# External Capstone Strategic Plan - Team Su Xiu

Ziyue Peng (Serena)

Siyi Wu

Xiaoxian Qu (Lucy)

Jingwen Zhang (Lilian)

Arts and Cultural Management, Pratt Institute

ACM-664A Integrative Capstone - Design & Delivery Phase

Instructor Richard Green

April 23th, 2025

#### **Table of Contents**

## I. Discovery Phase

- 1. Introduction of Su Embroidery (苏绣)
- 2. Overview of Su Embroidery Industry in China STEEPLEAD Analysis
- 3. Discovery Phase Conclusion & Research Question

#### II. Define Phase

- 1. Competitive Landscape
  - 1.1 Current Situation of the Global Textile Art Market
  - 1.2 Domestic and International Competitors
  - 1.3 SWOT Analysis of Su Embroidery
- 2. Asset Mapping
  - 2.1 Upstream Resource Needs
  - 2.1.1 Inbound Logistics
  - 2.1.2 Operations
  - 2.2 Downstream Resource Needs
  - 2.2.1 Outbound Logistics
  - 2.2.2 Marketing & Sales
  - 2.2.3 Service
- 3. Define the Problem We Can Address
  - 3.1 Core Challenge Lack of Public Awareness
  - 3.2 Gap in Current Promotional Initiatives
  - 3.3 Opportunities Modern Alignment & Cultural Trends

# III. Design Phase

- 1. Project Goals & UN SDG Alignment
- 2. Solution Overview: A Multi-Channel Promotion Campaign
  - 2.1 Solution Part 1 Suzhou Metro Activation
    - 2.1.1 Suzhou Metro and Su Embroidery
    - 2.1.2 Activation Site Lindun Road Station
    - 2.1.3 Activation Event's Target Audience
    - 2.1.4 Engagement Tactics Installation & Interaction Design
    - 2.1.5 Scalability Rotating Artisan Spotlights
  - 2.2 Solution Part 2 Digital Marketing Plan for Broader Participation

# **IV. Delivery Phase**

- 1. Stakeholder Engagement & Institutional Alignment
- 2. Implementation of the Metro Pilot (Timeline & KPIs)
- 3. Budget Breakdown & Funding Sources
- 4. Future Expansion and Long-term Impact

# V. Appendix

#### VI. References

# I. Discovery Phase

# 1. Introduction of Su Embroidery (苏绣)

Su Embroidery, renowned as the most intricate among China's Four Great Embroideries, represents a profound intersection of cultural heritage and artisanal mastery. Originating in the Jiangnan region more than 2,000 years ago, this art form has long embodied the aesthetic and technical heights of traditional Chinese craftsmanship. Its intricate craftsmanship has played a significant role in Chinese culture, with applications ranging from imperial robes and ceremonial garments to diplomatic gifts and museum collections (China News, 2013).

At its peak, Su Embroidery was not only a prominent cultural icon but also a driving force in the economic vitality of the region's silk and textile industries. Su embroidery is characterized by its unparalleled delicacy and technical precision. Artisans have perfected techniques capable of dividing a single strand of silk into sixty-four finer threads, an achievement unmatched even today by any other embroidery tradition globally. Such feats speak not only to technical prowess but to a deep cultural reverence for detail, patience, and beauty.

What distinguishes Su Embroidery is its unmatched technical depth and visual elegance. It remains the only embroidery tradition in the world capable of replicating the optical effects of oil painting and Chinese ink wash—light, shadow, and gradation—using only needle and thread. Artisans have mastered dimensional shading, freehand realism, and the renowned "double-sided three-difference embroidery," where a single silk piece shows different images, colors, and stitches on each side—impossible for any industrial embroidery machine to replicate.

Su Embroidery's iconic "double-sided embroidery" also portrays the spatial structure and cultural temperament of Suzhou itself. The urban landscape of Suzhou also present a sense of

duality: on the one hand, Gusu District retains its historical style, represented by ancient buildings, streets and traditional culture, reflecting profound cultural heritage; On the other side is the modern urban area represented by Suzhou Industrial Park and High-tech Zone, which is lined with tall buildings and driven by technology, showing the future picture of the city. This urban look of "blending ancient and modern" echoes Su Embroidery's core concept of "coexistence of tradition and innovation" in our project, and also symbolizes Su Embroidery's transformation path in the modern era.

## 2. Overview of Su Embroidery Industry in China - STEEPLEAD Analysis

We first applied the STEEP/LEAD framework to understand the overall environment of the Su Embroidery industry, learning about its current trends, challenges, opportunities in the broader cultural inheritance context in China.

#### 2.1 Social

It is evident from many aspects that the interest in preserving Su Embroidery is growing in China. Recently, with the China-Chic element favored by a large number of consumers, young people have a greater interest in traditional culture, and continue to bring new opportunities for traditional arts such as Su Embroidery (Fu, 2024).

Among the younger generation, trends in buying culturally valued products are growing. In 2024, the global market size of cultural and creative products is expected to reach 155.133 billion USD, and China's market size of cultural and creative products has reached 16.38 billion USD in 2023. At present, China's cultural and creative industry has entered a stable development period (Zhiyan Consulting, 2024).

In addition, it also passed the "Su Embroidery +IP" mode, so that the intangible cultural heritage Su Embroidery entered the eyes of more young people. In March 2024, Zhu Shouzhen

Embroidery Art Studio, together with the Chinese Embroidery Art Museum, cooperated with the domestic original cartoon "Wuhuang Cat" to create a Su Embroidery double-sided embroidery table, at the price of 1388 CNY (191 USD) per piece, the presale situation and conversion rate are very good.

On August 13, 2023, the Su Embroidery collection of the Chinese Embroidery Art Museum, "A Bustling Golden Feather Fan," combined with the virtual boy group image to achieve sales of more than 540,000 CNY (74,760 USD). In addition, Su Embroidery also cooperated with electronic equipment brands, mobile games, jewelry companies, and other industries and achieved good results (Liu, 2024).

# 2.2 Technology

In order to promote the innovation of traditional culture, Su Embroidery has aimed to combine modern technology to make progress. Technological advancements have played a crucial role in the preservation of Su Embroidery. Digital preservation methods, such as virtual reality (VR), 3D scanning, and augmented reality (AR), are being utilized to document and showcase intricate embroidery techniques, allowing for a more immersive and detailed presentation accessible to a global audience. This ensures that this traditional craft is preserved for future generations.

Through technological advancement, Su Embroidery has also explored more ways and materials to display. Zhang Xue and the Future Laboratory of Tsinghua University utilized shape memory alloy (SMA) technology to create "Magnolia," the world's first dynamic Su Embroidery work with three-dimensional, moving elements. This innovation demonstrates the potential of technological advancements to transform and modernize traditional Su Embroidery embroidery.

At Ali auction, it was sold at a high price of 160,000 CNY (22,264 USD), showing a high market potential for high-tech integrated Su Embroidery products (NetEase, 2023).

In addition, the popularity of social media and digital platforms provides Su Embroidery with with large visibility and new modes for selling their work. Bytedance implemented "Intangible Cultural Heritage Partner" and "Look at Crafts Program" on their Tik Tok platform in China to help hundreds of traditional craftsmen to raise awareness and sell their work via live streaming and short videos, providing resource support, official training and operational services. E-commerce service enterprises have collaborated with Bytedance, resulting in monthly sales reaching 600,000 CNY (83,500 USD) through Tik Tok for Su Embroidery products like double-sided Su Embroidery fans and pajama sets (Tian, 2023).

#### 2.3 Economic

Su Embroidery products have developed many affordable forms, making the works closer to the public and making intangible cultural heritage a way of life. For example, the embroidery limited series of beauty brand Huaxizi is based on the real Su Embroidery artwork hand-embroidered by Lu Meihong, and the embroidery workshop of Lu Meihong undertakes the top piece production of all the hand-embroidered version products of the embroidery limited series (Yang, 2024). In addition, mobile phone cases, watches, necklaces, notebooks and other Su Embroidery new products are also favored (Wei, 2023).

Now young people are keen to choose to wear Chinese wedding clothes at the Chinese wedding, and the custom service of embroidered wedding clothes will be tailored according to the couple's love story and family culture. Custom Su Embroidery wedding dress has also become the expression of people's attention to traditional culture, and regard the dress as emotional sustains and inheritance objects(Zhang, 2023).

Cultural tourism has also brought a lot of economic benefits to traditional culture and has become a national trend. According to the China Tourism Academy, 96.2% of tourists participated in cultural projects, revitalizing cultural and tourism consumption and showcasing robust demand for cultural experiences and products (Dai, 2024). The most famous cultural tourism spot in Suzhou, the Silk Show Town, a 1700 meters long embroidery street, has more than 400 embroidery shops, with an annual output of nearly 1.5 billion CNY (207 million USD) as of July 2024 (Chen S., 2024).

## 2.4 Environmental/Ecological

Environmental considerations are becoming increasingly important in the cultural heritage industry. Sustainable production involves creating goods and services using processes and systems that are non-polluting, conserve energy and natural resources, economically viable, safe, and healthful for workers, communities, and consumers.

Various international standards, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development
Goals and Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards, guide sustainable production. Although
China started late, it is now focusing on the green protection of enterprises a lot. The "China
Sustainability Assessment Report" from December 27, 2023, analyzes the sustainability policies
and outcomes of international metropolises and compares them with the sustainability levels of
110 large and medium-sized cities in China. The report recommends adhering to high-quality
green and low-carbon development, optimizing industrial structures, building a modern green
and low-carbon industrial system, expanding international openness, guiding enterprises to focus
on green and low-carbon development, fulfilling social responsibilities, and encouraging public
participation in urban sustainability efforts (Xin, 2023).

There are more than a thousand colors of Su Embroidery thread, and each color ranges from light to dark and there are more than a dozen, and the colors used in a work are often as many as one or two hundred. The most traditional method is to extract dye from plants, and then use artisans' experience to control the temperature to dye a variety of colors. The current way of dyeing is to use modern technology, through fully quantified dye ratio, as well as precise temperature and practical control to produce color, which is less eco-friendly than the materials in the past.

#### 2.5 Political

Political support for the preservation and promotion of Su Embroidery is evident in various local and national initiatives and guidance. According to the "Suzhou Three-Year Action Plan for Promoting the High-Quality Development of Cultural and Creative Industries (2023-2025)," Suzhou aims to have over 800 cultural and creative enterprises above a certain scale, with operating income exceeding 150 billion CNY (20.87 billion USD) and more than 60 cultural and creative industrial parks by 2025 (Hu, 2023).

China's robust policies and legislation to protect and enhance cultural heritage include corporate income tax incentives such as tax-exempt income, reductions, and waivers on cultural construction fees. These incentives reduce operational costs for cultural enterprises, fostering their diversification and large-scale development. Su Embroidery enterprises benefit from these policies provided by the government. In 2023, the National Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Fund allocated a total budget of 82.60 million CNY (11.49 million USD) for managing intangible cultural heritage (Ren, 2023).

Additionally, city-paired assistance programs encourage the creation of distinctive cultural industries, prioritizing cultural tourism. In 2024, the Provincial Department of Culture

and Tourism announced 65 key cultural and tourism projects with a total planned investment of 1,054.04 billion CNY (146.67 billion USD), including significant contributions from state-owned, private, and other enterprises (Chen Q., 2024). These projects, spanning industry integration, digital technology, quality improvement, cultural consumption promotion, and new business cultivation, underscore the government's dedication to the growth and sustainability of cultural heritage industries, providing a solid foundation for the continued growth and vitality of Su Embroidery.

# 2.6 Legal

Copyright registration is crucial for protecting Su Embroidery works. Many Su Embroidery manuscripts are frequently imitated and copied without permission, and creators often struggle to defend their rights, posing a significant obstacle to the heritage and development of Su Embroidery (Wan & Wang, 2020). To address this, companies have developed derivatives based on original design patterns and ensure systematic management and timely copyright registration through specialized personnel.

Recent data shows a significant increase in copyright registrations at the copyright service trading base of Suxiu Town, with 2,257 registrations in 2023—a 320% increase over 2022 (Shan, 2024). Still, there is a need to enhance copyright awareness among the general public. The Suzhou Government encourages rights holders, consumers, and other parties to report suspected infringements proactively, establish a quick handling mechanism for complaints and reports, and improve copyright management and rights protection awareness. These copyright protection efforts support the sustainable development of the Su Embroidery industry, ensuring artisans have the necessary resources to protect their contributions during collaborations. This, in turn, encourages more original designs and greater creativity in product innovation.

