

URBAN
STUDIES
LAB

US | IMPACT REPORT

— 2018 - 2021 —





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Chapter 1

Introduction



Abbreviations

USL Urban Studies Lab

BCST Bird Conservation Society of Thailand

BMA Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

CODI Community Organization Development Institute

CRB COVID Relief Bangkok

CPB Crown Property Bureau

depa Digital Economy Promotion Agency

DIT Department for International Trade

DGA Digital Government Development Agency

FCDO Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

FREC Ford Resource and Engagement Center

INDA International Program in Design and Architecture

ULL Urban Living Lab

UK United Kingdom

UDDI Urban Design and Development International

NSO National Statistical Office of Thailand

NIDA National Institute of Development Administration

NIA National Innovation Agency

NGO non-governmental organizations

About this Report

Our USL Impact Report provides an overview of much of the work of Urban Studies Lab since its founding in 2018 through the end of 2021. The report also introduces readers to our organization, outlining our mission and key areas of impact, our programs and activities, and the impacts and collaborations we've built along the way.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

It has been a crazy journey for me and for Urban Studies Lab since its founding four years ago. I did not expect that we would have grown this fast, and all the credit must go to my co-founders, USL fellows and all the partners we have been working with. In particular, Scott Chang and Ford Motor Company Fund, the team behind Ford Resource and Engagement Center Bangkok (FREC). The support they have been giving us has enabled USL to do what we do with the freedom and flexibility to adapt to real needs of the urban communities we work with and find solutions together with so many stakeholders.

Nang Loeng and her community leaders are the beginning of everything. I am indebted to these strong-willed and selfless individuals. Coming into the community as a young professor, they did not only welcome me with open arms but they also taught me many life lessons, most importantly of all the gaps between the real world and the work that academics have been trying to achieve. I have experienced first hand the barriers to impactful urban policy and intervention that can benefit local communities. I was really lucky that I have a group of like minded friends and colleagues who feel the same and join forces with me to start our mission as USL. We know that we need to radically change the way community research is being done and how research centers operate.

With what I have learned from the local community, USL was built upon the core values of Honesty, Empathy and Integrity. The past three years have confirmed that these values are crucial to the success of our mission "Building an inclusive urban neighborhood development process", and I believe that they contributed to the growth of USL enormously. I hope that these core values will be transferred not only to our fellows but our partners in the long term, too.

As this is our first ever impact report, I must reflect on the impact we have been able to achieve at USL. To date, COVID Relief Bangkok is our highest impact project. The initiative is a good example of our urban living lab model and how we combine data analytics, stakeholder engagement and development of local networks which can transform into long-term impactful projects. While the pandemic has highlighted the structural vulnerability in Thailand such as limited local government resources, out-dated data, lack of crisis management planning, limited platforms for collaboration and confusing risk communication, it also made us understand how resilient our communities are. Many stakeholders collaborated with each other, the local leaders took charge and the primary healthcare units throughout the country are the foundation of how we can cope with this public health crisis.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I believe that Thailand has a lot of social capital, in particular at the local level, which is why when there is a crisis we tend to mitigate and deal with the situation decently. However, we must take this opportunity to learn and improve the coping capacity and resiliency at all levels with the emphasis on a robust risk management system, and social infrastructure at the neighbourhood level, so that we will cope better with the next crisis in this era of disruption and uncertainty. Many initiatives that were developed during the pandemic are good, but they need more support, from the government sector or otherwise, to make it sustainable, and many would benefit from institutionalization into official policies and projects.

I can't say that we know all the solutions to urban issues, and we never will. But what we can share is that it has become apparent that in order to build an inclusive and resilient city we cannot do it alone, nor should we. It is work that needs all the sectors to contribute. For so long, Thailand has waited for the sole hero that can solve everything, and it kept us in this status

quo for way too long. The way forward is the process that can optimise the engagement and contribution from many partners, one which amplifies the voice of the most vulnerable people and the ones who are in a disadvantaged situation. The system should capitalize on new innovation and technology that allows us to make evidence-based strategy and action, while understanding the need for a human centric approach and support for the work of community networks and local institutions. I believe that USL must be the leader to advocate for that change and collectively develop this process slowly and steadily with many partners. I am proud to say that we are in a very good position to do so because of the team members, network and supportive partners that we have. And I hope this is just the beginning of the long and exciting journey for us.

Pongpisit Huyakorn

Director and Founder
Urban Studies Lab

OUR ORGANIZATION

OUR TEAM

4 units, 13 members



Kunlanat Jirawong-aram

Kisnaphol Wattanawanyoo

Pitchaya Huyakorn

Jirapat Jirawattanasilp

Pin Udomcharoenchaikit

Nantaporn Satirapanya

Pongpisit Huyakorn

David Fiske

Chamnarn Tirapas

Yupin Chaisompran

Laksika Dejjpreechachai

Sivanard Onpheng

MEET OUR ORGANIZATION

From our founding, USL has stood out as an independent applied research center with a focus on inclusive urban development. While we study the city, we emphasize practicality in our research that leads to impact in the lives of community members and neighborhood groups. Founded in 2018 by a group of passionate urban practitioners and academics, we have strong ties to both the university and professional networks in Thailand, and increasingly throughout the region.

Since 2018, we have grown both in size and capacity, developing into a trusted organization within the urban development field of Thailand. However, we still have much to learn and many ways in which we hope to improve in reaching our goal of becoming a top research institute and resource center for inclusive development in Thailand and the region. Here are the people involved in building USL into the organization we are today, and hope to be in the future.

STUDIES LAB

TEAM

The USL team is multidisciplinary and diverse, with each member bringing a unique set of capabilities and backgrounds to our work. USL draws on its broad range of experience and expertise in the fields of urban planning & development, architecture & design, community engagement, project management, communications, and the environmental and social sciences, to offer a unique and holistic approach to urban studies and consulting.

Our team is divided into four complimentary units: Research and Analytics, Knowledge Management and Communication, HR and Operation, and Placemaking and Partnership. In 2021, our team comprises the 13 members below:

RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS UNIT

Pongpisit Huyakorn – *Director*
 Yupin Chaisompran – *Senior Researcher*
 Sivanard Onpheng – *Research Fellow*

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION UNIT

David Fiske – *Assistant Director*
 Thanan Lilaonitkul – *Advisor*
 Kisnaphol Wattanawanyoo – *Advisor*
 Nantaporn Satirapanya – *Communications Officer*

HR AND OPERATIONS UNIT

Pitchaya Huyakorn – *Assistant Director*
 Laksika Dejpreechachai – *Lab Coordinator*

PLACEMAKING AND PARTNERSHIP UNIT

Pin Udomcharoenchaikit – *Associate Director*
 Chamnarn Tirapas – *Advisor*
 Jirapat Jirawattanasilp – *Senior Researcher*
 Kunlanat Jirawong-aram – *Community Engagement Officer*

USL Mission and Areas of Impact



Urban Studies Lab (USL) is driven by its mission to build a more inclusive urban neighbourhood development process in Thailand.

WHY IS THIS OUR MISSION?

Thai cities are increasingly failing to meet the needs of their citizens, leaving the most vulnerable and underrepresented members of our communities to bear the largest burden.

We believe the best way to address this challenge is through new forms of partnerships that take action based on mutual understanding, transparency and collective impact.

We focus on co-creation that expands the organizational capacity of the city, sharing the responsibility that falls on government, and providing an alternative to existing forms of governance and decision making.

USL URBAN LIVING LAB MODEL AND THE INCLUSIVE NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



We work towards our mission by orchestrating our USL Urban Living Lab (ULL), an approach that places local communities as equal partners in the planning, design and transformation of their city, and strategically convenes a broadrange of factors, including the public and private sector, as well as researchers, to test new methods of neighborhood-scale urban development. The projects outlined in this report show how we strive to build this approach into all of our work.

Through our ULL, we facilitate activities that build shared understanding of the most pressing issues facing a community or place, and collectively develop solutions focused on three complementary areas of impact:

- direct design or policy interventions**
- open data and knowledge sharing**
- the education of new urban leaders**

AREAS OF IMPACT

Urban Interventions and Policy Guidelines

We view our work as making both direct impact in the lives of local community members and our other partners, as well as more indirect impact through changes to the system and culture of urban planning and development in Thailand.

Through physical interventions and improvements to urban services, we will not only be making an immediate impact in the lives of the underrepresented communities in our cities, but we will be creating a sustained impact by opening more permanent channels of communication and collaboration through the adoption of new policies and legislation that lead to a more equitable distribution of resources in our cities.

AREAS OF IMPACT

Open Data and Knowledge Sharing

Our aim is to ultimately impact as much positive change in our cities as possible, and to do this, open data and knowledge sharing are crucial. Through the collection, analysis and communication of both qualitative and quantitative data, we look to build upon our work and connect it to the wider public. In doing so, we believe we can open up new areas of opportunity, not just for ourselves, but others, to create innovative solutions that benefit the whole of society.

Integral to our work is collaborating with our partners to develop platforms for knowledge sharing that can support more transparent and informed decision making in the city. This takes many forms, from traditional reports to online media, to podcasts and documentaries, and interactive data portals.

AREAS OF IMPACT

Urban Classroom

Our urban classroom acts as a workshop and open studio for people from various fields and careers to work on urban issues. It is open to anyone – not just students, but professionals, too – who want to learn about place-based challenges and processes, with the focus on impact and communities. Participants may be involved as USL interns, research fellows, visiting professors, or supporting practitioners, and are encouraged to develop their own area of focus and method of field research in collaboration with the USL team.

Public engagement is central to our classroom activities, and by connecting classroom participants with partners and stakeholders that are dealing with real-world challenges, we aim to foster a future network of urban leaders that can create real-world impact. It is also our goal to maintain Urban Classroom projects as an up-to-date “project bank” from which we can draw evidence and ideas to advocate for further change, looking for opportunities to scale with partners like the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, community groups or the private sector.

ACTIVITIES

A typical USL project is initiated together with a local community-based organization or leader and begins with collaborative research conducted with these partners, as well as others within our network.

We then utilize this research to spearhead a design intervention, like a public space improvement, through our placemaking activities, or develop policy recommendations like action plans or service improvements to aid in long term implementation.

The lessons we learn throughout the process are further refined into practical tools or handbooks made to support sustained collaboration between project partners or provide guidance to others' initiatives.

Through our activities, we aim to empower underrepresented communities to advocate for direct improvements to their lives, while also providing the tools and evidence to leaders in government and elsewhere to incentivize adoption of a more inclusive process.



OUR KEY ACTIVITIES



Research & Consulting

Our unique approach to research and consulting weaves together urban analytics, stakeholder engagement, participatory design, project management and communications to provide a deep understanding of urban issues for our partners. We have worked with partners ranging from community groups, municipalities, national agencies, and international organizations on a broad range of topics, including urban planning and design, urban resilience and public health, smart cities, universal design, urban governance, social entrepreneurship, and more.



Placemaking & Partnership Development

We are not working only on the data and information side. We see people and locals as very strong and important actors in urban settings. As such, we are thriving for actions and partnership through our placemaking work. This work includes facilitating participatory design and co-design workshops, small-scale design and architectural development, physical interventions, and community-based data collection. With our actions, we aim for community participation in events and construction together with beneficiaries. Through stakeholder engagement and partnership development, we help our partners coordinate and navigate the legal process of formalizing our placemaking activities.

