

DEPT. OF ARCHITECTURE JOINS URS PROJECT TO REBUILD DIHUA STREET

Dept. of Architecture has won the chance to join Taipei City Government' s project of Urban Regeneration Station (URS). Led by Dr. Wu kwang-tyng, Chair of Dept. of Architecture, some students and teachers in the department will recreate the store at No. 127, Dihua St. into No. 127 Public Store, a public communication platform for education and art. Moreover, Dept. of Architecture will establish an Innovation Incubation Center in the store in May to help their alumni realize their ideal. It will be the first Innovation Incubation Center run by a department in TKU.

The store is an over-100-year-old building that connected the shopping areas of Dihua St. and Minle St, where once was a busy commercial center but is on the downgrade in recent years. Dr. Wang Chun-hsiung, Associate Professor of Dept. of Architecture, thinks that its location and the long and narrow house space give the store a great potential for exhibition and education, so he and other professors in the department decided to apply for the URS project. The three-floor building will be divided into exhibition area, teaching area, and Innovation Incubation Center. The department will also cooperate with Danshui Historic Sites and Underground Movement to introduce theater troupe and art gallery to hold exhibitions and shows from time to time. It is hoped that through public power, the downfallen Dihua St. can regain its past glory again.

The store manager Chen Pai-hsin, an alumnus of Dept. of Architecture, indicated that her department has joined community activities and historic preservation for 20 years. This time, they also invite other art and literary groups to work together. "Two heads are better than one," said Chen. "With the participation of other groups, we hope that we can build the store into a public space that unites community, activating Dihua St.

with the power of art.

Shih Chuan Architect Studio, The 7 Plays, and Hand in Hand Design Studio has decided to be the long-term resident art groups at No. 127 Public Store. “These three groups are all formed by the alumni of Dept. of Architecture. They can accumulate their ability and experience at the Innovation Incubation Center to make their dream come true,” said Chen Pei-hsin. Liu Kai-hsin, a 2nd-year master student of Dept. of Architecture, is one of the members of Hand in Hand Design Studio. “It is hard to afford an office for a newly graduate of Dept. of Architecture. Therefore, we are very happy that we can stay at Innovation Incubation Center. It not only helps us work whole heartily, but also gives us chance to communicate and interact with many young groups and grow up together,” said Liu.

Instructed by Dr. Mi Fu-kuo, Associate Professor of Dept. of Architecture, the freshmen of Architecture Dept. are now preparing a result presentation of their course on community empowerment service at No. 127 Public Store. In the future, the design courses and international workshop of the department will also make use of the Store as a place to exchange ideas. Dr. Wang Chun-hsiung indicated that No. 127 Public Store will provide an ideal environment for young architects and artists to create, and bring more non-commercial art events and cultural atmosphere to Dihua St. In addition, combined with exhibition function and teaching activities, the Store will diversify the course of study in Dept. of Architecture, and hence create more possibilities!

(~Shu-chun Yen)

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