#### 2.7 Educational

Education plays a crucial role in the recognition and transmission of Su Embroidery, with higher education institutions actively integrating intangible cultural heritage into their curricula. The China Intangible Cultural Heritage Training Program, launched in 2015, integrates higher education resources to train and support practitioners, enhancing their skills, cultural confidence, and sustainability. The 2021 report (the most recent report, next one expected in 2025) indicates that over 100,000 trainees have been trained since its inception, significantly improving traditional craftsmanship, expanding the talent pool, and fostering innovation and awareness in cultural heritage protection, with 121 universities participating as of 2021 (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum, 2024). Notable examples include the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing and Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, which have established dedicated research centers for intangible cultural heritage since 2002 (Deng, 2022). Soochow University in Suzhou also established a research lab for Su Embroidery, leveraging local academic resources to better study its future development.

Additionally, online educational resources provide global access to bridge geographical gaps and facilitate widespread learning of Su Embroidery. Collaborations between educational institutions and cultural organizations further enhance preservation efforts by providing practical experiences and fostering expertise. The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education support nationwide research and training programs, ensuring that traditional skills are passed down to future generations. Moreover, the integration of modern technology into educational programs enriches the learning experience and ensures the contemporary relevance of Su Embroidery.

#### 2.8 Accelerate

Addressing talent issues is critical to maintaining the industry's production momentum, as talent drives innovation, efficiency, and sustainable development. Recently, Su Embroidery artisans have primarily been older, mostly between 40 and 50 years old. Su Embroidery requires a long learning process and years of hard practice, which deters many young people from learning it, leading to a severe shortage of successors and making it difficult to pass down rare skills. The embroidery class at Suzhou Arts and Crafts Academy has been running for several years, but now faces declining enrollment (Wan & Wang, 2020). Working conditions also pose a challenge. A few artisans are concentrated in the town, but most are scattered in the countryside, balancing their work with supporting older family members and raising children. To ensure the survival of this intangible cultural heritage, it is essential to attract more young people to Su Embroidery. Therefore, addressing the urgent issue of an aging workforce is crucial for accelerating the Su Embroidery industry (Shen, 2013).

# 2.9 Deeply Held Value

The spirit of Su Embroidery artisans is enduring and influential. Embroidering a Su Embroidery painting requires 120 million stitches, involving complex stitching and high technical difficulty, demanding immense energy and precision. Completing a painting requires great patience, a high level of artistic appreciation, and an eye for detail. The preservation of cultural identity and heritage is a deeply held value in the Su Embroidery industry. Balancing modernization with tradition is essential for maintaining the authenticity of cultural practices. Technological integration has introduced new methods for creating and promoting Su Embroidery, broadening its appeal. Additionally, cultural shifts towards sustainability and ethical consumption are influencing the industry, encouraging environmentally friendly practices.

Globalization and market expansion have brought new opportunities and challenges, requiring the Su Embroidery industry to adapt to changing market dynamics while preserving its traditional essence.

In short, recognizing the historical and cultural value of Su Embroidery is a deeply held value that underscores the determination and unity in this craftsmanship. This commitment has had a profound impact on China's development as a communist country, prompting China to promote its preservation and inheritance at all times and locations.

## 3. Discovery Phase Conclusion & Research Question

Despite the cultural significance and growing policy support surrounding Su Embroidery, our comprehensive STEEPLEAD analysis reveals persistent structural and systemic challenges—from generational gaps in talent and fragmented distribution channels, to low public awareness and limited integration with contemporary lifestyles. While past efforts have emphasized preservation and occasional branding, few have successfully repositioned Su Embroidery as an accessible and emotionally resonant cultural asset in modern life. These tensions between preservation and participation prompt a critical need to reexamine the pathways through which Su Embroidery can evolve—socially, economically, and creatively.

Thus, our research seeks to address the following question: How can Su Embroidery be sustainably reintegrated into contemporary life to enhance its cultural relevance, public visibility, and economic viability?

# II. Define Phase

Following our Discovery Phase, which examined Su Embroidery's historical context, industry dynamics, and macro-environmental conditions through STEEPLEAD analysis, we

identified a complex network of challenges facing the craft. From aging artisans and fragmented production to underutilized digital channels and weak global visibility, the issues are deeply intertwined. The Define Phase systematically narrows this field by zooming in on the most critical bottlenecks affecting Su Embroidery's viability in the modern era—through competitive analysis, asset mapping, and problem framing. Our goal in this phase is not only to understand what's wrong, but to identify where we can intervene most effectively to enable sustainable revitalization.

# 1. Competitive Landscape

## 1.1 Current Situation of the Global Textile Art Market

The global textile market is currently experiencing medium growth, with expectations that this will accelerate further. The market, valued at \$1.84 trillion in 2023, is projected to reach \$3.05 trillion by 2030 (imarc, 2024). This growth is driven by factors such as the availability of low-cost labor and increasing government support for establishing major business units. The Asia-Pacific region is the dominant force in the global textile market, with China and India accounting for approximately 65% of total production in 2022. This is largely due to their deep-rooted heritage in traditional textile arts such as embroidery, weaving, and dyeing. These countries also have a notable presence in the high-end textile art market, competing with other nations such as Turkey, Italy, and Japan, which are renowned for their craftsmanship. Major global players like Invista, Weiqiao Textile Co., Ltd., and Freudenberg Group have a significant impact on both industrial and artistic textile markets. However, in the specialized textile art sector, smaller, regionally focused producers are the dominant force in the luxury and artisanal segments, catering to the growing consumer demand for unique, handmade products. These producers often operate on a much smaller scale than the larger industrial firms.

Su Embroidery distinguishes itself in the global market through its exceptional craftsmanship, rich heritage, and high artistic prestige, making it an exclusive and highly valued product. Su Embroidery has a history of more than two thousand years, its origin and development are closely linked with the history and culture of the Suzhou area, witnessing the development of Chinese embroidery craft, and was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list. It serves as a diplomatic tool, featured in exhibitions, and used as gifts for international leaders, enhancing China's soft power. Economically, Su Embroidery has gained momentum through global collaborations with luxury brands like Audi, BMW, and Adidas, expanding its market beyond traditional crafts. The international demand for Su Embroidery has boosted the income of artisans, fostering cross-industry partnerships, and positioning it as a valuable cultural export that contributes to China's economy. (Jiangsu Arts and Crafts Association, 2016)

# 2.2 Domestic and International Competitors

Su Embroidery faces strong domestic competition from other prominent embroidery traditions like Xiang and Shu Embroidery. Xiang Embroidery, heavily supported by cultural tourism and substantial investments in Hunan, has developed large-scale industrial bases such as the Shaping Xiang Embroidery Cultural Plaza. Similarly, Shu Embroidery benefits from Chengdu's social capital investments and collaborative business models, achieving significant output. Additionally, Su Embroidery competes for local resources in Suzhou, where other intangible cultural heritage projects like Kunqu Opera and Suzhou Pingtan also demand government support and funding, intensifying competition for cultural promotion. Besides, indirect competitors to Su Embroidery include both other traditional crafts and modern alternatives. Handicrafts like batik and weaving compete for the attention of collectors, while

mass-produced textiles and machine embroidery offer faster, more affordable options, threatening the traditional craft market. Additionally, Su Embroidery faces competition from other intangible cultural heritage projects in Suzhou, such as Kunqu Opera and Suzhou Pingtan, which compete for the same limited government support, resources, and promotion, creating indirect challenges to Su Embroidery's development and growth.

In the global textile market, Su Embroidery's direct competitors include European embroidery, such as France and Italy's luxury embroidery used in haute couture, and India's hand-embroidered textiles like zardozi, known for their craftsmanship. Japanese embroidery also poses direct competition with its precision and symbolic designs. Indirectly, Su Embroidery faces competition from mass-produced textiles, particularly from large-scale manufacturing hubs like Bangladesh, as well as from the rising trend of sustainable and ethical fashion, which appeals to conscious consumers. In addition, modern innovative Su Embroidery is increasingly gaining market space from traditional Su Embroidery. While traditional Su Embroidery continues to retain a devoted customer base, drawn to its heritage and authenticity, modern brands are leveraging their market power and marketing capability to gain a larger share of the market.

# 2.3 SWOT analysis of Su Embroidery (Appendix\_1 SWOT)

Su Embroidery's strengths lie in its exceptional craftsmanship, rich cultural heritage, and strong government support, positioning it as a highly valuable and prestigious art form, especially in high-end markets. The rise of digital platforms and collaborations with brands like Dior and FILA have expanded Su Embroidery's reach to younger, tech-savvy audiences. However, Su Embroidery faces challenges with its limited global digital presence and lack of cohesive branding and advanced marketing strategies, which hinder international outreach. Many workshops still rely on traditional small collaborative business models, limiting scalability and

adaptability. Additionally, the labor-intensive nature of Su Embroidery embroidery results in high production costs and long lead times, affecting competitiveness in fast-paced global markets where affordability is key. The industry also suffers from fragmentation, with limited collaboration between artisans and businesses, particularly in addressing innovation and global market coordination.

Opportunities for Su Embroidery's growth include tapping into the rising global demand for sustainable and ethical fashion, leveraging partnerships with industries such as fashion and gaming, and expanding its e-commerce and international distribution channels(Li, 2024). However, competition from other traditional textile arts, the threat of cheaper machine-made imitations, intellectual property risks, and global market uncertainties present significant challenges. Despite these threats, Su Embroidery's blend of tradition with potential for modern innovation offers unique opportunities to stand out in the global textile art market.

# 2. Asset Mapping

In this section, we utilize Value Chain Analysis to deconstruct the available resources within the Su Embroidery industry, focusing on both upstream and downstream resource needs. By examining the five primary activities involved in Su Embroidery's production and distribution, we identified existing assets and supportive initiatives across the industry. This analysis highlights critical areas where there are gaps in infrastructure, talent, or market strategy, which our Capstone project, Sustain Su Embroidery in the Modern Market, aims to address.

# 2.1 Upstream Resources Needs

This section covers resources involved before Su Embroidery embroidery products are made, including the materials, production capabilities, and support systems necessary for high-quality, sustainable craftsmanship.

# 2.1.1 Inbound Logistics (Getting Materials to Artisans)

Su Embroidery artisans heavily depend on high-quality materials, including silk threads, fabrics, traditional embroidery tools, and natural dyes sourced primarily within China. As the largest producer of silk in the world, China accounted for 53.2% of global silk production in 2023, employing around 1 million workers in the silk sector. This significant contribution makes China the leading supplier of silk to both domestic and international markets (International Sericultural Commission, 2023).

The materials used in Su Embroidery are strictly regulated by national standards to ensure the authenticity and craftsmanship of the art. The National Standard for Su Embroidery divides Su Embroidery products into two categories: ornamental items (such as pendants, albums, and stand-up pieces) and practical items (including daily necessities, clothing, and household items). These products must be manually embroidered using pure silk thread or golden thread on silk fabric or silk viscose filament interwoven fabric (National Standard for Su Embroidery, 2019). This standard reinforces the high-quality requirements for materials in the Su Embroidery industry.

In addition to silk and thread, more and more artisans advocate for natural plant-based dyes to maintain Su Embroidery's cultural and environmental integrity. The supply chains for these materials are primarily localized within Suzhou and its neighboring regions, ensuring proximity to the main centers of production. This localized network aids in maintaining the traditional craftsmanship and meeting the high demand for authentic Su Embroidery products while fostering sustainability within the industry.

Moving forward, this section of the resources needs to focus on supporting long-term, affordable access to high-quality silk threads while incorporating sustainable practices, which

align with consumer preferences for eco-friendly products. Establishing relationships with more sustainable and cost-effective suppliers is a key to streamline inbound logistics.

# 2.1.2 Operations (Production of Su Embroidery Products)

The production of Su Embroidery embroidery relies on the expertise of artisans who skillfully blend traditional techniques with modern creativity. Renowned figures like Yao Jianping, Zou Yingzi, and Zhang Lixing lead the way in maintaining and innovating Su Embroidery's techniques. For instance, Yao Jianping's works have gained international acclaim, including recognition from the British Royal Family, while Zou Yingzi's patented "Zou's Didi Needle Method" has expanded the artistic scope of Su Embroidery embroidery, making it more complex and expressive (Zhou, 2023). Zhang Lixing, a representative of the younger-generation Su Embroidery artisan, modernizes the craft while maintaining its traditional roots. These artisans ensure Su Embroidery's cultural relevance while pushing its boundaries to align with contemporary market demands.

