

# The Development of Collaborative Mechanisms and Community Network Systems Based on Creative Cultural Tourism: A Case Study of Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Nakhon Thai District, Phitsanulok Province, Thailand

## การพัฒนากลไกความร่วมมือและระบบเครือข่ายของชุมชนบนฐานการท่องเที่ยววัฒนธรรมเชิงสร้างสรรค์ กรณีศึกษา ตำบลนครไทย อำเภอนครไทย จังหวัดพิษณุโลก ประเทศไทย

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**Keywords:** creative cultural tourism, local cultural, Nakhon Thai

**คำสำคัญ:** การท่องเที่ยววัฒนธรรมเชิงสร้างสรรค์, วัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่น, นครไทย

### Abstract

**Background and Objectives:** Creative tourism involves travel that emphasizes engagement with and experience of a place's cultural heritage, arts, and unique characteristics. It fosters meaningful connections between local residents and tourists through active participation in living culture, as defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This research aims to examine the development of community cooperation mechanisms and community networks rooted in creative cultural tourism, considering both internal and external perspectives. The study focuses on Nakhon Thai subdistrict, Nakhon Thai district, Phitsanulok province, and has three main objectives: 1) to analyze the systems of cooperation and community networks related to creative cultural tourism, 2) to explore models and approaches for fostering collaboration within community-based network systems founded on creative cultural tourism, with active participation from all sectors in the development of tourism in Nakhon Thai subdistrict, and 3) to develop strategic frameworks or policy recommendations at the community level by fostering cooperation and encourage the active participation of community networks in Nakhon Thai subdistrict.

**Methods:** The researcher utilized qualitative research methods, gathering data through purposive sampling via semi-structured interviews with three distinct groups of informants: 15 government officials, 5 community members, and 3 representatives from private businesses. Additionally, focus group discussions and pertinent document reviews were conducted. The data were analyzed through content analysis to synthesize findings and present the study results in a systematic and comprehensive way.

**Results:** The development of creative cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai district, Phitsanulok, shows collaboration between the government, local administrative organizations, communities, business sector, and educational institutions. In terms of policy, cultural preservation, infrastructural development, and tourist activities, every sector supports one another. The link with nearby provinces and universities helps increase the tourism potential. The area possessing significant cultural assets and local resources can be further developed in the long term. Success depends on community involvement at every level, necessitating decentralization of authority, support of local products, and ongoing creative activities to raise Nakhon Thai district as a sustainable cultural tourism destination in the future.

**Application of this study:** The policy proposals center on building local cooperation systems by means of a tourist development committee comprising representatives of the government, business sector, and community. Together, this group will plan, address issues, and methodically track results, coupling practice-based learning activities like weaving, local food, and cultural storytelling. The networks of community product manufacturers and monthly cultural markets should be supported to promote inclusive and balanced income distribution. Moreover, a cultural learning center ought to be established in cooperation with nearby universities to compile local knowledge and lead to the creation of high-value tourism.

**Conclusions:** The development of creative cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai subdistrict resulted from the cooperation of several sectors by emphasizing on local identity and creative activities. Important strategies include raising involvement, building infrastructure, supporting OTOP (One Tambon One Product), and effective resource management for community sustainability.

## บทคัดย่อ

**ที่มาและวัตถุประสงค์:** การท่องเที่ยวเชิงสร้างสรรค์เกี่ยวข้องกับการเดินทางที่มุ่งเน้นไปที่การมีส่วนร่วมและสัมผัสกับมรดกทางวัฒนธรรม ศิลปะ หรือลักษณะเฉพาะของสถานที่นั้น ๆ แนวทางนี้ช่วยส่งเสริมการเชื่อมโยงระหว่างผู้อยู่อาศัยในท้องถิ่นกับนักท่องเที่ยวที่เข้าร่วมในวัฒนธรรมที่มีชีวิตอย่างเข้มข้น คำจำกัดความนี้จัดทำโดยองค์การการศึกษา วิทยาศาสตร์ และวัฒนธรรมแห่งสหประชาชาติ (UNESCO) การวิจัยนี้มุ่งเป้าไปที่การตรวจสอบการพัฒนาของกลไกความร่วมมือและเครือข่ายชุมชนที่มีรากฐานมาจากการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสร้างสรรค์ทางวัฒนธรรม โดยพิจารณาจากทั้งแง่มุมภายในและภายนอก โดยศึกษาในพื้นที่ตำบลนครไทย อำเภอนครไทย จังหวัดพิษณุโลก มีวัตถุประสงค์ 3 ข้อ คือ 1. เพื่อวิเคราะห์ความร่วมมือและระบบเครือข่ายชุมชนที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการท่องเที่ยววัฒนธรรมเชิงสร้างสรรค์ 2. เพื่อสำรวจรูปแบบและวิธีการส่งเสริมความร่วมมือในระบบเครือข่ายของชุมชนบนฐานการท่องเที่ยววัฒนธรรมเชิงสร้างสรรค์โดยมีหน่วยงานทุกภาคส่วนเข้ามามีส่วนร่วมในการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวในตำบลนครไทย และ 3. เพื่อกำหนดกรอบยุทธศาสตร์หรือข้อเสนอเชิงนโยบายในระดับชุมชน โดยบูรณาการความร่วมมือและส่งเสริมการมีส่วนร่วมอย่างแข็งขันของเครือข่ายชุมชนในตำบลนครไทย

**วิธีการศึกษา:** ผู้วิจัยใช้ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ โดยเก็บข้อมูลผ่านการสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งมีโครงสร้างกับผู้ให้ข้อมูล 3 กลุ่ม ได้แก่ เจ้าหน้าที่รัฐ 15 คน สมาชิกชุมชน 5 คน และตัวแทนธุรกิจเอกชน 3 คน ซึ่งคัดเลือกด้วยการสุ่มแบบเจาะจง ร่วมกับการสนทนากลุ่มย่อยและการทบทวนเอกสารที่เกี่ยวข้อง ข้อมูลถูกวิเคราะห์แบบเนื้อหาเพื่อสังเคราะห์ข้อค้นพบและนำเสนอผลการศึกษาอย่างเป็นระบบและครอบคลุม

**ผลการศึกษา:** การพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยววัฒนธรรมเชิงสร้างสรรค์ในตำบลนครไทย อำเภอนครไทย จังหวัดพิษณุโลก แสดงให้เห็นถึงความร่วมมือระหว่างภาครัฐ องค์กรปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่น ชุมชน ภาคเอกชน และสถาบันการศึกษา โดยแต่ละภาคส่วนมีบทบาทสนับสนุนซึ่งกันและกัน ทั้งด้านนโยบาย การอนุรักษ์วัฒนธรรม การพัฒนาโครงสร้างพื้นฐาน และกิจกรรมท่องเที่ยว การเชื่อมโยงกับจังหวัดใกล้เคียงและมหาวิทยาลัยช่วยขยายศักยภาพการท่องเที่ยว พื้นที่ที่มีทุนทางวัฒนธรรมและทรัพยากรท้องถิ่นที่สามารถพัฒนาต่อยอดได้ในระยะยาว ความสำเร็จขึ้นอยู่กับการมีส่วนร่วมของชุมชนในทุกขั้นตอน โดยต้องมีการกระจายอำนาจ ส่งเสริมผลิตภัณฑ์ชุมชน และจัดกิจกรรมสร้างสรรค์อย่างต่อเนื่อง เพื่อยกระดับตำบลนครไทยให้เป็นจุดหมายการท่องเที่ยววัฒนธรรมอย่างยั่งยืนในอนาคต

