visitors to digitally experience tourist attractions featured in videos promoting Hallyu. The fourth floor houses the Local Tourism Hall, where programs and exhibits on diverse themes and regions are on display, as well as the Festival Experience Hall featuring famous local festivals starting with Jinju Namgang Yudeung Festival. HiKR Cave is designed to engage all of the senses in presenting the attractions of tourism hub cities and wellness tourism.

HiKR Lounge on the fifth floor offers space for relaxation as well as tourism guidance in the four languages of Korean, English, Chinese, and Japanese. It features a terrace overlooking Cheonggyecheon Stream and is expected to attract visitors as a venue of exchange and information-sharing. The opening ceremony was held on July 22. A variety of events and performances started on July 22 and continues to July 28 to promote HiKR Ground.

MCST said, "HiKR Ground will serve as both a tourism promotional facility and an innovative tourist attraction. We will join forces with local governments, art circles, and private organizations to continuously develop to new heights to exceed the expectations of international tourists."