

**Project Proposal for the Establishment of
Regional Art and Culture Centre in Dambulla**

T. B. TENNAKOON FOUNDTION

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Project Proposal for the Establishment of Regional Art and Culture Centre in Dambulla under the Japanese- Sri Lanka Cultural Cooperation.

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Project Digest

1.1 Project Title

- 1.1.1 **Suggested Popular Title of the Project** - Dambulla Japanese- Sri Lanka Culture and Art Center Project
- 1.1.2 **Technical Title-** Upgrading the Site of the T.B.Tennakoon Foundation with the Facilities for Performing Arts and Decorative Arts for Enhancing the Cultural Life of the People in Central Province

1.2 Project Location

T.B.Tennakoon Foundation area situated very closely to the Dambulla City coming under the Greater Dambulla Development Program, which is one of the major regional development programs of the country, will be the main project location. Dambulla is one of the main cultural cities in Sri Lanka with a history of more than 2000 years. Its cultural heritage originated even before the dawn of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa civilizations, which were the two classical periods of the Sri Lankan history. The famous prehistoric cemetery in Ibbankatuwa is the oldest historical site while there are many historical places situated in the vicinity of this proposed project location. Those sites include the famous Dambulla Royal Temple with Buddhist rock paintings and the Rock Fortress of Sigiriya. This proposed location has easy access not only to those sites but also to the world cultural heritage cities such as Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa.

1.2.1 Justification for the Selection of Project Location

The town of Dambulla is important as a cultural centre and also as an economic centre. Culturally Dambulla is situated between two ancient kingdoms, i.e. Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. Further both the most ancient civilizations and the Kandian culture, which belonged to a fairly modern historical period, have their influence to make Dambulla a unique place for cultural activities. Therefore, substantially superior cultural and

economic resources are readily available at Dambulla. Its current economic strength is so much greater than that of any city out of Colombo. An economic centre, which is fully dedicated for wholesale selling and buying of vegetables is situated in Dambulla. An interesting aspect of the linkages not only between Anuradhapura - Pollonnaruwa culture and the Kandian culture but also between the cultural activities and economic activities is a prominent feature in the cultural economical and physical landscape of Dambulla. These features make Dambulla an ideal location for modern cultural and related educational activities.

1.3 Project Background

1.3.1 This proposal is prepared to launch a project to create a modern cultural space with facilities for performing, learning and training related to Art and Culture including Drama, Music, Dance, Decorative Arts, Painting, Cultural Studies etc. and thereby promoting the indigenous cultural heritage of the area and provide an opportunity to acquire modern artistic knowledge for the talented students of the area and other people who have a keen interest in this field. T.B.Tennakoon Foundation, which has been established by a Parliamentary Incorporation Act of No.26 of 2006, will be the Governing Body for the implementation of this proposed project and conducting the programs developed through the proposed project inputs for a considerable period of time.

1.3.2 Major Objectives of the Project

Major objectives of the project cover the following, which are directly related to the upliftment of the quality of life of the people by enhancing the cultural facilities available for them.

1. Providing infrastructure facilities for cultural activities
2. Creation of a regional art and culture centre with suitable landscape, buildings, open spaces, gardens, monuments, sculptures etc.
3. Organizing and maintaining educational programs related to Art and Culture
4. Preserving and protecting the cultural heritage and living traditions of the area

5. Encouraging the people of the area to improve their quality of life by providing access to Culture and Art.
6. Coordinating the on-going cultural education conducted by schools, temples and other religious institutions, local art academies, tourist hotels of the area etc.
7. Implementation of an Annual Cultural Program and a Training Program
8. Promoting the extension of cultural activities such as dramas, musical performances, exhibitions now limited only to Colombo.
9. Creating a Resource Centre for cultural studies
10. Encouraging the tourist population hoteliers in cultural tourism

1.4 Implementing Agency

T.B.Tennakoon Foundation already established at Dambulla in Sri Lanka by T.B.Tennakoon Foundation (Incorporation) Act No. 26 of 2006 for the purpose of effectually carrying out training, establishing a cultural institution in the memory of late T.B.Tennakoon who was a poet and a Cultural Minister, will be the Implementing Agency for this project. This Implementing Agency will administer the project thorough a Board of Management in close collaboration with the government organizations and community based organizations of the area.

1.5 Justification of the Project

1.5.1 Present Conditions of the Sector

Sri Lanka is a developing country with a long history and living traditions such as traditional dancing, folk music, traditional Buddhist painting and sculpture, many categories of decorative arts etc. However, people in Sri Lanka enjoy a very limited cultural facilities required to enrich their life and society. There are few theatres, art galleries, exhibition halls etc. in the Country. In fact those facilities are extremely limited in the remote areas. There are many towns without even a cinema hall.