In 2017, the government built Silk Show Town, a 1700-meter embroidery street, in the birthplace of Su Embroidery–Zhen Hu, which now produces over 80% of Su Embroidery products in China, clustering more than 4,000 registered Su Embroidery artisans. It hosts hundreds of embroidery shops, an embroidery art museum, and cultural centers (Suzhou Daily, 2024). This specialized industrial cluster strengthens the entire production chain by encompassing everything from production to intellectual property protection, ensuring Su Embroidery's growth and sustainability.

Alongside these artisans, institutions such as the Suzhou Zhenhu Embroidery Research Institute, Soochow University Research Center, and other local embroidery workshops are instrumental in spreading knowledge about Su Embroidery, passing down skills, and fostering

innovation. These training programs help bridge the generational gap by equipping new artisans with both traditional and modern techniques while promoting the value of the skilled artisans.

This is vital, given the industry's dependency on labor-intensive handcrafting methods and the urgent need to address the shortage of skilled workers.

Despite the strengths of Su Embroidery's production system, challenges remain. Capacity building is crucial, as the industry must expand training programs to attract younger artisans. Formal recognition and certification programs are also essential for professionalizing the Su Embroidery sector and attracting young talent. More comprehensive educational resources are needed to ensure the sustainability of the craft. Besides, there are opportunities to integrate modern tools and digital innovations into traditional processes to improve production efficiency while preserving Su Embroidery's authenticity. Such advancements will help Su Embroidery meet increasing global demand while maintaining its cultural and artistic integrity.

# 2.2 Downstream Resources Needs

This section covers the resources involved after the Su Embroidery products are created and distributed, focusing on marketing, sales, and customer engagement.

# 2.2.1 Outbound Logistics (Delivering Su Embroidery to Market)

The outbound logistics for Su Embroidery products currently rely on a combination of physical outlets and e-commerce platforms. In Suzhou, Su Embroidery is sold in cultural hubs like the Su Embroidery Museum and the Silk Show Town, which boasts more than 400 embroidery shops (Chen S., 2024). These shops fall into three categories: ordinary embroiderers who live and work locally, shop owners who employ artisans to fulfill orders, and shop owners with official titles whose work is often more expensive and delicate, sometimes even used for

diplomatic purposes. These physical outlets provide an essential platform for showcasing Su Embroidery's craftsmanship and connecting directly with consumers.

In addition to physical stores, e-commerce platforms such as Taobao, TMALL, JD.com, and specialized Su Embroidery marketplaces on Douyin(Chinese Tik Tok) have played a pivotal role in delivering smaller products like bookmarks, pendants, and other affordable items directly to consumers. These platforms have allowed Su Embroidery to reach a broader audience domestically, with a particular appeal to younger consumers who engage with online shopping.

However, there is a critical need to expand Su Embroidery's reach into international markets. To facilitate this, the logistics system must be optimized by developing global partnerships that ensure efficient and cost-effective shipping, particularly for high-end products that are in demand internationally. Additionally, expanding distribution channels through collaboration with global retailers, auction houses, and exhibition venues can further increase the visibility and appeal of Su Embroidery worldwide.

# 2.2.2 Marketing & Sales (Branding and Selling Su Embroidery)

In marketing and sales activities, Su Embroidery has successfully leveraged traditional media, digital platforms, and cross-industry collaborations to expand its reach and appeal to modern consumers. To begin with, Su Embroidery industry utilizes traditional media and official channels to promote its craft both domestically and internationally. Government announcements play a crucial role, particularly in China, where Su Embroidery has been included in various national and provincial revitalization programs. This support is often publicized through national media such as CCTV and major regional newspapers like Suzhou Daily, which regularly feature reports on Su Embroidery's development, its inclusion in cultural heritage policies, and the initiatives taken to promote traditional Chinese craftsmanship. Also, Su Embroidery pieces have

been presented as national gifts during diplomatic meetings, further strengthening its association with Chinese culture and craftsmanship.

Besides, Su Embroidery has made impressive strides in the luxury fashion industry through high-profile collaborations. For example, Guo Pei, a globally recognized Chinese fashion designer, has incorporated Su Embroidery embroidery into her haute couture collections, blending traditional techniques with contemporary design (China National Silk Museum, 2018). This collaboration has raised Su Embroidery's profile in the global fashion industry, presenting it as both an ancient art and a modern luxury statement. Furthermore, the Dior collaboration helped bring Su Embroidery to an even larger international audience, as the brand incorporated Su Embroidery motifs into its products, blending Western pop art with Chinese craftsmanship (Deeny, 2020). These partnerships highlight Su Embroidery's versatility and appeal across cultures and industries.

Su Embroidery has also ventured into the gaming and digital collectible markets, which have opened up new opportunities for branding and sales. In collaboration with the mobile game Honor of Kings, Su Embroidery designs were used to create exclusive character skins, integrating traditional embroidery techniques into a popular digital entertainment platform. This partnership attracted younger, tech-savvy consumers, who appreciate both the cultural value and the aesthetic appeal of Su Embroidery. Similarly, the partnership with the My Emperor Cat comic series led to the creation of a Su Embroidery piece based on popular characters, which was successfully crowdfunded by fans. This project demonstrated the power of merging traditional crafts with modern pop culture to appeal to new consumer segments.

Despite these successful efforts, there remains a need for a more cohesive branding strategy. Su Embroidery should further highlight its dual appeal as both a traditional art form and

a contemporary luxury product. By refining the messaging and branding, Su Embroidery can better communicate its value to international markets, attracting both cultural enthusiasts and fashion-forward consumers. Additionally, increased investment in digital marketing is crucial. Partnering with influencers who have global followings can amplify Su Embroidery's reach and create a stronger connection with younger consumers who may not be familiar with the craft's history. Using a mix of storytelling, educational content, and product promotion, Su Embroidery can position itself as both a cultural artifact and a modern, fashionable item.

# 2.2.3 Service (Customer Engagement & After-Sales Support)

Cultural tourism is an important channel for Su Embroidery's customer engagement, offering visitors immersive experiences within Suzhou's rich cultural setting. In heritage hubs like Zhenhu Silk Show Town—home to embroidery shops, cultural centers, and live demonstrations—tourists gain a deeper appreciation of Su Embroidery as both an art form and a high-value cultural souvenir. This interaction helps position Su Embroidery as a preservable, meaningful memento, increasing its appeal among consumers who wish to take home a piece of Chinese heritage. Through this cultural immersion, Su Embroidery is transformed from a simple product into a symbol of craftsmanship and tradition with lasting emotional value.

However, while cultural tourism builds initial engagement effectively, the industry lacks a robust after-sales support system to maintain and deepen customer relationships after purchase. Customized Su Embroidery pieces—often bought as high-end gifts or collectibles—typically do not come with adequate post-purchase services, such as care guidelines, repair options, or restoration support. These services are essential for preserving the quality and longevity of intricate works, especially for international buyers who may face challenges in product care. A

structured after-sales framework, including educational materials and professional support, would significantly improve consumer trust and reinforce the premium value of Su Embroidery.

In addition, digital tools present key opportunities to enhance long-term engagement. For example, online workshops on embroidery care, personalized follow-up messages, or maintenance tips can help extend the customer experience. A more formal CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system is also needed to collect customer feedback, offer tailored services, and build loyalty—especially among high-end clients who expect ongoing support and premium service quality.

#### 3. Define the Problem We Can Address

Our analysis of Su Embroidery's position in the global textile art market revealed its distinctive craftsmanship but also exposed a clear gap in competitive branding and scalable outreach. Asset mapping further illustrated how downstream activities—especially marketing, branding, and customer engagement—remain fragmented and underdeveloped compared to upstream resources. While the upstream infrastructure shows promise, especially in production and material quality, it is not translating into downstream impact or public engagement. This disconnect signaled to us that the critical bottleneck was not a lack of product quality or artistic value—but rather a failure to meaningfully connect with contemporary audiences, particularly younger generations. This realization prompted us to narrow our focus from a broad ecosystem challenge to a singular, urgent question: How might we revitalize Su Embroidery's relevance, visibility, and resonance in modern urban culture? The following subsections explore this in more detail

## 3.1 Core Challenge - Lack of Public Awareness

Despite its extraordinary legacy, Su Embroidery today occupies a marginal position in contemporary urban life. Its production is now largely confined to Suzhou's Silk Show Town, a district situated on the periphery of the city center. Although over 8,000 artisans are currently registered, the vast majority are over 40 years old, because the process of mastering Su Embroidery requires years of rigorous training, yet the average income for embroiderers remains low compared to other professions, leading to a lack of interest among younger generations in pursuing this craft as a career (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Association, 2023).

Besides, public awareness of Su Embroidery is also in steep decline. According to a recent survey on the effectiveness of digital communication for intangible cultural heritage, approximately 65% of young respondents reported being unfamiliar with Su Embroidery (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Association, 2023). This lack of recognition among younger audiences underscores a broader cultural disconnect and waning visibility of the art form.

Underlying these trends are deeper structural and socio-economic challenges. The pervasive influence of fast fashion and digital consumer culture has reshaped aesthetic values and market expectations, making it increasingly difficult for traditional handcrafts to resonate with younger, tech-savvy consumers. Meanwhile, the art of Su Embroidery demands extensive training, and laborious production processes, and offers limited financial reward—factors that collectively deter potential apprentices and contribute to the declining artisan base. As a result, Su Embroidery is not only losing its visibility, but also its viability for the next generation.

# 3.2. Gap in Current Promotional Initiatives

Over the past decade, a wide range of promotional initiatives have been launched to revitalize Su Embroidery, from government-funded exhibitions and educational workshops to

contemporary strategies such as live-streaming, pop-up installations, and brand collaborations with luxury, cosmetic, and gaming IPs. Notable examples include partnerships with *Mercedes-Benz, Honor of Kings*, and animated series like *Fog Hill of Five Elements* and *The Legend of Mortal Cultivation*. While these efforts have succeeded in generating short-term visibility and media buzz, they have largely failed to foster long-term cultural resonance or sustained public engagement.

A key gap lies in the limited public awareness of these collaborations—many are not widely publicized or easily discoverable unless one actively visits official websites. Even among high-profile campaigns, Su Embroidery is often reduced to a symbolic aesthetic rather than being meaningfully highlighted for its craftsmanship, cultural complexity, or heritage value. For example, in the case of the *Han Shu* x Su Embroidery collaboration, embroidery was used more as a marketing label than as a subject of authentic storytelling or craft education (Concall, 2024).

Similarly, while exhibitions have served important educational and historical purposes, they are often geographically concentrated in the Jiangnan region and primarily target older or heritage-focused audiences. Youth-oriented exhibitions still tend to emphasize traditional techniques and history over showing how Su Embroidery intersects with modern life. Attempts to modernize outreach, such as the Su Embroidery Art Documentation Exhibition (1949–2019) touring Shenzhen, Suzhou, and Beijing—have begun integrating technology, such as VR walkthroughs, but these remain underutilized and lack interactivity (Suzhou Museum, 2023). Even more interactive efforts, like Eslite Suzhou's Spark of Yao Embroidery lifestyle exhibition, while offering engagement incentives through social media and giveaway campaigns, still

struggled to generate sustained dialogue or emotional resonance. Engagement metrics remained modest despite creative marketing efforts (Eslite Life, 2020).

In addition, the value narrative of Su Embroidery remains shallow—largely framed by phrases like 'exquisite craftsmanship' and 'intangible heritage.' Analysis of popular Su Embroidery-related content on platforms like Bilibili shows that top-performing videos often rely on labels like "non-heritage" or "traditional skill," and user comments tend to focus on admiration rather than emotional connection or cultural reflection. Without deeper narrative framing, the tradition fails to move beyond surface-level appreciation.

Current promotional formats also rely heavily on high-context communication modes, such as documentary films, academic exhibitions, and long-form heritage videos which demand significant time and cognitive investment(China Museum Association, 2023). In today's attention economy, where platforms favor content that generates emotional payoff within seconds, these formats struggle to compete. By contrast, simplified "embroidery ASMR" or "relaxing stitch process" videos on Douyin (Chinese TikTok) show significantly higher engagement, revealing a disconnect between traditional outreach methods and digital audience behavior.

Finally, while there is increasing volume in both online and offline promotion, most of it still lacks experiential depth. Viewers are expected to watch and listen, but rarely given opportunities to touch, try, or co-create. This is a missed opportunity, as research in sensory memory shows that tactile experience leaves a longer-lasting impression than visual input alone. Su Embroidery, with its rich textures and intricate detail, is uniquely suited for hands-on interaction—but current promotional formats fail to leverage this potential.

In summary, the current promotional landscape for Su Embroidery suffers from limited visibility, outdated formats, weak narrative framing, and a lack of immersive, multisensory experiences—factors that hinder its ability to resonate with modern audiences, particularly younger generations. At the heart of this disconnect lies a deeper messaging gap: while communication platforms and technologies have rapidly evolved, the core narratives surrounding Su Embroidery have remained static. Promotional efforts continue to focus on its historical legacy, technical virtuosity, and symbolic value—elements that, while important, fail to meet the emotional and experiential expectations of today's audiences.

In an era where people increasingly seek meaningful cultural engagement, inclusive access, and aesthetic relevance, Su Embroidery must be repositioned not as a distant artifact, but as a living tradition embedded in contemporary life. To achieve this, its storytelling must be reimagined—infused with fresh, relatable narratives and delivered through engaging, interactive formats that can inspire connection and sustain cultural transmission.

# 3.3. Opportunities - Modern Alignment & Cultural Trends

In these challenges, several emerging trends reveal a compelling opportunity to bridge this narrative gap and rewrite and revitalize the narrative surrounding Su Embroidery.

First, Recent national policy directives reflect a strong institutional commitment to repositioning intangible cultural heritage as a dynamic part of everyday life. In particular, the "Digital Elevation Action for Intangible Cultural Heritage" launched by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 2025 emphasizes the use of new technologies to empower the transmission and contemporary expression of traditional crafts(Xinhuanet, 2025). The policy actively encourages the integration of "Heritage + Technology" to support innovation in cultural storytelling and engagement. Simultaneously, the promotion of a "Heritage + Tourism" model advocates for

standardized, authentic cultural experiences that connect visitors with genuine craftsmanship rather than mass-produced imitations. These national strategies aim to transform heritage from static museum artifacts into interactive, emotionally resonant practices, making them more accessible and relevant to the public. The increasing government focus on public participation also reflects a broader ambition to embed intangible cultural heritage into daily urban life—ensuring that traditions like Su Embroidery evolve not in isolation, but in harmony with contemporary cultural and social rhythms.

At the same time, as both a cultural epicenter and a rapidly modernizing city, Suzhou has positioned itself at the intersection of heritage and innovation. In 2024 alone, the city welcomed nearly 200 million tourists, with inbound international visitors surging by 110% year-over-year(Xinhua News, 2024). To accommodate this influx and enhance cultural accessibility, Suzhou expanded its metro system with the addition of lines 6, 7, and 8, extending its urban rail network to over 350 kilometers (Suzhou Municipal Government, 2024). This substantial investment in mobility infrastructure not only reflects Suzhou's ambition to become a global cultural city but also supports the emergence of new, immersive forms of cultural participation. Institutions like the Suzhou Museum are actively responding to these shifts: since 2023, the museum has extended its hours during holidays and summer to as late as midnight, offering 119 nights of late openings throughout the year and drawing over 450,000 visitors during those extended hours (Pengpai News, 2024). This shift is especially significant in light of a national trend toward younger museum audiences. With museum visits increasingly becoming a staple of young people's travel and social media habits, cultural institutions are evolving to meet this demand by reimagining how heritage is experienced. These changing patterns reveal a

compelling opportunity to bridge the narrative gap around Su Embroidery and reposition it as a living tradition that resonates with contemporary life.

Besides, Su Embroidery inherently aligns with several modern values that are increasingly shaping consumer preferences and cultural discourse. Environmentally, it employs natural, biodegradable materials such as silk threads—positioning it within the global sustainability movement. Economically and ethically, it stands in contrast to the homogenization of mass production, offering hand-stitched, one-of-a-kind works that champion individuality and artisanal labor. Culturally, Su Embroidery embodies rich, intergenerational narratives that resonate deeply with younger generations seeking to reconnect with Chinese traditions in ways that feel personal, relevant, and meaningful.

These factors illuminate a timely and transformative opportunity: to reposition Su Embroidery not only as a heritage artifact, but as a contemporary cultural asset. Su Embroidery carries a deep cultural narrative that resonates especially with younger generations who are eager to reconnect with Chinese heritage in meaningful ways.

# III. Design Phase

# 1. Project Goals & UNSDG Alignment

Our initiative aims to transform Su Embroidery from a preserved artifact into a living urban tradition, rather than relegating this intricate art form to museum displays or occasional exhibitions. We propose a model of sustainable cultural integration that emphasizes public participation, emotional resonance, and narrative depth.

This vision is structured around three key strategic shifts. First, we aim to move from passive preservation to active participation by creating immersive and interactive experiences in

everyday public spaces, such as metro stations and city parks. These interventions invite citizens to engage directly with Su Embroidery, fostering hands-on appreciation and communal learning. Secondly, From Nostalgic symbolism to emotional relevance by telling stories that connect Su Embroidery to contemporary values, daily aesthetics. Finally, we transition from viewing Su Embroidery as merely decorative motifs to recognizing it as a medium for cultural storytelling. By framing it as a living narrative form, we open space for dialogue between tradition and innovation, encouraging reinterpretation and cross-cultural exchange.

Our initiative directly supports SDG 11 by achieving Target 11.4, which calls for strengthened efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural heritage, by reimagining Su Embroidery as a living practice embedded in the urban fabric rather than a static artifact. Through site-specific interventions in public spaces, we actively engage communities in preserving this intangible heritage by making it accessible, relevant, and emotionally resonant in daily life. Additionally, our approach aligns with SDG 17 by achieving Target 11.H, as we build a collaborative model that leverages the strengths of public institutions, private sector partners, and civil society organizations. By fostering cross-sector partnerships and pooling diverse resources, we create a sustainable framework for cultural innovation that honors tradition while enabling contemporary reinterpretation and global cultural dialogue.

# 2. Solution Overview: A Multi-Channel Promotion Campaign

Our campaign introduces a multi-channel strategy to revitalize Su Embroidery by embedding it into the rhythms of modern urban life. The approach combines physical engagement, digital storytelling, and community collaboration to bridge the gap between traditional craftsmanship and contemporary audiences.

Central to the strategy is the activation of Suzhou's Lindun Road Metro Station, a high-traffic hub surrounded by cultural landmarks. By installing interactive exhibits here, the campaign transforms routine commutes into opportunities for cultural discovery. This choice reflects a deliberate shift from static museum displays to dynamic public engagement, leveraging the station's visitors to maximize visibility while aligning with national policies that promote heritage integration into urban spaces.

The digital ecosystem amplifies this impact through Xiaohongshu, Weibo, and Douyin—platforms chosen for their distinct audience strengths. Xiaohongshu fosters personal connections via visually rich storytelling, appealing to young, aesthetically driven users. Weibo drives cultural discourse through polls and debates, positioning Su Embroidery within broader societal conversations. Douyin employs short videos and AR filters to make participation playful and accessible, resonating with Gen Z's preference for interactive content. Together, these platforms ensure multi-layered engagement, adapting to fragmented media habits while sustaining relevance across discovery, discussion, and creation.

Finally, workshops and educational programs will be held to deepen engagement through hands-on experiences. By inviting the public to learn basic techniques or collaborate on community projects, the campaign fosters emotional investment and demystifies the craft. This blend of visibility, digital innovation, and participatory learning positions Su Embroidery as a living tradition—rooted in heritage yet adaptable to contemporary values of creativity, sustainability, and shared identity.

#### 2.1 Solution Part 1 - Suzhou Metro Activation

## 2.1.1 Suzhou Metro and Su Embroidery

Our selection of the Suzhou Metro as the anchor site for this campaign is rooted in both symbolic alignment and practical opportunity. As a system built around green mobility, the metro embodies sustainability, which naturally aligns with Su Embroidery's eco-friendly practices, which rely on natural, biodegradable silk and hand-crafted techniques (Xinhua News, 2024). Both reflect a deep respect for slow processes, human touch, and harmonious living—core principles that resonate with global sustainability values.

From an infrastructural standpoint, the Suzhou Metro is highly equipped to support cultural programming. With an average daily ridership exceeding 1.7 million (Suzhou Municipal Government, 2024), it offers unparalleled visibility and foot traffic, especially among young commuters and cultural tourists. Moreover, the system has actively embraced cultural integration: for instance, Sushanqiao West Station is known for showcasing Su Embroidery-inspired patterns through station design and artistic installations, serving as a prototype for public craft interventions. Similarly, Zhuozhengyuan Station features architectural details inspired by the Humble Administrator's Garden, illustrating the metro's ongoing engagement with Suzhou's cultural heritage (China Daily, 2023).

Importantly, Suzhou Metro has a proven record of supporting intangible cultural heritage, having previously hosted Su Embroidery-themed exhibitions and displays in collaboration with municipal agencies. Its official social media platforms—including WeChat and Weibo—actively highlight cultural elements in station designs and promotional content, showcasing a communications infrastructure aligned with heritage storytelling (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Association, 2023).

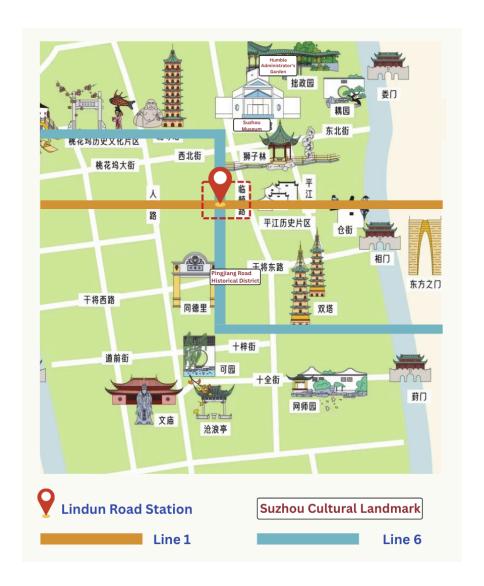
Furthermore, Suzhou has hosted events like "Suzhou Intangible Heritage Week", where stations served as platforms for live demonstrations and interactive installations. These activations not only increase public visibility for traditional crafts but also validate the metro's role as a dynamic venue for cultural expression (Suzhou Tourism Bureau, 2024).

Overall, Suzhou Metro was selected not only for its physical infrastructure, but also for its institutional and communicative readiness. It presents a rare convergence of spatial accessibility, civic trust, and operational flexibility—making it an ideal platform for integrating Su Embroidery into daily urban life.

## 2.2.2 Activation Site - Lindun Road Station

The choice of Lindun Road Metro Station is rooted in its unique convergence of cultural significance, urban connectivity, and audience diversity. Located at the intersection of Suzhou's Line 1 and Line 4, the station serves as a gateway to major cultural landmarks, including Suzhou Museum, Pingjiang Road Historic District, and Guanqian Street—a commercial hub blending traditional and modern aesthetics. This strategic positioning ensures exposure to both locals and tourists, with 62% of daily foot traffic comprising commuters aged 18–35 and 35% being domestic and international tourists during peak seasons (Suzhou Metro Annual Report, 2024).

The station's 500,000+ monthly visitors provide a critical mass for visibility, while its architectural design—featuring high ceilings and ample wall space—facilitates immersive installations without disrupting passenger flow. Data from Suzhou Tourism Bureau (2024) highlights that visitors spend an average of 3.7 minutes waiting at the station, creating a window for brief but impactful interactions. By embedding Su Embroidery in this high-engagement environment, the campaign transforms passive waiting time into active cultural participation.



(Map of Lindun Road Station, 2025)

# 2.3.3 Activation Event's Target Audience

Our primary target audience comprises two key segments: young urban residents and culturally curious tourists. Young locals, aged 18–35, represent a tech-savvy demographic with high digital literacy—89% engage daily with social media platforms like Xiaohongshu and Douyin (QuestMobile, 2024). Despite expressing interest in cultural heritage, 73% rarely visit museums due to perceived inaccessibility or time constraints (Suzhou Youth Cultural Survey, 2023). The campaign addresses this gap by offering quick, interactive experiences aligned with

their preferences for creativity and sustainability. For instance, the installation's magnetic wall allows users to rearrange embroidered figures into hybrid scenes, blending traditional motifs with modern elements like metro maps, fostering both engagement and social media sharing.

Tourists, constituting 35% of peak-season foot traffic, prioritize immersive, shareable experiences. Data from the Suzhou Tourism Bureau indicates that 85% of visitors seek "authentic local culture" during their trips, yet their average stay of 2.5 days necessitates concise interactions (Suzhou Tourism Bureau, 2024). The metro activation caters to this demand through bilingual QR codes offering historical context and limited-edition embroidered souvenirs, such as luggage tags, which serve as tangible cultural mementos.

