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## 24 Cities of Culture and 100 Local Cultural Teams Showcase Regional Culture

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (Minister PARK Bo Gyoon, MCST), in partnership with Busan Metropolitan City (Mayor PARK Heong Joon) and the National Culture Cities Council (led by Yeongdo District, Chief of District KIM Ki Jae), is set to host the “2023 Korea City of Culture Expo & Global Conference” from September 7 (Thur) to 10 (Sun) at the Mulyangjang (Lighters Wharf) site in Bongraenaru-ro, Yeongdo, Busan. MCST Second Vice Minister JANG Mi Ran inaugurated the event on September 8 (Fri), encouraging representatives and those who have significantly contributed to the promotion of Culture Cities.

The title City of Culture is a special designation by the MCST Minister for cities that effectively utilize their unique cultural resources to enhance cultural creativity in accordance with the “Regional Culture Promotion Act.” Currently, 24 cities, including Seogwipo, Cheongju, and Yeongdo, hold this designation. This event aims to share the four major achievements of the City of Culture initiatives, such as the creation of the “Culture Flip-Flop Zone<sup>1</sup>,” city branding, nurturing of the cultural industry, and strategies to counter regional decline while also exploring future plans for regional development through culture.

### *Expo Inauguration on a Barge Over the Sea of Yeongdo on Sept 8*

The expo, running from September 7 to 10, will feature diverse programs, such as a “City of Culture Promotion Hall,” “Showcase (Pop-Up Booth) of Local Cultural Personals,” “Yeongdo Local Brand Convenience Store,” and “Yeongdo Culture City Tour,” inspired by the novel *Pachinko*.

The opening ceremony, slated for 6:00 p.m. on September 8, will take place on a barge off the coast of Yeongdo. The event will include an award ceremony for those with notable contributions to the city of culture promotion and celebratory performances. Vice Minister JANG Mi Ran will present the MCST Minister’s Commendation Awards to notable contributors and representatives, including Daepyeong-dong Village Head PARK Gi Young, DYDYMOTION CEO JOO Hui Jin, and YG

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<sup>1</sup> The “Culture Flip-Flop Zone” is a term combining “flip-flop” and “station zone,” indicating a nearby area that can be comfortably accessed in casual wear, such as flip-flops

Entertainment. PARK Gi Young, head of Daepyeong-dong Village and a member of the Yeongdo Culture City Citizen Promotion Committee, collaborated with residents to enhance the village's landscape. He also played a key role in revitalizing the "Kangkangee Arts Village." JOO Hui Jin, CEO of DYDYMOTION, partnered with Cheongju Culture City to co-plan the youth culture store "Goodsyou<sup>2</sup>," contributing to the expansion of local cultural products. Meanwhile, YG Entertainment earned recognition for bridging cultural gaps by launching the "Project Yourside" initiative in collaboration with Wanju Culture City, which included operating a dance academy for Wanju's youth. At the opening ceremony, 40 Yeongdo residents will perform "Dancing Yeongdo." The band Leenalchi, which participated in the MCST's Busan promotion video, and Bosudong Cooler, a prominent indie band from Busan, will present celebratory performances.

*From Abandoned Industrial Facilities to City of Culture Promotion Hall, 100 Local Cultural Teams Operate "Pop-Up Booths" and a Yeongdo Culture City Tour with the Novel Pachinko*

The City of Culture Promotion Halls for the 24 Culture Cities are located at the parking lot of "Wonji" (Wonji Lounge), a transformed logistics storage warehouse in Yeongdo-gu, now a restaurant. Centered around the achievements made by the Culture Cities over the past three years, the exhibition will operate seven themed halls, including Culture City policies, the "Culture Flip-Flop Zone," city branding, the cultural industry, strategies against regional decline, exchanges, and a special Yeongdo section.

"Local Cultural Personals," consisting of 100 teams creating new job opportunities rooted in culture and settled in the region, will operate "pop-up booths" along the coastal path of Bongraenaru-ro. From September 8 (Fri) to 10 (Sun), everyone can enjoy cultural products, activities, and content from these local cultural teams, as well as participate in experiential events every afternoon from 2:00 p.m. Cafés "Momos Coffee" and "Mumyeong Ilgi" in the Bongraenaru-ro area will host the "Local Cultural Personals' Salon." The multicultural space "Ggti Bongrae," managed by the Yeongdo-based local cultural company "RTBP," will open the "Yeongdo Local Brand Convenience Store" from September 7 to 10, showcasing and selling products from 20 local Yeongdo brands.

The Yeongdo Culture City Center (Director KO Yun Jeong), which is organizing this expo, will operate the "Yeongdo Culture City Tour Program with the Novel Pachinko" during the period. Participants can explore key locations in Yeongdo-gu, including the Kangkangee Arts Village and Yangdabang, while encountering main characters and scenes from the novel *Pachinko*.

*Conferences on Regional Development Cases through Culture and Talk Shows for Citizen Engagement*

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<sup>2</sup>Goodsyou: A unique youth culture product brand in Cheongju Culture City that combines the term "goods" with the ending "-yu" in the Chungcheong Province dialect

The Global Conference, set to be held from September 7 to 10, will take place at the multicultural space “Blueport 2021” in Yeongdo. It will feature conferences where global and regional development strategies and successful cases of City of Culture will be shared, as well as a talk show facilitating direct communication with citizens.

Distinguished speakers at the conference include Professor NODA Kunihiro from Japan’s Tottori University, author of “Creative City Yokohama,” discussing “Regional Development through Culture”; Professor LEE Jung Hee from Portland State University on “City and City University Coexistence from the Portland Case”; JEON Jung Hwan, former head of Jeju Creative Economy Innovation Center and director of Crypton (a startup incubator), on “The Role of Creative Industry and Culture”; and Team Leader JO Jae Woo from Chuncheon Culture City Center, presenting the “10-minute Culture Zone” case of Chuncheon Culture City.

The Talk Show, designed to make the City of Culture project accessible for all, will be conducted with experts from various fields. Professor YOO Hyun Joon from Hongik University, a familiar face on tvN’s “The Dictionary of Useless Earth Knowledge,” will discuss “How to Upgrade a City”; Group Head NA Young Hoon from POSCO CSR on “Regional Cultural Development Linked with Corporate ESG”; Psychiatrist KWON Myung Hwan, author of “It’s Okay to Be Clumsy,” on “Consolation and Art Stories for the Emotionally Clumsy”; and Professor JEON Young Soo from Hanyang University, author of “Korean Population Trend 2022–2025,” will shed light on “The Role of Regions in Responding to the Demographic Cliff.”

Second Vice Minister JANG Mi Ran stated, “Culture should be accessible to all citizens without discrimination, regardless of location. It is crucial to revitalize the regional economy through culture and tourism and prevent regional extinction through cultural means. I hope this expo significantly promotes the value of local culture and provides a blueprint for regional development through culture.”

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