

Guangzhou's Tianhe a modern, industrialized business district

Making use of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area to become a hub

By YUAN SHENGGAO

With its modern industrial system, Tianhe district in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong province, is seizing the opportunities brought about by the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area to become an international first-class central business district, an international core area for innovation in science and technology, and a demonstration zone for Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao cooperation.

Its solid industrial foundation and favorable business environment, as well as the government's strong policy support, attract large numbers of enterprises to the district.

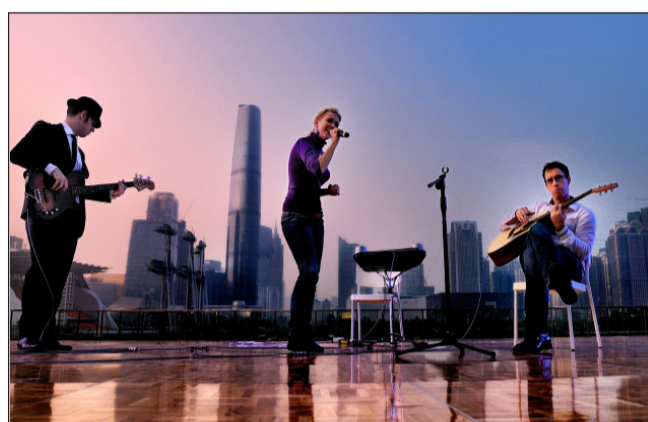
By the end of November, 162 out of the Fortune Global 500 enterprises had invested in 228 projects in finance, science and technology, trade and commercial services in Tianhe. It is the city's center for headquarters, with 104, or 29 percent of the total across Guangzhou, making Tianhe's business district one of the three largest world-class central business districts in China. Among these, 95 percent of the headquarters in Tianhe are in the service sector and 25 headquarters are foreign-funded ventures.

In the first three quarters of 2017, Tianhe's GDP hit 304 billion yuan (\$46 billion), up 9.5 percent year-on-year. Its GDP has been the highest among all the districts in Guangzhou for 10 years consecutively.

More importantly, experts said innovation, high-tech and service sectors have become the driving force of the district's economic growth. The district government focuses more on quality rather than quantity when it comes to the economy.

With 53 innovation platforms and 51 startup incubators above city level, the district government is carrying out what it calls its "super incubator" strategy. It is making use of old industrial parks, factory workshops and public sites collectively owned by villagers to provide a platform for startups and to foster local economic growth. So far, Tianhe has created 29 of this kind of incubators for startups and innovation, covering a total area of 1.11 million square meters. The district is also implementing a convenient "five-in-one" new business registration system.

As a center of finance and



Clockwise from top: Night scene of the Central Business District of Tianhe district in Guangzhou, capital of South China's Guangdong province. YANG YI / FOR CHINA DAILY Residents watch a lion dance performance at a New Year's event held in Tianhe district. PAN WENFENG / FOR CHINA DAILY Residents compete in dragon boat racing to celebrate a traditional festival in Tianhe district. YUAN YONGLIN / FOR CHINA DAILY Performers play music on the roof of a high building in Tianhe district. WANG XIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

technology industries, Tianhe has 215 registered financial agencies and 33 enterprises listed on the stock market. It boasts 378 research and development institutes set up by enterprises, 86 institutes affiliated to universities and governments, and 239 engineering technology research centers.

Last year, 4,312 patent applications were submitted in Tianhe, 32 percent of the city's total and a rise of 45 percent year-on-year. Among these 1,158 patents were granted.

By the end of last year, Tianhe had 1,403 high and new-technology enterprises, as well

as more than 50,000 science and technology enterprises.

The Tianhe government said it attaches great importance to optimizing the district's investment environment, developing its headquarters economy and upgrading key industries such as finance and technology. The government has enhanced its support for businesses in emerging industries, such as cloud computing, big data, the internet of things and the IAB industries — information technology, artificial intelligence and biopharmaceuticals.

Lin Daoping, Party chief of Tianhe, said: "As for the artificial intelligence industry,

Tianhe would like to attract more R&D, sales and support centers. In manufacturing and biopharmaceuticals, Tianhe eyes more opportunities in advanced medical apparatus and instruments, health services, and stem cell and regenerative medicine among others.

"Finance is the blood for the IAB industries' development."

He said that's why Tianhe pays special attention to developing its financial industry. The district has formed three kinds of science and technology financing platform systems: venture capital investment, loans and multi-

level capital market.

Quality education and medical care, a habitable environment, developed urban infrastructure and efficient public services in Tianhe are also important factors that attract professionals from around the world.

The new technology revolution is speeding up, presenting both opportunities and challenges, said the local official.

A combination of information and intelligence technologies can help to upgrade these industries, so as to improve the quality and efficiency of the supply side.

Flourishing as southern center for the high-end

By ZHANG DANDAN
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With its efficient layout, vibrant business climate and quality services, the Central Business District of Tianhe district in Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province, is developing into a cluster for advanced industries and a business center of southern China.

"It was not a tough decision for us to come to the CBD," said Andy Tan, general manager of Zurich General Insurance Co (China) Ltd Guangdong Branch.

"Since all the world-class financial institutions are here, the financial information is prompt and there is a rich pool of professional staff."

Zurich Insurance Group, a leading Fortune Global 500

insurer, was founded in 1872 and is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland. With about 54,000 employees, it provides insurance services in over 210 countries and regions.