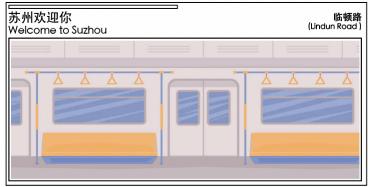
# 2.3.4 Engagement Tactics - Installation & Interaction Design

At Lindun Road Metro Station, the campaign reimagines Su Embroidery not as a relic of the past but as a living narrative that intersects with contemporary urban life. Our installation, titled "We Are on the Same Way," invites commuters and tourists to envision a world where the timeless figures, flora, and fauna of Su Embroidery step out of historical scrolls and into modern Suzhou. Picture scholars from the Ming Dynasty boarding the metro alongside office workers, or embroidered cranes soaring above digital train schedules—this is the cultural dialogue the installation seeks to spark. By transforming static patterns into dynamic companions, the campaign fosters a shared journey where heritage and modernity coexist.

The core is a 10-meter interactive magnetic board installed in the station's hallway. The board features a vibrant backdrop depicting a stylized metro scene—trains, platforms, and urban landmarks—while magnetic pieces inspired by Su Embroidery's iconic motifs are available for public interaction. Users can select these pieces and position them on the board to create whimsical, hybrid scenes. This tactile engagement requires no prior knowledge, democratizing

access to cultural participation. Each day, photographs of the board's evolving compositions are archived, creating a collective visual record of public reinterpretations of Su Embroidery.

Following their creative contribution, users can share their interactive journey on their social platform and tag *We Are On the Same Way, after sharing*, they will receive an embroidered sticker that users can take home. These stickers, crafted by Su Embroidery artisans, serve as both a reward and a bridge between the installation and daily life, encouraging users to carry a fragment of cultural heritage into their personal spaces.



Magnetic Engagement Board\_Along the aisle



Magnetic Engagement Elements

# Visualization



(Installation Mock-up, Lindun Road Station, 2025)



(Reward Stickers)

This installation transcends mere aesthetics—it redefines public space as a stage for cultural conversation. By enabling commuters to "ride the metro" with Su Embroidery's ancient figures, the campaign transforms passive observation into active co-creation. It challenges the notion that tradition and modernity are opposing forces, instead positioning them as collaborative storytellers in Suzhou's evolving identity. Through tactile interaction, social sharing, and digital extensions, the project ensures that Su Embroidery remains not only preserved but perpetually reimagined by those who encounter it.

### 2.3.5 Scalability - Rotating Artisan Spotlights

To ensure sustained impact, the campaign will evolve into a monthly rotating showcase of Su Embroidery masters. Following the initial activation, the metro installation will highlight a different artisan each month, such as Zou Yingzi (known for Buddhist-inspired motifs) or Liang Xuefang (renowned for her lotus-themed floral series). The interactive magnetic board will be updated with elements from the featured artisan's signature works, allowing users to engage with diverse artistic styles. A QR code beneath the installation links to a microsite detailing the artisan's biography, creative philosophy, and commercial portfolio (e.g., studio contacts, online shops), directly connecting public interest to economic opportunities.

This rotational model amplifies market visibility for individual artisans, stimulates demand for niche styles, and educates the public on Su Embroidery's stylistic diversity.

Periodically, featured artisans will host live demonstrations at the station—such as stitching sessions or Q&A dialogues—enhancing engagement through firsthand interaction. By institutionalizing this framework, the campaign transforms transit hubs into dynamic platforms for heritage entrepreneurship, ensuring Su Embroidery thrives as a sustainable cultural and economic practice.

### 2.2 Solution Part 2: Digital Marketing Plan for Broader Participation

Our digital strategy leverages three of China's most influential social media platforms

—Xiaohongshu, Weibo, and Douyin—to reposition Su Embroidery as a living cultural

expression integrated into contemporary life. Each platform plays a distinct yet complementary

role in the broader campaign: Xiaohongshu fuels aesthetic discovery and lifestyle integration,

Weibo drives public discourse and viral momentum, and Douyin fosters deep engagement

through interaction and co-creation. Together, these platforms allow us to reach diverse

audiences at multiple points—from initial exposure to sustained cultural participation.

### Phase 1: Build Awareness and Spark Conversation

In the first phase, we focus on sparking public interest and expanding the visibility of Su Embroidery through narrative and lifestyle-based content, in conjunction with the Metro Pilot Event. On Xiaohongshu, with its 300 Million monthly active users—65% of whom are women aged 18–35, our strategy capitalizes on the platform's reputation as a space for visual storytelling and everyday inspiration. In 2023 alone, over 500,000 posts related to intangible heritage generated more than 22 billion views, highlighting strong user appetite for cultural content.

We will launch the #SuEmbroideryMetroCheckIn challenge to drive cultural discovery and participatory engagement. This campaign includes three key components: photo opportunities labeled "Embroidery Encounter" at Lindun Road Station's art installations, a

countdown-style carousel series revealing daily trivia about Su Embroidery in the lead-up to the campaign launch, and a tiered reward system offering museum tickets for the top 50 participants and digital badges for the first 500 check-ins. These elements are designed to turn casual interest into visible action, encouraging users to incorporate Su Embroidery into their daily content creation. We will train Xiaohongshu's AI recommendation engine to prioritize our content for users interested in "slow fashion" and "Chinese aesthetics," ensuring cultural engagement becomes both personal and discoverable.

At the same time, Weibo fosters broader public discourse and more long-lasting participations under the hashtag #ModernValueOfSuEmbroidery. Weibo is China's leading platform for trending topics and public conversations, with its 588 million monthly active users—80% of whom are from the post-1990s generation. More than 60% of users use Weibo daily to explore current cultural and social trends, making it an ideal platform for viral marketing and resonating with a broad community.

Su Embroidery is introduced through serialized storytelling and interactive touchpoints on Weibo. We will mainly create contents for three engagement formats: daily discussion threads such as "Which modern product needs an embroidered reinvention?", real-time opinion polls managed by Suzhou Metro, Embroidery Association, or Artisan Studio's official account, and behind-the-scenes video coverage of the installation or reward sticker production processes.

Together, these initiatives activate both visual interaction and cultural dialogue, reinforcing the relevance of Su Embroidery within contemporary urban life. These interactive formats take advantage of Weibo's algorithm, which prioritizes content with high engagement velocity, amplifying organic reach.

## Phase 2: Deepen Engagement and Co-Creation

The second phase of the strategy shifts toward deeper engagement and user-led creativity, anchored by Douyin's massive influence among Gen Z and millennial users. Douyin's heritage-related content has seen a 172% year-on-year growth, and its hashtag campaigns like #FallInLoveWithTradition have reached 19 billion views.

On this highly interactive platform, we introduce a suite of features that turn viewers into participants. These include AR filters that project traditional embroidery patterns into user environments, weekly livestreams where artisans recreate user-submitted designs in real-time, and the "48-Hour Remix Challenge," which invites reinterpretations of iconic symbols like the phoenix. This approach not only revitalizes tradition through technology but also fosters community co-creation. To support credibility and scale, we will form long-term partnerships with three established Su Embroidery studios, launch campus ambassador programs at five major universities in Suzhou city, or broaderly in the realm of the Jiangsu Province, and co-create visual content with twelve key opinion leaders (KOLs) in heritage culture or traditional craftsmanship.

Taken together, this multi-platform strategy ensures Su Embroidery is no longer confined to museums or fading traditions. Xiaohongshu drives cultural discovery through daily life integration, Weibo builds public conversation through narrative formats, and Douyin transforms appreciation into action. This digital architecture allows Su Embroidery to be not only seen and celebrated, but also reimagined, participated in, and shared—firmly embedding it into the lifestyles of younger generations. By meeting users where they are, we ensure Su Embroidery evolves from an ancient craft into a dynamic force within modern culture.

# IV. Delivery Phase

### 1. Stakeholder Engagement & Institutional Alignment

Our proposal to revitalize Su Embroidery has been met with strong enthusiasm and tangible support across multiple sectors, highlighting broad recognition of both the potential and urgency of addressing the declining awareness and appreciation of this cultural heritage.

The Zhenhu Embroidery Association(苏州高新区镇湖刺绣协会) serves as our key co-organizing partner. The association, based in Suzhou's High-tech Zone, is critical in managing and supporting Su embroidery practitioners across the region. Ms. Qiu Xing, its Secretary-General, actively advocates diversification of products and innovative business models as essential strategies to enhance the craft's visibility. Qiu emphasized the practical necessity of integrating traditional craftsmanship with contemporary market demands. She specifically supports our strategy's emphasis on digital experimentation and engaging local communities, viewing these methods as effective tools to build awareness among younger generations. Qiu also acknowledges that traditional Su Embroidery suffers from a public perception issue—high pricing without clear communication of value. This misalignment often prevents broader consumer appreciation and adoption. Hence, she strongly backs our integrated marketing approach, believing it will clearly demonstrate the craft's intrinsic worth and cultural significance, ultimately reshaping public perception and expanding the market.

Suzhou Art & Design Technology Institute(苏州工艺美术职业技术学院) also provided crucial backing. Vice President Qin Huaiyu, a leading figure in talent cultivation and cultural innovation, highlighted how our initiative directly aligns with the Institute's ongoing efforts to balance traditional craft preservation with contemporary market viability. Qin specifically appreciated our strategy of mobilizing students and faculty for

collaborative design and programming, noting that students represent untapped potential for revitalizing Su Embroidery through fresh creativity and innovation. Reflecting on the Institute's own challenges—including declining student enrollment in embroidery courses and a mismatch between financial rewards and cultural pressures—Qin sees our proposal as a practical intervention that could reignite student interest by visibly linking traditional craft techniques with modern economic and cultural opportunities. He stressed that partnerships with innovative projects like ours are vital for reversing negative trends and ensuring sustainable growth in the field.

The support from the **Artisan Community** further validates our direction.

Yao Jianping, newly appointed president of the Zhenhu Embroidery Association and widely recognized as the most commercially successful figure in Su Embroidery today, expressed strong alignment with our initiative during our discussions. Yao has long championed the integration of intangible heritage with tourism, effectively expanding the reach and appeal of Su Embroidery by creating interactive cultural experiences at her institute, the China Embroidery Art Gallery in Suzhou. She shared with us her excitement about the emerging trends of combining heritage crafts with immersive travel experiences, which have substantially boosted local tourism and raised broader awareness about Su Embroidery. Yet, Yao remains deeply concerned about the misrepresentation and dilution of authentic embroidery techniques due to increased commercialization. She emphasized the urgent need to maintain quality and authenticity standards amid rapid commercialization and tourism integration. She believes our proposed approach, which carefully balances digital innovation, authentic craft presentation, and community involvement, is critical to showcasing Su Embroidery's genuine cultural value and preventing the craft from being reduced to mass-produced souvenirs.

Additionally, Master artisan Liang Xuefang, renowned for her progressive approach to blending traditional Su Embroidery techniques with modern artistic practices, expressed robust enthusiasm for our vision. With works permanently collected by institutions like the British Museum, Liang has firsthand experience of the global resonance of Su Embroidery. In our discussion, she pointed out how modernizing the craft through material innovations—such as introducing waterproof, eco-friendly textiles—can significantly widen its contemporary relevance and practical application. Liang strongly supports our proposal's digital and educational dimensions, emphasizing the necessity of nurturing younger generations' appreciation through active, innovative engagements rather than passive traditional teachings.

In contrast, artisan **Zou Yingzi**, recognized as a national inheritor of traditional embroidery methods, brings a conservative yet crucial viewpoint to our project. Zou acknowledges the critical problem of declining skilled artisans due to the labor-intensive nature of the craft and the attractions of quicker economic alternatives. Despite her caution towards modernization, Zou appreciates the visibility and market engagement aspects of our project. She believes efforts like ours, if executed sensitively, can preserve traditions while gently introducing the necessary contemporary touchpoints required to maintain audience relevance.

Emerging embroiderers such as **Zhang Lixing and Zhang Xue** have offered additional confirmation of our strategy's effectiveness and necessity. Zhang Lixing, artistic director at Lu Fuying Embroidery Art Gallery, actively integrates contemporary design elements into her embroidery works. Her perspective underscores the importance of balancing tradition with innovation, a principle central to our project. Having conducted embroidery courses for international students, she understands well the practical potential of experiential, interactive

public engagement. Zhang expressed strong support for our plan, particularly valuing its experiential aspects that directly connect the craft to younger, culturally curious audiences.