**การประยุกต์ใช้:** ข้อเสนอแนะเชิงนโยบายมุ่งเน้นการสร้างกลไกความร่วมมือในระดับพื้นที่ โดยจัดตั้งคณะกรรมการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวที่มีตัวแทนจากภาครัฐ เอกชน และชุมชน เพื่อร่วมวางแผน แก้ปัญหา และติดตามผลอย่างเป็นระบบควบคู่กับการพัฒนาทักษะของชุมชนผ่านการทำกิจกรรมเรียนรู้จากการปฏิบัติจริง เช่น การทอผ้า อาหารพื้นบ้าน และการเล่าเรื่องวัฒนธรรม พร้อมสนับสนุนการจัดตั้งเครือข่ายผู้ผลิตสินค้าชุมชนและตลาดวัฒนธรรมประจำเดือน เพื่อกระจายรายได้อย่างทั่วถึง นอกจากนี้ ควรจัดตั้งศูนย์เรียนรู้ด้านวัฒนธรรมร่วมกับมหาวิทยาลัยในพื้นที่ เพื่อรวบรวมองค์ความรู้ท้องถิ่นและต่อยอดสู่การสร้างสรรคการท่องเที่ยวที่มีมูลค่าสูงขึ้น

**บทสรุป:** การพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยววัฒนธรรมเชิงสร้างสรรค์ในตำบลนครไทย อำเภอนครไทย จังหวัดพิษณุโลก เกิดจากความร่วมมือหลายภาคส่วน โดยเน้นอัตลักษณ์ท้องถิ่นและกิจกรรมสร้างสรรค์ แนวทางสำคัญคือการเพิ่มการมีส่วนร่วมพัฒนาสาธารณูปโภค ส่งเสริม OTOP (หนึ่งตำบล หนึ่งผลิตภัณฑ์) และบริหารทรัพยากรอย่างมีประสิทธิภาพเพื่อความยั่งยืนของชุมชน

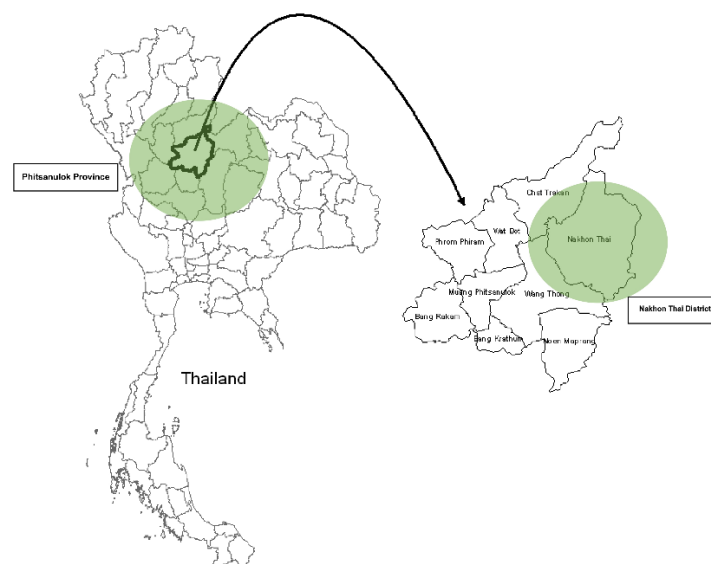
## Introduction

The discussion surrounding creative tourism, which has developed into creative cultural tourism, suggests that Thailand's tourism policy has traditionally been centralized under the "Thai Teaw Thai" (Travel in Thailand) initiative. This initiative is based on the premise that Thailand is rich in resources and attractions, including physical, intellectual, culinary, and cultural aspects. These elements have set Thailand apart as a nation that continually promotes and enhances tourism. A vital component of the initiative aimed at developing popular tourist destinations and broadening outreach into various community and local areas is creative tourism. Creative tourism involves travel aimed at engaging with and experiencing authentic aspects of cultural heritage, art, or unique characteristics of a location. This approach fosters connections between local residents and visitors who actively participate in the living culture. This definition is provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Wisudthiluck, 2015)

This has led to a preference for secure tourism, avoiding crowded areas, and opting for nearby transport options

(Prajongkan & Junanantatham, 2020). Additionally, there is an emphasis on leveraging technology to enhance convenience during the journey. The government and relevant authorities have proposed revitalizing the tourism sector through the promotion and development of community-based tourism initiatives. This strategy is essential for strengthening community capacity and creating tourism opportunities, with the main goal of sustainable development. Notable outcomes encompass the establishment of a community-focused tourist database and the development of a happiness index, aimed at promoting equitable growth. The policies and strategies align with the 20-year national plan and various policies across multiple levels, from national to local, through implementation in diverse regions and tourism sites. This has led to the development of New Normal tourism, (Online Manager, 2020) which emphasizes sustainable tourism by prioritizing factors beyond merely boosting visitor numbers (Nan, 2024). Thai tourism should focus on enhancing quality over low-cost options, highlighting innovative community-based activities that offer visitors meaningful engagement (Benhaida et al., 2024). The selection of items and services that enrich cultural resources, as noted by Setyaningsih et al. (2024), including lifestyles and living conditions, will differ according to each tourist's experience (Chiengkul & Kumjorn, 2024). As a result, in innovative cultural tourism initiatives, every visitor will gain unique insights and experiences. (Sharma & Aggarwal, 2024)

This study highlights the significant issue of global changes that influence the development of tourism, starting with creative tourism and advancing towards the enhancement of creative cultural tourism (Lin, 2024; Rasoul et al., 2022). As a result, the Nakhon Thai subdistrict in Nakhon Thai district, Phitsanulok province, has been recognized as a promising location for development into a major tourism destination within Phitsanulok (Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality Office, 2024a). The significant potential includes indigenous knowledge, the preservation of customs, and a unique local identity demonstrated through tangible tourism attractions, historical narratives, botanical resources, and cultural wisdom (Janchua, 2009). The key elements aim to strengthen the Nakhon Thai community by enhancing the cultural and traditional resilience of the Nakhon Thai subdistrict over a prolonged period. The researchers emphasize that utilizing the community's strengths in cultural and local traditions to develop tourism models centered on community participation, combined with financial and policy support from appropriate agencies, has the potential to elevate the Nakhon Thai subdistrict into a distinguished tourist destination celebrated for its cultural and local heritage (Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality Office, 2024b).



