

EU-China fair bolsters intl relations

Hundreds of business and government officials come together to discuss expectations and deals

By SONG MENGXING
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“Chengdu is very open to foreign innovation and technology.”

Allaga Tamas, director at the Smart Region Innovation Cluster in Hungary

23,800

enterprise match-making negotiations were made during the fairs

interested in the cluster's business and that he was hopeful about developing business in Chengdu.

Italian wine businessman Vito Lo Castro said Chengdu, where he founded a wine import company in 2013, is developing faster than many other regions in China and offers more space in which to develop business.

He said he had made connections with more than 200 people by exchanging business cards and making WeChat friends at the fair. A few companies showed interest in cooperation with his company and were invited to his wine club in Chengdu to discuss potential partnerships, Lo Castro added.

At the fair's theme forum on green economy development between China and EU, more than 500 participants, including important governmental officials and industrial leading figures, discussed how to deepen communication and cooperation between China and Europe for more environmentally-friendly economic development.

Mariella Lo Bello, vice-president of the Italian Sicilian region, said at the forum that the region would cooperate with China, especially Sichuan, in its internationalization and development plans. She hopes the Sicilian region can provide companies from China, especially Sichuan, with initial capital for their production in Sicilian industrial area.

Lo Bello headed company delegations, which were mainly from the food and beverage and tourism sectors, and officials from the Sicilian region attended the fair. It was the third time the region participated in the fair in Chengdu, according to the event's organizers.

China and Italy have established strong ties as two important countries on the east and west sides of the Silk Road, Lo Bello said, adding that she hopes the two countries will have more cooperative projects in fields such as nanotechnology and biological medicine to promote innovation-driven development.

Russian officials and company executives also participated in the fair. More than 30 Russian corporate representatives from sectors such as industrial manufacturing, science and technology, handicrafts and textiles negotiated with companies in Sichuan for cooperation.

Chengdu has insisted on reform, innovation and

opening-up in recent years and achieved some success, local officials said, adding that through the EU-China Business and Technology Cooperation Fair, contact and cooperation between Chengdu and Europe has increased.

A platform for diplomacy
Chengdu established a sister city relationship with 13 EU cities including French Montpellier and German Bonn in recent years, and opened five direct routes connecting EU cities such as Paris and Frankfurt.

Dai Yiling, president at the EU Project Innovation Center (Chengdu), said: "The EU-China Business and Technology Cooperation Fair has become an important platform for diplomacy, investment, scientific and technological exchanges and trade cooperation for EU member states and regions in western China."

According to Dai, the 11 sessions of the fair attracted more than 2,800 European companies and some 5,200 Chinese companies.

Mentors, including the CEO of Sophia Antipolis, will explore bilateral innovation cooperation mechanisms in fields such as science, technology and e-commerce.

The project aims to help companies' excellent people to gain new skills relating to innovation and entrepreneurship, such as confidence, independence and teamwork.

The zone plans to send young corporate leaders to the French scientific and technological park to get training and take part in scientific and technological companies' management work. The French park will do the same thing.

The second phase of the fair was convened in Qingdao on Nov 6-8.



Chengdu Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone announces a deal with Sophia Antipolis, its sister park in France, to initiate a mentor program to boost business and investment opportunities. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Left: Italian delegates and wine exhibitors are optimistic with their products' future in the emerging western Chinese market with Chengdu as its hub. Right: In-depth discussions are held during the 11 sessions of the fair, which attracted 2,800 European companies and some 5,200 Chinese companies.



Tech agreements abound at matchmaking event

By SONG MENGXING
in Chengdu

involving technological innovation and trade support. The network set up its western China headquarters in Chengdu in 2011.

The negotiation activity attracted more than 150 enterprises from 14 European countries, as well as some 400 companies from Chengdu and other regions in Sichuan province.

The businesses covered fields ranging from energy conservation and environmental protection, new energy and materials, to mechanical manufacturing, agriculture and tourism.

A Polish company promoted its wind power-generating equipment at the event. Krzysztof Janowski, chief engineer of the company, said use of the equipment is not limited by geographical conditions and it can realize effective wind energy conversion even in areas that do not have strong wind force.