OUR KEY ACTIVITIES



Tools & Platform Development

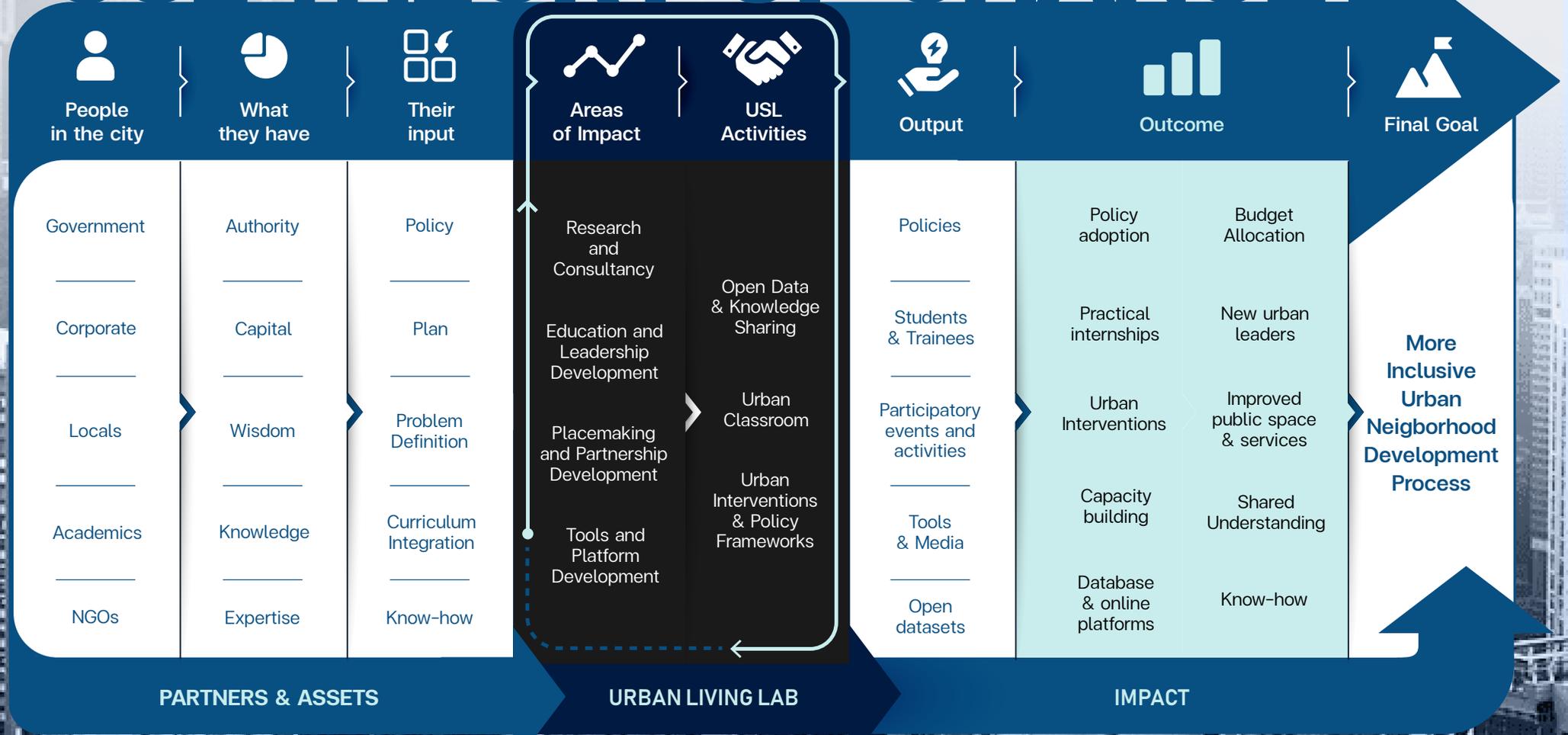
With our aim of knowledge sharing, we emphasize on communicating our research practically, developing toolkits, guidebooks, articles, and reports that share what we've learned with others. We hold events to share lessons learned, and produce both offline and online media. We also work to develop our spatial datasets, temporal datasets, and other forms of urban data into usable databases and online platforms.



Education & Leadership Development

With all the above ongoing initiatives, we also focus on education and leadership development, whether internal or external, as we see Urban Studies Lab as a place for people from various walks of life to learn together. We provide education on urban studies through many events and programs. Some independent upkeep programs might even take years, with our goals of training the new generation urbanist. Our past programs were internships and fellowships where we were open to various disciplines, not only urban studies or designs, and skill training and workshops to communities. Internally, we also have a USL Town Hall to bring the speciality of each person to the forefront.

USL THEORY OF CHANGE



Chapter 2

Project Reporting



Projects	USL Pillars				Areas of Impact			Activities			
	Inclusive Place-making	Resilient Urban Systems	Socio-cultural Diversity	New Urban Frontier	Urban Interventions & Policy	Open Data & Knowledge Sharing	Urban Classroom	Research & Analytics	Place-making & Partnership Development	Tools & Platform Development	Education & Leadership Development
Nang Loeng Pocket Park	✓				✓				✓		
Lakorn Chatri Documentary			✓			✓		✓			✓
Mahanak Canal Placemaking	✓		✓		✓				✓		
Social Innovation Hackathon: Creative Placemaking in Nang Loeng	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓
USL Lecture Series	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Urban Classroom (Lan Luang Road Identity Project)			✓				✓				✓

Projects	USL Pillars				Areas of Impact			Activities			
	Inclusive Place-making	Resilient Urban Systems	Socio-cultural Diversity	New Urban Frontier	Urban Interventions & Policy	Open Data & Knowledge Sharing	Urban Classroom	Research & Analytics	Place-making & Partnership Development	Tools & Platform Development	Education & Leadership Development
Smart City Handbook & Roadshow		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
COVID Relief Bangkok	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
Bangkapi Universal Design Handbook			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	
Nang Loeng in the Bag (Gift Pack)	✓	✓			✓				✓		
Education Kit	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓
Internships		✓				✓	✓	✓			✓

OVERVIEW



CHIANG MAI, KHON KAEN, CHONBURI
1 PROJECT

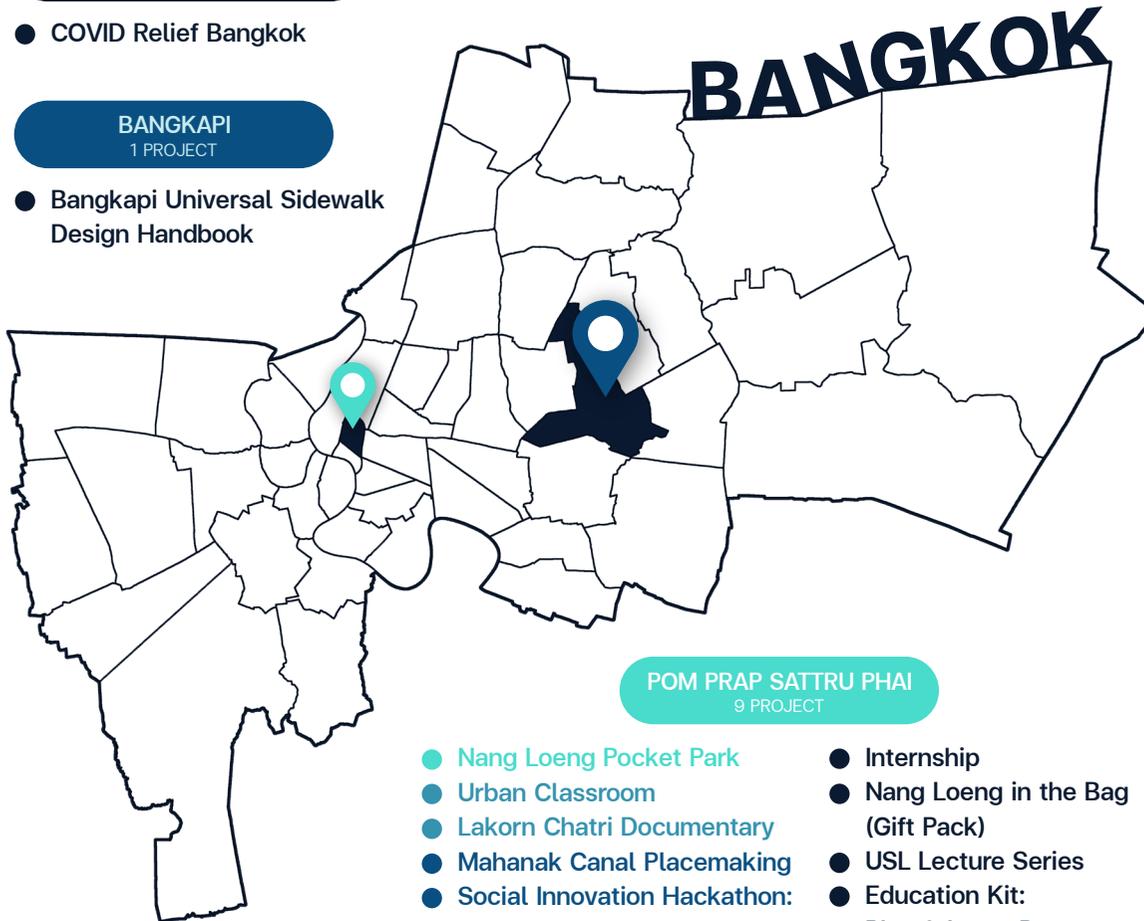
- Smart City Handbook: Thailand

BANGKOK CITY-WIDE
1 PROJECT

- COVID Relief Bangkok

BANGKAPI
1 PROJECT

- Bangkok Universal Sidewalk Design Handbook



POM PRAP SATTRU PHAI
9 PROJECT

- Nang Loeng Pocket Park
- Urban Classroom
- Lakorn Chatri Documentary
- Mahanak Canal Placemaking
- Social Innovation Hackathon: Creative Placemaking in Nang Loeng
- Internship
- Nang Loeng in the Bag (Gift Pack)
- USL Lecture Series
- Education Kit: Play & Learn Box

2018

- Nang Loeng Pocket Park
December 2018 - April 2019
- Urban Classroom
Summer Break 2018

2019

- Internship
Summer Break 2019
- Urban Classroom
Summer Break 2019
- Lakorn Chatri Documentary
End of 2019 - 2020

2020

- Smart City Handbook: Thailand
Feb 2020 - May 2021
- COVID Relief Bangkok
March 2020 - present
- Mahanak Canal Placemaking
April - July 2020
- Internship
Summer Break 2020
- USL Lecture Series
August - October 2020
- Social Innovation Hackathon: Creative Placemaking in Nang Loeng
End of 2019 - 2020

2021

- Internship
Summer Break 2021
- Bangkok Universal Sidewalk Design Handbook
June - August 2021
- Nang Loeng in the Bag (Gift Pack)
September & December 2021
- USL Lecture Series
July - October 2021
- Education Kit: Play & Learn Box
October - December 2021



Nang Loeng Pocket Park

USL Pillars

Inclusive
Placemaking

Areas of Impact

Urban Interventions
& Policy

Activities

Placemaking
& Partnership
Development



Location:

Nang Loeng Market,
Pom Prap Sattru Phai,
Bangkok



Partners:

INDA Chulalongkorn
University, FREC, SOS
Foundation, Pom Prap Sattru
Phai District Office, L&E
(Lighting & Equipment)



Beneficiaries:

Nang Loeng Market and
surrounding communities



Timeframe:

Dec 2018 - Apr 2019

The project was born out of interest of students from the International Program in Design & Architecture (INDA), Chulalongkorn University, in the subject of “Architecture and Urbanism”. Through USL’s network of partners, we helped to create a quality public space with a community that formerly had little access to vital community spaces.

During the park design phase, there was an event of product testing where communities participated in the design process and joined the user testing. In the process, the community had an opportunity to communicate their needs and discuss maintenance. Later, when the construction was finished, INDA held an event for communities to join. USL facilitated both events.

USL facilitated the development of a park management committee with representatives from both the District Office and the community to help with upkeep and programs. This committee was written in policy with a rare act of official support from the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA).

The design solution from students was to renovate an empty space near Nang Loeng Market and modify it to an activity space with shades and covers. INDA program and an L&E (Lighting and Equipment) supported the funding. FREC supported this project by providing a working space and coordinating volunteers. SOS Foundation provided plants and gardeners. USL also acted as a front-end facilitator to Pom Prap Sattru Phai District Office, the Crown Property Bureau (CPB), and Nang Loeng community.

This adjustment of space served as a children’s playground and hosted events and activities by communities. Unfortunately, it has seldom been used during COVID-19 situation.

Key Lessons Learned

As a front-end facilitator, USL learned the importance of keeping track and communicating the projects and plans closely in every step. In this project, we worked closely with the community and the District Office and all were happy with the first construction plan which contained roofs for the park. However, due to restrictions from the CPB, the roof was removed before final construction. The community was unhappy with the final outcome of the park as they were not informed of the roof's removal.

Secondly, for any community-led project such as this, the clarity of the maintenance and management system is of crucial importance. It was discussed that the District Office would maintain the space, however, as the park is not a permanent structure it does not possess an address, and therefore has no electricity or water. As such, plant maintenance proved difficult. We were able to overcome some of these complications due to the installation of a solar cell-based electric system.