**Figure 1** Nakhon Thai district, Phitsanulok province, Thailand

(Source: Payakpate, 2008)

This research intends to examine the development of collaboration mechanisms and community networks rooted in creative cultural tourism, considering both internal and external aspects of the aforementioned nation. The research locale is Nakhon Thai subdistrict, Nakhon Thai district, Phitsanulok province. The researchers aim to give results about area development, illustrating the state of collaboration and community networks centered on cultural tourism. The objective is to transform Nakhon Thai subdistrict into a center for creative cultural tourism. The researchers want to examine the models and methodologies for fostering collaboration and community networks centered on creative cultural tourism, including all sectors in the development of tourism to establish the subdistrict as a sustainable tourist destination. Ultimately, to guarantee the sustainability of regional development, this necessitates the creation of strategies or policy suggestions at the community level, including the collaboration and engagement of community networks in Nakhon Thai subdistrict.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To analyze the existing cooperation and community network systems pertaining to creative cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai subdistrict, Nakhon Thai district, Phitsanulok province.
2. To explore models and methods for fostering cooperation and community network systems in creative cultural tourism by including all pertinent sectors in the sustainable development of Nakhon Thai subdistrict as a cultural tourism destination.
3. To formulate strategic frameworks or policy proposals at the community level by integrating collaborative efforts and fostering the active engagement of community networks in Nakhon Thai subdistrict.

### **Literature Review**

The examination of literature and research on creative cultural tourism indicates that collaboration and community networks play a crucial role in promoting sustainable tourist development (Department of Community Development, 2005). Various studies, such as "Creative Tourism Management Based on Sustainability " by Suebsunthon & Kunwong (2018), highlight that effective management, reliant on collaboration across all sectors, will advance creative tourism towards sustainability. A study conducted by Kongkaew et al. (2014) suggests that a pilot project in the Nakhon Thai district, which involves collaboration between government agencies and the community, has the potential to enhance the economy and create opportunities for tourism development. Additionally, Sirithipa (2003) highlighted that fostering tourism in Nakhon Thai district requires community networks as a crucial element to enhance collaboration, leading to sustainable success.

A study conducted by Lertpachrapong & Saengjamnong (2020) in the realm of creative cultural tourism illustrates that initiatives promoting tourist interaction with the community, including immersive experiences and cultural education, contribute to income distribution within the community and strengthen the connections between tourists and residents. The work of Sopa (2018) emphasizes the establishment of community enterprises that promote creative initiatives, thereby energizing the market and creating economic opportunities. Chanchai's study (2018) indicates that visitors are inclined to acquire knowledge and engage with culture through experiential activities. In summary, creative cultural tourism acts as an essential tool for fostering economic development within communities and safeguarding cultural heritage. This research utilizes relevant study findings as a basis for discussion to determine the path for developing collaborative mechanisms

and community networks focused on creative cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai district, Phitsanulok, province, with the goal of transforming it into a sustainable tourist destination in the future (Matayamburut, 2020).

Furthermore, there exists a framework pertinent to this research that warrants discussion, namely Community-Based Tourism (CBT). This type of tourism emphasizes the involvement of the local community, with the goal of delivering extensive advantages to the community. This functions as a mechanism for community development, strengthening the ability of rural communities to oversee tourism resources through local engagement (Ngo & Creutz, 2022). CBT focuses on enhancing community well-being and fostering community empowerment. The framework includes principles such as local ownership and management, community participation, benefit sharing, cultural and environmental preservation, and sustainability (Bittar Rodrigues & Prideaux, 2018).

## **Research Methods**

The author selected qualitative research methodologies, encompassing a review of relevant literature and studies. Interviews with research informants were conducted using semi-structured interview tools, with researchers categorizing them into three groups through a purposive sampling method: 1) A group of 15 government officials, including the district chief, the mayor of Nakhon Thai Municipality, members of the Nakhon Thai Sub-district Cultural Council, and village heads; 2) a group of 5 local community members; and 3) a group of 3 representatives from businesses and private networks in the region. The data collection process involved thorough interviews and focus group discussions. The document includes inquiries pertinent to the aims of this research. For instance, what governmental policies or strategies can effectively enhance tourism in the Nakhon Thai subdistrict? What types of collaborative mechanisms ought to be established to promote sustainable creative tourism in Nakhon Thai subdistrict? Is your community equipped with a robust network or collaboration to foster tourism development? What is the reason? The analysis involved integrating data from interviews and relevant document reviews, leading to a comprehensive presentation of the findings. The integration of conceptual frameworks in research is essential, particularly regarding the cooperation between the state and the community, creative cultural tourism, and tourism development. This approach aims to present comprehensive research results, focusing on both outcomes and outputs related to strategy and policy formulation. This encompassed detailed explanations of the materials and findings from the investigation, culminating in the concluding discussion section of the study. The research has received ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University, reference number 019/2024.

## **Research Results**

### **1. The Status of Collaborative and Community Network Systems Centered on Creative Cultural Tourism in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Phitsanulok**

The development of creative cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai subdistrict, has been enhanced through the collaboration of various sectors, including government agencies, local administrative bodies, communities, the public, the private sector, and educational institutions. This was achieved by the analysis of relevant documents, including the Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Tourism Promotion Plan for 2025, the Local Development Plan 2023–2027, and the Tourism Development

Plan for Phitsanulok Province. Interviews that collaboration across diverse sectors significantly impacts the development and enhancement of the area. The primary research findings are grouped as follows:

1. The interconnected and cooperative structure of several sectors. The development of cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai subdistrict relies on the cooperative endeavors of many sectors, each undertaking certain roles that complement one another as follows. 1.1 The national government, including the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, is tasked with formulating national strategies, providing funds, and promoting cultural and natural tourism projects. At the provincial level, organizations like the Phitsanulok Provincial Tourist and Sports Office are tasked with marketing and promoting activities aligned with tourism strategies (Officials of the Phitsanulok Provincial Tourism and Sports Office, Interview, 2024). The Phitsanulok Provincial Culture Office facilitates the preservation of cultural heritage via museum restoration projects and the organization of local handicraft exhibitions (Officials of the Phitsanulok Provincial Culture Office, Interview, 2024). 1.2 The regional administrative unit, Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality, and local administrative body, Subdistrict Administrative Organization (SAO) are essential in coordinating infrastructure development and promoting local events, such as the Pakthongchai Festival, the worship ritual of Phokhun Bangklangthao (King Indraditya of Sukhothai Kingdom), and the arrangement of local food festivals (Officials of the Phitsanulok Provincial Culture Office, Interview, 2024). 1.3 The Nakhon Thai subdistrict community plays a vital role in preserving culture and the environment by organizing traditional events and producing OTOP products, such as local textiles and traditional food. Additionally, local tour guides enable the conveyance of history and culture to guests (Mayor of Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality, Interview, 2024). 1.4 Private businesses manage accommodations, restaurants, and the development of new tourism projects, including cultural and ecological tourism routes. They collaborate with the government to improve services and advance the area. Educational institutions, such as Naresuan University and Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University, promote tourism research and development, train local guides, and establish collaborative networks to enhance sustainable tourism (Representative of the business sector in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Interview, 2024).



