



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES

मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

CHINA

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

September 2026

- **China Releases Education Action Plan (2026-2030)**
- **CAS Releases 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030)**
- **Scientific Collaboration Projects**
- **Scientific Research Breakthroughs and Discoveries**
- **China Science Diplomacy**

China Releases Education Action Plan (2026-2030)

In collaboration with the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the National Health Commission, the Chinese Ministry of Education jointly [released](#) the Action Plan for the Development of Special Education (2026-2030). The plan aims to make special education more inclusive, accessible, and convenient, strengthening the ability of children and adolescents with disabilities to integrate into society and achieve lifelong development.

The ‘Action Plan’ identifies five major areas of focus: Resource optimisation, which will expand and improve resource allocation to support students in pursuing secondary and higher education; Quality improvement by enhancing educational quality—particularly for children with autism—through curriculum reform and professional support, as well as integrating vocational education with employment; Digitalisation, where digital tools will be leveraged to boost the development of special education; Inclusiveness in improving funding mechanisms, upgrading school facilities, and strengthening the special education workforce; and Foreign cooperation, where international collaboration in the field of special education will be boosted.

Meanwhile, the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology [released](#) its annual report on ‘Science Popularisation for

Technology’ 2025. The report underscored that China’s science popularisation workforce continues to expand, reaching 2.25 million, up 1.72 per cent from the previous year. On the financial investment front, total funding rose to 24.4 billion yuan (US\$3.6 billion), up 9.80 per cent from 2024, with government allocation accounting for 80 per cent of the total. By the end of 2025, China had 1,988 science and technology museums and science-themed museums, up 98 from 2024. The 2025 data covered 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, as well as 32 central and state organs, and included 100,600 questionnaires. These data are currently a crucial foundation for statistical analysis of government science popularisation work in China.

CAS Releases 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030)

The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) [released](#) the development plan for the 15th Five-Year Plan period (2026-2030). The plan sets strategic directions for scientific and technological breakthroughs across three major pillars: basic research, strategic high technologies, and sustainable development. It also defines priority fields for the academy: AI, quantum technology, life sciences, biotechnology, brain-computer interfaces and controlled nuclear fusion.

Meanwhile, to coordinate and optimise the regional sci-tech layout, it also formulated

measures to accelerate the construction of a tiered regional layout system, providing systematic sci-tech support for the country's major regional strategies. Under this system, Beijing (the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region), Shanghai (the Yangtze River Delta), and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area are considered 'strategic highlands', whereas Hefei, Chengdu-Chongqing, Wuhan, and Xi'an will be considered 'strategic pivots', with several key regions as strategic nodes. The overarching objective is to build a world-class research institution through reform, management innovation, and expanded international cooperation.

Meanwhile, the Computer Network Information Centre of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) has officially [launched](#) the 'Panshi AI-for-Science Ecosystem 1.0.' This initiative is designed to advance scientific research by integrating AI-enabled technologies with collaborative pilot programs. The objective behind this initiative is to address several critical needs in the scientific community: standardisation by providing an evaluation framework across five disciplines: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and Earth and space science; maintaining integrity by implementing a traceability system to ensure data governance and verifiable research processes; and advancing collaboration by providing participants with shared computing resources, data sets, and end-to-end research toolchains to foster interdisciplinary cooperation and practical application development.

Scientific Collaboration Projects

Based on the theme "A Decade of Innovation, Building the Future Together", the 10th annual China-Central and Eastern European Countries Innovation Cooperation Conference was [held](#) from 9th to 11th September in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, China. Nearly 500 representatives from government departments, research institutions, universities, enterprises, and think tanks of China and Central and Eastern European countries participated. Since its inception in 2016, the China-Central and Eastern European Countries Innovation Cooperation Conference has become an important platform for both sides to strengthen policy communication, exchange innovative ideas, and build consensus on cooperation. At the 2026 annual conference, the focus was on collaboration in artificial intelligence and robotics, biotechnology and green energy. It adopted a "Vision 2030 for Innovation Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries", which outlined a new blueprint for bilateral cooperation in science and technology innovation over the next decade. The two sides signed eleven agreements on industry-university-research collaboration and joint development of innovation platforms, and launched the second China-CEEC Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition. Meanwhile, it also released a 10-year report on China-CEEC innovation cooperation and a 2026 index measuring open innovation cooperation between Chinese cities and CEEC.

At the sixth International Forum on Big Data for Sustainable Development (FBAS 2026), held in Beijing from 6-8 September, “The Beijing Initiative on Digital Science and AI for Global Sustainable Development” was [adopted](#). The Initiative establishes 12 priorities across five areas to leverage big data, earth observation and AI to advance the UN 2030 Agenda and calls on governments, UN agencies, research institutions, and other stakeholders to strengthen open, inclusive, and science-based cooperation. Nearly 700 participants from 50 countries and 19 international organisations attended the three-day event.

Scientific Research Breakthroughs and Discoveries

The Shenzhen Institute of Advanced Technology (SIAT) [developed](#) a new lightweight dual-model AI agent for materials science research, named MatBrain. This new system enables AI not only to “think” but also to “act.” The key components for MatBrain include Mat-R1 (30-billion parameters), which acts as the “materials expert” responsible for scientific reasoning, knowledge comprehension, and evaluating results, and Mat-T1 (14-billion parameters), which functions as the “research executor” tasked with interacting with databases, software, and structure generation tools. The dual-model approach allows for an “execute-analyse-feedback-re-execute” cycle that significantly improves research efficiency.

In terms of efficiency, the model improves prediction accuracy by 66% compared to large-scale models (like GPT-5 and DeepSeek-R1) while reducing hardware deployment costs by 95%. In terms of capabilities, it conducts complex research tasks, including structure generation, property prediction, and stability analysis. In practice, it demonstrated its efficacy in electrocatalyst studies by managing the entire research chain, from hypothesis formation to screening 30,000 candidate structures and experimental validation.

China Science Diplomacy

The Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) and the Portuguese Academy of Engineering (PAE) jointly [organised](#) the first CAE-PAE Forum on Marine Technology and Ocean Engineering on 2 September, in Lisbon, Portugal. The forum aimed to deepen innovative cooperation between China and Portugal in marine engineering, support the high-quality development of their marine economies and contribute “China-Portugal wisdom” to the sustainable development of the global ocean. Both sides exchanged views on innovations in ocean engineering, ship decarbonisation and intelligent shipping, green and smart ports, sustainable development of deep-sea mineral resources, and offshore oil and gas production. Meanwhile, CAE and PAE signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to formalise institutional cooperation in the marine sector.