

## **Tamsui Good Life: Only Private School Initiative in USR Phase IV' s Sustainable Development Category**

The Center for University Social Responsibility, Ministry of Education, has announced the list of approved projects for Phase IV (Years 2025-2027) of the USR initiative. Tamkang University' s USR project, "Tamsui Good Life: University City Empowering Creative Design Action," is featured on the list, marking the fourth consecutive approval. It is also the only private university project in the sustainable development category with a distinct sustainability focus to be approved.

The project leader, Professor Jui-Mao Huang from the Department of Architecture, expressed his gratitude to the team members and stated that during the 3-year implementation period, the team will continue to advance the "university-local connection." Through the "Tamsui Living Festival" platform, collaboration with local authorities, businesses, and the school will create various presentations showcasing Tamsui' s unique characteristics and attract more people to discover and love Tamsui. At the same time, more teachers will be encouraged to bring students into the community, working together to improve the environment and use teaching and research to explore related issues.

Professor Huang explained that this project, inspired by the vision of "Tamsui Good Life," has transformed its focus across 4 phases, from creating a "sustainable living circle" to "learning-oriented urban-rural construction," and now to "mountain, sea, river, and creative design action," primarily exploring the importance of "learning" in community transformation while also examining the relationship between universities and society. Phase IV focuses on "University City Empowering Creative Design Action," exploring the active role of universities in the ecological reconstruction process of Tamsui' s urban transformation. The project continues exploring various local issues in the shifting social context while promoting the goal of "university-city collaboration," addressing challenges, and enabling the school' s faculty, students, and partners to collaborate and co-create solutions, producing talent needed

for societal change.

Since 2018, the "Tamsui Good Life" team has been implementing the USR project through various courses and activities, including promoting cross-campus workshops, reality games, documentaries about Greater Tamsui, assisting in space and community development, creating unique markets, and establishing a teaching resources-sharing platform in Greater Tamsui. In recent years, the team has also been actively assisting with local matters such as water quality testing, hosting scientific inquiry camps, and collaborating with local businesses and workers to conceive and launch the "Tamsui Living Festival." The festival's engaging activities allow participants to experience Tamsui's cultural heritage and natural beauty while shaping Tamsui's unique lifestyle. This initiative has not only drawn the attention of residents but also gained recognition from relevant government agencies as a practical platform for promoting community integration, regional regeneration, and fostering local creation.

In addition to local connections and promoting community regeneration, the "Good Life Project" emphasizes "local issues" as a theme for teaching innovation and academic research, providing ongoing encouragement for faculty to apply for teaching practice research projects. Since 2020, six projects under this initiative have been executed, with two receiving USR funding for a second year. Some projects received recognition in the 2020 and 2022 annual excellence awards. The project also actively supports faculty advancement, with four faculty members completing promotions during Phase III, benefiting their academic career development. Additionally, teachers have been encouraged to submit their teaching research results and local solutions for various competitions. From 2021 - 2024, the team won a Silver Award, three Bronze Awards, and one honorable mention at the Taiwan Sustainability Awards, further clarifying ways to effectively link universities with local issues.

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Tamkang University's USR project, "Tamsui Good Life: University Town Empowerment Design Action," has been approved for Phase IV of the MOE USR initiative, making it the only private university project in the sustainable development category.

