

Charities thankful for Jiading practice zone

Liu Jingxian and Tom Qian

When Yan Dongxia launched a charity offering educational support for parents it was little more than a dream, with no office, projects or money.

Step forward the Jiading Social Organization Charity Practice Zone. Yan, a psychology graduate, contacted them at the end of last year telling them of her plans.

"Out of my expectations, the zone operator voiced their support on my charity dream,"

she said. "The zone not only equipped us with computers and telephones, they even exempted us from house rent as well as water and electricity bills." In addition, she received 10,000 yuan (US\$1,600) as a business start support, ensuring the launch of the social organization.

Approved by the Jiading district government, the charity practice zone was set up in September 2014 as an incubator for social organizations.

So far 26 organizations have entered the zone while seven have left after incubation.

Chen Jiayu and her classmates set up a social worker service center after graduation. She said they were attracted by the preferential policies in the zone. The zone supported their application for venture capital investment from local government and, so far, Chen's center has successfully applied for more than 270,000 yuan in support in two years.

Shanghai Jijicao Charity Culture Development Center was one of the first organizations to enter the zone. Recently, after a successful incubation,

they have set up formally in Jiangqiao Town.

Before September 2014 most of the members in the center were very vague about a social organization's role, operation and management.

"Before that we had no regulations, and our management were loose without proper measures," center leader Yin Xiaohua said.

After entering the zone, members took part in monthly training sessions to improve their management skills.

One of the most important benefits was the accounting

service provided by the zone.

"One of the most important thing for social organizations is accounting," Yin said.

Chaotic financial management is not only an internal risk but also a threat to the organization's credit.

"The accounting service of the zone helped us a lot, and is one of the reasons for our success," Yin said.

Social organizations wanting to incubate in the zone must be "badly needed by society" and have a "strong sense of mission," said zone official Xu Jing.

A door to art opens for children

Ran Tao and Tom Qian

THE ongoing second Poly Children's Art Festival, which will run through September, is presenting 35 performances in a series branded "Open the door of art."

The Wiltener Boy's Choir from Austria are giving concerts.

Music from the movies, including "Kung Fu Panda" and "Ice Age," is expected to attract large audiences of young people.

Lightwire Theater, who have appeared on "America's Got Talent," is performing "Moon Mouse: a Space Odyssey," a glow-in-the-dark adventure tale which combines 3D effects, dance, puppetry and traditional theater.

And endeavoring to make festivalgoers laugh are comedians from Russia, Germany and Ukraine.

The art festival will hold charity events in four communities to stage performances and give lectures on music and theater.

Shanghai Poly Grand Theater will also hold lectures on percussion and opera aimed at children and their parents.



A boy practices calligraphy at Jiading's art carnival for children. The carnival included lectures on traditional culture and stage performances at Poly Grand Theater, and attracted more than 1,000 students and teachers to take part. — Li Huacheng

Information boards solve parking woe

Gu Xianhui and Tom Qian

JIADING plans to set up 34 electronic information boards to help solving parking problems for drivers.

With the increasing number of cars in recent years, there is a huge gap between the number of cars and parking spaces in the Jiading Old Town area. As drivers have no idea where there are parking spaces, they spend time driving around looking for one, which adds to the traffic congestion.

For example, there are often traffic jams around Jiading Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospital even though there may be a number of spaces in nearby parking lots.

Electronic boards with parking information from six parking lots will be set up at main roads leading in and out of the downtown area. Boards with parking information from four parking lots will be set up along main roads inside the downtown area. Others will be set up in front of individual parking lots.

A plan has been compiled that covers Jiading Old Town.

"So far the positions of the 34 parking information electronic boards have been set, and construction is expected to be completed by the end of July," an official with the Jiading construction administration said.

By taking note of the boards, drivers can find their way to vacant parking spaces and know just how many are available.

The information will be shared with Shanghai's municipal parking information platform so that drivers from other parts of the city can also search for parking information in Jiading Old Town. The system is expected to be expanded to Jiading New Town, Anting and Nanxiang.

Renovation frees up underground space

Ran Tao and Tom Qian

RENOVATION of space under the elevated road of Xinyu Road is now complete.

The 26 million yuan (US\$3.9 million) project included installing a sewage pipe network, clearing construction waste, planting trees and painting the bottom of the elevated road and its support columns.

In Jiading's Zhenxin sub-district there are more than

100 archways under elevated roads which were considered an ideal solution to traffic jams.

However, most of the archways have been illegally occupied and used as warehouses or small workshops.

The space under the Beijing-Shanghai highway was known for illegal construction and random parking.

As the situation of chaotic parking and construction became more serious, traffic

jams increased.

A lot of people parked their cars randomly under the elevated road, and often the cars inside couldn't get out as a result.

So far 80 percent of the 78 archways under elevated roads in Zhenxin have been renovated, and will be open to the public late this year.

Parking lines have been painted under the elevated road and physical exercise spaces have also been set up.

Most of the vendors in nearby tea and textile market voiced their support. "We are happy to see the parking spaces have been set up and order has been established.

Without order our businesses were not promising," a tea trader surnamed Fu said.

"After renovation, the environment has been improved and it's cleaner," said Dong Shumin, who lives in the Zhenxin Garden neighborhood.