After setting up subsidiaries in Beijing and Shanghai, Zurich chose Guangzhou as the location for its third branch in China in 2016.

"The local government offers almost the best services that I ever had," he said. "The approval process, for example, is very simple."

In 2016, the GDP of the Guangzhou Tianhe Central Business District hit 270 billion yuan (\$40.82 billion), up 9 percent year-on-year, statistics from Tianhe district showed.

A total of 140 Fortune Global 500 companies have established 184 offices in the CBD of



Scenery of Zhujiang New Town in Tianhe district of Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Tianhe, according to the local government.

JPMorgan Chase & Co, Allianz, Zurich Insurance, Bank of America and many other institutions are there — offer-

ing advanced and professional financial services that account for 70 percent of Guangzhou's total financial institutions.

"It's Zurich's very first year in Guangdong," he said.

"Thanks to the important role Guangzhou plays in the Belt and Road Initiative, Zurich has cooperated with many involved countries, such as Russia, Thailand, the Philippines, Iraq, Turkey and Poland. It is a favorable beginning."

He added Zurich has strong interest in the IAB program put forward by the local government, covering information technology, artificial intelligence and biological medicine.

"Information technology has high risk and cyber security is what the nation pays close attention to," he said.

"Zurich is experienced in cyber attack insurance. We are convinced that there will be plenty of opportunities for business with the information technology industry."



Residents watch a soccer game held at Tianhe Stadium in Tianhe district of Guangzhou. ZHANG YONGLIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Harnessing IT, AI, biomedicine to propel innovation

By LIANG KAIYAN
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Tianhe district of Guangzhou, Guangdong province is striving to establish a technology innovation hub by focusing on the IAB industries: information technology, artificial intelligence and biomedicine.

"Tianhe is home to a national-level central business district, high-tech zone and software park, and is the first district to implement the Internet Plus strategy in Guangdong. The district provides a sound living environment for internet-related enterprises," said Huang Hao, rotating president of UC.

UC, a mobile internet company, was founded in Tianhe in 2004.

At its founding, the government of Tianhe provided the company with 100,000 yuan (\$15,120) and helped it to settle into its offices.

"UC has benefited from the government's considerate services, the favorable business environment and the orderly urban life of the district in its long-term development," Huang said.

He added that, thanks to the sound business environment, the well-established internet industry supply chain and improved intellectual property protection, Tianhe plays a key role in the sustainable development of internet enterprises.

In accordance with the district's goal, UC will focus more on content, digitalization and globalization to become an international top technological innovation enterprise, according to the company.

Wang Meng, executive of the Guangdong Investment Promotion Association, said: "Tianhe is a window for Guangdong province. It demonstrates South China's high economic growth and innovation levels."

In recent years, Fortune 500 and domestic companies have swarmed into Tianhe, injecting momentum into the district's advanced modern services and technology innovation industries.

"The advanced modern service industry is crucial to developing advanced manufacturing and promoting the exchange of capital, technology, professionals and management," Wang said.

She said advanced service providers, such as consultants, lawyers and accountants, can offer specialized knowledge to help enterprises bring forth more innovation.

In 2015, the Tianhe government published a three-year action plan to support industrial development and technological innovation.

This year, the government has revised the plan to mainly focus on the IAB industries, by increasing the annual finance available for technology companies from 1 billion yuan to 2 billion yuan.

Spotlight shines on cultural epicenter

By ZHANG DANDAN

The cultural and creative industry in Tianhe district in Guangzhou has made huge gains on the back of supportive policies, culture exchange platforms and a cluster of leading companies, experts said.

Broadly speaking, the cultural and creative economy comprises advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, research and development, software, toys and games, TV and radio, and video games.

"Tianhe district enjoys unparalleled advantages with its economic and cultural foundation and creative talent pool," said Zhao Haizhou, vice-president of Kugou Music, a major online music provider based in Guangzhou.

"So, it is the optimal location for the cultural and creative industry."

In addition to Kugou Music, the district has gathered many other leading cultural companies including Fangsuo Commune, NetEase and UC Browser.

In 2016, the value added of Tianhe district's cultural and creative industry hit 28.35 billion yuan (\$4.29 billion), 11.1 percent higher than 2015.

It accounts for 7.46 percent of the district's GDP and 29.7 percent of the total value added of Guangzhou's cultural and creative industry,

ranking it No 1 in that sector in Guangzhou.

Mao Jihong, founder of Fangsuo, a creative bookstore which entered Guangzhou in 2011, said he was glad to have settled there.

Four hundred cultural exchange activities and 60 art exhibitions have been held there in the past six years. The number of visitors to the district is expected to hit 10 million in 2017, Mao said.

In 2017, Tianhe district issued a series of supportive policies to boost cultural and technological innovation there.

Every year, a specialized fund is used to support key cultural fields, including digital content and creative design as well as cultural and arts services, according to the local government.

The cultural and creative companies can get stipends of up to 500,000 yuan, it said. "Tianhe district is open and inclusive enough to develop the cultural and creative industry," Mao said.

"The most inspiring thing has been to see the cluster of the cultural industry forming here."

Boosted by the Guangdong National Online Game and Animation Industry Base and the Guangdong National Digital Publishing Base, a large group of competitive cultural companies with independent innovative abilities have been established in the district.