**Figure 2** The Worship Ritual of Phokhun Bangklangthao (King Indraditya of Sukhothai Kingdom)

(Source: Pounpunwong, 2024)





Figure 3 Pakthongchai Festival

(Source: Saenkham, 2017)



Figure 4 Folk Song Performances, Local Cuisine, and Local Museums

(Source: Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality Office, 2024)

2. Benefits and achievements of the network system Strengths and achievements of the network system. 2.1 A unique cultural identity, shown by the Pakthongchai Festival, the recounting of historical events, and the artistry of local textiles. 2.2 Community is essential to all developmental processes, including event organization, product manufacture, and activity facilitation. Inter-agency collaboration involves structured cooperation at national, provincial, municipal, and community levels, resulting in diverse support (Nakhon Thai District Chief, Interview, 2024).

3. Obstacles and constraints. Despite progress in cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai subdistrict, there remain challenges that need to be addressed, namely the unequal distribution of advantages across community groups, especially small-scale producers. Certain community groups also demonstrate a lack of understanding of creative tourism. The private sector's participation in publicity and the coordination of large-scale events remains limited. Notwithstanding its progress in cultural tourism, there remains limitations that need consideration. These involve the unequal distribution of benefits among different community groups, particularly smaller producers. Certain community groups demonstrate a lack of understanding of creative tourism, but the business sector's participation in public relations and the orchestration of large-scale events is limited (Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Cultural Council, Interview, 2024).

4. Opportunities and Challenges. Opportunities include governmental financial and regulatory support, the rising prominence of cultural and health tourism, and partnerships with educational institutions. Challenges include overreliance on government financing, difficulties in natural resource conservation, and competition with nearby cultural tourism attractions. (Representatives of the public sector in Nakhon Thai subdistrict, Interview, 2024).

5. Recommendations. The authors suggest to enhance private sector participation in developing activities and public relations, improve the community's skills and knowledge in creative tourism, and guarantee equitable distribution

of profits among all community groups, especially small enterprises (Representative of the business sector in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Interview, 2024).

To enhance the clarity of the research findings on this topic, the author has supplemented the previous presentation utilizing the SWOT analysis model with synthesized field data, presented in the form of a TOWS Matrix. This approach aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding, which includes the details in Table 1.

**Table 1** TOWS Matrix for Creative Cultural Tourism in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Nakhon Thai District, Phitsanulok Province

		Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
1.	Opportunities (O)	<b>SO Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize interagency cooperation to obtain state financing and build novel tourism opportunities</li> <li>Strengthen health and cultural tourism through the use of strong community participation and unique national identity supported by governmental and educational institutions</li> </ul>	<b>WO Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the capacity of small producers through training and partnerships with universities</li> <li>Public and private sectors collaborate on incentivizing and innovating tourism dynamics</li> </ul>
2.	Threats (T)	<b>ST Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish organized governance and partnerships to avoid dependency on state funds</li> <li>Broaden identity-driven tourism initiatives to better promote the destination in competitive markets</li> </ul>	<b>WT Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empower ability in creative tourism for marginalized communities to decrease inequalities</li> <li>Open new funding streams to fund and promote sustainability mitigation</li> </ul>

However, the TOWS Matrix analysis of the creative cultural tourism potential in Nakhon Thai subdistrict, reveals the concept for ambitious and purposeful strategy formulation based on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that better utilizes the potential of all sectors in creating sustainable tourism development.

1. SO (Strengths–Opportunities): A strategy to use strengths to take advantage of opportunities. The Pak Thong Chai tradition, local woven products, and regional cuisine show Nakhon Thai's unique cultural identity and ability. It also envisions on having a strong partnership model involving government, private sector, universities, and community partners. Thus, the strategy focuses on their effective use to support different creative tourism projects, and also make advantage of the government solicitations and growth of cultural and health trend in tourism.

2. ST (Strengths–Threats): A strategy that uses strengths to minimize threats. Despite its strong management system and active engagements, Nakhon Thai is still facing challenges, such as relying on government budget and local tourism competition. As such, the plan prioritizes developing a unique identity and diversification of revenue sources to buffer against potential declines in external funding.

3. WO (Weaknesses–Opportunities): A strategy that aims to eliminate weaknesses and utilize opportunities. Also, there are barriers related to the knowledge and skills of the community, especially small-scale producers who have not started engaging with creative tourism. The strategy focuses on maximizing the potential of these groups through cooperation with educational institutions and unifying with the private sector to develop joint innovative projects.

4. WT (Weaknesses–Threats): By vulnerability-solving methods and reducing risk, the strategy emphasizes enhancing knowledge about creative tourism, offering chances for vulnerable groups, and reducing government revenue



dependence through the development of both capital and cooperation networks in an environment where access to tourism opportunities coexist with informal practices.

In summary, the TOWS Matrix enables you to determine the strategic orientation for Nakhon Thai subdistrict, where no single concern can be responsible for achieving sustainable tourist growth. It calls for collaborative efforts on behalf of the government, local communities, the commercial sector and academic institutions to preserve culture and build an equitable and inclusive community-based economy.

## **2. The Framework and Approach for Developing Collaborative and Community Network Systems Focused on Creative Cultural Tourism in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Phitsanulok**

The development of creative cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai is essential for enhancing the local economy and society. This initiative requires strategies that prioritize collaboration across the government, community, and corporate sectors, including local resources, including the integration of their operations. Cooperation among governmental agencies, such as the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Office of Culture, and local administrative authorities, is crucial for policy creation, funding distribution, and infrastructure enhancement. This includes the creation of physical tourism sites, infrastructural enhancement, and the organization of significant cultural events like as the "Pak Thong Chai" festival, which embodies local history. The community substantially aids in cultural preservation by sharing information, organizing cultural activities, and engaging in events. Moreover, the commercial sector, including tourism operators, OTOP product collectives, and non-governmental organizations, must dedicate resources, including investments in marketing, promotion, and innovation, to enhance the value of local products. The integration of diverse roles strengthens the cooperative framework and fosters sustainability (Officials of the Phitsanulok Provincial Tourism and Sports Office, Interview, 2024).

1. The cooperation among governmental bodies, including the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Office of Culture, and local administrative organizations, is crucial for policy development, budget distribution, and infrastructure advancement, which includes the improvement of physical tourism sites, road construction, and the coordination of significant traditional events like the "Pak Thong Chai" festival, which represents local culture. The community plays a crucial role in cultural preservation by disseminating information, organizing cultural activities, and efficiently managing events. Moreover, the business sector, including tourism operators, OTOP product groupings, and non-governmental organizations, must help by allocating resources, including investments in marketing, public relations, and the development of technologies that enhance the value of local products. The integration of duties strengthens the collaborative network and fosters sustainability (Mayor of Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality, Interview, 2024).

