

THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM OF THAILAND

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Our everyday living relates to scientific technology closely and increasingly. Thus, it is very necessary both to complement the standard of science studies and teaching and to spread more technological knowledge to people. A way to achieve these purposes is to establish an educational institute which will specially function not only as a centre of scientific and technological materials but also as a place where scientific activities can be presented. Such centre is the Science and Technology Museum, which will be under the Division of Science Education Museum, Department of Educational Techniques, Ministry of Education.

Plan for the Museum establishment

The establishment of the Science and Technology Museum is one of the principal urgent projects of the Ministry of Education. This project was drawn up by the Ministry of Education and submitted to the Directorate of Education and Public Health (who functioned as the Minister of Education of the National Executive Council). After the approval, the Ministry assigned the Department of Educational Techniques with the task of collecting all the details in order to present them to the government.

After the assignment, the Co-ordinating Committee for the Establishment of Science and Technology Museum was appointed by the Ministry of Education. Mr. Bunthin Atthakara, then the Under-secretary of State for Education, was the Chairman. The committee consists of twelve members from both within the Ministry of Education and outside.

The committee considered all details of the project and then proposed to the Department to make a draft of it. At the same time, another two subcommittees were appointed. They are the Subcommittee of the Arrangements for Science and Technology Exhibitions—Mr. Singto Pukahuta is the Chairman; and the Subcommittee of the Arrangements for Natural History Exhibitions—Dr. Pradisth Cheosakul is the Chairman. These two subcommittees consist of the representatives from various government offices, government enterprises, companies and other people.

When this project had been drafted completely, the Department of Educational Techniques put forward the work of the two subcommittees to the Co-ordinating Committee. After careful consideration, the Ministry of Education proposed this project to the government. When the National Executive Council was dissolved, the project was reassigned to the Ministry of Education on December 1972 in order to present it once again to the newly formed government.

The author is a senior official of the Ministry of Education involved with the Science and Technology Museum project from the beginning. With a special interest in science education, she is one of the fifteen scientists selected for the official visit to the People's Republic of China this year.

On March 1973, the project was approved by the newly formed cabinet. Therefore SLT & Associates Co. which has skilful experts and architects has been employed by the Department of Educational Techniques to design the building.

During the consideration, the Ministry of Education requested the Ford Foundation to send an expert in the establishment of museum. The Ford Foundation sent the Director of the Smithsonian Institution Dr. Frank Taylor to advise us for three weeks. Moreover, Dr. Grace Morley, Chief of ICOM Regional Agency in Asia also sent advice and documents from various museums. After that, the Co-ordinating Committee reconsidered the design of the museum buildings and then proposed to the Department of Educational Techniques a two-period construction plan within a budget of 40 million baht; 20 million baht will be spent in each period.

The project of the Science and Technology Museum in summary

1. Objectives

- 1.1 To promote the quality of scientific and technological education both in schools and for the public. This is to pave the way for students and other people to have the basic knowledge and to understand the significance of scientific and technological development concerning our everyday lives.
- 1.2 To be a science and technology teaching centre for students as well as classroom extension.
- 1.3 To be the collecting centre of scientific and technological objects and instruments, which will be displayed for the public.

2. Location

The site allocated to the museum is in the compound of the Bangkok Planetarium.

3. Operation

- 3.1 To use the government's budget with the possibility of asking for experts and equipment from abroad.
- 3.2 To request experts and scientists to give advice concerning the science and technology museum.
- 3.3 To put the government officials in various positions as follows: the executive, scientists, technicians, personnel officials and workers. Sometimes other specialists will be invited to co-operate in this project.
- 3.4 To arrange various activities such as permanent and temporary exhibitions, lectures and demonstrations, films, libraries, and science kits. When possible, the exhibits will be capable of movement.

4. *Working periods*

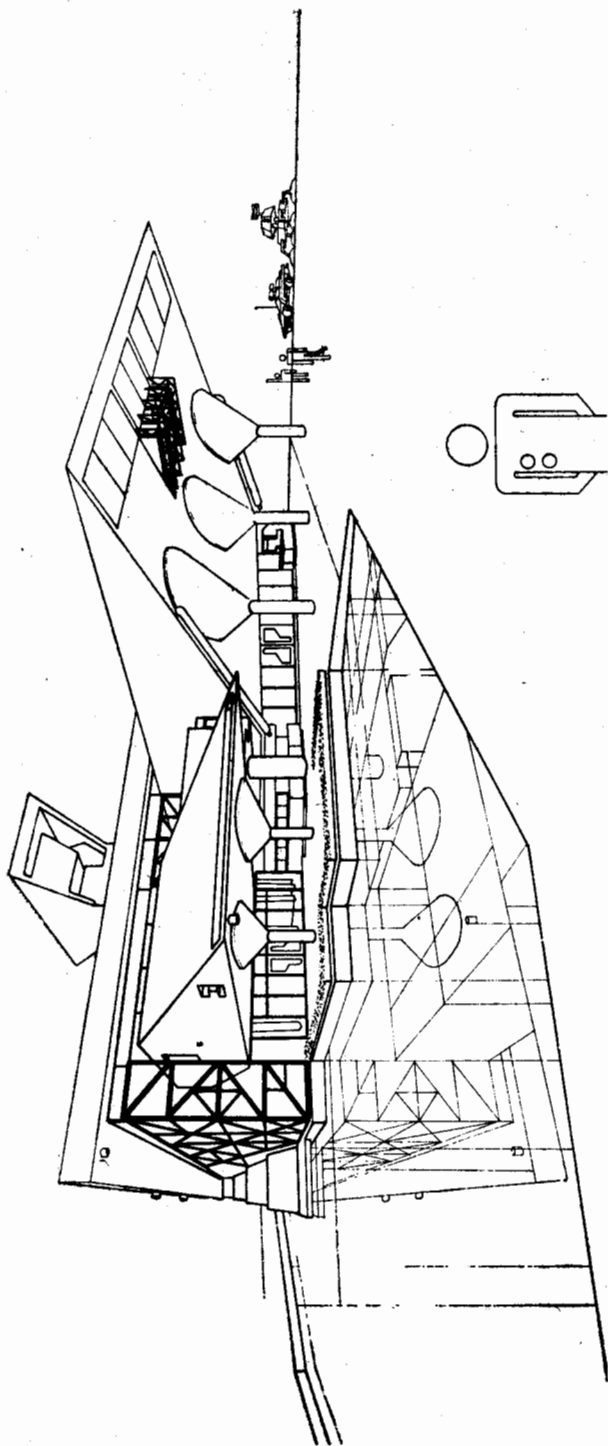
The first period takes three years during which the work of the museum will be prepared. The first half of the building will be constructed. Necessary equipment will be procured and prepared for exhibition.

The second period, taking about two years, will be to prepare the additional work to construct the second phase, to procure more equipment for exhibition.

After the museum extension has already been completed, it is expected that the operation of the museum, in various activities, will be in full swing. This depends however on personnels and budget which have been requested.

5. *Budget*

- 5.1 Budget for construction: The total budget for the building will be 40 million baht; 20 million baht of the budget for building construction has already been approved by the cabinet.
- 5.2 Other budget: During these five years the total expenditure on salaries, wages, supplies, materials and general expenses will be 17 million baht.



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NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY