

# Industry Analysis Report on Shanghai's Marine Intangible Cultural Heritage Venues

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## Abstract

**This report on the development and problems of the marine intangible cultural heritage in Shanghai. The ICH culture has become more and more popular in recent years, so the sector has grown steadily. As a coastal city, Shanghai is at an advantageous geographical and economic location to develop marine ICH venues. However, the industry has a series of problems such as insufficient funds, lack of manpower and immaturity of the business model of the venues. This paper will analyze the current situation of the venues for marine intangible cultural heritage in Shanghai, point out the problems existing in the venues, and put forward countermeasures for reference to solve the problems and guide future development.**

## Keywords

**Shanghai's Marine Intangible Cultural Heritage; Intangible Cultural Heritage; Venue Development; Industry Analysis.**

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

Along with the development of economy and promoting of national policy, the ICH has begun to grow. In 2021, the State Council released guiding opinions on further strengthening the protection of intangible cultural heritage, supporting the construction of intangible cultural heritage museums and experience centers. From this, it can be known that ICH venues are an important part of protecting and inheriting China's ICH.

Shanghai to the north is the Yangtze and to the east is the east coast. This special geographical position has given the city a wealth of rich and diverse marine ICH resources. Since 2007, Shanghai has announced five batches of cultural heritage items, reaching a total of 220 items, with 58 related to the sea, accounting for nearly one quarter of the municipal-level listings. From 2006 to the present, 58 items from Shanghai have been included in the national intangible cultural heritage list, among which there are 10 marine-related items, accounting for 17 percent of the city's national items. Up to now, there are several marine ICH venues established and opened in Shanghai, mainly located in the seven districts of Pudong New Area, Baoshan District, Chongming District, Jinshan District, Fengxian District, Minhang District, and Qingpu District. This shows that the marine ICH venue industry in Shanghai has substantial growth potential and promising prospects.

### 1.2. Research Significance:

Shanghai's marine ICH is an important part of the city's cultural heritage. In addition to connect the past and present, to give Shanghai a second opportunity to develop into a first class port in the world. There are mainly three areas of research on the form of marine ICH events, cultural development and integration with local tourism, after some success in some venues, problems such as the standardization of form and content have begun to emerge. This report starts with

a discussion on the special features of marine ICH. It analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of existing venues from both the visitor and operator perspectives and summarizes successful operational models to support the sustainable development of the industry.

### **1.3. Literature Review**

#### **1.3.1. Foundational Research on the Value and Preservation of Marine ICH**

In recent years, China has been continuously implementing the strategy of a maritime power. At the same time, the goal of building a strong cultural nation has become increasingly important. In this context, the protection and development of marine ICH have become a key research topic. Deng Qiongfeng pointed out that marine ICH in Sanya includes folk tales, marine beliefs and traditional production skills. Protecting this heritage can provide support for the national maritime strategy [1]. Bi Wen analyzed the marine ICH in Qinzhou, Guangxi. The study pointed out that this heritage has historical, cultural and artistic value, and also has practical value in education, spiritual life and local economy [2]. Xu Junkang focuses on the marine ICH in Zhejiang Province. It was pointed out that this heritage is closely related to daily life and has strong local characteristics and rich belief traditions. The author suggests using digital means and online media to support protection and development. This can help to increase the access and cultural value of the public [3].

#### **1.3.2. Research on Marine ICH Protection and Operational Pathways**

As important institutions for the protection of heritages, museums and related venues are at the center of marine ICH work. Fang Jianhui considers marine ICH protection from a museum point of view. This article proposes four main implementation paths: collection, exhibition, research, and education, and offers clear and practical directions for venue operations [4].

In addition, Many scholars are studying the connection between marine ICH and tourism. Yu Cuiling puts forward that tourism development should enhance the quality and cultural depth of projects [5]. Wang Heng conducts a study on the integration of marine ICH and tourism in the Bohai Rim area. The research focuses on innovation in product forms and stronger promotional strategies [6]. Cui Fengxiang points out that there are problems such as shallow cultural connotation, insufficient promotion, and limited financial support in the marine ICH of Shandong Province. Suggest solving these problems through the integration of resource development, service supply and technology application [7].

Existing research has formed a relatively complete understanding of marine ICH; These studies have explained the value, protection methods and development paths of marine ICH; In the case of Shanghai, there is a lack of special research and analysis on marine ICH venues, which this study aims to fill the gap through industry analysis.

## **2. Industry Overview**

### **2.1. Industry Definition and Classification**

The ICH venues refer to the places for the exhibition, research, protection and inheritance of ICH. There may be some museums, galleries, exhibition halls, etc. There are more than 30 items of marine heritage such as drum storytelling, dragon dance and rolling lantern performances at the marine ICH venues in Shanghai. The former mainly include museums, Art galleries, cultural Centre, the House of exhibiting, experience Center, and the likes. The management of these venues is generally undertaken by local cultural and tourism departments, but some of the venues are run by universities, communities or enterprises.