2. Protecting and Nurturing Cultural Identity, Nakhon Thai subdistrict possesses a rich cultural heritage, exemplified by traditions such as Phak Thong Chai, local weaving, banana trunk carving, and basketry activities that reflect the community's cultural diversity and creativity. However, challenges persist in sustaining this heritage, particularly due to the lack of successors in the younger generation and declining interest among youth. To counter these challenges, representatives from the public sector suggest implementing innovative strategies rooted in local wisdom. These include organizing educational seminars, establishing community-based learning centers, and promoting experiential tourism that allows visitors to engage directly in traditional practices such as weaving and banana trunk processing (Representatives of the public sector in Nakhon Thai subdistrict, interview, 2024). Similarly, the Nakhon Thai subdistrict Cultural Council highlights the potential of using modern media—such as product design and narrative storytelling to foster cultural identity and ensure its continued relevance and appeal (Nakhon Thai subdistrict Cultural Council, interview, 2024).

3. Establishing a collaborative network among communities, government agencies, and the business sector is essential for advancing cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai. Collaboration with local universities can support research on cultural preservation, while partnerships with regional agencies particularly in provinces like Sukhothai and Phitsanulok can facilitate the creation of shared tourism routes that strengthen regional connectivity and potential. However, findings from both academic studies and stakeholder interviews indicate several coordination challenges, including delayed communication, limited financial resources, and an unequal distribution of economic benefits. As a proposed solution, integrated meetings are recommended to foster more effective and inclusive cooperation among all involved sectors. (Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Cultural Council; Mayor of Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality, Interviews, 2024)

4. Community participation should be promoted in the decision-making process. Interview data reveal that the community fulfills a significant practical role by engaging in activities and offering labor support, however it lacks influence in policy decision-making. Therefore, the community's people must be given opportunity to participate at all stages of the development process, including the design of development plans, budgeting decisions, and the establishment of participatory activities (Representatives of the public sector in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Interview, 2024).

5. Structural and financial obstacles remain a critical challenge for sustainable tourism development in Nakhon Thai. Both government officials and local business representatives highlight the community's heavy dependence on public funding and external event organizers, which limits local participation and reduces the potential for direct economic benefit. To address these challenges, it is essential to improve budget allocation strategies by encouraging local businesses to take part in organizing tourism events. Additionally, investments should focus on upgrading infrastructure, particularly at tourist sites, to better accommodate large visitor numbers and promote long-term sustainability (Nakhon Thai District Chief; Representative of the business sector in Nakhon Thai subdistrict, Interview, 2024).

The author concluded the presentation of the research findings by emphasizing the stakeholders, their roles, and the collaboration guidelines, as detailed in Table 2.

**Table 2** Stakeholders' Roles and Collaborative Strategies

Stakeholders	Roles and Responsibilities	Collaboration Approaches
1. Ministry of Tourism and Sports	Create national plans, distribute money, advance innovative tourist ideas	Match national policy with local development objectives, coordinate large projects
2. Ministry of Culture	Support regional customs and cultural promotion while preserving legacy	Support educational initiatives and community-led historic projects
3. Phitsanulok Provincial Offices	Plan regionally, coordinate infrastructure, and create tourism paths	Support regional tourist links and cross-district collaboration
4. Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality	Manage local planning, festivals, infrastructure, and community engagement	Lead implementation of projects and inclusive community participation
5. Local Communities	Plan local activities, maintain tax, create cultural goods, provide workers	Participate in planning and co-create tourism experiences
6. Private Sector	Invest in digital platforms, marketing, tourism, and innovation	Work with local government, create environmentally friendly goods and services
7. Local Universities (Naresuan University, PSRU)	Invest in research, offer training, assist cultural and tourist learning centers	Link local uses with academic research, mentor young people
8. NGOs and Cultural Councils	Promote cultural education, policy ideas, and preservation of legacy	Through campaigning, raise consciousness of and consistency of cultural identity

### **3. Strategies and Policy Ideas for Community Level Integration Via Cooperation and Engagement of Community Networks in Nakhon Thai Sub-district**

The research findings on the enhancement of creative cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai have highlighted the area's potential in terms of culture, traditions, and local resources that can be further developed to strengthen the economy, society, and community resilience over the long term. This expansion requires coordination among government agencies, communities, and the corporate sector, supported by law, infrastructure, and modern technology. The report has outlined fundamental methodology and specific policy recommendations, detailed as follows:

1. The conservation and advancement of local cultural identity: Nakhon Thai district showcases diverse cultural history, including the Pak Thong Chai Tradition, weaving, and the recital of the narrative of Phokhun Si Inthrahit. The developmental strategy in this area prioritizes the establishment of community cultural centers for the aggregation and distribution of local cultural information, the education of youth through the "Youth Love Culture" initiative, and the incorporation of local cultural content into the educational curriculum to enhance awareness and pride in their heritage among young people (Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Cultural Council, Interview, 2024).

2. The development of infrastructure and facilities: Quality tourism relies on meticulously designed infrastructure, encompassing accessible pathways to attractions, tourist information centers, and rest areas that address the needs of travelers. Producing comprehensive maps and travel guides that emphasize the cultural and historical significance of Nakhon Thai is crucial. Additionally, the incorporation of digital tools like websites or mobile applications to deliver real-time information can greatly improve the travel experience. (Representatives of the public sector in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Interview, 2024).

3. Advancement of community economics: Tourism can act as a driving force for community economic development by promoting the development of products and services that reflect local identity such as OTOP goods, traditional handicrafts, and regional cuisine. To improve economic outcomes, it is crucial to back market-driven initiatives such as cultural markets, which act as important platforms for boosting product visibility and sales. Providing local residents with business management skills enhances their ability to compete in wider markets, thus fostering sustainable and inclusive economic growth within the community. (Representative of the business sector in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Interview, 2024).

4. Establishing a cooperative network: Forming a tourism development committee that includes representatives from government, the business sector, and the local community is crucial for promoting sustainable partnerships and collaborative networks. To promote inclusivity and sustain effectiveness, it is essential to foster community engagement during all phases planning, implementation, and evaluation. Furthermore, it is essential to organize regular community forums to enhance transparency, encourage dialogue, and foster mutual trust among stakeholders. (Representatives of the public sector in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Interview, 2024).

5. Progression of creative initiatives: Integrating cultural elements into engaging activities is crucial for enhancing tourism experiences. Programs like weaving workshops and local cooking classes provide practical experiences while fostering significant and lasting connections for visitors. Furthermore, organizing events that integrate traditional arts with contemporary music, or highlighting innovative handcrafted creations, can enhance the cultural significance of destinations while supporting sustainable tourism efforts. (Representatives of the public sector in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict, Interview, 2024).

6. Political considerations: A commission tasked with the development of creative cultural tourism should be established to formulate legislation and supervise implementation. The devolution of power to local administrative bodies in resource management should also be promoted. Ensure the proper allocation of funds from both national and provincial levels.