โครงการออกแบบสิ่งก่อสร้างเพื่อชุมชน

พื้นที่สาธารณะในชุมชนนางเลิ้ง



พื้นที่บริเวณนี้เป็นพื้นที่ของสำนักงานทรัพย์สินพระมหากษัตริย์ซึ่งได้ให้สำนักงานเขตป้อมปราบศัตรูพ่ายเขตพื้นที่เพื่อจะได้อนุญาตให้ทางคณะสถาปัตยกรรมศาสตร์ สาขาวิชาออกแบบสถาปัตยกรรมศาสตร์ ภาควิชาอังกฤษ (INDA) จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย เข้าปรับปรุงสภาพภูมิทัศน์ของพื้นที่เพื่อใช้เป็นสวนชุมชน

โครงการนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งในการศึกษาภาคฤดูร้อนของทาง INDA ร่วมกับ สำนักงานทรัพย์สินพระมหากษัตริย์, สำนักงานเขตป้อมปราบศัตรูพ่าย, ศูนย์วิจัย USL, ศูนย์การเรียนรู้เพื่อชีวิตเพื่อชุมชนและสิ่งแวดล้อม, มูลนิธิ Ford, SOS Thailand, BigTree และ บริษัท L&E จำกัด (มหาชน) ประเทศไทย พร้อมด้วยการสนับสนุนจากชุมชนนางเลิ้ง

จุดมุ่งหมายของโครงการคือการปรับปรุงลานคอนกรีตเดิมให้เป็นสวนอเนกประสงค์สำหรับจัดกิจกรรมในชุมชน โดยได้แก้ปัญหาในด้านต่างๆ และจัดทำสิ่งอำนวยความสะดวกที่จำเป็น ดังต่อไปนี้

- 1) จัดหาอุปกรณ์สำหรับออกกำลังกายกลางแจ้ง
- 2) ปัญหาแสงสว่างไม่เพียงพอในยามค่ำคืน
- 3) ปัญหาสภาพแวดล้อมที่เกิดจากความร้อนของคอนกรีต และ ไม่มีพื้นที่สีเขียวให้ร่มเงา

เพราะฉะนั้นทาง INDA จึงได้ทำการออกแบบพื้นที่บริเวณนี้ให้เป็นพื้นที่โล่งกว้างสำหรับกิจกรรมดังนี้

- 1) พื้นที่นั่งเล่นสำหรับพักผ่อนและสนามเด็กเล่น
- 2) โคมไฟให้แสงสว่างในยามค่ำคืน
- 3) พื้นที่สำหรับวิ่งออกกำลังกายและเล่นกีฬา

การออกแบบพื้นที่ได้พยายามเพิ่มพื้นที่สีเขียวให้มากขึ้น ทั้งการปลูกต้นไม้และการปลูกต้นไม้เพื่อให้อากาศบริสุทธิ์ ระบายอากาศให้บริสุทธิ์และช่วยลดอุณหภูมิของพื้นที่โดยรอบ โดยได้ทำการผลิตอุปกรณ์เหล่านี้เพื่อให้อุปกรณ์โดยเฉลี่ย

ทั้งนี้ทาง INDA อยากขอเชิญชวนชาวชุมชนนางเลิ้ง ร่วมพัฒนาพื้นที่ส่วนนี้ผ่านกิจกรรมที่จะเกิดขึ้นต่อไป



ระยะเวลาการทำงานทั้งหมด

17	งานปรับปรุงพื้นที่	8.00น. 17.00น. (อาทิตย์ละวันละครั้ง)
22		17.00น. 20.00น. (ทำความสะอาด)
23		
24	งานก่อสร้าง	8.00น. 17.00น. (อาทิตย์ละวันละครั้ง)
		17.00น. 20.00น. (ทำความสะอาด)
4		
5		
6		
7	เก็บรายละเอียด	

PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS



PARTNERSHIPS & ACTIONS





Lakom Chatri Documentary

USL Pillars

Inclusive
Placemaking
Socio-cultural
Diversity

Areas of Impact

Open Data &
Knowledge Sharing

Activities

Research &
Analytics
Education &
Leadership
Development



Location:

Nang Loeng,
Pom Prap Sattru Phai,
Bangkok



Partners:

FREC, Global Giving,
Nang Loeng Community



Beneficiaries:

Nang Loeng Community
and Public



Timeframe:

End of 2019 to 2020

The Nang Loeng neighborhood is in an historical area of Bangkok. The community is rich in cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

Lakorn–Chatri and Khon (or traditional masked dance) are some of the traditional cultural assets still found in the community, and some of the residents still carry on this artistic heritage. However, with new forms of entertainment and urban development, these traditional dances are losing attention and fading away. Therefore, it is an urgent task to both document these living heritage and art and revive them before they are gone forever.

Upon receiving funding from FREC and Global Giving, and in partnership with the Nang Loeng community, USL proposed to document the community’s heritage and assets. USL acted as the facilitator, working with Pisut Srimok (the film maker) and Mrs. Kanya Thipyosoth (the Lakorn Chatri dancer) and Miss Nammon (the community photographer) to produce this work together.

This project comprises two documentary types; through the VDO format and through the photography format. The length of the documentary is in the range of 10 - 12 minutes and has English subtitles. The photography is the set of twelve key poses, highlighting the essence of Lakorn Chatri dance. The project time frame was three months. In the period of two-month time, Mrs. Kanya Thipyosoth would be documented, mainly about the Lakorn Chatri dance, as well as the stories of her life, which related to the conservation of this traditional dance.



Key Lessons Learned

Throughout the process, USL learned how to facilitate and coordinate with the dancer, film-maker and photographer. Also, during the process, USL learned about related aspects of community heritage through the dance and performance, which could also be considered the nation's cultural asset. The documentary of Lakorn Chatri raised the awareness of this traditional dance and community cultural heritage. It also promoted this dance to a wider audience, and could draw in some public attention to rethink and reconsider the conservation/preservation of this dance. It could build up the sense of pride of people in the community and neighbourhood. It would also allow a new generation to appreciate and learn more about this traditional dance, or might even push it further into contemporary society.



Project Documentation





Mahanak Canal Placemaking

USL Pillars

Inclusive
Placemaking
Socio-cultural
Diversity

Areas of Impact

Urban Interventions
& Policy

Activities

Placemaking
& Partnership
Development



Location

Mahanak Community,
Mahanak Canal,
Pom Prap Sattru Phai,
Bangkok



Partners:

Pom Prap Sattru Phai district
office, Nawat Lertsawaengkit
and RNO.XOXO,
Mattawan Suwannapasri,
Jidapa Suvanvihok,
Sukrit Chongthavornvasana



Beneficiaries:

Mahanak community



Timeframe:

Apr - Jul 2020

A project for the overall improvement of the Mahanak Canal was initiated by the former Assistant Director of Pomprab Sattru Phai District Office, and USL was invited to conduct a placemaking initiative centered on a small disorganised space nearby Mahanak canal at the entrance to Mahanak community. The placemaking activities involved a participatory design process centered on wall-painting and versatile street furniture.

The wall painting was coordinated by Nawat Lertsawaengkit and RNO.XOXO, with USL helping to facilitate community participation in the design of the final painting. There was a controversy from the beginning of the process, as the space was located within a Buddhist community, while the wall was facing towards a Muslim community. USL emphasised social and cultural diversity in talks between community leaders to encourage an inclusive design process.

The wall painting phase occurred during the COVID-19 lockdown, meaning people could not gather for the activity as originally planned. Luckily, prior to strict lockdowns,

an art activity was able to be conducted on-site in which children got to paint the wall by using their hands. Further community meetings were moved online and art packages with art supplies were distributed to children in the community and nearby schools. Children were asked to create designs of what they would like to see on the wall, and after getting the designs, the artist selected pictures for final decoration with consideration for religious beliefs. The theme of the wall was dreams, toys, and home.

The second initiative was the design and production of versatile street-furniture, which was done through the contribution from product designers (Mattawan Suwannapasri, Jidapa Suvanvihok, Sukrit Chongthavornvasana) working on a thesis about Nang Loeng Community. The design for the furniture was flexible and can be adjusted into many shapes and forms for practical use (e.g., clothes-hanger and benches). The model was adapted from plastic pipes to test how the community liked the design.



Key Lessons Learned

The first lesson was the importance of resilience, especially in times of COVID-19 where situations changed rapidly. Due to the lockdown, the activities needed to be adapted to the situations at a very fast pace by changing from on-site to online activities.

The second lesson was about the bureaucratic work of the District Office. In this project of placemaking, USL was responsible for the wall-making and design. However, the production of street furniture was in the District Office's responsibility. At the moment, the furniture was not constructed. Therefore, the place that once transformed was gradually disorganised.



PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

2
EVENTS

The painted wall was still there but the street furniture was not, as they are still in the construction process by the District Office.

LIST OF EVENTS
Tactical urbanism participatory design process and wall-painting event.



BENEFICIARIES
Mahanak Community

1
PARTNERSHIPS CREATED

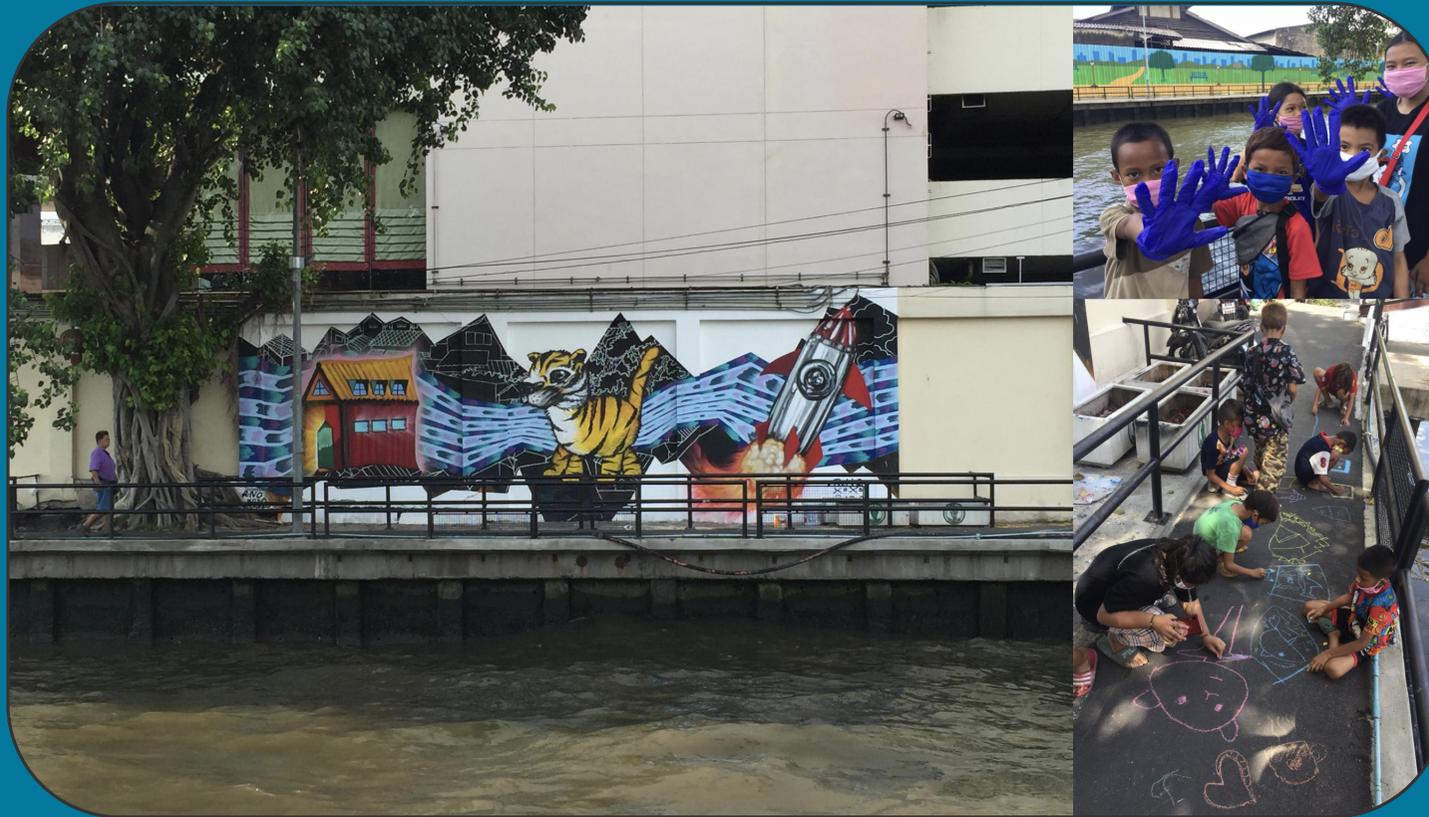
PARTNERSHIPS & ACTIONS

MAHANAK COMMUNITY
Stakeholders

The main partner, the District Office, was the initiator of the project idea and also provided space, cleaning, and laying foundational paint for the wall.

