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May 25, 2026

Twenty Years of Commitment: Empowering Intangible Cultural Heritage Through Innovation for a Sustainable Future

2026 BMW China Culture Journey Unveils New Initiatives for Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Innovation

Beijing. As China enters the first year of the 15th Five-Year Plan, the inheritance and innovation of outstanding traditional Chinese culture enter a new era of high-quality development. **Recently, BMW Corporate Social Responsibility announced a series of new initiatives to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the BMW China Culture Journey, reinforcing its long-standing dedication to cultural protection through concrete actions.**

This corporate social responsibility program, with a history spanning two decades, will focus on empowering intangible cultural heritage creative works through technology, systematically cultivating young inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, continuing cultural explorations along the Grand Canal, and publishing a commemorative album marking 20 years of support for intangible cultural heritage, thereby advancing the creative transformation and innovative development of intangible cultural heritage as it becomes more deeply integrated into contemporary life.

Twenty years of sustained corporate social responsibility practice exemplify the BMW Group's belief that "commercial success and corporate social responsibility can go hand in hand," while also serving as a vivid reflection of the Group's localization strategy of "In China, For China, With China."

Launched in 2007, the BMW China Culture Journey began with the mission to raise public awareness and engagement in cultural heritage protection. In 2019, Baika, a Tibetan herdsman from Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, completed her studies at the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University. She subsequently led local herdsman in commercializing traditional Tibetan candy craftsmanship and now operates a local specialty store called "Yushu Reception Hall" in Yushu Prefecture; In 2025, Tao Qiongli, a provincial inheritor of Miao embroidery from Pingbian Miao Autonomous County in Yunnan Province, entered the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University supported by the BMW Warm Heart Fund, collaborated with Tsinghua professors from the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University, she co-created a cultural heritage cushion design that combined BMW's iconic design language with traditional Miao butterfly motifs, enabling traditional Miao embroidery to adapt to modern aesthetics and enter everyday consumer settings.

As one of the longest-running corporate philanthropic programs in China's automotive industry, the BMW China Culture Journey has experienced and witnessed two decades of development in the protection of China's intangible cultural heritage.

Over the past twenty years, the BMW China Culture Journey has traveled across 25 provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions throughout China, supported and trained nearly 1,000 inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, organized 20 symposiums and 9 innovation exhibitions, and benefited more than 258 million engagements.

The BMW China Culture Journey has evolved from being a recorder, donor, and protector into an enabler and innovation incubation platform, exploring a replicable model of corporate participation in cultural heritage revitalization, rural revitalization, and cultural tourism development.

Standing at a new milestone marking the project's 20th anniversary, the BMW China Culture Journey, centered around "Innovation + Responsibility," is **launching four new initiatives for intangible cultural heritage protection** and embarking on a new chapter of cultural preservation.

Technology Empowering Innovative Expressions of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The BMW Warm Heart Fund will support more inheritors of intangible cultural heritage to partner with the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University, pioneering the integration of AI and digital tools into innovative cultural heritage expression and creating cultural products that seamlessly integrate into contemporary life.

Systematically Cultivating the Next Generation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors. The upgraded empowerment program at the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University will include practical training in offline teaching and workshops, cultural product design, brand visual identity, AI tool applications, digital cultural creation, and new media communications, helping inheritors transform from being "skilled practitioners and preservers" into innovators who "understand innovation, implementation, and the market."

Continuing Cultural Exploration Along the Grand Canal. BMW, together with the China Center of International Cultural Exchange and Tourism Promotion under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, will continue advancing the Grand Canal Conservation and Education Program.

In 2026, the program will visit Shandong to help promote the cultural heritage of the Grand Canal and outstanding traditional Chinese culture, while supporting regional cultural and tourism development.

Publishing a Commemorative Album on Intangible Cultural Heritage Education. Supported by the BMW Warm Heart Fund, BMW will systematically document twenty years of experience in intangible cultural heritage protection and publish a commemorative educational album, transforming the company's long-term protection and innovation practices into a shared public cultural resource.

Innovation through inheritance is both the pathway for intangible cultural heritage to enter modern life and the way BMW moves toward the future.

Whether it is millennia-old intangible cultural heritage craftsmanship or a century-old automotive company, both continuously rediscover themselves through inheritance while carrying forward timeless values through innovation. This is the true essence of "innovation through inheritance." Throughout BMW Group's 110-year history, "Sheer Driving Pleasure" has remained the enduring legacy of the BMW brand.

In response to the transformation of global mobility, the BMW Group has established a vision for future mobility that is "more human-centric, more intelligent, and more responsible," translating this commitment and spirit of innovation into the largest transformation project in BMW's history — the Neue Klasse.

BMW respects heritage and innovates through inheritance. This is BMW's way of moving toward the future, and it is also the design philosophy behind the Neue Klasse.

Long-term commitment is the defining foundation of BMW's local corporate social responsibility practice in China. Since establishing the BMW Warm Heart Fund in 2008 — the first corporate philanthropic fund in China's automotive industry — BMW has continuously built three major CSR pillars focused on cultural heritage preservation, children's traffic safety, and biodiversity protection.

From the 22-year commitment to the BMW Children's Traffic Safety Training Camp, to the 20-year dedication of the BMW China Culture Journey, and the five-year persistence of the BMW Beautiful Homeland Initiative, BMW continues to focus on China's core social issues and fulfill its promise of "In China, For China, With China" through stable, long-term, and innovative philanthropic practices.