

Report on UK-Wuxi Technology Transfer Conference Nov 8th-9th 2012

I. Background

Building on the successful inspection trip to the UK by Wuxi science & technology delegation in May 2012, as the second phase of this joint collaboration programme, the UK-Wuxi Technology Transfer Conference took place from Nov 8th and 9th 2012 in Wuxi, which attracted more than 200 representatives from universities in the UK and enterprises located in Wuxi Municipality, and this conference turned out to be a great success.

The programme aims to link up UK excellence in researches and technologies with the needs of Wuxi-based enterprises with an ultimate aim to transfer the technology from UK universities to Wuxi on a commercial basis, and as well as to expand such kinds of collaborations to surrounding cities of Wuxi, which have similar interests and environment.

The collaboration project was jointly developed by the British Council and Wuxi Association for Science & Technology (WAST) and it falls in Knowledge Economy Partnership strand of IHE programme, BC's global initiative on higher education work, which is aimed at providing a platform and framework for the creation of sustainable, multilateral partnerships that link the higher education sector, government and business communities to drive forward global, regional and national knowledge economies.

II. Participants & Technologies

The UK Side:

10 representatives from 4 universities in the UK were present, and the delegation was a mixture of academic research fellows and technology commercialization specialists with the first being the majority, this combination allows Wuxi side to be able to get a full understanding of both technical and commercial areas. The numbers of delegates from each of the universities are:

4 representatives from Nottingham University;
2 representatives from De Montfort University;
2 representatives from Swansea University;
2 representatives from Strathclyde University.

Wuxi Side:

There are over 200 representatives present at the conference who are from 34 enterprises/institutions located in Wuxi and the cities and counties under Wuxi Municipality. As most of the technologies are bio-medical related, a great majority of the representatives are from hospitals and biological companies in Wuxi.

Apart from these, there are a few high level officials who were also present at this event, such as the followings:

- Mr. Feng Shaodong, Vice Chairman of Jiangsu Provincial Association for Science & Technologies;

- Mr. Cao Jiazhong, Vice Mayor of Wuxi Municipal Government;
- Mr. Ding Jian, CPC Party Secretary of Wuxi Association for Science & Technology.

Technologies:

Prior to the conference, a total of 101 technologies (including 16 technology projects and 85 technology patents) had been recruited from UK universities at the call of British Council for this conference. These technologies were then distributed to all the enterprises located in Wuxi area for preliminary match-making, after which, 12 projects and 37 patents were successfully pre-matched with industries.

These technologies covered almost all the 8 priority development areas identified by Wuxi, which includes Biological Industry, New Energy, Micro-electronics, New Materials, Cultural and Creative Industry etc, with biological industry accounting for nearly 80% of the total technologies.

III. Activities

Activity 1:

A Policy Workshop was delivered to the UK delegation on the morning of Nov 8th by Wuxi Science & Technology Bureau and Wuxi Foreign Experts Bureau, and both of them are the departments under Wuxi Municipal Government.

The workshop specifically explained to UK delegation the local governments' preferential policies and key initiatives regarding introducing new and high technologies and high profile experts, such as the *Oriental Silicon Valley Initiative*, and *530 Initiative*. The delegation was briefed about the financial and non-financial policies of transferring technologies in Wuxi and was assured of the local government's determination to protect their intellectual properties.

Activity 2:

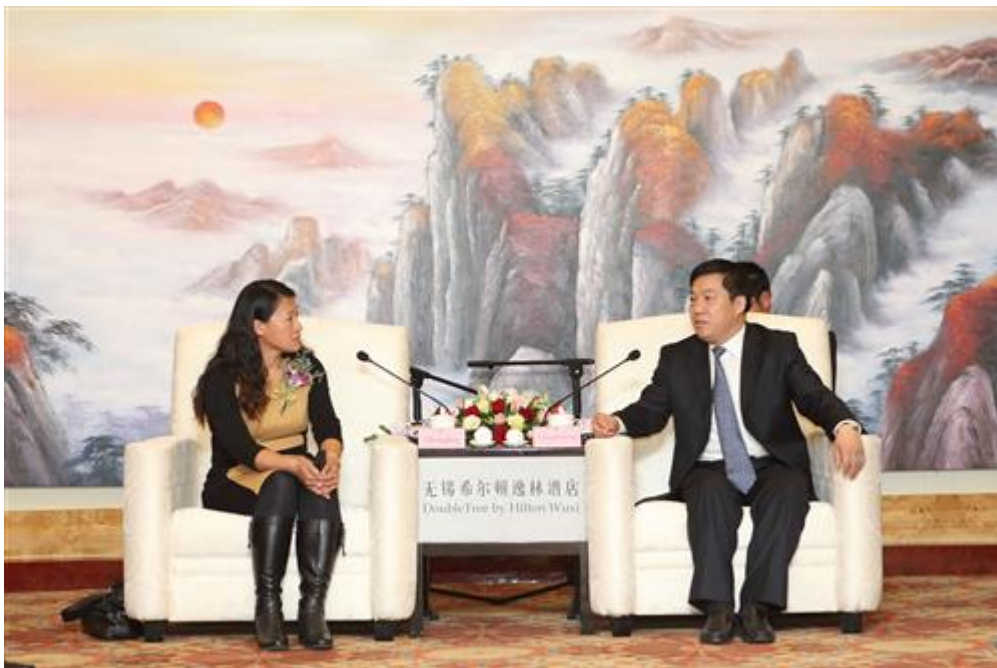
Following a short but grand Opening Ceremony, the Match-Making session was conducted as the main activity and it lasted the whole afternoon of Nov 8th in a very well programmed and coordinated manner. Industry representatives had been allocated time slots and were advised to arrive 30 minutes in advance which avoided chaos at the matching-making desks.





