

Fair strengthens Sino-EU cooperation

Influential event promotes China and Europe's development plans for research and innovation

By LI YANG and LI YU
in Chengdu

The 10th China-EU Business and Technology Cooperation Fair was held in Chengdu High-Tech Industrial Development Zone from Nov 9 to 10. More than 200 delegates from 27 European countries, the United States, Israel and India attended the event.

This fair aims to deepen the attendees' understanding of relations between the European Union's Horizon 2020 program, a plan projected to promote research and innovation from 2014 to 2020, and China's Belt and Road Initiative, the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) and China's strategies to boost innovation and start new businesses, according to the high-tech zone's administrative committee.

The fair saw some progress in China-EU cooperation in investment and trade, innovation, electronic information industries, the bio-medicine industry, new energy and environmental protection, the committee added.

More than 300 Chinese enterprises held 800 negotiations with 150 European companies in sectors including aerospace and aviation, bio-medicine, machinery manufacturing, new energy and environmental protection and electronic information, which yielded more than 160 intentional cooperation agreements.

In an innovation cooperation meeting during the fair, five enterprises from the high-tech zone in Chengdu signed agreements with five European enterprises. The two sides pledged to make thorough use of their respective resources to promote cooperation and exchanges in business, education, trade, investment and innovation, to boost both of their competences in the global market.

Since the first fair in 2002, more than 2,550 European enterprises and over 4,700 Chinese enterprises have taken part in more than 22,800 negotiations, reaching 1,625 intentional cooperation agree-

ments, making it one of the most influential events of its kind between China and the EU.

The cooperation fields have expanded from business and trade to research and innovation and industry relocation. At first only about 10 EU member states participated in the event, and now most EU countries are involved.

In October last year, the event held some of its promotional activities in Neijiang, out of Chengdu for the first time. These activities also went to Mianyang in Sichuan province and Qingdao in Shandong province this November. The Enterprise Europe Network built its West China Center in Chengdu and North China Center in Qingdao.

The Chengdu high-tech zone has hosted the event since 2006, fostering inter-state and inter-regional exchanges and cooperation, and promoting the internationalization of Chengdu and Sichuan.

The high-tech zone has developed broad cooperation relations with nearly 60 agencies from 28 EU countries, making Chengdu an area of strategic importance in China's implementation of its Belt and Road Initiative, and boosting the opening-up of the entire west China region.

Cooperation platform

In 2006, the China-EU Technology and Business Cooperation Platform was set up in the high-tech zone in Chengdu to promote cooperation and exchanges in technology, trade and investment. The platform consists of innovation agencies from Chengdu and EU members, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Finland, and has become one of the most important Sino-EU cooperation platforms, serving 10 provincial regions in west China.

As the first national-level model zone for promoting innovation, Chengdu high-tech zone plans to strengthen its cooperation in research and innovation and biotechnology with Singapore, South Korea and Cuba. It will also strength-



Delegates discuss collaboration between China and Central and Eastern Europe at a roundtable conference during the 10th China-EU Business and Technology Cooperation Fair. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

en its strategic cooperation with the Silicon Valley in the US, Tel Aviv in Israel, Valbonne in France, Bangalore in India and Hsinchu in China's Taiwan province, to achieve better bi-directional flow of innovation talent, capital and technology, and build itself into an innovation hub with international influence.

Deputy head of the delegation of the European Union to China Carmen Cano said the EU has developed into China's largest trade partner since the two sides founded diplomatic relations 40 years ago. She said in the next 40 years, the reliance between China and EU will deepen, with innovation, research and development occupying increasingly important positions.

Cano believes China and the EU have many potential cooperation agreements in the fields of research and innovation. The EU's Horizon 2020 program shares many similarities with the Chinese government's plans to boost

innovation and new business startups and there are broad cooperation areas in innovation and research.

Philippe Mariani, a senior official at the Sophia Antipolis Science and Technology Park in Valbonne, said the Chengdu high-tech zone and the Sophia Antipolis park have bright development and cooperation prospects, and internationalization is the common demand. Both parks plan to carry out more market-oriented activities and create more development opportunities and innovation clusters.

