



# PROMOTING LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM





## PROMOTING LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM 3

Thailand's aspirations for a learning society and the accompanying learning reforms strive towards the creation of a culture of learning across Thai learners and knowledge seekers of all ages. The realisation of this vision requires the development of greater access to non-formal and informal educational opportunities as well as more flexible validation and promotion of learning opportunities and outcomes beyond the traditional boundaries of the classroom.

The promotion and development of non-formal and informal education forms the cornerstone of Ministry of Education efforts to extend learning beyond the classroom. In recent years, this has been complemented by public, non-profit and private sector funded initiatives to develop knowledge and learning Centres. In addition, campaigns have been introduced to promote learning through the arts, world of business, science, sport and an understanding of Thai culture, language and heritage.

Thailand's learning society aspirations are increasingly visible and accessible to the general population as schools and universities along with the expanding public spaces for knowledge and learning have attracted learners of all ages. These developments have served to promote, complement and reinforce learning beyond the classroom.



## Quick Facts

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The National Science Museum is Thailand's most modern science museum and was built at a cost of 1.4 billion baht in the year 2000 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the birth of H.M. Queen Sirikit.</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ H.R.H Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn has inspired a knowledge and literacy initiative for remote communities with the mobile library vehicle "Bannathorn" for the Family Library Foundation providing communities access to over 3,000 books.</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ In 2005, there were over 3.1 million learners aged 14 years old and above undertaking non-formal vocational education and training programmes - an 11% rise from 2001.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) promotes environmental understanding and learning beyond the classroom to thousands of students, and is sponsored by IPST and coordinated with other 40 Universities.</li> </ul>       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Over 83,000 learners were undertaking functional literacy programmes equivalent to grade 4 studies in 2005.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ There are approximately 3,200 informal learning spaces in Thailand, including over 850 public libraries, 293 museums and over 1,200 public parks.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ In 2005, over 1.5 million learners were studying continuing education programmes for primary and secondary education qualifications. Over 60% of these learners were studying for upper secondary academic qualifications.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ There are 8 entities in the Office of Knowledge Management and Development (OKMD) promoting knowledge and learning in popular public places such shopping malls in Bangkok reaching thousands of learners of all ages.</li> </ul>                         |



## STRATEGY AND APPROACH 3

The overall approach towards promoting learning beyond the classroom has involved activities initiated by the Ministry of Education as well as other government departments together with the not-for-profit and private sectors.

The Ministry of Education has focused on enhancing non-formal education opportunities reaching learners of all ages as detailed in the box below. These programmes have formed the cornerstones behind the overall strategy for learning beyond the classroom. They have provided opportunities for childhood learning and development, second chance education opportunities for basic education qualifications, and skills development through vocational education.

The non-formal education strategy has also been matched by efforts to complement formal learning in the classroom. The focus has been on channeling student enthusiasm for sport and the arts to support learning and self-development and has been associated with improvements in student learning and attainment in the classroom. These programmes have stimulated new ways of teaching and learning that value activities outside of the classroom.



### Non-Formal Education Themes and Activities

#### Provision of non-formal education for pre-school children

Initiatives are targeted at those children between 2-6 years old and have included:

- ◆ Early Childhood Centres provided by communities for children between 3-6 years old;
- ◆ Family based early childhood development;
- ◆ Promotion and support to private and not-for-profit childhood development organisations such as the Council of Early Childhood Development and over 50 Youth Development Organisations in Thai land.

#### Provision of fundamental education for literacy

Initiatives have been directed towards learners over 14 years of age and have included:

- ◆ The literacy campaign;
- ◆ The functional literacy programme;
- ◆ The promotion of Thai Language usage;
- ◆ Hill area education.

