

WHV – Ayutthaya 2025: River x Heritage

Historic City of Ayutthaya, Thailand

Cultural property inscribed on the World Heritage List (1991)

PROJECT DATES

20 August - 30 August 2025

THE SITE - The Historic City of Ayutthaya, founded in 1350, was the second capital of the Siamese Kingdom. It flourished from the 14th to the 18th centuries, during which time it grew to be one of the world's largest and most cosmopolitan urban areas and a center of global diplomacy and commerce. Ayutthaya was strategically located on an island surrounded by three rivers connecting the city to the sea. This site was chosen because it was located above the tidal bore of the Gulf of Siam as it existed at that time, thus preventing attack of the city by the sea-going warships of other nations. The location also helped to protect the city from seasonal flooding.

OBJECTIVES - The project aims to promote the World Heritage site of Ayutthaya under the theme "River x Heritage," highlighting the significant role of the Chao Phraya River in shaping the cultural and natural heritage of the area. This initiative seeks to explore the river's contribution to Ayutthaya's history, including its impact on local traditions and the natural environment, thereby enhancing appreciation and understanding of its value as a cornerstone of cultural identity and biodiversity. The project will serve as a platform for critical debate and educational growth among local communities and international volunteers.

ACTIVITIES - Volunteers will be integral to the organization and implementation of the WHV Ayutthaya 2025, contributing to a variety of planned activities. These will include paddling along the historic river, interactive workshops on the historical impact of the river on Ayutthaya, and panel discussions featuring experts in environmental science and cultural history. A special focus will be placed on the river's influence on both tangible and intangible heritage elements, including but not limited to local culinary traditions and gastronomic heritage. Additionally, the project will incorporate a river clean-up initiative, where volunteers will work alongside participants to preserve the river's ecosystem. This activity will underscore the importance of environmental stewardship while connecting volunteers to the river's role in shaping the cultural landscape of Ayutthaya.

PARTNERS - Design Lab in Gastronomy, Heritage, and Tourism (deliGHT), Riverfront Research Alliance, Pa Pi Pie, Klong Rang Chorakae Community, and Koh Kerd Community.

Faculty of Architecture, Kasetsart University

Ass. Prof. Patiphol Yodsurang

patiphol.y@ku.th



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