Cultural sector of Sri Lanka needs special attention as the economic progress of the Country is a result of market oriented open economy policy in which

the sectors like art, craft and culture could be very easily marginalized. Therefore, the Country has a national policy to promote cultural and artistic growth as a part of the enhancement of its human capital. This policy includes the provision of many cultural services to the Provinces and Districts through the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Ministry of National Heritage, Cultural Department, Archaeological Department, Central Cultural Fund etc.

In Sri Lanka, although the per capita income is of US \$ 1030 per person, about 23% of the population lives below the poverty line. There are also high regional variations in poverty. The population needs support for the improvement of their cultural life. Sri Lanka has a very high literacy rate when it is compared with the other countries in the region. This shows that the country and its population have the capacity to absorb cultural and artistic inputs.

Sri Lanka has above 4 million school children enrolled in approximately 9800 public schools and 300 private and international schools. Investment in education is at the heart of the development strategy of the country. Investing in people has been recognized since the Independence as a strategy to build a productive and efficient human resources based with knowledge and skills. The lack of facilities for cultural activities and extra curricular activities in poor regions of the country is a bottleneck for human resource development. Therefore, providing access to Science, Technology, English and Culture has been recognized as a priority to ensure the quality of education.

1.6 Problems to be Solved in the Sector through this Project

1. Lack of public facilities in the cultural, educational and artistic sector
2. Limited cultural and artistic awareness among the people
3. Non availability of basic cultural services required to protect the heritage and living traditions.
4. Lack of resources in the regions available for the promotion of culture, craft, and art.
5. Cultural gap between the resourceful heritage and the daily life today
6. Lack of coordination between the cultural organizations

1.7 Outline of the Project

This project proposal will focus on establishing cultural facilities available at the T.B.Tennakoon Foundation in Dambulla with a view of enhancing the human capital. Further, the delivery of cultural services to Dambulla, which has already become a regional cultural centre, will also be a development objective of this proposal. This project will add value to the Greater Dambulla Development Program, which is a national program prepared for the promotion of regional economic and social centers in Sri Lanka. Further, through this project, it is envisaged to promote cultural corporation between Japan and Sri Lanka. Accordingly, the rich cultural heritage of Japan will be able to share its knowledge and skills with an important cultural centre in Sri Lanka.

1.7.1 Major Project Activities Proposed

1. Construction of an open theatre and theatre hall suitable for performing arts
2. Designing the space available for the providing infrastructure facilities for the T.B. Tennakoon Foundation with suitable landscape, buildings, open spaces, gardens, monuments, sculptures etc.
3. Developing the site available as a regional art and culture centre
4. Organizing and conducting following educational programs related to Art and Culture
 - (I) Dancing, choreography and music
 - (II) Drama, opera and ballet
 - (III) Painting and sculpture
 - (IV) Making copies of Buddhist rock wall paintings
 - (V) Making replicas of ancient classical statues and monuments
 - (VI) Traditional crafts, i.e. silver crafts, wood crafts and textile
5. Promotion of Japanese-Sri Lanka corporation through art and culture
 - (I) Teaching the art of Japanese flower arrangement
 - (II) Teaching Japanese language and promotion of cultural tourism

(III) Introducing technology for artistic creations

6. Coordinate the on-going cultural education conducting by the schools, temples and other religious institutions, local art academies, tourist hotels etc.
7. Implementation of an Annual Cultural Program and a Training Program
8. Encourage the tourist population in cultural tourism
9. Preserving and protecting the cultural heritage and living traditions of the area
10. Encouraging the people of the area to improve their quality of life by providing access to culture and art.

1.8 Prospective Beneficiaries

- a) Direct beneficiaries:
 - (I) Local artists
 - (II) Other people with artistic talents
 - (III) Students of the area
- b) Indirect beneficiaries:
 - (I) Temples with heritage assets
 - (II) Local art academies
 - (III) Cultural organizations
 - (IV) Tourist hotels and guides
 - (V)General public

1.9 Desirable Schedule Time of the project

From 2008 to 2010

Input from the Recipient T. B. Tennakoon Foundation

1. Site available
2. Counterpart staff
3. Execution of the project
4. Coordination and monitoring
5. Ensuring effective participation of Central Provincial Council, Matale District Secretariat, Dambulla Division Secretariat and the Dambulla Pradeshiya Sabha, Ministry of Cultural affairs, Ministry of National Heritage, Cultural Department, Archaeological Department and Central Cultural Fund
6. Basic services including electricity and water supply
7. Publicity and awareness through the TV, radio and press