#### Non-formal technical and vocational education and training

Programmes are organised by the Office of the Vocational Education Commission to improve the skills of learners and adults. They are often developed in partnership with other Ministries such as Labour, Industry, and Agriculture. Programmes have included:

- ◆ Non-formal education certificates for lower secondary students and working adults;
- ◆ Short courses for vocational training allowing for articulation into formal courses of study provided by public and private vocational colleges;
- ◆ Special vocational programmes for young farmers allowing for credit transfer and articulation into higher vocational studies in agriculture and related disciplines.

#### General non-formal education

Activities are aimed at those who have not had access to formal education and cover primary to higher levels of education. Teaching and learning takes place in schools, the workplace and other public spaces in the community with the aim of offering study opportunities for the same qualifications offered in formal education through self-study, part-time or distance learning.



## LEARNING THROUGH SPORT AND THE ARTS

The value of sport and the arts in engaging and enthusing young people about learning cannot be understated. There has been increasing evidence of students generating skills such as creative thinking, team working, planning and leadership through after school sport and arts projects. The Ministry of Education is increasingly trying to recognise and promote such activities to complement teaching and learning in the classroom and improve the educational attainment of young people as well as the development of skills for life.

### Learning through the Thai Arts

The creativity and thinking skills developed through an appreciation and understanding of Thai traditional dance, fine art, and music has been encouraged for its impact on learning as well as instilling a strong set of moral values and appreciation of Thai culture. As such, art education is one of the compulsory subjects inside of the curriculum aiming to develop the learner's moral, physical, music and performing art abilities. The example illustrates the integration of classroom based learning with after-school activities.



## LEARNING THROUGH SPORT



### Learning through Sport: Dreams and Teams

Dreams and Teams is a global learning-through-sport project coordinated by the British Council and introduced in Thailand in partnership with the Ministry of Education as part of its wider strategy for promoting learning beyond the classroom. It has given young people aged 14-19 the chance to learn important leadership skills through the organisation and running of sports festivals for primary school children. Several hundred young leaders have been trained in Thailand benefiting over 1,000 primary school students along with associated teacher training programmes. The programme has also created global school links with students and teachers undergoing similar programmes promoting communication in English and world awareness amongst Thai students.



## PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN LEARNING

The increasing involvement of the private sector in the development of knowledge and learning has served two key roles: first, stimulated more educational spaces available to the general public, and second, enabled learners from primary to higher education access to practical learning experiences and projects which will enable them to develop skills for the world of work. Such programmes have grown significantly in recent years and have helped ensure that students develop practical skills to complement knowledge from formal education.

### Business management for children

The "Little CEO" programme sponsored by Unilever Thailand encourages children to learn about entrepreneurship and experience a business environment. The project is staffed by volunteers and aims to let young people own and manage a business for a day. Children are trained in how to calculate expenses and profits as well as duties that include customer service, production management and public relations. The programme enables children to learn new skills that extend their classroom learning into real life situations. All profits made by the students are donated to charity.



## PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN LEARNING



### Entrepreneurial development of University students

The Bangkok Business Challenge is Thailand's premier business plan competition conducted in English. It was created in 2002 to encourage postgraduate students in business administration programmes across Thailand to become more entrepreneurial. Teams from business administration programmes compete for the prestigious His Majesty the King's Award as well as prize money. The judging committee includes leading entrepreneurs, professionals and venture capitalists who assess the most attractive new ventures based on written business plans, presentations and exhibits. Partners for the 2007 project include the Stock Exchange of Thailand, and Sasin business school of Chulalongkorn University.



## THE OFFICE OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (OKMD)

The establishment of OKMD in 2004 was a response to the need to promote informal education opportunities to support the development of a knowledge economy in Thailand. OKMD aims to enable all Thais to gain equal access to knowledge and learning opportunities for their self-development. At the heart of this is the promotion of a culture of lifelong and self-learning for learners of all ages through innovative and inspiring public knowledge and resource Centres.