### **2.2. Development History and Characteristics**

The marine ICH venues in Shanghai began to appear at the beginning of the 21st century and gradually formed after 2010. At present, Shanghai has developed a number of well-known ICH

venue. According to the comparison of data from 2000 to 2024, this report finds the following characteristics of the development of Shanghai's marine intangible cultural heritage venues:

### 2.2.1. Venue Format Changes

Forms of venues have continuously innovated, and have experienced four stages of:

Phase One: Exhibition-led (2000-2005). During this stage, venues were mainly dedicated to exhibitions and showed marine intangible heritage by means of artifacts, texts and pictures; Phase Two: Performance Integration (2005-2015). 2005 - 2015 Venues began to explore more vivid and varied ways of displaying. Began to adopt performance forms such as storytelling, dragon and lion dances, displaying traditional craftsmanship, etc. to enhance the cultural appeal and ornamental value of the venues. Phase Three: Interactive Experiences (2015-2020). At this time, Shanghai's marine ICH venues are dedicated to creating an interactive experience platform. Visitors could participate in activities such as painting fishermen's works or a try of Shadow puppetry. This gave a hand - on experience that led to more of an engagement with the audiences. Phase Four: Digital Empowerment (2020 - Present). Technologies like VR, AR and big data has been applied in order to bring the visitor experience more immersive and customized.

### 2.2.2. Supply and Demand Factors

The development of ICH venues is the result of both supply and demand upgrading, demand driving innovation and supply guaranteeing development. In terms of demand, there is an increase in spiritual consumption, and the transaction volume, per capita spending, and number of both businesses and consumers in ICH activities have all risen. On the supply side, technological innovations, government support, market competition, etc., have jointly contributed to the improvement of the quantity and quality of venues.

## 3. Findings and Challenges

Through the interviews with managers of marine ICH venues in Shanghai and the survey of the participants, we can get as follows:

### 3.1. Funding Shortages and Operational Pressure

Most are free, therefore have great operation cost and few sources of profit. Of the seven venues, six are free, only the Shanghai Baoshan International Folk Art Museum charges a small fee, see Table 1. At the same time, all seven venues can be used for activities such as ICH performances, ICH experiences, and special exhibitions, among which the three featured activities are also free to the public. While free access is for the benefit of the people, it also brings financial pressure: exhibiting rental and transport and performer. And as for if there are other ways to make money besides regular exhibitions and activities, some venues such as the Jinshan Folk Painting Academy have mentioned they have opened an online shop where they sell cultural goods, but no one is buying it.

**Table 1.** Pricing Conditions of Marine ICH Venues

District	Venue Name	Ticket Required	Featured Activities
Jinshan District	Jinshan Farming Village	No	Paid (Farm Experiences)
Pudong New Area	Pudong Bookbinding Art Museum	No	Free
Qingpu District	Qingpu Museum	No	Paid (Special Exhibitions)
Minhang District	Qibao Shadow Puppet Art Museum	No	Free
Chongming District	Chongming Cultural Center	No	Paid (ICH Performances)
Fengxian District	Fengxian Cultural Center	No	Free
Baoshan District	International Folk Art Museum	Yes (from ¥7)	Paid (Festival Events)

### 3.2. Talent Shortage and Transmission Issues

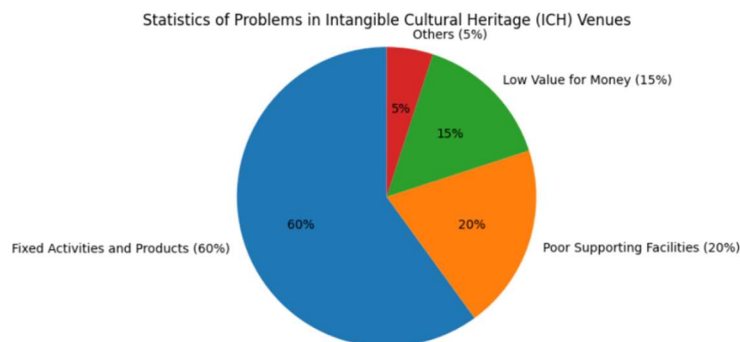
A lack of skilled young workers is preventing the inheritance of ICH. Many of the practitioners are old, and there is a shortage of young talent. And the way is complex, it must be effort to be learned. These days young people all have a quick life and many pressures, making it difficult for them to take time out to learn and keep these skills.

### 3.3. Low Market Awareness and Engagement

Limited promotion methods, no new media strategies for young audiences. The survey results show that among the seven venues, five are promoted through WeChat official accounts, and the other two promote through traditional newspaper articles. The venues with the most interactive times have an average of 270 to 300 views per article. But none of them have an account on popular self-media platforms such as Xiaohongshu and Douyin. The small outreach of the brand leads to lack of recognition of the market and the public.