Zhang Xue, known for his innovative collaborations with international artists, also endorses our strategic direction. Coming from a background initially unrelated to embroidery, Zhang returned to Su Embroidery with a fresh perspective, keenly aware of the craft's global potential. He especially appreciates our digital engagement and international visibility strategies, aligning with his vision of establishing an internationally recognized Su embroidery brand. Zhang recognizes that regulatory restrictions often limit Su Embroidery's online visibility outside China and thus sees our approach—leveraging local social media platforms and physical public spaces—as essential steps toward eventual international recognition and expansion.

**Suzhou Metro** provides critical operational and communications support, informed by their proven track record of successfully integrating intangible cultural heritage into public spaces. Their previous experiences, including hosting Su Embroidery-themed exhibitions, demonstrate a deep institutional understanding of the craft's potential to resonate widely when effectively positioned in accessible, everyday contexts. Suzhou Metro's proactive social media promotions underscore their commitment to raising public awareness. They see our partnership as a natural extension of their existing efforts, leveraging their extensive digital reach to further boost public appreciation and participation in Su Embroidery activities, thus effectively bridging traditional cultural expression with contemporary urban lifestyles.

Lastly, **Suzhou Museum** emerges as a powerful potential collaborator for future expansions. Though not formally involved yet, the Museum's West Branch, established in 2021, specifically focuses on integrating traditional culture with cutting-edge technology—precisely aligning with our strategic vision. Their innovative use of VR technology to archive and publicly

share exhibitions demonstrates their proactive stance toward digital experimentation, significantly broadening audience access and appreciation. Suzhou Museum's continued funding and logistical support for culturally innovative, interactive exhibitions further reinforce the feasibility of our long-term partnership. Given their substantial institutional prestige and technological resources, aligning with the museum will not only extend our project's reach but also solidify Su Embroidery's position as a modern, dynamic cultural practice.

In summary, stakeholder feedback and alignment confirm the broad validity and urgency of our strategy. From cultural institutions and educational partners to master artisans and emerging practitioners, the consensus is clear: raising public awareness and modernizing perception are critical for the sustainable future of Su Embroidery. Through strategic collaborations, innovative digital engagements, and targeted educational programs, our project addresses the core challenges identified by stakeholders, ensuring Su Embroidery transitions smoothly from its historical context into a vibrant, participatory contemporary culture.

### 2. Implementation of the Metro Pilot (Timeline & KPIs)

Our activation implementation plan is structured into four strategic phases, each designed to ensure the successful revitalization of Su Embroidery in a modern urban context while maximizing engagement and long-term impact. The whole phase focuses on our first activity, which is the exhibition, and it will end within 6 months.

The first phase, Infrastructure & Installation (Months 1-3), focuses on securing necessary permissions from Suzhou Metro and Suzhou Museum to install an interactive magnetic embroidery board at Lindun Road Station. This phase involves designing and prototyping the board, fabricating physical signage, and integrating QR codes that link to educational content and an interactive digital platform. Additionally, we will ensure high visibility through strategic

lighting and optimize accessibility through careful placement within the metro station. Logistics such as transportation, installation, and pre-launch testing will be meticulously managed to ensure a seamless experience. Our key performance indicators (KPIs) for this phase include securing metro approval by Month 1, completing the interactive board prototype by Month 2, and ensuring full installation and testing before the campaign launch in Month 3.

The second phase, Marketing & Digital Engagement (Months 2-4), will build anticipation and maximize audience reach through a multi-platform marketing campaign. We will leverage social media platforms such as Xiaohongshu, Weibo, and Douyin to share behind-the-scenes content, teaser videos, and interactive polls, using dedicated hashtags to encourage engagement. Collaborations with influencers, Suzhou tourism boards, and local media outlets will amplify visibility, while Suzhou Museum and Metro will support digital storytelling efforts through their own networks. This phase will also include interactive digital elements such as augmented reality (AR) filters and virtual embroidery challenges to further engage audiences.

Our KPIs include achieving 10,000+ total impressions before the event launch, generating 500+ pieces of user-generated content, securing 2,000+ interactions across social media platforms, and obtaining at least 10 media mentions covering the campaign.

The third phase, Event Programming & Community Engagement (Months 3-4), will activate the campaign through immersive on-site experiences. We will organize live embroidery workshops featuring Suzhou artisans, allowing participants to try their hand at traditional techniques while learning about the history and craftsmanship of Su embroidery. Additionally, we will facilitate public engagement through Su Embroidery sticker rewards, interactive voting stations where visitors can choose future metro locations for similar projects, and student engagement programs in collaboration with local universities. This phase aims to foster a sense

of ownership and community involvement, with KPIs including attracting 5,000+ on-site participants, distributing 7,500+ stickers, securing participation from at least two universities, and collecting 500+ offline feedback forms. Our ultimate goal is to achieve a 50%+ passenger engagement rate among metro commuters.

The final phase, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Future Expansion (Months 5–6), will focus on assessing the project's impact and identifying opportunities for future development. We will collect real-time visitor engagement data through QR code analytics, conduct post-event surveys to measure participant satisfaction, and compile a comprehensive impact report for sponsors and partners. Additionally, we will evaluate potential expansion opportunities, such as installing similar interactive embroidery exhibits at other Suzhou metro stations, public parks, or cultural institutions. Our KPIs include achieving an 85%+ participant satisfaction rate, identifying at least three viable expansion opportunities, and generating 10+ new partnership leads for future Su Embroidery projects. Based on the performance of this exhibition, we will continue at least two Su Embroidery programs, refining our approach based on community feedback and engagement data. Through this structured and data-driven approach, we aim to bridge Su Embroidery's cultural heritage with contemporary urban experiences, ensuring its sustained relevance and accessibility for both local residents and international visitors.

## 3. Budget Breakdown & Funding Sources (Appendix\_4)

Our strategic initiative to revitalize Su Embroidery through innovative urban activation and digital storytelling operates within a deliberately lean budget of approximately \$30,000. Despite its modest scale, this budget effectively covers comprehensive needs critical to our project's success. Approximately half of our total budget is dedicated to core production expenses, including the construction of the interactive installation at Lindun Road Station,

specialized visual and graphic design work, the production of tailored digital content, and embroidered giveaways that will foster immediate audience engagement. The remainder of the budget is allocated to social media promotions, public outreach activities, and detailed on-site documentation and analysis to facilitate sustained interest and ongoing strategic refinement.

Recognizing the limitations typically associated with traditional public sector funding, we have strategically developed a grassroots funding model centered around robust community partnerships and in-kind contributions. Our primary supporting partner is the Suzhou Embroidery Association, a well-established and deeply networked organization within the regional embroidery industry. Leveraging this partnership, we gain essential access to a broad network of highly skilled artisans, critical media press resources, and coordination with key local cultural institutions, enabling the effective execution of our activation without dependence on large-scale governmental funding.

Moreover, Liang Xuefang Studio provides vital co-development support for our project.

As a renowned Su Embroidery artist recognized both domestically and internationally, Liang Xuefang's involvement lends substantial credibility to the campaign, enhancing its authenticity and attractiveness. Her studio assists directly in the design and production of embroidered items, ensuring high quality and culturally accurate representation.

The Suzhou Art & Design Institute contributes significantly through in-kind support, offering design expertise and mobilizing student volunteers. This collaboration provides not only essential operational support but also brings fresh creative energy and academic rigor to the project, fostering innovation and meaningful participation from the younger generation. Such involvement additionally serves as an experiential learning opportunity for students, aligning with the institute's broader mission to develop talent for the cultural and creative industries.

Suzhou Metro, our venue and promotional partner, plays a pivotal role by providing access to the high-visibility location of Lindun Road Station and assisting with promotional outreach through its well-established social media platforms. Suzhou Metro's track record of integrating intangible cultural heritage into urban public spaces demonstrates its institutional commitment and practical capability to support culturally significant projects effectively.

Additionally, Suzhou Museum, though not formally committed at this phase, has indicated strong potential for future support. Its innovative West Wing, established in 2021, regularly integrates traditional cultural exhibits with cutting-edge technology like virtual reality. Their emphasis on digitization and interactive public exhibitions aligns precisely with our campaign's values, suggesting a highly compatible partnership that could significantly expand our project's reach and sustainability in subsequent phases.

Finally, our project has also identified avenues for supplemental financial support from the Suzhou Municipal Culture Department. Micro-grants aimed at promoting intangible cultural heritage will be available for application in the latter half of this year. These grants, though relatively modest, represent valuable resources that can enhance specific activities within the broader campaign structure, allowing additional flexibility and responsiveness in our plan.

Collectively, these diverse and community-rooted contributions ensure that our project remains financially feasible, culturally authentic, and deeply embedded within local artistic and institutional ecosystems. Rather than relying on large-scale external funding, this collaborative approach ensures sustainability, cultural sensitivity, and strong local ownership.

### 4. Future Expansion and Long-term Impact

The Metro Event demonstrates the profound potential of embedding Su Embroidery within urban daily experiences. We have established that cultural heritage need not be confined

to institutional exhibitions or specialized environments; rather, it can thrive in accessible and familiar public spaces, effectively engaging diverse contemporary audiences.

Building on this, we will continue co-creating installations with more artisan studios, refresh motifs and themes seasonally, and build digital archives in partnership with the Suzhou Museum to further deepen public understanding of this cultural heritage. At the same time, Su Embroidery will enter more public spaces—Cafes, Malls, Campuses, and so on— to build wider access points and normalize its presence in daily settings. In the long term, this growing visibility will raise public awareness, driving demand for embroidery experiences, customized products, and local tourism—ultimately increasing artisan income, attracting new apprentices, and rebuilding the craft's economic ecosystem.

Broadly speaking, the success of Su Embroidery can also bring attention to Suzhou's other 20+ national intangible heritage, including Song brocade, Kunqu opera, and woodblock printing. This design-led, emotionally resonant, and community-centered model offers a replicable framework for renewing traditional crafts across both physical environments and digital ecosystems. Additionally, Su Embroidery's use of natural, eco-friendly materials—like silk and plant-based dyes—along with its frequent depiction of nature themes such as flowers, birds, fish, and insects, makes it a powerful medium for sparking global conversations around sustainability.

## V. Appendix

## 1. SWOT analysis of Su Embroidery in the competitive global environment

## Strengths • Exceptional Craftsmanship and Artistic Heritage: Su Embroidery represents centuries-old embroidery techniques, recognized as a Chinese intangible cultural heritage. Its intricate craftsmanship and artistic expression make it highly valuable. • Cultural Prestige and National Support: Su Embroidery enjoys strong backing from the Chinese government and cultural institutions, which enhances its visibility and reputation. This support includes financial incentives, cultural diplomacy (e.g., national gifts), and participation in global exhibitions, all adding to its artistic value. • Emerging Digital Presence: The rising influence of e-commerce platforms, particularly in China, has expanded Su Embroidery's reach to younger generations. • High-End Market Position: At the high end of the market, Su Embroidery offers bespoke and collectible items sought after by art collectors and cultural institutions. Its association with luxury brands (e.g., Guo Pei, Dior) and presence in international art shows contribute to its prestige and exclusivity. Weaknesses • Limited Digital Integration and Marketing: Although Su Embroidery has made Great progress in e-commerce, its global digital presence remains underdeveloped. A lack of cohesive global branding strategies and advanced digital marketing hampers broader international outreach. • Traditional Business Models: Many Su Embroidery workshops still rely on traditional sales methods, such as in-person exhibitions and physical storefronts, limiting scalability and market adaptability. The artisans' focus on tradition can sometimes prevent innovation and hinder responsiveness to contemporary market demands. • High Production Costs and Long Lead Times: The labor-intensive nature of Su Embroidery embroidery increases production time and costs. particularly for handmade, high-quality pieces. This can limit its competitiveness in fast-paced global markets where consumers may prioritize affordability and accessibility. • Fragmented Industry: There is limited collaboration and communication between Su Embroidery artisans, workshops, and businesses, especially when addressing industry-wide challenges such as

product innovation and global market entry coordination.

## **Opportunities**

- Growing Demand for Sustainable and Ethical Fashion: Global consumer trends increasingly favor products that emphasize sustainability, ethical craftsmanship, and cultural heritage. Su Embroidery's eco-friendly production methods, particularly its use of natural materials like silk and plant-based dyes, align well with these values.
- Collaborations with Contemporary Industries: Collaborating with fashion, gaming, and interior design industries presents new avenues for innovation and market expansion.
- Emerging Middle-Class Markets Globally: The rise of middle-class consumers, particularly in markets like Southeast Asia, Europe, and the Americas, offers Su Embroidery an opportunity to expand its market base. Consumers in these regions are increasingly interested in culturally significant and artisanal products.
- Expansion through Digital and Cross-Border Commerce: There is potential to further develop international e-commerce platforms to facilitate the sale of Su Embroidery products. This includes establishing partnerships with global e-retailers and optimizing outbound logistics for seamless cross-border trade.