OKMD provides an important link to formal and non-formal education and has 7 Institutes under its remit covering a range of priority areas for knowledge and learning development, namely:

- ◆ National Institute for Brain-Based Learning (NBL)
- ◆ National Centre for the Gifted and Talented (NGT)
- ◆ Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park)
- ◆ National Discovery Museum Institute (NDMI)
- ◆ Thailand Creative and Design Centre (TCDC)
- ◆ Thailand Centre of Excellence for Life Sciences (TCELS)
- ◆ Centre for the Promotion of National Strength on Moral Ethics and Values (Moral Centre)



## OKMD'S KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING CENTRES

### **Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park):**

TK Park was established in 2003 and was the inaugural initiative of OKMD. TK Park is a living library located in a leading shopping mall allowing for maximum public convenience and aims to promote an interest in literacy and reading amongst Thai youth through state-of-the-art facilities and modern design.

TK Park encourages creativity and thinking skills through its innovative and inspiring space and facilities as well as a series of events involving Thai celebrities and role models. TK Park provides books, magazines and multi-media resources for the public. Plans include expanding into other provinces integrating digital content with local culture and traditions. "Digital TK Park" provides online resources anytime, and anywhere.

### **Thailand Centre for Design and Creativity (TCDC):**

TCDC provides access to a rich resource of design information, product exhibitions and resources for knowledge development with the main objective of "creating new inspirations".

TCDC aspires to promote a sense of creativity and entrepreneurship amongst the general public. It is hoped that the Centre will also stimulate product design and innovation to international standards enabling Thai SME's to compete internationally.

Activities at TCDC include study tours and educational activities for young designers, university students and SME's in rural areas under the One Tambon One Product programme.



## MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES FOR KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

The national strategy for the improvement and expansion of public spaces for informal learning has stimulated the development and enhancement of museums and libraries under public, private and not-for-profit initiatives. Public libraries and museums have been encouraged to become more lively in order to attract public interest. Key activities have included promoting learning beyond classroom through activities such as courses and classes for students and the attraction of sponsors to be partners and to invest in public resources for knowledge and learning.



### Promoting public understanding of science

The Science Museum was the first museum to be opened under the management of the National Science Museum organisation (NSM), and aims to engage individuals in the excitement of science with the aim of increasing public understanding of science and technology. The use of interactive exhibits has enabled visitors to understand and explore the links between science and technology in everyday life.



## MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES FOR KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

### Private sector funded public libraries

The Stock of Exchange of Thailand's public library, is the "Mareuy Library" ([www.maruey.com](http://www.maruey.com)). It offers one of the best-stocked capital market knowledge resources in Thailand as well as being a key resource on all money matters. It provides a typical example of the growing trend of non-public funded libraries emerging in Thailand.

The library is open to the public and offers books, magazines, journals, research reports, and access to financial statements, news and trading data from SETINFO databases. The library aims to engage the new generation of information seekers with a "new age library" utilising multi-media to offer a "One-Stop Centre" for those seeking knowledge and learning in their leisure

### The Children's Discovery Museum

The Museum was built in 2001 and inspired by Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's who proposed the creation of an informal and educational space for the public. The Museum has three exhibition buildings and provides substantial space for the Museum to meet its aims to encourage children to learn and think about the environment, science and technology, culture and the arts.

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration has given responsibility for the museum to the Bangkok Children's Discovery Museum Foundation, which undertakes the task of providing an effective and high-quality learning experience for children as well as supporting educational activities of schools.