PARTNERSHIPS
Pomprab Sattru Phai district office, Nawat Lertsawaengkit and RNO.XOXO, Mattawan Suwannapasri, Jidapa Suvanvihok, Sukrit Chongthavornvasana

Project Documentation





Location:

Nang Loeng,
Pom Prap Sattru Phai,
Bangkok



Partners:

British Council, FREC,
E-Learng, Weave Artisan
Society, Kiondo, Factopia,
Prayoon for Art, Nang
Loeng Community



Beneficiaries:

Nang Loeng Market
and surrounding
communities



Timeframe:

16-18 Nov 2020

Social Innovation Hackathon

Creative Placemaking in Nang Loeng

USL Pillars

Inclusive
Placemaking
Resilient Urban
Systems
Socio-cultural
Diversity

Areas of Impact

Urban Interventions
& Policy

Activities

Placemaking
& Partnership
Development
Education &
Leadership
Development

In late 2020, USL, together with British Council Thailand, organised and facilitated a unique program called “Social Innovation Hackathon: Creative Placemaking in Nang Loeng.” This hackathon differed from others that tend to be more tech focused, whereas the main focus for the Nang Loeng Hackathon was about collaboration between different stakeholders, in particular between Thai and UK creative hubs and local stakeholders, and how that collaboration could turn into innovative solutions at the local level.

USL acted as facilitator of the activities, working with British Council to develop the process to encourage participants to build upon the rich socio-cultural heritage in the neighbourhood, and most importantly, supplement ongoing work that local communities had already been doing to improve their neighbourhood. Four Thailand based creative hubs were chosen to participate and were given access to a baseline and community engagement report that was conducted by the USL research team with input from more than 100 local participants from various backgrounds.

From the beginning, engagement with the local stakeholders was at the core of the process. Hackathon participants engaged with stakeholders including market communities, the district office, schools, local leaders who

are promoting the arts & crafts of the area, new generation business owners and other FREC partners. The participants explored the neighbourhood with USL and local communities, giving them the chance to test out initial project hypotheses. This process helped validate solutions they had in mind while gathering crucial first hand input. USL also supported the teams with a Social Impact Assessment toolkit and training on how to use it.

Projects included a digital platform for local enterprise, a virtual tourism experience & treasure hunt highlighting local heritage and history, development of a local pocket park and community centre, and a plastic upcycling station to build plastic tapestries as shading structures. While there was only one winner, all of the projects had merit to be carried out in the future.

In the end, the winning team of Weave Artisan Society, a creative hub based in Chiang Mai, won the competition and was given further support and funding to implement their plastic upcycling concept. In October 2021, the Nang Loeng Plastic Bank program was launched, with implementation support from another participating hub, E-Learng. The project is ongoing.



Key Lessons Learned

Throughout the process, USL learned how creativity and collaboration leads to innovation and inclusive development. The diversified expertise from different backgrounds, for example, between the professional mentors and the participants, encouraged a healthy debate as well as exchanging of creative solutions outside of one discipline.

On the other hand, for any organisation who wants to promote more inclusive development, just engaging or putting relevant stakeholders together are not enough. Information and data sharing as well as tools to support the process is extremely important. The physical platform for engagement is also crucial. In this case, FREC centre acted as neutral ground in which the local communities feel comfortable participating. Having veteran creative hubs who have been operating for social impact from the UK involved also proved to be important and the innovative solutions which came out of the process are the good evidence. The UK hubs also pitched in and formed longer-term partnership with Thai hubs that may go beyond this project.

Key Lessons Learned

It should also be noted that early on in the project, the COVID-19 pandemic hit, forcing the project team to change its original timeline and delay in-person activities planned for the Hackathon. However, this forced participating teams to spend more time contemplating their proposals, and though

COVID-19 has not been good for anyone, in some ways, this drawn-out process ended up providing some benefit to the Hackathon, as the participants were able to spend more time tailoring their solutions to the local context based on what they had learned.



Key Lessons Learned

Another important lesson, and one that led to a successful program, was the way in which project proposals were judged. At the end of the Hackathon, teams pitched their ideas to a team of judges, and were graded based on criteria that highlighted the importance of sustainable and long-term development. These criteria included:

Viability: Business model, viable solutions, not a one-off proposal, growth mindset, ability of cross-discipline within the team

Impact: Usefulness of the project for the local area (potentially to the district-wide scale), for the local stakeholders, socio-economic impacts

Sustainability: Long-term lifespan of the project, the possibility to replicate/ expand the project elsewhere

Creativity: Showcase creativity, new way to solve problem, innovative solution

Implementation plan: Ability to come up with a concrete plan to use the price money, roadmap on how the proposal will turn into a real project, how will the local resources be used or integrated into the project?





Project Documentation

Nang Loeng Hackathon

Social Innovation Hackathon 2020 is the British Council's project to attract Thai creative hubs and the results are wonderful ideas, vegetable gardening on wasteland, local currency, and the use of VR for old town redevelopment.

เรื่อง นิตยาภรณ์ ชัยวัฒนวิเศษ, ภาพ ชัยวัฒน์ ทาสุรินทร์

MORE DETAILS >>



MORE DETAILS >>



MORE DETAILS >>





Location:

FREC,
Pom Prap Sattru Phai,
Bangkok



Partners:

NIA, CONT,
Jane Jacobs Thai
Network



Beneficiaries:

General public



Timeframe :

Aug – Oct 2020
and Jul – Oct 2021

USL Lecture Series

USL Pillars

Inclusive
Placemaking
Resilient Urban
Systems
Socio-cultural
Diversity
New Urban Frontier

Areas of Impact

Open Data &
Knowledge Sharing
Urban Classroom

Activities

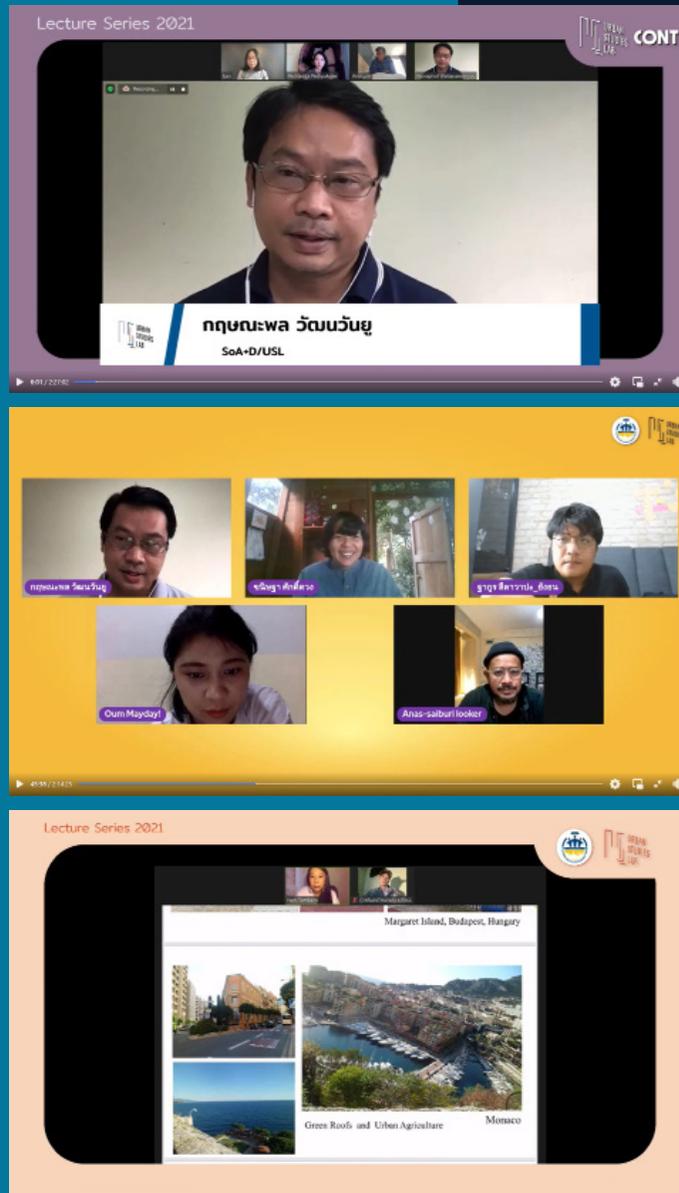
Research &
Analytics
Placemaking
& Partnership
Development

The USL Lecture Series has been held consecutively for two years in 2020 and 2021 via various mediums, including in-person events and online platforms. The goal was to establish a network of urbanists and people who are interested in urban issues, and bring them together to share their knowledge of the city.

In 2020, USL partnered with the National Innovation agency (NIA) and held three events of public lectures and round table discussions under the theme of “Urban Innovations in Time of Crisis.” The topics varied from urban resilience, smart cities/ community digitalization, and public space, and included structured interviews and discussion with the aim of exchanging knowledge and information among urban professionals and researchers around how to respond to ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic. After each public event, we also produced a podcast to share various stories from within the community related to the respective topics.

In 2021, the series was more diverse and had more public involvement. USL partnered with CONT. Reading as the main media partner and launched the series under the theme of Investigating Thai Urbanism. USL took care of story and content, curating, and inviting speakers. We held three talks online, and each was followed by summaries, articles, and videos published through online media channels. The goal of this event was to explore the unique challenges and approaches to urban design and development within the Thai context, and to try and answer the question of: What is Thai Urbanism, and how can we define it together? Included in this series was a side event book club titled “Re-reading The Death and Life of Great American Cities” with Jane Jacobs Thai Network which compared our contemporary Thai Urbanism to the perspective of this seminal text.

compared our contemporary Thai Urbanism to the perspective of this seminal text.



Key Lessons Learned

Lecture series need consistency and frequency. In these topics, there were a lot of people interested in them. However, the need to consolidate knowledge is still crucial to make a holistic point on existing knowledge of urbanism.

During COVID-19, the events were held online, even though it did not meet our goals, we found that there were other agencies who share USL interests. The lecture series was a good opportunity to connect and collaborate. Collaboration makes a work more impactful than doing it alone. Nonetheless, working with many organisations requires close coordination, job order flow and clear job description. The intention is to build off of these lecture series to invite a broader range of people and networks in the future.

TOOLKITS & KNOWLEDGE SHARING



REACH

<p>Investigating Thai Urbanism 2,771 reached 169 engagement</p>	<p>Ways of Water, Ways of Lives 1209 reached 67 engagement</p>	<p>Cities adapted, because the world changes 387 reached, 20 engagement</p>
<p>USL Interview by CONT 434 reached 74 engagement</p>	<p>Death and Life of Great Thailand Cities 654 reached 90 engagement</p>	<p>Hightlight video: Popular Urbanism City-making from Below 271 reached 11 engagement</p>
<p>Facebook Live: Popular Urbanism City-making from Below 2,494 reached 139 engagement</p>	<p>Facebook Live: Re-reading the Death and Life of Great American Cities 2,107 Reached 91 Engagement</p>	<p>Summary post: Death and Life of Great American Cities 720 reached, 94 engagement</p>

PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS



Project Documentation



Spotify

USL Lecture Series EP1 Urban Resilience (1/2)

พ.ค. 2563 • USL Lecture Series

ติดตาม

15:34



Spotify

USL Lecture Series EP2 Urban Resilience (2/2)

มิ.ย. 2563 • USL Lecture Series

ติดตาม

26:10



Spotify

USL Lecture Series EP3 Smart Cities/Community Digitalisat...

ก.ค. 2563 • USL Lecture Series

ติดตาม

37:16



Spotify

USL Lecture Series EP4 มรดกทางสังคมและวัฒนธรรมใน...

ส.ค. 2563 • USL Lecture Series

ติดตาม

24:50

[MORE DETAILS >>](#)



Project Documentation

Facebook posts

Investigating Thai Urbanism

MORE DETAILS >>



USL x CONT. :

Investigating Thai Urbanism

MORE DETAILS >>



Popular Urbanism :

City-making from below

MORE DETAILS >>



(Un)fading ways of waters, (un)fading ways of life.