### **Threats**

- Intense Competition in the Textile Art Market: Su Embroidery faces competition from other textile traditions worldwide, including Italian, Indian, and Turkish embroidery. These competitors often have well-established global brands, making it difficult for Su Embroidery to gain a significant foothold in international markets.
- Substitute Products and Technological Disruption: Machine-made embroidery and mass-produced textile art pose a significant threat to Su Embroidery, particularly in the lower-end markets where price competition is fierce. Consumers who are not culturally attached to the tradition may opt for cheaper alternatives that imitate Su Embroidery's designs.
- Intellectual Property Concerns: The globalization of digital sales channels increases the risk of copyright infringement and imitation of Su Embroidery's designs. Protecting intellectual property in the international marketplace is a growing concern for artisans and small workshops.
- Global Market Uncertainty: Changes in global trade policies, economic instability, and fluctuations in consumer spending patterns could negatively impact Su Embroidery's expansion into new international markets.

### 2. The Persona of Su Embroidery Customers

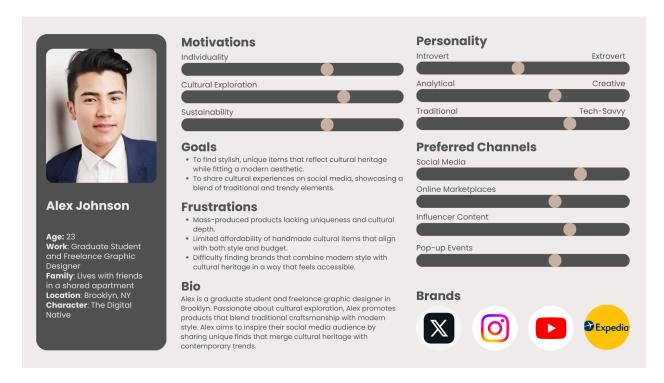
### 2.1 Art Collectors and Institutions



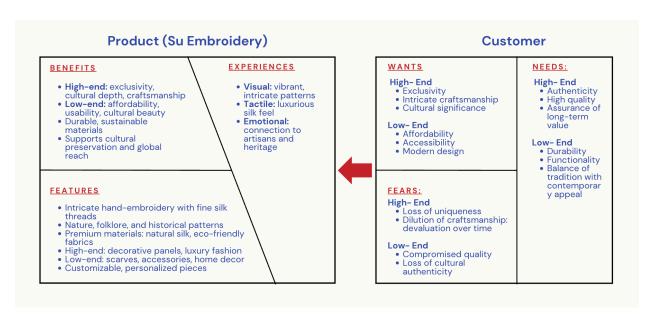
## 2.2 Cultural Tourists



## 2.3 Younger Generation (Millennials and Gen Z)



## 3. Value Proposition of Su Embroidery Products



# 4. Budget Breakdown for Metro Pilot Event

Category	Justifications	Estimated Cost (USD)	Ratio
Production	Installation Materials & Fabrication	\$6,400.00	21.33%
	Interactive Wall Design & Printing	\$4,300.00	14.33%
	Lighting & Setup Labor	\$2,900.00	9.67%
	Giveaway Production (embroidered stickers, museum tickets)	\$1,500.00	5.00%
Marketing	Platform Fees (Weibo + Xiaohongshu promotions)	\$2,900.00	9.67%
	Content Creation (video, graphics)	\$2,600.00	8.67%
	KOL & Micro-Influencer Collaboration	\$3,600.00	12.00%
Implementatio n	Event Staffing & Volunteer Coordination	\$2,200.00	7.33%
	Photography & Documentation	\$1,500.00	5.00%
	Miscellaneous + Contingency	\$2,100.00	7.00%
Total Amount		\$30,000.00	

#### VI. References

- 2024版中国文创产品行业市场分析研究报告 (2024 China Cultural and Creative Products Industry Market Analysis Research Report). (2024, May 2). 智研咨询 (Zhiyan Consulting, www.chyxx.com)
  https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1797903803201722151&wfr=spider&for=pc
- 2024 Social & KOL 营销趋势报告》发布,「内容+社交+达人」三位一体影响年轻消费者
  ["2024 Social & KOL Marketing Trend Report" released, "Content + Social + KOL"
  trinity influences young consumers]. (2024). China-Caa.org; China Advertising
  Association(中国广告协会). https://www.china-caa.org/cnaa/newsdetail/920
- 2024抖音精选创作趋势洞察[2024 Tik Tok Featured Creative Trend Insights]. (2024, September 20). Oceanengine.com; 巨量算数.

  https://trendinsight.oceanengine.com/arithmetic-report/detail/1082?source=undefined
- 2024抖音热点年度数据报告[2024 Douyin Hotspot Annual Data Report]. (2024, December 29).

  Oceanengine.com; 巨量算数.
  - https://trendinsight.ocean engine.com/arithmetic-report/detail/1083? source = undefined the property of the
- 2024小红书内容产业年度报告[2024 Xiaohongshu Content Industry Annual Report]. (2024, February 1). Newrank.cn; 新红数据.
  https://xh.newrank.cn/product/article/article-detail/d1d709da11884c7c
- CCTV-4《国宝·发现》上线"十大精品"终评全纪实《璀璨星河》(Masterpieces" final review full documentary "Brilliant Galaxy"). (2024, May 20). Chinese Museum Association. https://www.chinamuseum.org.cn/cma/detail.html?id=12&contentId=13690

- Chen, Q. (2024, June 15). 全省重点文旅产业项目名单出炉 65个项目总投资超1000亿元(The list of key cultural and tourism industry projects in the province has been released, with a total investment of over 100 billion CNY in 65 projects). 新华日报(Xinhua Daily). 中共 江苏省委新闻网(Jiangsu Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China News Website). http://www.zgjssw.gov.cn/yaowen/202407/t20240715\_8358535.shtml
- Chen, S. (2024, July 4). 探访苏州苏绣小镇:一枝独"绣"传经典(Visiting Su Embroidery Town:
  A unique embroidery that spreads classics). Xinhuanet.com; Xinhua News.
  www.js.xinhuanet.com/20240704/b7ed96bb27da4fe0a57cf6ee8bb08f2c/c.html?page=8
- China Daily. (2023). Suzhou Metro integrates traditional garden design elements in station décor. https://caijing.chinadaily.com.cn
- China Education News. (2019, December 24). 为民族存艺 为文化存根(Preserve art for the nation and preserve the roots of culture). China Vocational and Technical Education Association. Sponsored by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. https://www.chinazy.org/info/1009/2700.htm
- China Intangible Cultural Heritage Association. (2023, December 7). The updated significance and trends in digital communication of intangible cultural heritage [非物质文化遗产数字化传播的意义更新与趋势分析]. https://www.ihchina.cn/luntan\_details/28643.html
- China Intangible Cultural Heritage Association. (2023). 非物质文化遗产数字传播效果调查
  [Survey on the effectiveness of digital communication for intangible cultural heritage].

  Retrieved from https://www.ihchina.cn/Article/Index/detail?id=23320

- China National Silk Museum. (2018, October 1). 山水:全球名家旗袍邀请展「郭培手中的"繁花似锦"\_融合 (Landscape: Global Famous Cheongsam Invitational Exhibition 「"Flowers and Brocade" in the Hands of Guo Pei\_Fusion). Sohu.com; Sohu News. https://www.sohu.com/a/257373966\_750865
- Deeny, G. (2020, December 8). Dior Men Pre-Fall 2021: Chinese seed embroidery meets Kenny Scharf. Fashion Network.

  https://ww.fashionnetwork.com/news/Dior-men-pre-fall-2021-chinese-seed-embroidery-meets-kenny-scharf,1265553.html
- Deng, H. (2022, April 26th). 有了本硕博, 非遗人才培养能否燎原(With bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees, can the cultivation of intangible cultural heritage talents spread like wildfire?). Editor: Li, F. 光明日报(Guangming Daily). 光明网(Guangming Web). https://news.gmw.cn/2022-04/26/content\_35689141.htm
- Dongfang Web. (2024, June 27). 微博"焕新非遗计划" 助力非遗焕发新活力 [Weibo's "Revitalize Intangible Cultural Heritage Plan" helps intangible cultural heritage regain new vitality] (T. Zhang, Ed.). Chinadaily.com.cn; China Daily(中国日报). https://caijing.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202406/27/WS667d2dcda3107cd55d268e3b.html
- 诚品生活苏州携手姚绣举办品牌首展「星火姚绣——有温度的非遗生活展」(Eslite Life Suzhou and Yaoxiu jointly held the brand's first exhibition "Spark Yaoxiu Warm Intangible Cultural Heritage Life Exhibition"). (2020 September 11). Copyright © 2024 Eslite Corporation. https://www.eslitecorp.com/eslite/news.jsp?site\_id=eslite\_cn&id=119
- Global Silk Industry Statistics. (2023). Inserco.org; International Sericultural Commission. https://inserco.org/en/statistics)

- Guangming Daily. (2013, July 2). 四大名绣该怎样传承(How to pass on the four famous embroidery). Editor: Wu, B & Chang, X. China Communist Party News Web. http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/0702/c83083-22041649.html
- Handicrafts Market Report by Product Type, Distribution Channel, End-Use, and Region 2024-2032. (2024). Imarcgroup.com. https://www.imarcgroup.com/handicrafts-market
- Hau, J. (2025, January 15). Notes on Xiaohongshu/REDNote The Ultimate Guide (2025).
  Prizm Digital NZ. https://prizmdigital.co.nz/xiaohongshu-notes/
- He, J. (2024, May 7). 200多场活动等你来!2024年四川非遗宣传展示系列活动最全攻略出炉 (More than 200 events are waiting for you! The most comprehensive guide to the 2024 Sichuan Intangible Cultural Heritage Promotion and Exhibition Series of Activities is released). 四川新闻网 (Sichuan News Web). https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1801204959166307957&wfr=spider&for=pc
- Hu, H. (2023, May 17). 当科技"碰撞"非遗! 全球首幅动态苏绣立体呈现花开蝶舞 (When technology "collides" with intangible cultural heritage! The world's first dynamic Suzhou embroidery presents flowers blooming and butterflies dancing in three dimensions). 网易新闻(NetEase News). https://js.news.163.com/23/0517/16/I4V0I3OQ04249CU3.html
- Hu, L., Li, R., & Yang, L. (2022). 苏绣工艺品现状浅析. 博斯林国际出版社(Procelain Publishing International Limited). DOI: 10.12184/wspcyycxWSP2516-413912.20220602
- Hu, Y. (2023, April 12). *Empowered by copyright, Suzhou's digital cultural industry "goes out of the circle."* 版权赋能, 苏州数字文化产业"出圈"\_中国江苏网.
  https://jsnews.jschina.com.cn/sz/a/202304/t20230412\_3197104.shtml

- Lai, D. (2023, September 14). 非遗短视频传播策略及其文化审视 [Short video communication strategies of intangible cultural heritage and its cultural examination]. China Culture

  Daily. Retrieved from https://www.ihchina.cn/news\_1\_details/28067.html
- Li, Y; Xiong, Y. (2017, September 30). 苏绣的传承、保护与产业发展研究 (Research on the inheritance, protection, and industrial development of Suzhou embroidery). 中国社会科学网 *(China Social Science Web)*.
  - http://www.jsthinktank.com/zhihuijiangsu/wenhua/201709/t20170930\_4710747.shtml
- Liu, W. (2021, May 13). 苏州高新区出台措施推动苏绣传承创新发展(Suzhou High-tech Zone issued measures to promote the inheritance and innovative development of Suzhou embroidery). 新华网(Xinhua Web).
  - $k.sina.cn/article\_2810373291\_a782e4ab020022c12.html? from=news \& subch=onews \\$
- Li, Q. (2024, June 14). 《2023非物质文化遗产电商消费报告》发布("2023 Intangible Cultural Heritage E-commerce Consumption Report" released). Ctnews.com.cn; 中国旅游新闻 网(China Tourism News Network).
  - https://www.ctnews.com.cn/chanye/content/2024-06/14/content\_161408.html
- Liu, W. (2021, May 13). 苏州高新区出台措施推动苏绣传承创新发展 (Suzhou High-tech Zone issued measures to promote the inheritance and innovative development of Su Embroidery). 新华网(Xinhuanet.com).
  - k.sina.cn/article\_2810373291\_a782e4ab020022c12.html?from=news&subch=onews
- National Standard for Su Embroidery GB/T38029-2019. (2019, August 30). 国家市场监督管理总局 & 中国国家标准化管理委员 (National Administration for Market Regulation & China National Standardization Administration).