### 3.4. Lack of Innovation in Exhibitions and Products

About 60% of the visitors think that the problem of the current venues is repetitive content, see Figure 1. Exhibitions are often in need of renewal and cannot meet modern audiences' requirements for interactivity and technology application. Many of the on-site activities are perceived as boring with no creativity or interaction, especially by young people. In addition, derivative cultural products follow trends blindly without creativity and uniqueness, reducing consumer interest and impeding the promotion of ICH.



**Figure 1.** Statistics Table of Existing Problems in ICH Venues

### 3.5. Inadequate Supporting Facilities

Missing supporting service such as transportation, accommodation, food lead to lower visitors. According to the survey, there are 20% people who believe that there are shortcomings for the supporting facilities at the current ICH venues as their main issue. Like Jinshan Folk Painting Institute in the suburbs of Shanghai which takes over 2 hours' bus ride downtown, it also has no hotels or restaurants nearby. These problems that arise from a lack of logistics, to a large degree, cut down on the visitors' satisfaction.

## 4. Future Development Directions and Strategic Recommendations

### 4.1. Future Development Directions

#### 4.1.1. Digital Transformation and Innovative Development

With the progress of information technology, Digitization transformation brings into being opportunity for the developing of all areas. Shanghai's marine ICH venues can use digital tools such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) to improve the service and display effects, and allow visitors to experience it. Many domestic venues have already introduced

digital display technologies, such as the Panoramic Forbidden City, Digital Dunhuang exhibitions, etc. Make the exhibition content more vivid, attract a wider range of people.

Digital communication can be expanded to social media and the Internet to promote the dissemination of ICH. Venue can establish digital archives and databases, such as the Palace Museum digital collection, to facilitate the public. Also, places can use the power of big data to learn more about what kind of audience there is out there, figure out how each group likes to spend their time, make exhibitions and events that people will want to come to and actually have fun.

#### **4.1.2. Deep Integration of Cultural Tourism and Industrial Upgrading**

Shanghai's marine ICH venues should be better combined with tourism to create unique local heritage tourism brands. By virtue of local cultural resources to develop a variety of products such as ICH experience and exchange, These venues will have more visitors, and escape the homogenized competition. In terms of industrial upgrading, venues should actively explore the linked development with local related industries, such as exploration in fishing and marine product processing and agriculture, and so on. By incorporating ICH elements into these fields and venues, the value of the relevant products can be increased. In addition, with the development of cultural industries, venues can explore a model of coexistence of intangible heritage and cultural creativity, promoting the cooperation between practitioners of heritage and contemporary designers to produce marketable products that integrate traditional craftsmanship and modern aesthetics.

#### **4.1.3. Expanding International Exchange and Cooperation**

In today's globalized world, Shanghai's marine ICH should have more interactions with the international audience. Take "Jinshan Peasant Paintings Exhibition "Art of Jiangnan: Spring Scenery and Autumn Rain" Exhibiting in Tokyo as an example, it was very popular in Tokyo because the brilliant color and ingenious conception. And help with the profile of shanghai culture abroad, and also make a new impetus for the shanghai cultural industry and creative industry to progress. Set up international cooperation platforms, which can promote resource sharing, enhance the global influence of Chinese ICH and promote the exchange and prosperity of different cultures.

### **4.2. Policy Recommendations**

#### **4.2.1. Strengthening Policy Support and Financial Investment**

The government plays a key role in the development of ICH venues. In order to sustain their business they need to receive more policies and finance. Encourage society to participate in protecting intangible cultural heritage through some kinds of fund and tax exemption. More targeted policies should also be made in order to get more money from the fund to ICH projects and business so there is a more mixed investment setup. Government also construct a unified assessment system to supervise, to give direction for these venues, to realize the optimal use for public money and to guarantee the accomplishment of projects. Improve the operational standards and enhance the public's confidence in such practices.

#### **4.2.2. Enhancing Talent Development and Incentive Mechanisms**

The inheritance of ICH inheritance is impossible without talent support. A complete training system for practitioners should be established. Universities can be encouraged to work with cultural institutions to develop courses and practical projects to cultivate inheritors who have both professional knowledge and practical skills. We might provide scholarship and job to the youth so that they can work on intangible heritage. Moreover, establish incentive mechanisms to retain young inheritors, who tend to leave due to the economic pressure. Governments and the like can inheritors solve practical problems through means such as subsidies and help them

feel a sense of belonging and honor, thus increasing the inheritance of ICH; And development and expansion can also be.

#### 4.2.3. Increasing Market Awareness and Engagement

The market awareness and participation of ICH directly affect its development prospects. Efforts should be made to raise awareness through various channels, including social media and offline events, to allow more people to appreciate the value of intangible heritage. Interactive activities such as workshops and lectures should be actively organized to encourage public participation. This will foster a stronger sense of community and enthusiasm for heritage preservation, creating an environment that supports the sustainable transmission of ICH.

### Acknowledgments

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