MORE DETAILS >>



The Death and Life of Great American Cities

MORE DETAILS >>



USL x CONT.: Re-reading The Death and Life of Great American Cities

MORE DETAILS >>



Adapting cities, changing worlds.

MORE DETAILS >>



Civic Urbanism: Re-creating the Urban Public Life

MORE DETAILS >>



Project Documentation

Facebook posts

USL x CONT. : The Death and Life of Great American Cities review

[MORE DETAILS >>](#)



Bangkok, what an (im)perfect life!

[MORE DETAILS >>](#)



USL x CONT. : Civic Urbanism

[MORE DETAILS >>](#)



Good city? How can we have it?

[MORE DETAILS >>](#)



Turning crisis into chances, turning pandemic to new (urban) planning.

[MORE DETAILS >>](#)



Social Urbanism: New-generation City-makers and Future Challenges

[MORE DETAILS >>](#)



Smart City: Future and Challenges of Modern Worlds

[MORE DETAILS >>](#)



USL x CONT. : Reading Cities

[MORE DETAILS >>](#)





Urban Classroom

USL Pillars

Inclusive
Placemaking

Areas of Impact

Urban Interventions
& Policy

Activities

Placemaking
& Partnership
Development



Location:

Lan Luang Road,
Pom Prap Sattru Phai,
Bangkok



Partners:

USL, Pom Prap Sattru Phai
District Office



Beneficiaries:

Pom Prap Sattru Phai
District, Nang Loeng
Community



Timeframe:

Summer Break 2018
and Summer Break
2019

The Nang Loeng Community is one of the oldest communities in Bangkok, bordering Rattanakosin Island, and was historically one of the major entertainment quarters of the city. As a result, the area contains many of the richest cultural assets in the city. Based on the Pom Prap Sattru Phai District plan, the District aims to strengthen the characteristics of 10 areas within the district. One of the areas is Lan Luang Road, which is part of the Nang Loeng Community, connecting the historical and new town area. Concurrently, there is a new MRT subway station planned for Lan Luang Road, causing many concerns for Nang Loeng Community members about what changes may come. Therefore, this urban design studio project aimed to work with local community members along Lan Luang Road to search for potential programs that suit and assist the community to be part of the future urban development in the area.

The main study focused on defining the identity of Lan Luang Road and proposing a design solution to respond to old cultures that may exist with the new opportunities and threats that will come to the area. Secondly, the studio searched for the programs and architectural design that would suit both old and new conditions. The students were required to propose their programs and sites based on the research from the Lan Luang Road identity.

With the aim of proposing architectural solutions based on understanding of the urban fabric, this Urban Classroom was organized through an architectural studio approach. There were nine 4th-year architecture students who participated in the studio, and the class provided the analytical process from physical and user perspectives on Lan Luang Road in order to propose the appropriate programs, urban spaces and new characteristics for the unique communities along the road.

Due to Lan Luang being a long road, the study was divided into three blocks, with the students focusing on one block each. Each group shared the resulting data and analysis amongst the teams, and the class provided external reviewers to comment and suggest the process of the data collection, analysis and synthesis. According to the results, the students proposed their own approach and architectural solutions.

For the final projects, the class collaborated with FREC, Promprap District, and Nang Loeng Community to establish an exhibition to present and explain the ideas to the invited guests and open for the public to join and share their ideas.

Key Lessons Learned



The lessons from this Urban Classroom can be viewed into three points of views: students, teachers, and partners. From the students' points of view, they learned a great deal in many aspects. At the urban level, the student learned the impact of the urban data collection towards their design decisions. Most importantly, they found that their proposed designs had touched and reflected more in the community's needs, surprising many as they had rarely had chances to explore and do deep research with the community. It also increased their empathy towards local and urban social problems in the city. At the architectural level, the proposed programs were derived from the social enterprise perspective and business model canvas, which was a new approach for the architecture students to explore.

The teacher's perspectives are more the process of study. Normally, the architectural studio topic is set based on a theoretical approach to testify the ideas. It is rarely strongly related to social and economic dimensions. The collaboration between partners also elevated the learning level of the studio and approach. The students enjoyed and engaged more into the topic and community.

Key Lessons Learned

From the partner's point of view, the design proposals seemed to inspire the community and the District Office to think of possibilities for developing the area. Even though these might not be possible now, the projects can be expanded for future discussion and future development of the area.

The Urban Classroom offered a great opportunity for the students to go deep in exploring the urban issues in the area and view them as built environment creators to search for various design possibilities. This was also a good exercise for them to engage themselves in the current situation and be key changers for the city they are living in.

PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

7
CLASSES



Exhibition
of designs
at Nang Loeng
community.

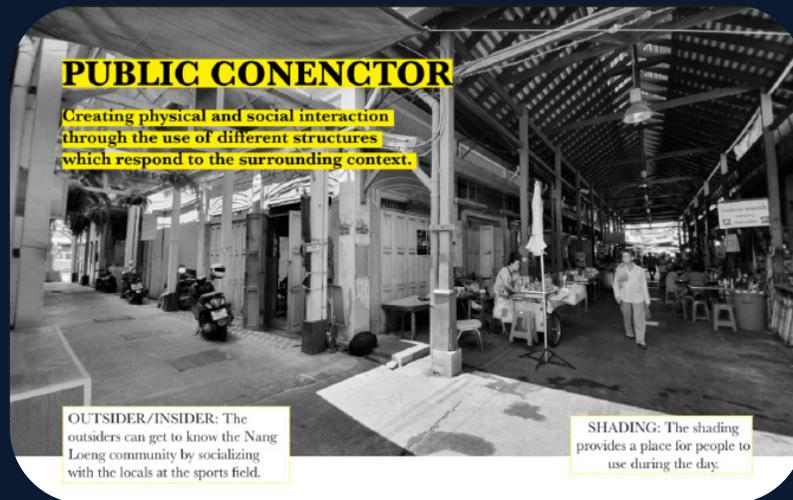
100
STUDENTS

**EDUCATION
& LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT**

**REAL WORLD
IMPACTS**

After going on for
fieldworks, the students led
their projects,
choosing their own
sites and designs.

Project Documentation



Xin jia 新家
Elderly community center

The market had to relocate to the new site due to the city's expansion plan. The new site was located in a residential area, which was not suitable for a market. The project aimed to create a new market structure that could accommodate the market's needs while also providing a public connector for the community.

Location: [Map showing the site location in Bangkok, Thailand]

Background of the site: [Diagram showing the site's context and surrounding areas]

Problem of the site: [Diagram showing the site's challenges and constraints]

Site plan: [Detailed architectural site plan showing building footprints, courtyards, and circulation paths]

Program: [List of program elements including market stalls, seating, and public spaces]

DESIGN PROCESS: [Flowchart of the design process from concept to realization]

Section: [Architectural section drawing showing the building's vertical structure and shading elements]

Smart City Handbook: Thailand

คู่มือเมืองอัจฉริยะประเทศไทย



Location:

Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen,
Pattaya, Bangkok



Partners:

British Embassy Bangkok,
UK Foreign, Commonwealth
and Development Office
(FCDO), UK Department for
International Trade (DIT),
Digital Economy
Promotion Agency (depa)



Beneficiaries:

Cities of Chiang Mai, Khon
Kaen, Pattaya, and stake-
holders within the broader
Thailand and UK smart city
industry.



Timeframe:

Feb 2020 - May 2021

Smart City Handbook: Thailand & UK - Thailand Smart City Workshops

USL Pillars

Inclusive
Placemaking
Resilient Urban
Systems
Socio-cultural
Diversity

Areas of Impact

Urban Interventions
& Policy

Activities

Research & Analytics
Placemaking & Partnership
Development
Tools & Platform Development
Educational & Leadership
Development

Thailand is in the midst of rapid urbanisation, and in recent years government stakeholders have heralded the “smart city” as a solution to the many urban challenges within the country. However, both for those working in Thailand, as well as potential partners and investors outside of it, the opportunities to engage within the smart city industry, and more importantly how it will benefit those living in Thai cities, remained unclear.

In early 2020, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), commissioned USL to develop a handbook to help demystify the smart city sector in Thailand, and to highlight key challenges and opportunities in the country, as well as the wide range of stakeholders needed to bring about positive change through the smart city movement.

USL led a research effort that involved consultation and in-depth interviews with members from across all of Thai society, including stakeholders from both national and local governments, private organisations, and the research community, and developed a bi-lingual handbook to act as a primer for anyone interested in getting involved in the smart city sector of Thailand. In addition to giving an overview of the state of smart cities

in the country, USL detailed ongoing and potential opportunities for investment and collaboration within Bangkok and throughout the country, and provided insights into how foreign stakeholders from the UK could forge partnerships with Thai counterparts.

Following the successful launch of the handbook, the British Embassy Bangkok commissioned USL to facilitate three UK-Thailand Smart City Workshops during the months of December 2020 through March 2021. The workshops, conducted in the cities of Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, and Pattaya, directly built off the Smart City Handbook: Thailand, and helped set the agenda for the UK-Thailand Tech Export Academy Virtual Mission, which was held on May 10-14, 2021, in which 30 British smart city companies met with Thai counterparts to discuss potential partnerships.

The workshops brought together more than 150 key actors from the public, private and academic sectors of smart city related fields to examine key problems, draw up potential solutions and further explore opportunities for cooperation between the UK and the three cities and provinces.



Key Lessons Learned

Smart city, while a term growing in popularity and usage, still lacks a clear definition and understanding, both internationally and within Thailand. In order to successfully develop the “smart cities” of the future, we must bring together stakeholders from sectors not traditionally involved in the process of urban planning and development. To do that, we must have a common understanding of what we are working towards.

Fundamentally, this means two things. First, even though smart city is a neat term that draws a lot of interest, what “smart city” means and how it is implemented will be different in each and every city or community. A sound process of forging a vision, setting clear goals, and building partnerships for implementation, the core of good urban planning and design, are still necessary for any successful smart city development.

Key Lessons Learned

Secondly, most people associate smart cities with advanced technology. While these technologies are important tools that can help us scale positive outcomes in a way we are still only beginning to understand, technology cannot be the first step in building a smart city. We must move away from this notion and first identify and focus on citizen needs before discussing what technologies may help to address them.

These two lessons are core to USL's understanding and approach to smart city development, and we hope to continue to build local capacity to engage with the smart city process throughout the coming years.





Project Documentation



[MORE DETAILS >>](#) 



[MORE DETAILS >>](#) 



[MORE DETAILS >>](#) 



COVID Relief Bangkok

USL Pillars

Resilient Urban Systems
New Urban Frontier

Areas of Impact

Urban Interventions & Policy
Open Data & Knowledge Sharing

Activities

Research & Analytics
Tools & Platform Development



Location:

Bangkok



Partners:

SATI Foundation, SOS, Ford Fund, Social Giver, Public Health Centers and Local Health volunteers, Bangkok 1899, RISE Impact, CODI, Brandthink



Beneficiaries:

vulnerable households in Bangkok area



Timeframe:

Mar 2020 - present

In the year 2020, the COVID Relief Bangkok (CRB) operation launched to remedy afflicted people in the Bangkok area. As a founding partner of CRB, the USL research team gathered available census data to perform urban analytics that helped prioritise the urban areas with the households most vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19. The assessment enabled the identification of target areas at the sub-district level, and the initiative aims to help vulnerable communities in the Bangkok and BMR area through urban analytics, collaboration with public health centres, and crowdfunding platforms. To date, we have raised approximately 4 million Thai baht (150,000 USD) and delivered relief packages to more than 30,000 households, which accounts for roughly 30% of the vulnerable households in Bangkok (from NSO, 2015).

Through direct partnership with local stakeholders, it allowed us to learn and keep transforming the operation to match with the real need. As a result, following initial relief efforts, we were able to continue onto 2nd and 3rd phases, which includes:

- 1) Training for mental health first aid for public health volunteers
- 2) A community enterprise bootcamp, in partnership with Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), with a focus on food business to assist local communities to mitigate and recover from the pandemic.



Key Lessons Learned

We believe that through working with the local entities, which in this case included the public health center and public health volunteer network, we showed an ability to augment the relief effort by adding real time, live data. If we can capitalize on the strong local institutions and networks to further develop the COVID relief effort, we can develop a social service that will truly match the most vulnerable as well as provide the adequate and relevant support in the most efficient way. The relief operation also needs to be reflexive and evolving as we suggested in the urban living lab model to measure the impact and adapt to the local context and likewise unforeseen circumstances.