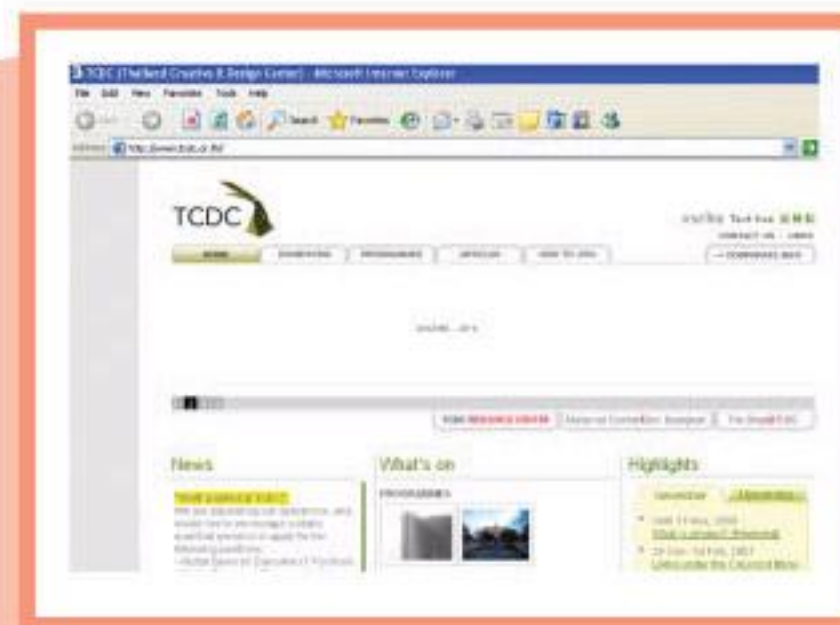
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES ONLINE



**The Office of Knowledge Management and Development (OKMD):**  
<http://www.okmd.or.th>



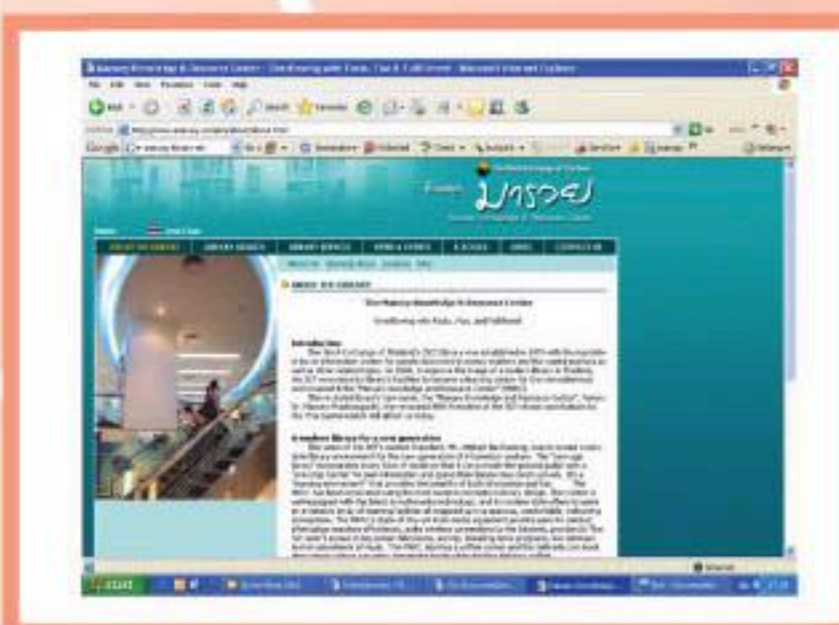
**Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park):**  
<http://www.tkpark.or.th>



**Thailand Creative and Design Centre (TCDC):**  
<http://www.tcdc.or.th>



**National Science Museum:**  
<http://www.nsm.or.th>



**The Maruey Knowledge and Resource Centre:**  
<http://www.maruey.com>



**Children's Discovery Museum:**  
<http://www.bkkchildrenmuseum.com>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

*In-depth information*

Further in-depth detail on the education system can be found inside the excellent "Education in Thailand 2005/2006" booklet produced by the Office of the Education Council available to download from [www.onec.go.th](http://www.onec.go.th).

*Contact Details*

This publication is one of six publications focusing on Thailand's learning society aspirations. Specific information on the work of the Ministry across the different sectors of education is available at:

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