The engineer said the equipment drew attention from some Chinese electric power companies who said they want to cooperate with the Polish company and would discuss

technological problems in the near future.

Many excellent companies from Chengdu Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone attracted European counterparts. Among them was Sichuan Methyrr Co, which deals with environmental protection-related science and technology.

Methyrr Co developed a process to turn straw and process them into a new material, of which straw composes more than 70 percent, for producing furniture.

The new material technology may help to reduce straw incineration and deforestation, the company's representative said.

A Russian company interested in the new material and its representative, Anton Kirillov, said that if the technology is exported to Russia, it will help to effectively use the country's abundant straw resources and export products to some regions in Central Asia that lack timber.

It would be a step toward realizing a multinational ecological and environmental protection system, the Russian



A high-profile innovation and startup forum is held during the 11th EU-China Business and Technology Cooperation Fair in Chengdu earlier this month.



Visitors browse products at the pavilion of the European Union, a highlight during the fair.

representative said.

It is said that six European companies wanted to cooperate with the Chengdu-based material company and are expected to come to an agreement soon on how to transfer technology and cooperate.

In addition, at the EU-China fair's Europe-China Innovation and Entrepreneurship Cooperation Dialogue, also held on Nov 4 in Chengdu, representatives from technology incubators, investment organizations, scientific and technological parks and companies discussed topics such as how to foster SMEs and improve financing services.

A representative from the zone said the zone is integrating into the Belt and Road Initiative, which was proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2013.

The initiative aims to boost connectivity and trade across Asia, Europe and Africa.

The zone will help set up a technological transfer fund to promote Chinese and European companies' cooperation in capital, brand operations, market expansion, transnational technological transfer and project development.

Christoph Block, head of operations at Cluster Biotechnology from North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany, delivers a speech during the event.

German bio-pharma state forges links with Chengdu

By REN JIE
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Delegations from the biomedical industry in Germany's North Rhine-Westphalia state have said they would like to promote further cooperation with similar enterprises in Chengdu, Sichuan province.

Christoph Block, head of operations at Cluster Biotechnology NRW, said the cooperation with biomedical enterprises in Chengdu's Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone will help the two sides achieve complementary advantages and win-win development.

Block made the comments on Nov 4 at a seminar introducing the NRW bio-pharmaceutical industry. About 10 outstanding Chinese enterprises in the biomedical sector gathered at the meeting in Chengdu, part of the 11th EU-China Business and Technology Cooperation Fair.

Chengdu's high-tech zone has formed a key cluster of bio-pharma companies, with leading names such as Diao Group, Sichuan Dikang Sci&Tech Pharmaceutical Industry Co, Chengdu Hengrui Pharmaceutical Co Ltd, and Brilliant Pharmaceutical Group attracted to the region. High-tech enterprises such as Alltech Medical Systems and Ultimedical Inc, which focus on medical equipment research, also call the zone home.

Gu Kaifeng, head of the Bio-Pharmaceuticals Industry Department of EU Project Innovation Center in Chengdu, said at the meeting that the Chinese biomedical industry has developed quickly in recent years.

The improving environment in Chengdu and the biomedical business' favorable outlook in the region have appealed to overseas partners, including the NRW cluster from Germany.

"The seminar will form a platform to promote cooperation among biomedical enterprises from Europe and China," Gu said. "NRW is the center of Europe's biomedical innovation," said Fu Qiang, head of Service Center Greater China, NRW.INVEST, the investment promotion agency for the German state.

It has accumulated 443 companies in the life sciences industry, among which 95 are engaged in biotech innovation. In addition, NRW also has 59 higher education institutions and 65 technological centers, which provide incubation service to new startups and help them to form development networks.

"Bio-pharmaceuticals have become a driving force in Germany's innovative economy," said Block, adding that the NRW cluster promotes domestic and international cooperation among researchers, enterprises, investors and governments.

Chengdu's high-tech zone is on its way to build its own biomedical industrial cluster. In cooperation with the city's Shuangliu district, the high-tech zone built up Tianfu International Biological City in March, which has planned 180 projects so far.

Tianfu also intends to cooperate with biomedical companies from Cuba, the United States and Europe to explore innovative development in the future.

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