Local sentinel

Gaps in data

Community resilience

Key Lessons Learned

Prevention and remedies for vulnerable households during emergencies and after crisis are urgent issues for the government, the private sector, and social enterprises. However, defining a rescue structure without a clear identification of specific target groups will lead to operational failure. Due to socio-economic differences,

providing public access to remedies in different areas requires different approaches, especially in Bangkok. There are various demographics, household structures, needs, income, occupation, statistical data, physical data, social data, and

economic data essential to plan remedial action and determine appropriate approaches for afflicted people in different neighbourhoods.

We continue collecting, systematising, and analysing on-the-ground and dynamic above-mentioned data with local health volunteers throughout Bangkok and are in the process of developing this into a health and community well-being census where relevant vulnerable population data would be timely updated to support future policy development and relief efforts.

Methods & Frameworks

THEORIES OR FRAMEWORKS APPLIED

The research team assessed seven levels of risk areas based on socio-economic factors as follows: The proportion of low-income people per area, the proportion of elderly per area, the number of elderly, the number of low-income people, squatter congestion, and the inequality coefficient (Gini Index) are utilised by hierarchical analysis (Analytic Hierarchy Process: AHP).

Social network analysis was utilized to identify the key local stakeholders and focal points for the relief operation in the sub-district area.

POTENTIAL USL FRAMEWORK

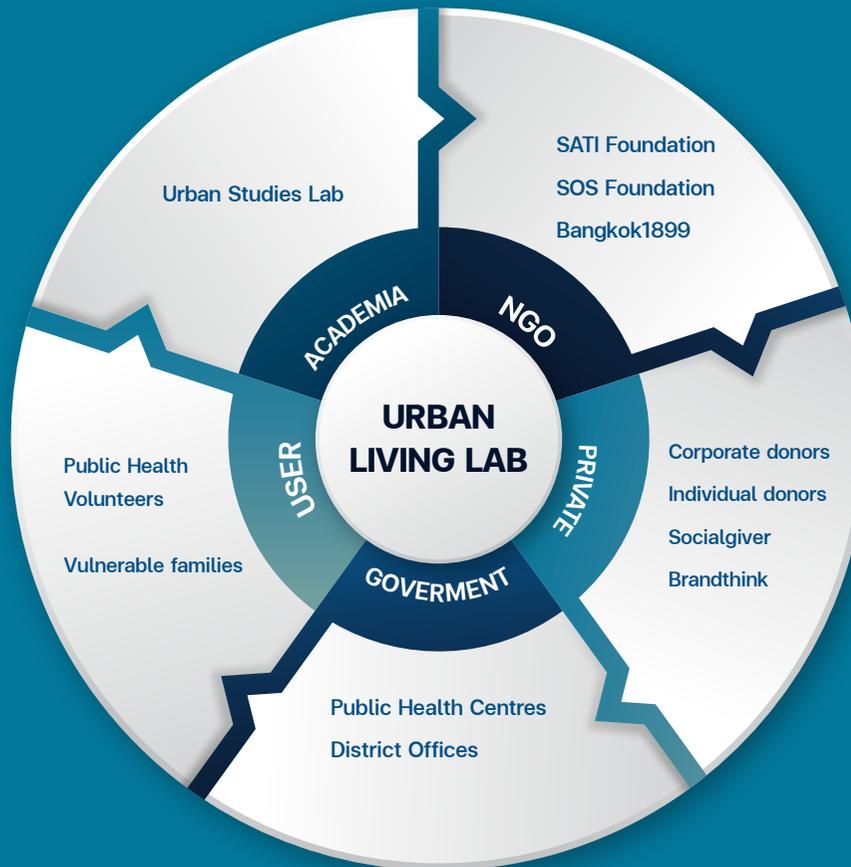
CRB showed how the ULL model can be utilized to create positive outcomes in the city. Every partner brings with them specific expertise to the table. Each contributes to the growing ecosystem of this initiative by offering critical insight and knowledge. This empowers us to be confident that our data-driven plans are bolstered by real-world perceptions and keeps us on the right track. The model provides everyone with a universal and systematic approach that is easy to plug-in and get to action. Scalability and replication becomes more straightforward.

USEFUL SKILLS

During risk management, in this case for the management in time of a pandemic crisis, it is extremely important to be flexible and operate in an optimal process. The initiative is also ever growing, and coordination between different partners is necessary for the success of the project.

One of the biggest advantages of the ULL model is its flexibility, which caters to our need for quick, real-time adaptations. The urban setting is dynamic and that is even more amplified in times of crises and uncertainty, such as the current pandemic. We must be ready to learn, grow, and pivot with promptness to adjust to changes within the many unique local environments. For example, when we completed a cycle of supply distribution, the user provided us with feedback and live data. Our team then reprocessed new information, reflected, and readjusted operation processes into a more fitting and robust system.

Methods & Frameworks



The model helps define roles and responsibilities for each group:

Academia: urban analytics, strategic planning, facilitation and engagement with the government organisations and local communities

NGO: practical know-how, expertise in the supply logistics, insights to the needs of the vulnerable groups, networks with groups for volunteers

Private: crowdfunding, monetary & in-kind support, raising public awareness

Government: intermediary to the community, local-level data and knowledge, support for space and staff

User (service recipient): local connections, real demands, up-to-date data

POLICY GUIDELINES

BENEFITS OF POLICY

The way forward is to modernize and restructure the new system for the healthcare and wellbeing census at the household level with the usage of the dynamic data that public health centres and local health volunteers have been collecting. This will be the nexus of public policy development and community resilience that goes beyond one-side-fit-all solution.

After a year of operation, we have learned that there are high potential local networks and social capital in Bangkok, however, there must be an optimal engagement process and public policy which supports them. In times of crisis, testing, implementing, and pivoting are all important and ULL model provides the right structure and ever-transforming ecosystem that empower the relief operation to do so.

ADOPTED POLICY

It will be a collaborative effort between USL, the public health center and the local communities in the Pomprap Sattru Phai area.

1 MUNICIPAL POLICIES

Crowdsourcing and crowdfunding are very powerful, but we need the appropriate system to help navigate the resource to the most vulnerable or the most in-need recipients, in our case the urban analytics which used the mixture of secondary data (top-down) from the censuses and dynamic data (bottom-up) from the local level is the key to success. This is particularly true in the country which still has the limitation of dataset, scattered city open data that cannot be interpreted for locational data and geodemography.

PARTNERSHIPS & ACTIONS



Actions from partnerships

Crowdfunding and crowdsourcing. Boot camp. As the most important partner and user of the relief operations, public health centre officers and local health volunteers together form a structured healthcare support network that reaches deep into communities throughout Bangkok. Their services are even more imperative right now at the fringes of city and society, where most vulnerable communities are located. Without them, CRB would not have been able to distribute supplies to where they are truly needed. They have been the ones helping us comprehend and properly engage locals to prevent any community mismatch for relief support.

After the first phase in 2020, with the robust local data gathering unit and strong local network connection, CRB moved into the next phase after relief supply distribution, which focuses on strengthening the safety net. This includes empowering the public health centres and local health volunteers. Their resources are currently stretched, and they need us as much as we need them. Beyond short-term goals, they need assistance in setting and achieving longer term ones, such as becoming more crisis resilient.

COVID Relief Bangkok is a sustained operation that continued well into 2021.

PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

2

INTERVENTIONS

MORE THAN
50,000 households

150,000

BENEFICIARIES

ONGOING INTERVENTION

The bootcamp syllabus is being transformed into CODI training program.



1

CURRICULUM DEVELOPED

3

TRAININGS

OUTCOMES

Beyond health impacts, vulnerable households are those most likely to sustain economic blows due their inability to work during lockdowns. CRB has been implementing a training program for public health volunteers to prepare them to provide support on community mental health and wellbeing issues, while we also implemented a program of community enterprise bootcamp with Community Organization Development Institute's (CODI) that focuses on food business.

EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



After a year of operation, we have learned that there are high potential local networks and social capital in Bangkok, however, there must be an optimal engagement process and public policy which supports them. In times of crisis, testing, implementing, and pivoting are all important and ULL model provides the right structure and ever-transforming ecosystem that empower the relief operation to do so.

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Project Documentation



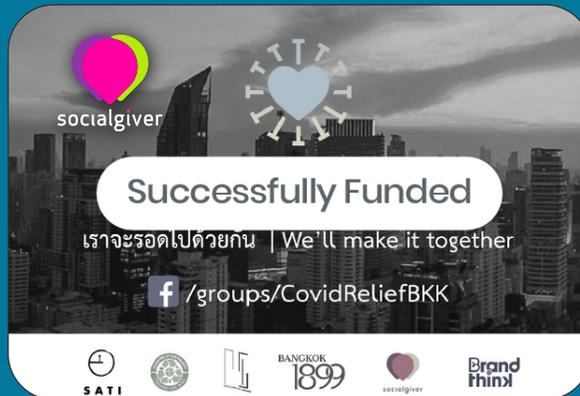
MORE DETAILS >>



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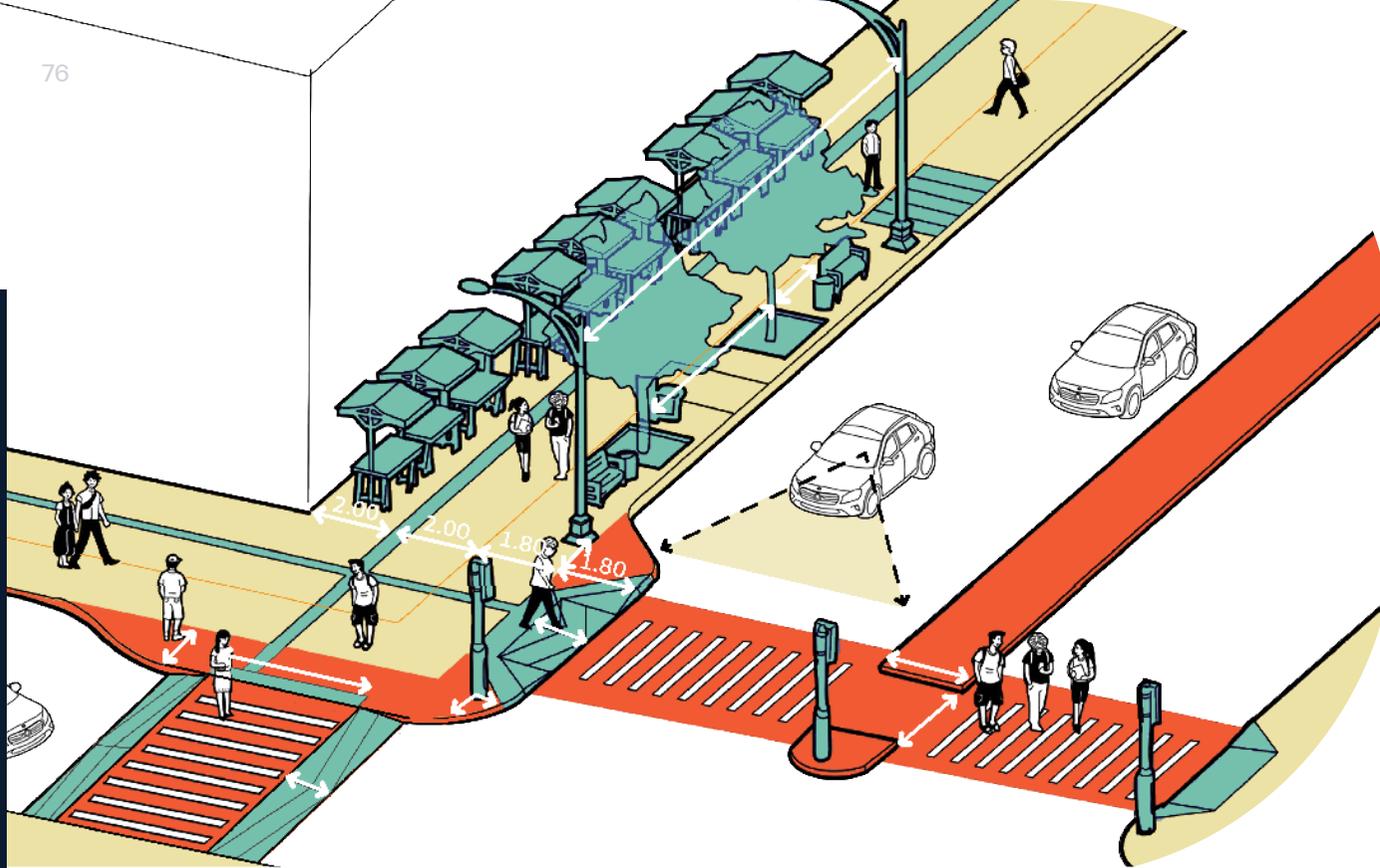
MORE DETAILS >>