7. Economic dimension: OTOP products and local services should be promoted for access to national and worldwide markets. private sector investment in infrastructure should be encouraged, including conservation-focused hotels and restaurants that embody local distinctiveness. Digital marketing tools should also be implemented to augment visibility and sales opportunities.

8. Social and cultural dimension: Data collection and the preservation and transmission of indigenous knowledge should be enhanced (Mayor of Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality, Interview, 2024).

## **Discussion**

The progress of cultural and creative tourism in the Nakhon Thai subdistrict of Phitsanulok province is attributable to the partnership of governmental, community, business, and educational sectors. These stakeholders contribute to national policy, the promotion of cultural identity, infrastructural development, and artistic endeavors. Nakhon Thai has strengths in cultural identity and collaboration; nevertheless, it faces obstacles such as inequitable benefit distribution, knowledge deficiencies, and ambiguous positions within the business sector. Solutions prioritize the augmentation of cooperation, new endeavors, and community engagement to guarantee sustainable growth. Principal projects include the preservation of cultural assets, including the Victory Flag Festival and weaving traditions, as well as the enhancement of infrastructure, such as tourist routes and information centers. OTOP items and creative activities, like weaving, bolster the local economy. Forming collaborative networks, decentralizing power, and distributing enough resources are essential for success. A committed committee for the promotion of cultural tourism and proactive community engagement are crucial for attaining sustainable development and addressing local requirements.

The discussion of the research results is presented below, based on the findings and conclusions derived from the research conducted.

**Objective 1:** From the review of literature and related research, it was found that the research findings on the issue of cooperation and community network systems based on creative cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai subdistrict indicate that the development of creative cultural tourism has been supported by the cooperation of various sectors, including government, local administrative organizations, communities, private sectors, and educational institutions. The research results show that this collaboration plays a crucial role in driving development and enhancing the area effectively. When compared with the review of literature and related research, both similarities and differences can be clearly explained as follows.

The study by Suebsunthon & Kunwong (2018) on creative tourism management based on sustainability indicates that successful and sustainable tourism management requires appropriate management aligned with the context of the area and relies on cooperation from all relevant sectors to drive development. This is consistent with the research findings in the Nakhon Thai subdistrict, which show that cooperation from all parties, including the national and local government, communities, the private sector, and educational institutions, contributes to creating a systematic mechanism for driving tourism, such as organizing the Pak Thong Chai Festival, producing local products, and developing tourism-friendly

infrastructure. The integration of roles from all sectors in Nakhon Thai demonstrates that this cooperation is not scattered, but rather a system with planned and jointly determined strategies, also considering the sustainability of tourism. This aligns with the conceptual framework of Supriya and Nisa, which states that sustainability can only be achieved on the basis of appropriate and effective management (Suebsunthon & Kunwong, 2018).

Kongkaew et al. (2014) studied a prototype project of spatial collaboration to create learning for farmers in agricultural decision-making, using the case study of low-cost corn cultivation in Nakhon Thai District. It emphasizes the success of collaboration between government agencies and the community in developing the local economy. This research aligns with studies in the Nakhon Thai subdistrict, which found that the government plays a crucial role in supporting budgets and national policies, while the community preserves local identity and resources, such as cultural conservation, the Pak Thong Chai tradition, and local weaving. Furthermore, this collaboration has led to the development of the area, improving the quality of life for community members. This is consistent with Kongkaew et al.'s (2014) conclusion that successful development projects rely on strong and sustainable local collaboration. This issue is similar to Janchua's (2009) research to enhance tourism management capabilities by the Bo Kluai community in the Bo Pho sub-district, Nakhon Thai district, Phitsanulok province. Janchua (2009) emphasized that tourism development requires cooperation from all parties, which aligns with the collaborative efforts of various agencies in the Nakhon Thai subdistrict, supported by the government, local administrative organizations, and educational institutions. The community's role is particularly vital in driving cultural activities, producing OTOP products, and managing local guides.

In a study of local wisdom: a case study of the Pak Thong Chai tradition to strengthen the community of Nakhon Thai Sirithipa (2003) emphasized the role of community networks as the main mechanism for sustainable tourism development, highlighting the importance of community strength in self-driven initiatives. However, the researcher's findings indicate that the development of creative tourism in the Nakhon Thai district does not rely solely on community networks but also requires cooperation from all sectors, such as the government, which plays a role in policy-making and budget allocation, the private sector, which supports accommodation management and tourism activities, and educational institutions, which are involved in research and local development (OECD, 2014).

Additionally, Sirithipa's (2003) study did not address the limitations related to the equitable distribution of benefits, an issue that the research in Nakhon Thai district found, where small producers still receive insufficient benefits from tourism. From the comparison of the research findings with related studies, it is evident that a key consistent point is that the development of creative tourism requires integrated cooperation from all sectors to be successful. This is clearly reflected in the works of Suebsunthon & Kunwong (2018), Kongkaew et al. (2014), and Janchua (2009). However, a notable difference is that this research emphasizes the necessity of enhancing the private sector's role in organizing large-scale activities and public relations, as well as addressing the issue of unequal benefit distribution, which has not been extensively discussed in previous studies (Duxbury & Richards, 2019). Additionally, the work of Sirithipa (2003), which primarily focuses on the community's role, differs from this research, which views cooperation from multiple sectors, particularly the roles of the government and the private sector, as crucial factors in driving sustainable tourism in the long term (Arunothai, 2019).

In this concluding part, the author examines the results by emphasizing the alignment of the TOWS Matrix analysis findings with the concepts of CBT. The TOWS Matrix study for Nakhon Thai district is well aligned with CBT concepts (Ngo & Creutz, 2022). It underscores cultural identity, interdisciplinary cooperation, community empowerment, and sustainable economic diversification. The SO and ST strategies emphasize the utilization of cultural assets and collaborations, whereas the WO and WT strategies concentrate on enhancing capability and diminishing dependence on

external finance. These methodologies foster inclusive engagement, cultural conservation, and equitable benefit allocation fundamental aspects of CBT. The strategy promotes multi-sectoral collaboration to develop a resilient, community-oriented tourism model that enhances local livelihoods while safeguarding Nakhon Thai's traditional heritage (Bittar Rodrigues & Prideaux, 2018).

**Objective 2:** The research findings on the patterns and methodologies for fostering cooperation and community networks through creative cultural tourism in Nakhon Thai subdistrict when correlated with pertinent literature and studies, reveal consistencies and discrepancies. The Royal Society of Thailand's concept of development underscores that "development" constitutes systematic enhancement, consistent with research findings advocating for development via planning processes, budget management, and the establishment of collaborative networks among government, community, and private sectors to ensure sustainable progress in the region (Piamphongsarn et al., 2009). The Chaipattana Foundation emphasizes self-reliance development, whereby individuals must independently execute developmental tasks. The study highlights the significant role of communities in preserving and conveying traditional knowledge, including weaving, bamboo basketry, and loom weaving, via creative endeavors that provide visitors chances for direct learning and experience (The Chaipattana Foundation, 2009).

