

Editor's Note:

This special English edition of Science and Technology Daily (S&T Daily) offers a fresh perspective on China's innovation landscape through the eyes of five young international researchers. Their immersive journey through high-tech zones in Beijing's neighboring Tianjin city, renowned educational institutions and entrepreneurial bases for overseas talent reveals a dynamic China that blends tradition with modernity, and openness and local character with global vision. Part of our "Into Tech Park" series, this edition brings you youth-driven insights into what makes China's innovation ecosystem unique.

Zooming In on China's Innovative Spirit

Imagine controlling objects with your mind, like a Marvel Comic superhero. In Tianjin, this fantasy is becoming reality. Picture Osuagwu Obinna Ikechukwu, a young Nigerian researcher at the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences (UCAS), wearing a headset connected to a wearable "backpack," attempting to lift a bottle using only his thoughts. With the help of a futuristic "sixth finger" device developed by Tianjin University (TJU)'s Brain- Computer Interaction and Human- Machine Integration team, he succeeded. "Amazing!" he exclaimed, a sentiment echoed by four other international researchers on this unforgettable journey.

Hosted by S&T Daily, this week-long expedition was a deep dive into China's innovation ecosystem and cultural heritage. The group of young international innovators explored how China at large is embracing the future through science, technology and global collaboration.

Hard tech: the future has arrived

Tianjin's high- tech zones embody China's vision for a smarter, greener and more connected world. At the heart of this innovation engine is TJU, one of the powerhouses of talent and research.

TJU's close collaboration with the high-tech zones fosters breakthroughs in research, innovation and industrial development. The university supplies academic expertise and talent, while the zones provide real-world applications and commercialization opportunities.

At TJU Medical School, for example, the students experienced revolutionary non-invasive brain-computer interface technology. Meanwhile, at the School of Marine Science and Technology, they navigated a ship-handling simulator replicating real-world navigation conditions and complete with dynamic weather and sea environments. Timothy Hutagaol, an Indonesian student at TJU, was particularly impressed by the ASEAN- China Marine Education Big Data Platform, a digital tool enhancing regional cooperation.

"What fascinates me about China is how deeply technology

is integrated into everyday life — in every sector, you see it fully implemented," Timothy said.

But innovation in Tianjin isn't confined to labs. The journey also revealed a seamless blend of culture and technology. Kazakh student Akbayan Yerlankyzy from UCAS, an architecture enthusiast, was captivated by traditional design principles at the TJU Institute of Architectural History and Heritage Conservation.

The group participated in a hands-on workshop assembling wooden structures using ancient techniques, including the iconic *dougong*, interlocking brackets that define classical Chinese architecture. "This activity showed us the harmony between structure, aesthetics and tradition," Obinna said.

For TJU student Song Ziyan, the exchange highlighted technology's role in preserving heritage. "I didn't expect foreign students to be so passionate about this field. Their curiosity embodies the spirit of people-to-people exchange," Song said.

However, as young French researcher Theo Yossa at UCAS noted, "Many French people recognize China's technological advancement but may not fully grasp its depth in certain areas. Better information sharing could enhance cooperation and mutual awareness."

This sentiment aligns with China's commitment to openness. A prime example is Danfoss, a leading Danish heating technology company, which made its first investment in China in 1996 by establishing Danfoss (Tianjin) Co., Ltd. After over two decades, the subsidiary has developed into a modern factory integrating research and development and intelligent manufacturing. Here, cutting-edge automation meets sustainability, proving that Industry 4.0 is a tangible force driving efficiency and environmental responsibility.

Soft environment: where ideas grow

But innovation doesn't happen in a vacuum. The soft environment, like supportive policies, infrastructure and a culture of entrepreneurship, is just as important. That's where places like the National Offshore Entrepreneurial Base for Overseas Professionals come in. Designed to welcome international startups, it

provides the tools, mentorship and networks needed to turn ideas into scalable businesses.



Young researchers experience the Lingxi Finger device at the Haihe Laboratory of Brain- Computer Interaction and Human- Machine Integration, TJU.

At the base, Moaaz Awan from Pakistan was intrigued by the streamlined process for obtaining China's Permanent Residence Card. "If you meet residency and employment requirements, applying for permanent residence becomes a major incentive for long-term stays," he said.

A young entrepreneur, Richard Gao, who returned to China from France to launch his startup, emphasized the base's value: "It connects research institutions, universities and companies, as a one-stop solution for businesses."

These young innovators were impressed by the fertile environment provided by the base and China. They said China offers subsidized offices, business expense support, and even seed funding for strong projects. These are excellent examples of practical incentives.

For those who witness China's development course, its openness isn't just rhetoric. "Cities like Tianjin, Beijing and Guangzhou each offer unique policy experiments," Awan observed. "This mix- and- match approach helps businesses find their ideal ecosystem."

A recent milestone in the Tianjin tech world is the launch of the city's first fully foreign-owned hospital by a Singaporean group. "While not all sectors are fully open, the trend is clear," Awan said. "This is the time to seize opportunities and share them globally."

At the same time, the Peking University Entrepreneurship Camp in Tianjin showcases how academia and industry collaborate to accelerate intelligent technologies, from AI to robotics. Meanwhile, at Assure Power Technology (Tianjin), a company incubated in the camp, the research team shared their breakthrough in low-wind turbine technology, an innovation supporting China's clean energy goals and opening doors for global partnerships, particularly with countries like Indonesia.

"This experience proved green energy isn't just a scientific challenge," Obinna concluded. "It's a bridge for worldwide sustainability collaboration."