**STRATEGIC COVID-19
RELIEF OPERATION
IN BANGKOK**

MORE DETAILS >>





Bangkapi

Universal Sidewalk Design Handbook

USL Pillars

Socio-cultural
diversity

Areas of Impact

Urban Interventions &
Policy
Open Data &
Knowledge Sharing

Activities

Research &
Analytics
Tools &
Platform
Development



Location:

Bangkapi District,
Bangkok



Partners:

UDDI, NIDA



Beneficiaries:

Bangkapi commuters



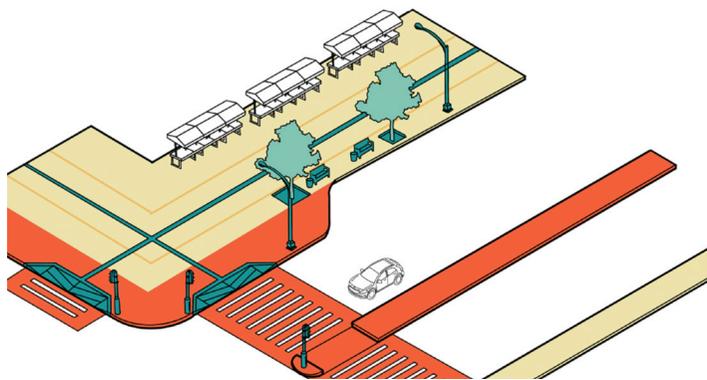
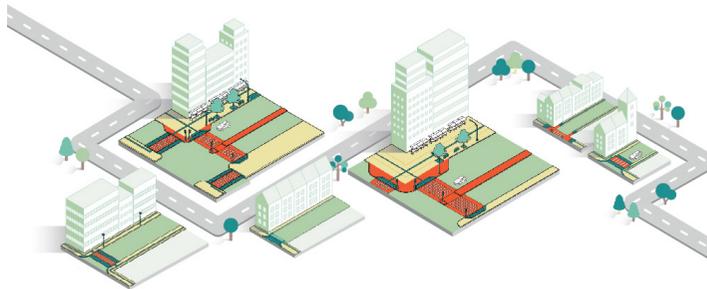
Timeframe:

Jun - Aug 2021

The National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) was undertaking a project related to Smart City together with the Urban Design & Development International (UDDI) Thammasat University program in the Bangkapi, Bangkok area. In this project, USL joined NIDA to research on universal design for sidewalks in the area. This project is connected to Bangkapi Smart City, to connect skywalks to railroads and pavements, and the product of this project is the guidelines for designing pavement in the unique Bangkapi area for more safety and walkability. USL supported research with a participatory process on designing sidewalks and consolidated diverse sidewalks' standards. Reviewing BMA's and other countries' standards, USL found that there was no single consolidated standard. Following that, the design guideline of Bangkapi was to suggest that this local and participatory process should be done in other areas as well in order to fit each place's unique challenges and environments.

The research process included: (1) research on basic data (2) reviewing theories e.g. Transit-oriented Development (ToD) and sidewalk for all (3) reviewing sidewalk standards by BMA and other countries (4) creating prototypes (5) engaging with stakeholders (disabled people, officials, informal labour). After the stakeholders' engagement, the results were used to discuss, share data, and find reasonable solutions. The data from guidelines would be used by BMA and NIDA later.

The goal of this project was to find guidelines to develop the Bangkapi area with its specific landscape and physical differences from other areas. The Bangkapi area was grown from market communities where the roads came later. Currently, the sidewalk is very narrow with the trading area surpassing it and with heavy traffic jams. Also, the sidewalk near the canal and port was not planned to be connected with other transportation. This guideline attempts to ensure accessibility for everyone. So, in the workshop with stakeholders, USL tried to integrate this guideline with specific needs of each user even though it was aware that they were not the majority.



Key Lessons Learned

New knowledge and processes. It was found that there were options other than conducting large scale standards like Thailand or Bangkok. Each area and each district should have its own processes and standards since each area is different and in need of detailed and specific design e.g. likelihood to be flooded.





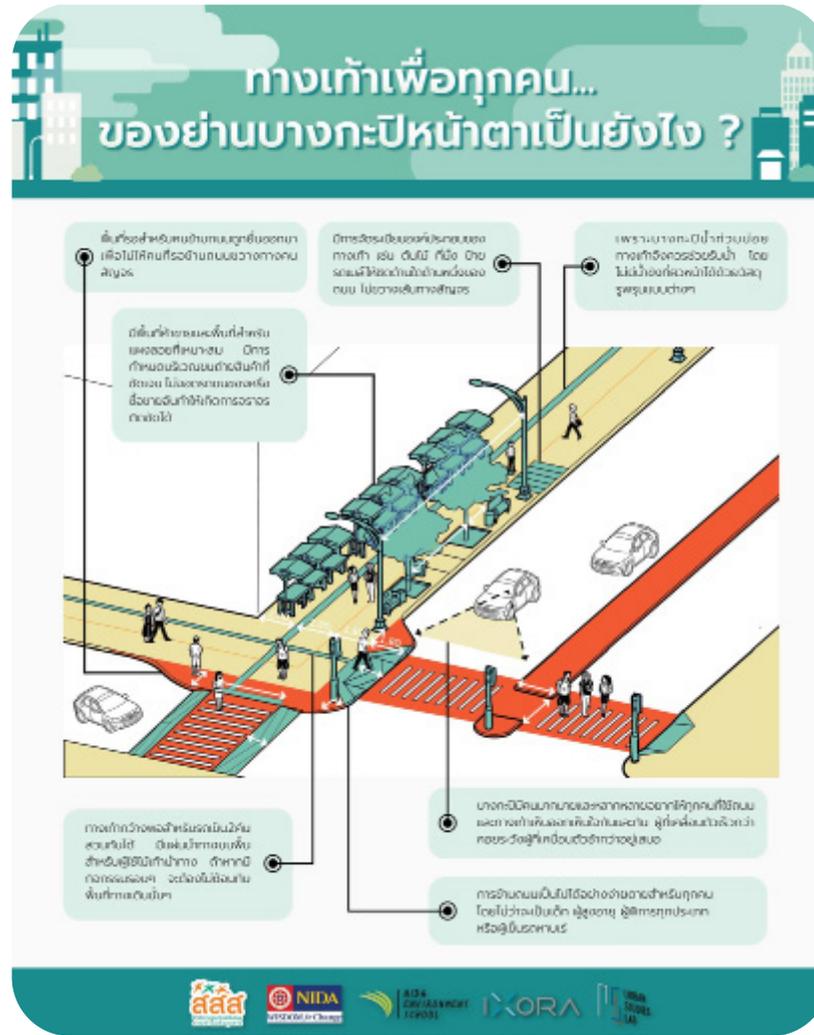
Project Documentation



MORE DETAILS >> 



MORE DETAILS >> 



MORE DETAILS >> 



Location:

Nang Loeng,
Pom Prap Sattru Phai,
Bangkok



Partners:

Mamuang Cafe,
Mamuang Shop,
Nangloeng Shophouse,
Na Cafe, The Embassy,
DTF, Nam Heng Li, The
Umber Housepresso,
Weave Artisan Society,
Charoenphan Shop



Beneficiaries:

Mamuang Cafe,
Mamuang Shop,
Nangloeng Shophouse,
Na Cafe, The Embassy,
DTF, Nam Heng Li, The
Umber Housepresso,
Weave Artisan Society,
Charoenphan Shop



Timeframe:

Sep - Dec 2021

Gift Pack Nang Loeng in the Bag

USL Pillars	Areas of Impact	Activities
Inclusive Placemaking Resilient Urban System	Urban Interventions & Policy	Placemaking & Partnership Development

Nang Loeng in the Bag was initiated by USL as a part of Community Mitigation in order to assist people with food sourced careers in the Nang Loeng area under the COVID-19 outbreak. This time, it created a network of local shops and cafes in Nang Loeng communities by connecting their products and publicising, in order to present another Nang Loeng neighbourhood identity to the public and strengthen community ties.

The gift packs invite shops and local cafes to join and pool their products to sell them together to the general public. In September 2021, there were three sets of Nang Loeng delicacies, ranging from long time well-known pandan cream to emerging “new” generation of cafes and shops with crispy croissants, cookies, crispy rice, butter, chilli paste, and coffee. Each shop comes with unique stories to retell about Nang Loeng. In December, the project invited another shop, the Umber Housepresso, to join its network for another round of gift packs for the Christmas and New Year holiday. This project aims to connect local shops together and create networks for neighbourhood identity with paths to other collaborative opportunities. USL acts as a facilitator and front-end service to shops and customers.

Key Lessons Learned

Working with many shops at once entails complexity as each place has a different schedule, sometimes that involves shop renovation or more personal issues, and also changing nature of products and customers. As such, finding a balance and common timeline in project management can be difficult.





Project Documentation



MORE DETAILS >>



MORE DETAILS >>



NANGLOENG IN THE BAG

pre order

2-10 Sep 2021

Hot and Sweet 250 ฿

- น้าพรหมฯ (DTF)
- ครัวซองตบเนย (Embassy)
- สิวยา (หม่าเฮงฉี)

Nangloeng 280 ฿ tea time

- กุ้งฝอยย่าง (Mamuang cafe)
- เมยฮอจกซอมีนี่ฟือ (Nangloeng shophouse)
- สิวยา (หม่าเฮงฉี)

Chocolates 300 ฿ Peanut Butter

- Chocolate Puffed Rice & Nut Clusters (Embassy)
- Peanut Butter (Nangloeng shophouse)
- สิวยา (หม่าเฮงฉี)



MORE DETAILS >>



MORE DETAILS >>



MORE DETAILS >>





Location:
Pom Prap Sattru Phai,
Bangkok



Partners:
FREC Bangkok,
SOS Foundation, Love
Wildlife Foundation,
Precious Plastic Bangkok,
BCST, 15 shops in
surrounding communities



Beneficiaries:
125 students from Satri
Julanak School, Wat
Sommant School, Bamrung
Islam School and
15 shops in surrounding
communities



Timeframe:
16-18 Nov 2020

Education Kit Play & Learn Box

USL Pillars

Inclusive
Placemaking
Resilient Urban
Systems

Areas of Impact

Urban Interventions &
Policy

Urban Classroom

Activities

Placemaking
& Partnership
Development

Education &
Leadership
Development

During lockdown, students have to study online. Previously, FREC Bangkok used to have After School activities with school children in surrounding communities. When they had online education, those activities had to stop. Hence, this project was born to give primary school children side activities with joy and fun to be away from screens. The activities were developed by FREC stewards.

They included,

- 1) a nature journal for children to explore urban wild life, etc
- 2) a compost kit for children to make compost from food at home.
- 3) recycling manual which children can use for their daily life plastic.
USL created two activities, one with cookie decoration and another was mapping places in surrounding communities as perceived by children e.g. which place they fear the most, most often go with friends and families, or have a greenest space.