In this perspective, community engagement is seen as a pivotal element in fostering sustainable development, underscoring the significance of communities as "custodians of culture" with an essential role in safeguarding and cultivating local identity. The study indicates that the Nakhon Thai sub-district has remarkable cultural resources, including the Pak Thong Chai tradition and other local cultural heritage, which may be used to create revenue while preserving cultural legacy (Piamphongsarn et al., 2009). Piamphongsarn et al. (2009) underscore the need of resource conservation to facilitate sustainable development, particularly by optimizing the use of finite resources to enhance benefits. The study proposes innovative techniques, including the development of OTOP goods that integrate old knowledge and are presented in a contemporary way to enhance value (Piamphongsarn et al., 2009). A significant distinction identified is that conventional economic development often emphasizes rapid economic expansion, perhaps resulting in unsustainable challenges (Dachum, 2013). Nonetheless, the study indicates that balance may be attained by sustainable cultural development, including the promotion of authentic creative learning activities that actively engage visitors.

The research addresses the challenge of establishing cooperative networks and coordination constraints by proposing strategies to develop such networks within the community and regionally, specifically by connecting Nakhon Thai district with adjacent provinces like Sukhothai and Phitsanulok to formulate collaborative tourism routes. This corresponds with the notion of holistic development that emphasizes regional integration. The Chaipattana Foundation's idea emphasizes the integration of resources and collaboration in the region for sustainable development (The Chaipattana Foundation, 2009). Nevertheless, the study indicates communication issues that the researchers believe corresponds with the principles of sustainable development, highlighting the collaboration among government, community, and private sectors to achieve equilibrium among economic, social, and cultural dimensions.

Nonetheless, the observed constraints include communication challenges, inequitable distribution of benefits, and the absence of community decision-making authority in policy. Resolving these difficulties should emphasize fortifying the community by facilitating possibilities for involvement in all phases of development, as well as establishing transparent and efficient collaboration methods. This would allow Nakhon Thai subdistrict to evolve into a really sustainable creative cultural tourist destination that adheres to international development criteria (Zeng et al., 2024; Rasyid et al., 2023).

Furthermore, making a linkage between the results of the study for the second objective with CBT, research on the development of creative cultural tourism in the Nakhon Thai subdistrict is well grounded in CBT (Ngo & Creutz, 2022).



Such illustrate the importance of partnerships among government, community, and private sectors in ramping up cultural assets and infrastructure. Experiential tourism, youth participation and digital storytelling sustain local identity including traditional weaving and the Pak Thong Chai festival. Prime factors for improving resilience planning include marginalized and excluded communities seeking recognition as stakeholders and the lack of community input in wider city decision-making processes, resulting in an urgent need for integrated planning across sectors. Challenges range from funding delays to disparities in benefit distribution, which disproportionately affect small producers. The recommendation includes enhancing local business involvement, setting up cultural learning centers, and building regional tourism networks. Such strategies promote participatory ownership, fair benefits and sustainable tourism, which are elementary for the true meaning of community-based tourism (Bittar Rodrigues & Prideaux, 2018). The research provides a useful framework that draws attention to using authentic local identity and working together as areas that can increase community empowerment and pursue sustainable economic and cultural development.

**Objective 3:** The literature review and related research indicate that strategies and policy recommendations at the community level, emphasizing cooperation and participation among community networks in Nakhon Thai subdistrict, underscore the significance of fostering creative cultural tourism. This emphasizes the need of collaboration across all sectors, the preservation and enhancement of local cultural identity, and economic advancement via community tourism. These results align with other literature, especially with methods for structuring creative endeavors, fostering collaborative networks, and enhancing community resources. The synopsis is as follows.

1. The advancement of innovative tourist initiatives: The study findings advocate for the implementation of innovative activities, including weaving, preparing traditional cuisine, and hosting cultural events. This corresponds with the research conducted by Lertpachrapong & Saengjamnong (2020), who examined the evolution of innovative tourism initiatives in the Klong Rang Crocodile village, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province. This project enables visitors to participate in community activities, resulting in experience learning, pleasure, and equitable cash distribution to the community. Furthermore, Chanchai's (2018) study on the evolution of creative tourism derived from local lifestyles in Hua Hin revealed that visitors are driven to engage in activities that foster an understanding and appreciation of local culture. This corresponds with the study idea that emphasizes the establishment of seminars and festivals that thoroughly engage visitors with the community.

2. The formation of a collaborative network among the government, community, and commercial sector: The research advocates for the establishment of a tourism development committee comprising representatives from all sectors, consistent with the collaborative framework presented by Sopa (2018), who examined the advancement of community enterprises that bolster creative tourism through the integration of activities with tourism and government involvement, including collaborative marketing with the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). Nonetheless, the study revealed constraints in promoting cooperation, including an inequitable allocation of the benefits. This stands in contrast to Matayamburut's (2020) viewpoint, which highlights the importance of international collaboration specifically, the integration of travel routes with neighboring countries as a strategic method to enhance and maintain tourism networks.

3. Advancement of Community Economic Development and Promotion of Local Goods The research emphasizes the promotion of OTOP products and local handicrafts as a means to increase revenue and strengthen community competitiveness. This aligns with the work of Sopa (2018), who advocates for the development of local food products and the establishment of learning centers to attract tourists. These efforts also underscore the importance of enhancing food processing and marketing through governmental support. Similarly, Chanchai (2018) highlights that effective product development must be accompanied by improvements in community infrastructure and services, such as the

standardization of homestays and the training of local guides both of which are vital for the sustainable economic development of Nakhon Thai district.

The study highlights two key issues, firstly, preserving and conveying culture. A major challenge is the lack of successors to traditional wisdom and disinterest among younger generations. This contrasts with Lertpachrapong & Saengjamnong's (2020) success in engaging youth through tourism activities. Secondly, advancing infrastructure and technology is an issue. The research advocates for modernizing transportation and adopting digital tools like travel apps, which differ from Sopa's (2018) focus on product development and event organization. Additionally, the study aligns with previous research on designing innovative activities, building networks, and promoting local products but addresses unique challenges such as financial constraints and inequitable benefit distribution (Pounpunwong, 2023).

In conclusion, after examining the three study topics, we now address the government's policy regarding the promotion of soft power, which has come to the forefront following the Pheu Thai Party's assumption of power under the leadership of Ms. Paetongtarn Shinawatra as Prime Minister of Thailand. A strategic mechanism for enhancing soft power has been introduced, focusing on two primary objectives: fostering economic development to navigate the middle-income trap and elevating the population out of poverty. This policy includes the five key areas: food, film, fashion, fighting, and festival. Multiple government agencies have joined forces to advance the 5F policy through initiatives and strategies aligned with the objectives of each agency (for the implementation of the soft power policy in the medium and long term, the government plans to establish the Thailand Creative Culture Agency (THACCA) as the main agency responsible for comprehensively driving the country's soft power policy). This research connects the Development of Collaborative Mechanisms and Community Network Systems for Creative Cultural Tourism in the Nakhon Thai subdistrict, to the driving strategy and soft power policy, as illustrated in Table 3.