- Pi, L. (2024, September 10). 小红书公益设立"非遗上新"专项扶持基金 助力乡村文化振兴 [Xiaohongshu Charity sets up a special support fund for "Intangible Cultural Heritage" to help revitalize rural culture]. Gongyishibao.com; China Philanthropy Times. http://www.gongyishibao.com/html/gongyizixun/2024/09/28348.html
- Qi, M. (2021, April 29). 隐匿在迪奥秋季男装系列背后的苏绣匠人们 (The Suzhou embroidery craftsmen behind Dior's autumn men's collection). *Mensuno News*. https://k.sina.cn/article\_1223849864\_48f2778801900uq09.html
- QuestMobile 2024年新媒体生态盘点: 五大平台覆盖10.71亿用户, 内容商业化进入爆发期 [QuestMobile 2024 New Media Ecosystem Inventory: Five Major Platforms Cover 1.071 Billion Users, Content Commercialization Enters a Period of Explosion]. (2024, December 24). QuestMobile. https://www.questmobile.com.cn/research/report/1871401635281997826
- Ren, Y. (2023, May 17). 中央财政支持国家非物质文化遗产保护 下达保护资金超8.2亿元 (The central government supports the protection of national intangible cultural heritage and allocates more than 820 million CNY in protection funds). Editors: Sun, H; Gao, L. 人民网(*People.cn*). http://finance.people.com.cn/n1/2023/0517/c1004-32688680.html
- Sina Weibo Data Center. (2024, October). 2024微博用户消费趋势报告[2024 Weibo User Consumption Trend Report]. Data.webo.com/Report; 微报告.

  https://data.weibo.com/report/reportDetail?id=473
- Sun, Q. (2024, December 24). 2024刺绣艺术展示周绽放江南水乡[2024 Embroidery Art Exhibition Week blooms in Jiangnan Water Village]. Ihchina.cn; China Intangible

- Cultural Heritage Web(中国非物质文化遗产网). https://www.ihchina.cn/project\_details/29496
- Shan, L. (2024, July 26). 小银针绣出大产业 (Small silver needle embroidery creates a big industry). 中国知识产权资讯网 *(China Intellectual Property Information Web)*.

  .http://www.iprchn.com/cipnews/news content.aspx?newsId=140362
- Shen, L. (2013, October 3). 苏州一小镇八千绣娘把刺绣当生活 成就"刺绣之乡" (Eight thousand embroiderers in a small town in Suzhou make embroidery their living creating the "hometown of embroidery"). 人民网(*People's Daily*). http://culture.people.com.cn/n/2013/1003/c172318-23100166.html
- Song, M, et al. (2024, June 4). 亮点抢先看! 2024年"文化和自然遗产日"浙江省主场城市 杭州 系列活动即将启幕(Highlights preview! 2024 "Cultural and Natural Heritage Day" Zhejiang Province host city Hangzhou- series of activities are about to kick off). 杭州网(Hangzhou Web).

  https://ori.hangzhou.com.cn/ornews/content/2024-06/04/content 8739569.htm
- Suzhou Daily. (2024, July 9). 苏绣入选国家和省级传统工艺振兴目录 (Suzhou embroidery was selected into the national and provincial traditional craft revitalization catalogue). 苏州市人民政府 (Suzhou Municipal People's Government).
  www.suzhou.gov.cn/szsrmzf/szyw/202407/64924cd71676443ebe7117ce0bacfd86.shtml
- Suzhou Daily. (2022, August 7). 文化苏州 魅力非凡(Cultural Suzhou, Extraordinary Charm). 苏州市人民政府 (Suzhou Municipal People's Government).
  www.suzhou.gov.cn/szsrmzf/szyw/202208/5da83e2c91434c8fb113e63b46dd9d43.shtml

- 苏绣与国礼(Su Embroidery and National Gift). (2016, March 9). Clii.com.cn; Jiangsu Arts and Crafts Association.
  - https://www.clii.com.cn/zhhylm/zhhylmhyzmqy/201603/t20160309\_3887539.html
- Tian, M. (2023). 非遗与时俱进 平台助力振兴 | 她们让传统手工艺搭上电商直播快车 (Intangible cultural heritage keeps pace with the times, and platforms help revitalize it | They let traditional handicrafts catch up with the express train of e-commerce live streaming) (W. Luo, Y. Zhang, & J. Zhang, Eds.). 中国妇女报 (China Women's News). https://epaper.cnwomen.com.cn/images/2023-02/17/6/06BLM06B217\_h.pdf
- Tu, T. (2024, February 27). 小红书公益联合非遗传播研究中心发布《小红书春节非遗生活指南》[Xiaohongshu Charity and the Intangible Cultural Heritage Communication Research Center jointly released the "Xiaohongshu Spring Festival Intangible Cultural Heritage Life Guide"]. Chinadaily.com.cn.

  https://chuangxin.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202402/21/WS65d5a12ea3109f7860dd2787.html
- Wan, L., Wang, F. (2020, August 16). 苏绣"绣娘"为何年龄大都是40到50岁之间?"非遗苏绣,梦回姑苏"江苏大学学生探寻苏绣非遗文化 (Why are most Suzhou embroidery "embroiderers" between 40 and 50 years old? "Intangible cultural heritage Suzhou embroidery, dreaming of Suzhou" Jiangsu University students explore the intangible cultural heritage of Suzhou embroidery). 扬子晚报(Yangtse Evening Post). https://www.yangtse.com/content/986546.html
- Wei, Z. (2023, September 26). 中秋将至苏绣产品销售火爆! 年轻群体消费占比过半 (Mid-Autumn Festival is approaching, Suzhou embroidery products are selling well! Young people account for more than half of the consumption). 央视财经网 (CCTV-2

- Finance Web).
- https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1778085869897110966&wfr=spider&for=pc
- Xin, X. (2023, December 28). 《可持续发展蓝皮书:中国可持续发展评价报告(2023)》在京发布 ("Sustainable Development Blue Book: China Sustainable Development Evaluation Report (2023)" released in Beijing). 中国日报网(China Daily).

  https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1786536238084541374&wfr=spider&for=pc
- Yang, Xue. (2022, November 3). 浅析互联网时代苏绣产业的发展研究 (A brief analysis of the development of Suzhou embroidery industry in the Internet era). 江苏工艺美术 *(jsact.cn)*. http://www.jsact.cn/paper/info/10941
- Yang, Xiufeng. (2024, July 22). 非遗苏绣首次入妆 花西子让文化传承成为时尚引流
  (Intangible cultural heritage Suzhou embroidery is used in makeup for the first time. Hua
  Xizi makes cultural heritage a fashion trend). 中国经济网 (China Economy Information
  NET). http://travel.ce.cn/gdtj/202407/22/t20240722\_7389195.shtml
- Yuan, X, et al. (2019, May 19). 274.关于苏绣产业融合发展的建议 (274. Suggestions on the integrated development of Suzhou embroidery industry). 苏州政协 (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Suzhou Committee).

  http://www.zx.suzhou.gov.cn/wyzj/017003/20190923/0db741a8-d117-474e-8696-5f34ea 9cc22b.html
- Zhang, J, et al. (2021, August 6). 记录中国 | 苏绣"内卷"待解:非遗如何"出圈", 打通新市场 (Recording China | Suzhou embroidery "involution" needs to be solved: How can intangible cultural heritage "go out of the circle" and open up new markets). 澎湃新闻 (*Pengpai News*). https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail\_forward\_13915982

- Zhang, S. (2023, December 12). 苏州"811"计划提升城市文化软实力(Suzhou's "811" plan enhances the city's cultural soft power). 中共江苏省委新闻网 (Jiangsu Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China News.).

  https://www.zgjssw.gov.cn/shixianchuanzhen/suzhou/202312/t20231212\_8168360.shtml
- Zhang, W. (Ed.). (2019, September 5). 《苏绣》国标明年3月1日起正式实施 (The national standard of Su Embroidery will be officially implemented on March 1 next year).

  Ourjiangsu.com; 我苏网. http://www.ourjiangsu.com/a/20190905/1567653114463.shtml
- Zhou, X., et al. (2023, July 13). 奋进新征程 我们这五年 邹英姿: 用艺术回报社会(Striving for a New Journey, Our Five Years Zou Yingzi: Giving Back to Society with Art). 澎湃 新闻(*Pengpai News*). https://m.thepaper.cn/newsDetail\_forward\_23839714
- Zhu, Q; Liu, M. (2024, April 22). 文化消费新偏好折射青年一代文化自信(New preferences in cultural consumption reflect the cultural confidence of the younger generation). 经济参考报(*Economic Information Daily*). Editor: Shi, G. 新华社(Xinhua News Agency). http://www.xinhuanet.com/20240422/524748f4b85a4c18a5b256db5f4d5fe7/c.html
- 关于开展2024年度苏州艺术基金项目扶持工作的启事 (Announcement on the support of Suzhou Art Fund projects in 2024). (2024, March 22). 苏州宣传, 中共苏州市委宣传部主办 (Suzhou Promotion, hosted by the Publicity Department of Suzhou Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China)

  http://www.xcb.suzhou.gov.cn/index.php/Home/Mb/article?id=3595
- 关于下达2024年国家非物质文化遗产保护资金预算的通知(Notice on Issuing the 2024

  National Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Fund Budget). 中华人民共和国财政部

官网(Official website of the Ministry of Finance of the People's Republic of China). (2024, May 7). https://www.mof.gov.cn/jrttts/202405/t20240508 3934220.htm

商务部电子商务司负责人介绍2024年1-4月我国电子商务发展情况(The head of the Department of E-commerce of the Ministry of Commerce introduced the development of e-commerce in my country from January to April 2024). (2024, May 21). 商务部新闻办公室(Press Office of the Ministry of Commerce). 中华人民共和国商务部(Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China).

http://file.mofcom.gov.cn/article/syxwfb/202405/20240503511278.shtml

- 《苏州市民办博物馆扶持办法》解读(Interpretation of the "Suzhou Municipal Private Museum Support Measures"). (2016, September 30). 苏州霆峰知识产权代理有限公司. http://www.jstfip.com/nd.jsp?fromColId=173&id=60# np=173 631
- 《苏州市文化"走出去"扶持项目资金补贴办法(试行)》解读 (Interpretation of the "Suzhou City Cultural "Going Global" Support Project Fund Subsidy Measures (Trial)"). (2016, September 30). 苏州霆峰知识产权代理有限公司.

  http://www.jstfip.com/nd.jsp?fromColId=173&id=57# np=173 631
- 甜蜜暴击! 这些苏绣小镇的梦幻联动, 比巧克力还让人心动! (Sweet attack! The dreamlike linkage of these Suzhou embroidery towns is more exciting than chocolate!). (2025, February 14). Silk Show Town Official Public Account. https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/jMxK6VH-fZjjHHVW97nhIw
- 王者荣耀荣耀中国节第三弹:王昭君"乞巧织情"来袭, 感受非遗"苏绣"的魅力 (The third episode of Honor of Kings China Festival: Wang Zhaojun's "Begging for Skill and Weaving Love" is coming, and you can feel the charm of the intangible cultural heritage

- "Suzhou Embroidery"). (2021, August 13). 搜狐网新闻*(Sohu.com News)*. https://www.sohu.com/a/483123898 120254956
- 文化和旅游部对十三届全国人大五次会议第3697号建议的答复 (The Ministry of Culture and Tourism's reply to Recommendation No. 3697 of the Fifth Session of the Thirteenth National People's Congress). (2022, July 15). 文化和旅游部非物质文化遗产司 (Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Culture and Tourism). https://zwgk.mct.gov.cn/zfxxgkml/zhgl/jytadf/202211/t20221117\_937515.html
- 文化新纪行苏州古城里的"新中式"从业者:"国潮风"未来已来 (New Cultural Chronicles:
  "New Chinese Style" Practitioners in Suzhou Ancient City: "National Trend" is coming).
  (2024, April 20). 中国新闻网(Chinanews).
  https://m.chinanews.com/wap/detail/chs/zw/10202729.shtml
- 中国非物质文化遗产传承人研修培训计划介绍 (Introduction to the training program for inheritors of China's intangible cultural heritage) (2024, August 2nd). 中国非物质文化 遗产数字博物馆 *(China Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum)*. Retrieved from https://www.ihchina.cn/train.html