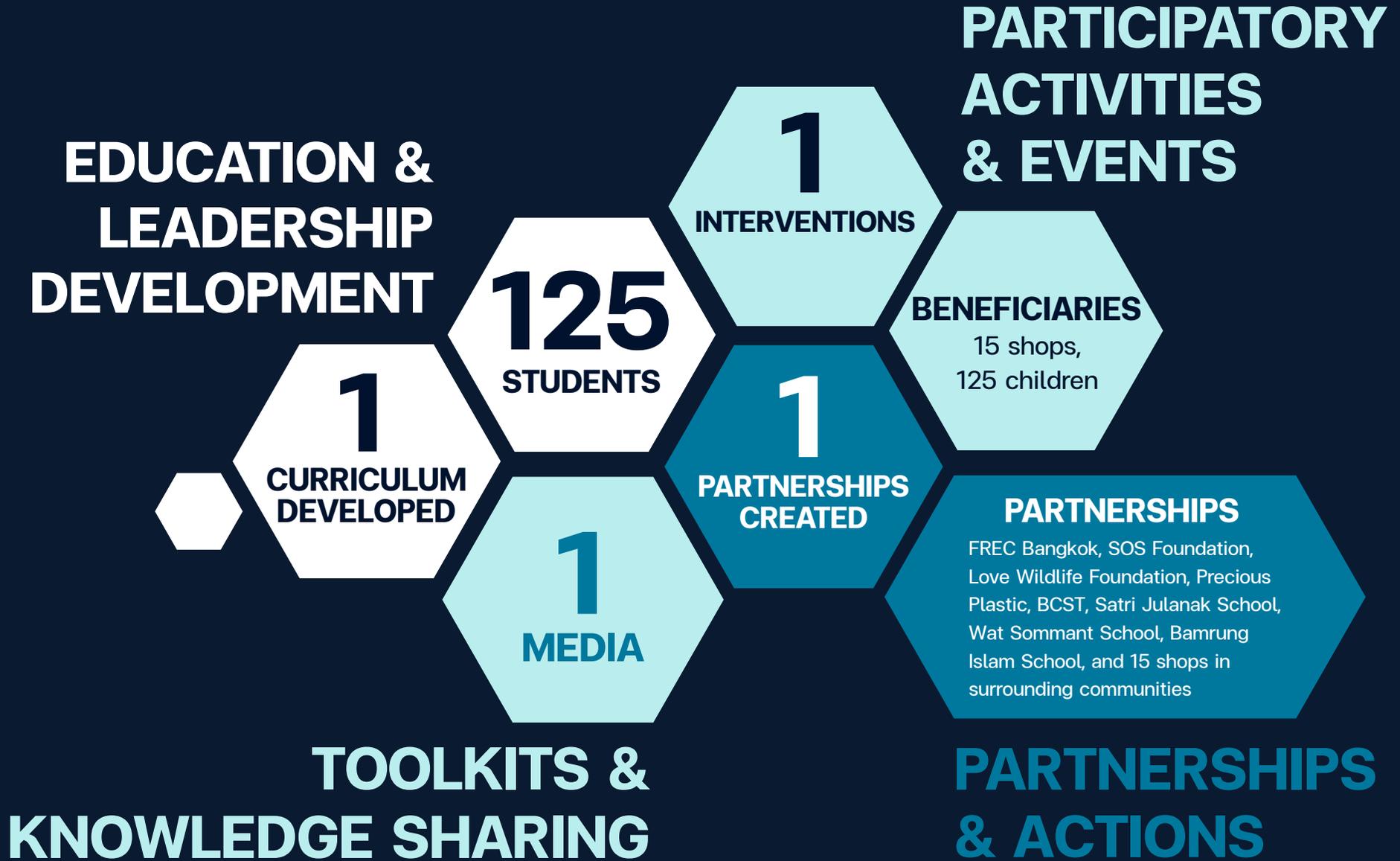
After children finished half of the activities, they could get a reward of 250 baht to use in 15 local shops ranging from Chakkrapatipong area to Wat Sommanat and to Mahanak Canal. These shops were included in the maps so children could know their local shops in communities better and shops had the rewards to boost their business during a pandemic which could be for Community Mitigation.



Key Lessons Learned

When the education kits were delivered to children, schools were not open yet. Therefore, the team could not communicate directly to children and had some misunderstandings over how to do certain activities and how to deliver the work. If direct communication to children could happen, that would be better for systematic results. Also, COVID-19 also played significant roles as some schools reopened and had to close again because some staff caught COVID-19 and that could change or delay the schedule. As such, to be flexible and adjustable to schools, children's and shops' needs were very important.





Project Documentation



MORE DETAILS >> 

Education Kit กิจกรรม กล่อง-เรียน-เล่น

เพื่อเสริมสร้างการเรียนรู้ผ่านกิจกรรม และส่งเสริมให้เด็ก ๆ ในพื้นที่ได้มีส่วนร่วมในชุมชนของตนเอง

📍 เขตป้อมปราบศัตรูพ่าย 📅 ตุลาคม - ธันวาคม 2564

ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม 125 คน

👥 **PARTNERS**
 FREC Bangkok, Urban Studies Lab, SOS Foundation, Love Wildlife Foundation, Precious Plastic Bangkok, BCST, และพันธมิตรต่าง ๆ ทั่วประเทศ

📖 **กิจกรรม**
 โดยทาง FREC Stewards ได้ร่วมกับอาสาสมัคร 5 ทั่วประเทศ เพื่อเสริมสร้างทักษะและความรู้ ทัศนคติ และนำไปใช้ในการเรียนรู้ชุมชนของตนเอง

- สอนทำปุ๋ยหมัก** - ปลูกผักสำหรับทำสวนที่บ้าน จาก SOS Foundation
- ปลูกต้นกล้า** - ปลูกต้นกล้าผักสวนครัว
- สมุดบันทึกชุมชนภาคี** - ฝึกทักษะช่างสังเกตและชุมชน จาก Love Wildlife หรือ BCST
- เสริมสร้างจินตนาการ** - ผ่านการทำตุ๊กตา DIY จาก Urban Studies Lab
- สมุดชุมชนออนไลน์** - ฝึกทักษะการเขียนและใช้คอมพิวเตอร์ จาก Precious Plastic Bangkok
- ฝึกเขียนแผนที่และสำรวจความรู้อันหลากหลาย** - ฝึกทักษะการเขียนแผนที่และสำรวจความรู้อันหลากหลาย จาก Urban Studies Lab หรือ Love Wildlife

📅 **ระยะเวลา** 10 วัน - 1 เดือน
 - 10 วัน: สำหรับนักเรียนชั้นประถมศึกษา 15 ปี
 - 1 เดือน: สำหรับนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาตอนต้น

📌 **BCST** | **PRECIOUS PLASTIC** | **LOVE WILDLIFE**

MORE DETAILS >> 



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM 2021

ที่ Urban Studies Lab



Internship

USL Pillars

Resilient Urban Systems

Areas of Impact

Open Data & Knowledge Sharing
Urban Classroom

Activities

Research & Analytics
Education & Leadership Development



Location:

Urban Studies Lab,
FREC,
Pom Prap Sattru Phai,
Bangkok



Beneficiaries:

Interns,
University students



Timeframe:

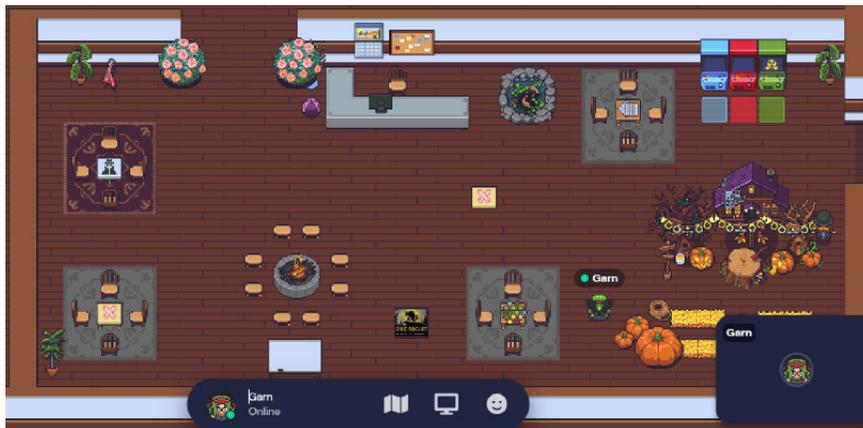
Summer Break
2019 - 2021

Since USL's founding, it has welcomed three rounds of internships, all during the traditional university summer break. As an urban studies lab that aims to be an education center which prioritizes knowledge exchange and co-learning, we invite students to collaborate on existing or new research and projects. USL welcomes interns from any field, with no qualifications required other than an interest in USL's area of expertise and in making an impact in their city.

Each successful candidate receives a paid internship and is assigned a supervisor to advise from the USL team. During internships, interns are tasked with developing their own research projects that compliment existing USL projects. Past project topics include migration, urban gardening, secret delicacies of Nang Loeng, participatory budgeting, and housing, amongst others.

USL's role is to provide guidance and introduce interns to a professional research environment via literature review, desk research, content creation, and fieldwork. The activities aim to guide interns through the real-world research process and explore its practicality. With USL's stewardship to FREC, interns are also able to learn from the diversity of our partners within the FREC organization.

Key Lessons Learned

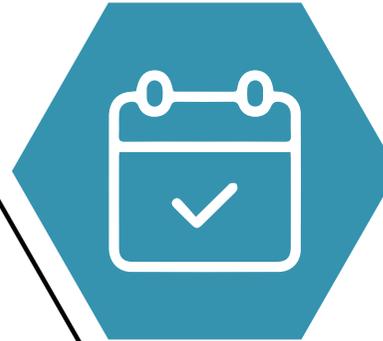


Having a diversity of interns has made the internship program special, especially as it encourages the exchange of ideas between generations. The collective of interns, and what they learned together, were also powerful as they drove each other to know more in a field, as well as about themselves. We believe the potential of each intern is elevated by having a collaborative project.

When COVID-19 first hit, the internships were not well prepared for the changing circumstances. As such, that year, it was not as smooth as preferred. However, as the team learned and adapted to online collaboration for the 2021 internship, including weekly check-ins and assigned supervisors, the program improved dramatically. Still, there are gaps to be filled, and we hope to have more work across units in the years to come.

TOOLKITS

& KNOWLEDGE SHARING



MEDIA
OUTPUTS

4
REPORT

1
promoted
to be the PB pilot
for BMA (SED)
in Pomprap district

12
STUDENTS

EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The interns were encouraged to develop their own projects based on their interests. That resulted in various projects, including publishing contents on Nang Loeng delicacies, etc. Even during lock-down and COVID-19, some interns managed to interview people in the Nang Loeng Community which paved the way for future projects.

Project Documentation



MORE DETAILS >> 



OUR PARTNERS



TESTIMONIALS

“The urban analytics helped us focus and prioritise, with data we can be transparent with the crowdfunding program too.”

Sakson Ruaypirom
SATI Foundation
COVID Relief Bangkok

“Thank you for coming to aid areas as peripheral as ours, we work on the frontline here. We are tackling the COVID situation every day and need all the help we can get.”

A healthcare worker
COVID Relief Bangkok

“Working with USL was smooth because USL gave freedom in working, so their partners could make decisions readily and update things to be decided together periodically.

The work led us to know more of the community networks in Bangkok, know more partners, which resulted in wider impact with low income groups in the city.

I would recommend USL as I saw their determination for social impact and content-and-impact-oriented workstyle. In my experience, USL is one of organisations that work with a new age, clear, concise, and adaptive.”

Peewara Jitsukummongkol
Project manager, RISE Impact
Community Bootcamp phase 1, 2020
COVID Relief Bangkok

TESTIMONIALS

“This project made children knew about our shop more. Before this, they never walked inside this alley but they saw our shop in the map and walked here. So now, we have new customers.”

**Marisa, an ice cream shop owner from Mahanak Masjid
Education Kit: Play & Learn Box**

“Many people come and buy stuff, especially eggs. They were poor family. So this project helped them a lot.”

**Sombat, a grocery shop owner from Mahanak Masjid
Education Kit: Play & Learn Box**

Our team was taken aback by this comment, as we had assumed that the public health centre was getting enough support from the municipality and central government. It turned out that we had just met with an under-resourced health centre outpost. And there are many more that are probably in the same state.

THANK YOU



This impact report has provided a snapshot of the work USL has done since its founding. This work is far from done. Not only are a number of the projects highlighted in this report ongoing, but others have acted as springboards towards other initiatives that we hope will build on the impacts already achieved.



As a young organization, we are committed to the continuous improvement we know is necessary if we are to achieve our goals and mission. In 2022, we look forward to refocusing our efforts and further developing our ability to be a strong partner and voice for change in our cities. Strategically, we aim to establish our living lab model as a more robust platform for engagement and collaboration by seeking formal partnerships across all sectors of society. In addition, we hope to broaden our impact by more effectively sharing the knowledge and lessons we learn along the way, and becoming a trusted resource center for others involved in urban development.



Thank you to all of the individuals and partners that have supported and collaborated with USL to date. We look forward to continuing to work with existing partners, as well as forming new partnerships and collaborations in Thailand and the region to work towards more inclusive and sustainable cities.



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