Main Takeaways from Tianjin Tech Tour

"I am thrilled for the privilege of participating in the exciting activity 'Into Tech Park' with S&T Daily along with other esteemed friends from TJU and the UCAS. We visited the Tianjin Binhai Base for Overseas Professionals, where we engaged in eye-opening discussions and were given technology demonstrations of offload equipment, the popular robot mechanism for air quality measurement, and the versatility of the entrepreneurial base in supporting the recent development of various companies."

—Timothy Hutagaol

"This journey was not just about technology; it was about cultural exchange, global innovation and collaborative potential. I am incredibly grateful to UCAS and S&T Daily for this enriching experience. It has deepened my understanding of China's innovation landscape and strengthened my commitment to contribute to global scientific development."

—Osuagwu Obinna Ikechukwu

"Participating in this project in Tianjin was a completely new experience for me — one that proved to be both incredibly exciting and inspiring. The new connections I made and the friendly, welcoming atmosphere made the work process smooth and enjoyable. It was not only about learning, but also about exchanging ideas, engaging in cross- cultural dialogue, and building meaningful relationships. The trip combined cutting-edge technology, historical depth and entrepreneurial spirit in a unique and memorable way."

—Akbayan Yerlankyzy

"This trip awakened my curiosity and growing interest in the Chinese high-tech scene. With this hands-on trip, I was able to turn my memory of the academic articles I had read into a tangible experience as a public management student. It was very impressive to witness the full scale of economic development in Beijing- Tianjin- Hebei. Wherever we have been, we have been able to witness the excellent cooperation between companies, universities and the government."

—Theo Yossa

"We've seen the Tianjin Binhai Base for Overseas Professionals and it's very easy to access. The office spaces are excellent, and all essential services, such as visa processing, human resources and company registration, are centralized in one place. Additionally, the port is just a few kilometers away, meaning everything can be conveniently handled within this single location. By bringing everything together in one hub, this model proves highly successful in fostering high-quality growth, advancing science and technology, and promoting the commercialization of research."

—Moaaz Awan



Young researchers visit the National Offshore Entrepreneurial Base for Overseas Professionals.

Planned by WANG Junming, FENG Weidong, HE Yi, FANG Linlin & CHEN Xi  
Written by ZHONG Jianli & LONG Yun  
Edited by GONG Qian & LU Zijian  
YIN Wei from TJU also contributed to this page.  
PHOTO: S&T Daily

For further information, please scan the QR code.



Young researchers interact with a robotic dog during a hands-on technology demonstration.

International Youths Share Keywords for China

When asked to describe China in just three words, these vibrant youths were thoughtful before giving their impressions of why the country continues to captivate international talent. Their responses centered around its sci-tech development, landscape and cultural attractiveness, which offer a picture of modern, vivid and multi-faceted China.

The engine of progress

For Timothy Hutagaol, China embodies "development, innovation and persistence." He marvels at how cities transform overnight, citing how entrepreneurship bases constantly optimize technologies to improve lives. "The persistence behind China's growth is why it leads in every field we can imagine," he said.

Osuagwu Obinna Ikechukwu expands this view, calling China a "tech leader, collaborative and business-oriented" nation where AI solutions and e-commerce integrations happen at breakneck speed, deploying the technologies to solve daily life problems. He is impressed by the fact that "China is willing to collaborate within its local areas, collaborate within its surrounding communities, and collaborate even at international and continental level."

A feast for the senses

Theo Yossa selected "landscape, food and hard work" as his keywords for China. He focused on sensory and cultural elements. "Where else can you find snowy mountains, tropical beaches and megacities in one country?" he asked before praising China's culinary diversity from Sichuan hotpot to Cantonese dim sum. But what truly impresses him is the virtue of hard work. Chinese people pour their hearts into achieving almost ev-

erything, whether that be studying, creating, or developing innovative ideas.

Where Akbayan Yerlankyzy sees China's soul is in its vibrant public spaces. She enjoys China's cultural "openness," where people freely express themselves without judgment. The breakneck "speed" of development astonishes her, with infrastructure projects completed in months. As an international student, she particularly values China's accessible "travel" opportunities supported by comprehensive transportation networks and financial policies.

Obinna also shared a story about learning Mandarin. Initially daunted by its complexity, he mastered tones and radicals through self- study, later teaching classmates Chinese songs. "The secret?" he grins. "Love the language first. The radicals un-



Young researchers are in the smart factory of Danfoss.

lock meanings, and mastering four tones lets you learn anywhere, even without a teacher." His journey mirrors China's philosophy: confronting challenges with determination yields extraordinary results.

Effective governance

"China is [one of] the oldest civilizations, 5000 years of history," Moaaz Awan noted. This deep historical foundation permeates modern Chinese society, from cultural traditions to philosophical values.

Awan was also interested in China's consistent emphasis on mutual benefit: "Whenever China collaborates with other countries, it always talks about win-win cooperation where both parties win." This principle guides China's international relations, whether in trade, infrastructure projects, or technology exchanges, creating frameworks for shared progress.

Awan emphasized that China's remarkable development achievements stem fundamentally from its distinctive governance system, experimental policy implementation model, and continuous innovation in governance approaches that dynamically adapt to new challenges, while maintaining strategic consistency.

In China, some ancient philosophical concepts like people-centered and harmony in diversity still endure, even actively fueling modern innovation. These concepts lay a solid foundation for people-to-people exchanges and international sci-tech collaborations. For global minds, China and its people try to offer them not only a destination but also an invitation to "grow roots and thrive" in a place where development and traditions are seamlessly integrated.