



Bloomberg
New Economy
Forum

Happiness in Urban Spaces

Roundtable Briefing

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Session Information

Session Title: Happiness in Urban Spaces

Date & Time: Wednesday November 7, 2018 - 10:25-11:15am

Location: Specific breakout room will be listed in the Forum App

Logistics:

- Leaders: Please arrive 5 minutes prior to the start of your session to meet the moderator [10:20am]
- Press plan: Open but not broadcast
- Session length: 50 min

Description:

The challenge for New Economy super-city planners: think big, act small. A vibrant culture that attracts talent, and fosters innovation, starts with a focus on individuals and communities.

Format:

Timeline	Agenda
5 min	Host opens the roundtable (5 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frames the challenge• Summarizes the topic• Explains the format
10 min	Moderator introduces and calls on the Firestarters Firestarters speak (2-3 min each)
33 min	Moderator opens conversation to the room <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Calls on delegates individually to share ideas, reactions, comments (1-2 min each)
2 min	Moderator wraps roundtable

Roundtable Leaders

Hosts:



Michael R. Bloomberg
*Founder of Bloomberg L.P. & Bloomberg Philanthropies
108th Mayor of New York City*



Yana Peel
Chief Executive Officer, Serpentine Galleries

Moderator:



Reuben Abraham
Chief Executive Officer, IDFC Institute

Roundtable Leaders

Firestarters:



Adrian Cheng
Executive Vice Chairman, New World Development



Richard Edelman
President and Chief Executive Officer, Edelman



Arianna Huffington
Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Thrive Global



Herman Narula
Chief Executive Officer, Improbable



Carlo Ratti
Director, MIT Senseable City Lab

Registered Roundtable Participants

Mohamed Al Ramahi, Chief Executive Officer, Masdar

Mina Al-Oraibi, Editor-in-Chief, The National

Beh Swan Gin, Chairman, Economic Development Board

Youngcho Chi, Executive Vice President, Hyundai Motor Company

Kai Fong Chng, Managing Director, Singapore Economic Development Board

Stephanie Flanders, Head of Bloomberg Economics, Bloomberg

Orit Gadiesh, Chairman, Bain & Company, Inc.

Miguel Gamino, Executive Vice President, Mastercard

Fanyu Lin, Chief Executive Officer, FLUXUS LLC

Hai Ling, Co-President, Asia Pacific, Mastercard

Federico Lopez, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, First Philippine Holdings Corporation

Daniel Martinez-Valle, Chief Executive Officer, Mexichem

Tim Murphy, General Counsel, Mastercard

Isabel Noboa, Executive President, Consorcio Nobis

Jayne Plunkett, Chief Executive Officer, Asia, Swiss Reinsurance Asia Pte Ltd

Susan Rockefeller, Trustee, Oceana

David Rockefeller, Jr., Director, Rockefeller Capital Management

Claudia Romo Edelman, Founder, We Are All Human

Ari Sarker, Co-President, Asia Pacific, Mastercard Asia/Pacific Pte Ltd

Bahren Shaari, Chief Executive Officer, Bank of Singapore

Nemat Shafik, Director, London School Of Economics and Political Science

Takumi Shibata, President and Chief Executive Officer, Nikko Asset Management Co., Ltd.

Nestor Tan, President and Chief Executive Officer, BDO Unibank, Inc.

Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Chairman, Ayala Land Inc.

Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Ayala Corporation

Topic Overview



Shenzhen, according to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, is the most liveable city in China. Never mind its sky-high housing costs and so-so schools, the academy based its judgement on other factors: economic development, social management, quality of life, innovation, and ecological environment. This is why the city is a magnet for talent from all over China, the base for Huawei, Tencent and the drone giant DJI. By any measure, it is a happy city. Hong Kong, next door, is in a funk. It ranks a lowly 76th in the U.N. World Happiness Index. Although it is richer than Shenzhen in terms of GDP per capita, it no longer feels like a city of boundless opportunity, and the millennial generation in the city-state is gripped by a widespread feeling of malaise. Further south, by contrast, the even richer Singaporeans inhabit the happiest city in Asia.

Happiness describes a range of positive emotions, from pride to contentment. We now know that the triggers can be embedded in the lines and shapes of urban architecture, or in displays public art, or in thoughtful infrastructure that puts people first. Copenhagen doubled the width of its bicycle lanes so riders can chat with each other on their way to work, promoting camaraderie, friendship and social solidarity.

This is the “soft infrastructure” of urbanization that can make the difference between a city that attracts talent and succeeds, or repels creative minds and stagnates. Mike Bloomberg, the former New York Mayor, lauds public art as a vehicle to “bring communities together, spur change and increase economic growth.”

Samuel Johnson famously remarked that “when a man is tired of London he is tired of life.” Yet too many of our great cities today breed ennui. It is worth noting, in an era of urban gigantism, that the 2018 Soft Power Destinations Awards – the Oscars of the museum world – went to a territory of less than 100 square miles and 2,706 inhabitants: Fogo Island off Newfoundland, a speck of rock in the storm-lashed Atlantic that nurtures artists and celebrates design.

Objective

Our panel will examine the complex roots of urban happiness, and propose ideas to improve the “soft” infrastructure of supercities, one of the prime concerns of the New Economy Forum at a time when the global economy is organizing around gigantic urban spaces with GDPs of medium-sized countries. What can we learn from a startup city like Shenzhen, or a green metropolis like Singapore where order and security breed content? We should provide practical insights.

Can art and architecture help restore Hong Kong’s sense of social wellbeing, and lift its economic prospects? The link between culture, broadly defined, and economic prosperity is key here. And what is the role of technology? We cannot speak of cities without reference to digital technologies at the core of their operating systems. Can virtual worlds transport urban millennials to more joyful places, while modeling more pleasing environments and more satisfying lifestyles?

These are the types of questions this panel should examine, drawing on the background and deep knowledge of the speakers in the areas of art, architecture, technology, real estate and consumer culture.

Background Resources

Charles Montgomery, *Happy City: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design*, 2013

<https://thehappy.city.com/the-book/>

Summary: After decades of unchecked sprawl, more people than ever are moving back to the city. Dense urban living has been prescribed as a panacea for the environmental and resource crises of our time. But is it better or worse for our happiness? Are subways, sidewalks and tower dwelling an improvement on the car-dependence of sprawl? Award-winning journalist Charles Montgomery finds answers to such questions at the intersection between urban design and the emerging science of happiness, during an exhilarating journey through some of the world's most dynamic cities.

Michael Bloomberg, *Evening Standard*: “*Public Art is not just culture. It brings energy and cash to our cities,*” October 5, 2018

<https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/comment/public-art-is-not-just-culture-it-brings-energy-and-cash-to-our-cities-a3954446.html>

Summary: The success of any city depends on its ability to attract creative, talented people. The arts can help do that, and London and New York are perfect examples. Public art can also reinforce the values we cherish and celebrate – and open our eyes to the ways in which we're failing to live up to them. Culture attracts capital more than capital attracts culture, because the arts are a magnet for dreamers and innovators from every walk of life. They make our cities more vibrant and our economies more prosperous.

Leading Culture Destinations

<https://www.leadingculturedestinations.com/awards-1>

Summary: Culture destinations celebrate the best established and emerging culture destinations worldwide. Each year the LCD awards shines a light on the most impactful cultural activations from those institutions and organizations shaping tomorrow's world.

For more information

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