**Table 3** The Alignment and Developmental Trajectory of Research Outcomes With Soft Power Policy

Issue	Adherence to Soft Power Strategy	Recommendations for Continued Advancement
1. Advancing cultural dimensions	The approach demonstrates alignment with the 5F policy, especially in the domains of Festival and Fashion, as evidenced by the organization of the "Pak Thong Chai" festival and the commitment to preserving indigenous textiles.	The development strategy can be enhanced to include cultural products and soft power initiatives that appeal to both Thai and international tourists, leveraging local cultural assets.
2. Generating economic value	Corresponds with the primary goals of the soft power policy in promoting the grassroots economy and mitigating inequality.	Leverage cultural assets as foundational elements to produce innovative local products, including souvenirs crafted from natural fibers and traditional cuisine.
3. Developing a framework for soft power	Ensuring alignment with THACCA's responsibilities in policy-making, advocacy, and functioning as a central hub for connecting all sectors.	Form a soft power working group at the subdistrict level, comprising representatives from the community, government, universities, and the private sector to collaboratively advance creative initiatives in the region.
4. Advocating for the region as an exemplar of soft power	Nakhon Thai subdistrict has the potential to evolve into a leading example for creative culture, supported by its cultural, physical, and network resources.	Formulate an innovative local development plan to seek budget support from the Soft Power Fund and to advance sustainable development initiatives.

**Table 3** The Alignment and Developmental Trajectory of Research Outcomes With Soft Power Policy (cont.)

Issue	Adherence to Soft Power Strategy	Recommendations for Continued Advancement
5. Advancing the private sector and community engagement	Soft power highlights the importance of empowering the local private sector to enhance its contribution to the development of a cultural economy.	Encourage the utilization of digital platforms, including social commerce, to market products and enhance tourism activities within the district.
6. Improving design and cultural communication abilities	Focusing on the advancement of "human capital" to effectively convey cultural narratives through innovative mediums, including storytelling and visual media.	Partner with universities or training organizations to improve the skills of youth, OTOP product groups, and local guides.  Integration of plans with national agencies
7. Integration of plans with national agencies	Ensuring alignment with the initiatives of the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, and THACCA to support cultural sectors.	Nakhon Thai is engaged in a partnership with Phitsanulok province to develop a cultural area development plan that is in accordance with national budgetary frameworks and strategic goals.

Overview summary: This research addresses the development of local cultural tourism and has the potential to serve as a model for spatial policy that can be extended into national soft power policies, encompassing the creative economy, cultural identity, and sustainable grassroots economic development.

## Research Recommendations

1. A local collaborative framework should be formed, including pertinent authorities such as the Phitsanulok Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports, the Provincial Office of Culture, and the Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality. A tourist development committee for Nakhon Thai subdistrict should be established, consisting of members from the government, corporate sector, and community. This committee will be tasked with formulating strategic strategies, identifying challenges, and efficiently overseeing the execution of operations. This method will facilitate local collaboration and establish development strategies that address the area's need.

2. It is essential to establish policies that foster creative cultural tourism by encouraging collaboration between the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Ministry of Culture, and the Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Administrative Organization. It is essential for these policies to encompass the allocation of budgets aimed at supporting initiatives such as the preservation of cultural identity, the organization of community-based workshops, and the establishment of annual cultural festivals. Furthermore, the incorporation of digital technologies, including intuitive tourism applications, should be promoted to deliver engaging and contemporary information, thereby appealing to younger generations of travelers.

3. To provide equitable distribution of economic benefits, relevant agencies, including the Community Development Department, the Tourism Development Office, and local universities (Naresuan University and Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University), should establish mechanisms to assist small entrepreneurs within the community, such as OTOP groups or local product manufacturers, by providing management and marketing training, as well as facilitating the sale of local products on online or national platforms.

4 To advocate for the development of research and cultural learning centers in the region, a collaborative effort among Naresuan University, Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University, and Nakhon Thai subdistrict Municipality is essential.

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These institutions should work together to establish a center for cultural and tourism education in Nakhon Thai Subdistrict. The proposed center would serve as a repository of local history, cultural heritage, and indigenous knowledge. It would also provide training programs for local guides and youth, aimed at enhancing skills in cultural preservation and promotion. Moreover, the center should promote innovative tourism activities that effectively engage and attract visitors.

Furthermore, to facilitate practical application, the author has consolidated the research findings and recommendations by formulating an example, specifically the development plan for the Nakhon Thai subdistrict, based on the concept of cooperative mechanism development and community network for creative cultural tourism, as illustrated in Table 4.

**Table 4** One Plan: Area Development Framework for Nakhon Thai Subdistrict

Component	Key Activities	Responsible Agencies	Development Objectives
1. Local Collaborative Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formulate the Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Tourism Development Committee, including representatives from government entities, the private sector, and local community stakeholders</li> <li>- Facilitate annual strategic planning meetings</li> <li>- Oversee project implementation and tackle development challenges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phitsanulok Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports</li> <li>- Phitsanulok Provincial Office of Culture</li> <li>- Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality</li> </ul>	Build a sustainable multi-sector collaboration mechanism
2. Policy Support for Creative Cultural Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop policies for local tourism advancement</li> <li>- Allocate funds for cultural events, workshops, and tourism mobile applications</li> <li>- Advocate for the integration of digital technology to engage and attract a younger demographic of tourists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Tourism and Sports</li> <li>- Ministry of Culture</li> <li>- Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Administrative Organization (SAO)</li> </ul>	Provide policy and financial support for sustainable creative tourism
3. Equitable Allocation of Economic Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide assistance to local entrepreneurs, including OTOP and craftspeople</li> <li>- Coordinate training sessions in business management and digital marketing</li> <li>- Enhance sales via online and national channels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community Development Department</li> <li>- Tourism Development Office</li> <li>- Naresuan University</li> <li>- Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University</li> </ul>	Reduce income disparity and build local entrepreneurship capacity
4. Establishment of Cultural and Tourism Learning Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish local cultural and tourism education centers</li> <li>- Safeguard and record local history and indigenous knowledge</li> <li>- Provide training for youth and community guides</li> <li>- Create engaging tourism initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Naresuan University</li> <li>- Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University</li> <li>- Nakhon Thai Subdistrict Municipality</li> </ul>	Build knowledge infrastructure and enhance local human capital
5. Creative Communication and Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create strategies for cultural storytelling</li> <li>- Create digital media content for platforms such as Facebook, TikTok and YouTube</li> <li>- Initiate the "Creative Nakhon Thai" tourism campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provincial Public Relations Office</li> <li>- Local tourism operators</li> <li>- Academic media units and community storytellers</li> </ul>	Strengthen brand identity and visibility as a creative cultural tourism destination

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