

Creative Experiments in Urbanism

Civic Creative Base Tokyo [CCBT] was established in October 2022 as a hub where the public can explore their creative imaginations in society through art and digital technology.



"rode work ver. under city" (SIDE CORE, 2023), exhibited in an empty site next to the Meguro Observation Well. Photo: Tada (YUKAI)

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, which operate Civic Creative Base Tokyo [CCBT] (hereafter CCBT), have concluded a partnership agreement with Ars Electronica, a cultural institution in Linz, Austria, which has been working to connect art, technology, and society for about 40 years. Ogawa Hideaki, an internationally active member of Ars Electronica, was appointed the creative director of CCBT in April 2023.

Ogawa remarked, "CCBT is neither a museum nor a gallery. It is a hub for citizens and artists to gather, utilize art and technology, and conduct social experiments in Tokyo. It makes us redefine Tokyo and explore a multitude of 'futures,' using the city as a testing ground for these futures."



The project image of "IISE (Immersive Inclusive Sensory Environment)" by SnoezeLab., a 2023 Artist Fellow. The team includes people with disabilities and the parents of children with disabilities, and aims to develop an inclusive environment. Image: SnoezeLab.



AUGMENTED SITUATION D (March 2023), an urban XR exhibition by Asami Kazuhiko, God Scorpion, and YOSHIDAYAMAR, held in Shibuya. Photo: Tada (YUKAI)

Exploring Ways to Implement Advanced Technology through Art

Ogawa continues, "I believe that art has the power to raise questions and create dialogue with people and society. Rather than simply consuming technology that evolves every day, how do we give meaning to it through the power of art, and how do we install the resulting innovations within the society of Tokyo? CCBT is the platform that tackles such questions."

Programs Connecting Citizens, Artists, and Government

One of CCBT's core programs is the Art Incubation Program, in which five creators selected from the public each year become partners of CCBT in creative activities and openly share their processes with society through workshops and exhibitions.

In 2022, the project included an urban exhibition showcasing XR artworks in Shibuya, as well as Future Tokyo *Undokai* (Sports Day), in which people, from children to adults, collaborated to create a one-of-a-kind sports event.

In addition, under the theme of "underground space," skateboarders explored a giant underground regulating reservoir and other locations, exhibiting works that captured civil engineering and architecture from the street perspective. In 2023, 141 applications were received, and the five selected CCBT Artist Fellows have begun their respective activities.

"CCBT aims to create art not for the white cube (a contemporary art term for exhibition spaces in museums and galleries), but for the transformation of the city, to create art for society. Daring to incorporate art with a critical nature within the administrative system, we will work with citizens to develop strategies and policies to solve urban issues. Each project can be thought of as a major urban experiment involving society."

The many experiments that CCBT is engaged in will provide insights and opportunities for innovation that can be applied in other cities. Expectations are high for the role that CCBT will play in making Tokyo a global hub for digital creativity.