



"HUNARMAND" ASSOCIATION  
OF UZBEKISTAN



WORLD CRAFTS COUNCIL  
ASIA PACIFIC REGION



# Press Statement

## FOR SIX SUB-REGIONS

**JUNE 14, 2024**

West Asia, Central Asia  
South Asia, South East Asia  
East Asia, and South Pacific

## AWARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR HANDICRAFTS 2024

The World Crafts Council Award of Excellence for Handicrafts (WCC-AoE) for the year 2024 has been granted to 87 submissions out of a total of 160 entries from the Asia Pacific Region's six sub-regions.

The WCC Award of Excellence for Handicrafts aims to encourage artisans to produce handicrafts that utilize traditional skills, patterns, and themes in an innovative way, ensuring the continuity and sustainability of these traditions. It is essential to set quality standards, raise international awareness, and strengthen the promotional potential for handicraft products, enabling them to compete in the global market and thereby improving the welfare of the craftsmen.

The submissions were highly diverse, including woven and embroidered textiles, natural fibers, ceramics, wood carvings and inlays, metalwork, stone carvings, glass, and other materials. The 160 submitted products originated from the six sub-regions of the WCC-Asia Pacific Region:

- West Asia (Iran, Palestine): 48 entries
- Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan) : 47 entries
- South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka): 16 entries
- South East Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines): 26 entries
- East Asia (China): 15 entries
- South Pacific (Australia, New Zealand): 8 entries

From May 3 to May 5, 2024, an event dedicated to the Award of Excellence for Handicrafts 2024 was held in Bukhara, Uzbekistan. The Second International Festival of Gold Embroidery and Jewelry coincided with this event. For the second time in the Award's history, the best works of artisans from various countries were showcased in one location in Bukhara, Uzbekistan. All products were meticulously selected at the initial stage by sub-region experts and were collectively evaluated at the international level.

A distinctive feature of this event was the collective evaluation process. Unlike previous years where handicrafts were selected within their respective sub-regions, this time a unified committee evaluated the products.

The jury consisted of Vice-Presidents, Honorary members, and Advisors from the World Crafts Council-Asia Pacific region:

- **Mr. Aziz Murtazaev** - WCC-APR President from Uzbekistan
- **Mr. Aidarkhan Kaliyev** - WCC-APR Vice-President of Central Asia Subregion from Kazakhstan
- **Ms. Aizhan Bekkulova** - WCC-APR Honorary Member & Advisor from Kazakhstan
- **Ms. Manjari Nirula** - WCC AISBL, AoE Sub-Committee Coordinator, WCC- APR Honorary Member & Advisor from India
- **Ms. Luva Nahid Choudhury** - WCC-APR Vice President of South Asia Sub-region from Bangladesh
- **Mr. Sampath Erahapola** - WCC-APR Vice President of South Asia Sub-region from Sri Lanka
- **Mr. Ma Xiang** - Representative of the WCC-APR Vice President of East Asia Sub-region from China
- **Mr. Edric Ong** - WCC-APR Honorary Member & Advisor from Malaysia
- **Dr. Joseph Lo** - WCC-APR Honorary Member & Advisor from Singapore
- **Dr. Sithichai Smanchat** - WCC-APR Vice President of South East Asia Sub-region from Thailand
- **Ms. Jude Van Der Merwe** - WCC-APR Vice President of South Pacific Sub-region from Australia
- **Ms. Lindy Jubert** - WCC-APR Honorary Member & Advisor from Australia
- **Ms. Vida Tavahodi** – Representative of the WCC-APR Vice President of West Asia Sub-region from Iran
- **Mr. Osama Staiti** - WCC-APR Vice President of West Asia Sub-region from Palestine

Gathering in a historical place like Bukhara and conducting an assessment committee for the Award of Excellence for Handicrafts was the main motivation for holding this event. It was an incredible exchange of experiences, an opportunity to share opinions and achievements of masters, subtly touching the skillful creations.

The international experts from all sub-regions observed and evaluated the submitted materials over three days based on four key criteria: excellence, authenticity, innovation, and marketability.

During the Second International Festival of Handicrafts, which took place in Kokand city of the Fergana region from September 21 to 23, 2023, a new Museum of International Handicrafts was opened to visitors. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Mr. Saad al-Qaddumi, President of the World Crafts Council AISBL (International); Mr. Aziz Murtazaev, President of the World Crafts Council Asia Pacific Region; and Mr. Maruf Usmonov, Mayor of Kokand city.

The opening of this museum highlights the WCC's contribution to the development of handicraft art globally, especially in the Asia Pacific Region. The museum's collection will feature the best works from the Award of Excellence for Handicrafts 2024 and aims to continually surprise visitors with unique handmade products.

The awardees will receive certificates in August 2024 and will be promoted through WCC networks and other programs. The certificate can be used as a promotional tool (for a specific product or product line only) to attest to the quality and authenticity of the awarded product.



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