Alvaro Simon de Blas, vice-president of the European Business Innovation Centers Network, praised the incubator model in Chengdu's high-tech zone. He said that Chengdu has many development opportunities for the network's members, and he will encourage small and medium-sized enterprises to pursue business opportunities in Chengdu.

"We will deepen our exchanges and cooperation



Chinese and foreign business reps sit together to seek new business opportunities at the fair.

with European countries and increase the fair's coverage and influence in Sino-EU cooperation, and foster win-win cooperation in industry,

investment and exchanges, so as to let Chengdu occupy a commanding height in China's Belt and Road Initiative," said Fan Yi, director of the

high-tech zone's administrative committee.

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Decade-old event yields series of achievements

By LI YANG and LI YU
in Chengdu

The China-EU Business and Technology Cooperation Fair has played a pivotal role in promoting cooperation between its host city Chengdu and Europe in the past 10 years.

The fair has contributed to many inter-governmental

cooperation programs. Chengdu started running direct flights to London and Frankfurt and will have a direct route to Prague soon. The city has shuttling freight trains along the New Eurasian Land Bridge to Lodz, Poland. Chengdu became sister city with Horsens in Denmark and has a China-Denmark new energy

and environmental protection research and development application center.

Steinbeis China Technology Transfer Center's project came to the city, while the China-Czech aviation industry cluster in Chengdu has developed quickly. The Czech Republic opened its consulate general in Chengdu in September and

the China-France Montpellier Elementary School opened in Chengdu High-Tech Industrial Development Zone, deepening sister-city relations.

More than 50 European business agencies and high-tech enterprises from Austria, Belgium, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Poland and Denmark, moved to Chengdu's

high-tech zone as a result of the fair.

More than 40 cooperation agreements in areas including technology transfer, investment and trade, worth 500 million yuan (\$78.5 million), were signed between China and European enterprises. These generated about 2 billion yuan in production value

in upstream and downstream industries and boosted the innovation ability and international competence of small and medium-sized enterprises from China and Europe.

The Chengdu high-tech zone also serves as a springboard for Chinese enterprises to go global. In April 2012, Chengdu Di'ao Group, a pharmaceutical company, started cooperating with SU BioMedicine from the Netherlands to develop a capsule treating heart disease, which became the first Chinese patented medicine to appear in the EU medicine market.

The Centauri 1.5T superconductivity magnetic resonance medical imaging system developed by Di'ao Group was installed and came into operation in Lithuania in April 2013, becoming the first Made-in-China medical equipment of its kind to enter the EU market.

Currently, 104 of the world's top 500 enterprises have operations in the high-tech zone in Chengdu, including Intel, GE, Siemens and Philips, as well as 60 research and development centers from home and abroad.

Foreign investment

Last year, foreign capital in practical use in the high-tech zone hit \$2.14 billion. The total import and export value in its bonded zone was \$28.5 billion, ranked third in China among all bonded zones.

Fan Yi, head of the high-tech zone's administrative committee, said, "We support famous enterprises, universities and

institutes to set up R&D agencies in the zone, and we look forward to introducing a host of talented professionals from around the world to build the zone into a base for international production capacity cooperation, and the industrialization of new technologies."

"We also pay attention to implementing the experience of the Shanghai Free Trade Zone in Chengdu, and facilitate trade and boost the development of cross-border e-commerce, and bonded trade, so as to build a business environment according to international standards," Fan added.

In June, central authorities approved the high-tech zone as the eighth national-level innovation model zone. On Oct 31, the governments of China and South Korea agreed to set up a China-South Korea innovation park in the high-tech zone.

According to the zone's administrative committee, the China-South Korea innovation park will be composed of a number of incubators and an industrial park.

Fan said that the Chengdu high-tech zone will actively support international industrial cooperation and development, deepen cooperation with Singapore, South Korea, and Cuba, as well as world-class science and technology parks in developed countries and emerging economies, to build the zone into a world-class platform for talent, capital and technology.

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The matchmaking meeting between Chinese and foreign entrepreneurs is an important part of this year's fair.