The Match-Making session has proved to be a very useful and effective form where both sides could have an individual face to face discussion on the technologies that had been pre-matched; both sides had in-depth interaction and communication on any aspects they need to know.

A total of 18 volunteers, mainly university students, were recruited and allocated to each of the UK delegates for the purpose of assisting with their needs throughout the event. In the evening, the delegation was warmly welcomed and received by the Vice Mayor of Wuxi Municipality right after the Match-Making session. The 1st day was concluded by a formal reception dinner hosted by Wuxi Municipal Government.



Activity 3:

The 2nd day of this event featured a tour of the National Life Science Park and other 3 demonstration sites including Demonstration Centre of Wuxi New District, Wuxi Sensing China Expo Park and the Wuxi Academy of Shanghai Jiaotong University.

The UK delegation was mostly impressed by the National Life Science Park, which is Wuxi's very first international cooperation base at the national level with an area of 5km² incorporating 8 functionalities such as R&D, manufacturing, exhibition, education and training etc. This Park serves as a very good base for transferring technologies.

IV. Outputs

The conference turned out to be very successful and fruitful as described by WAST. After individual and face to face communications, a Preliminary Agreement (Letter of Intent) on a photovoltaics technology from Swansea University was signed on the spot. Apart from that, representatives of other 19 technologies have expressed strong interest and intent to further their communication in following days.

After rounds of discussions with various levels of staff from Dongfang Electric Yixing MAGI Solar Power Technology Co. Ltd before and on the day, Swansea University were very pleased, so were we, to reach a preliminary agreement with this state-owned limited company and Yixing Economic Development Zone where this company is located. Areas of co-operation include collaborative research and development, setting up a joint solar energy innovative research centre and opening a factory in Wales. Detailed agreements will be negotiated in due course. Iwan Davies, one of Swansea's PVCs will visit Wuxi in Dec. to help progress the discussion.



The proposal of this project states that Swansea aims for a total investment of RMB10 million which would be divided into three steps/phases. All the sides pledge to work together to apply for financial and policy support from relevant government agencies and to apply for science innovation initiatives at various level such as Wuxi municipal, Jiangsu provincial, China national level and as well as UK and EU's.

This Letter of Intent makes it very clear that this was reached with the help of British Council under the Wuxi-UK Technology Transfer Programme managed by BC and WAST. In addition to the signing of this agreement, representatives from De Montfort University expressed strong interest in seeking collaboration with PKU-CRM-Roslin Joint Institute of Stem Cell Biology, which was visited by the UK delegation on Nov 9th. Both sides have initiated communication and will keep BC posted of the progress.

V. Media Reach

The UK delegation and its participation into the conference were well promoted across China through the media. The media reach is estimated at least two millions people with the details as follows:

Wuxi TV, the most influential media in Wuxi, covered this event on Nov 8th, this event was reported in its show named *Wuxi News*, with at least 2 millions of viewers of this news according to the statistics provided by WAST. As the first project to sign the agreement, representatives from Swansea University were interviewed by Wuxi TV.

This event was also reported by a number of influential newspapers such as Wuxi Daily, Yangtze Evening News, Wuxi Business News, Jiangnan Evening News etc. The Wuxi Daily is the largest and most influential newspaper whose audiences are mainly government agencies and officials with a circulation quantity of 50,000 per week.

This event was also reported by two of the largest news websites in China respectively are People's Daily and Xinhua News Agency, the reports could be found at:

<http://wuxi.people.com.cn/n/2012/1109/c131315-19534967.html>

http://wx.xinhuanet.com/2012-11/10/c_113656408.htm

Matt Burney, Cultural and Education Consul and Director East China of British Council, was invited to deliver a speech at the opening ceremony:

<http://tlpsr.chinawuxi.gov.cn/gjil/hzhd/6222350.shtml>

This event was reported on the official website of Wuxi Association of Science & Technology, which is available at:

<http://tlpsr.chinawuxi.gov.cn/jczx/gzdt/zxgz/6221068.shtml>

This event was also widely reported on internet by a number of industry news agencies which include the followings:

<http://www.caigou.com.cn/Lab/Detail/112594.shtml>

http://www.jskx.org.cn/new_view.aspx?newid=634186&labelid=23

<http://jsnews.jschina.com.cn/system/2012/11/09/015179889.shtml>

VI. Feedback

Both of the UK and Wuxi participants gave highly positive comments on the project and expressed their willingness to continue working in technology transfer collaboration between China and the UK. Most of them stated on the questionnaire that they strongly agree (or agree) that this event has met their expectation and this was a high quality event, and they

would very much likely to recommend BC to their friends or colleagues. Here are some examples of their remarks:

“Very well organised event. Good local support in China. Very useful to speak with them (industry representatives from Wuxi) generally about the Chinese health industry. We are still working through the long list of actions that were generated as a result of the event. We will keep the British Council up to date as these relationships develop.”

--Dr. George Rice, Senior Licensing Executive, IP and Commercialization from University of Nottingham

“We are in medical industry, R&D in cancer medicines is one of our priorities, and we are very much interested in the research outcomes from Nottingham University and keep in communication with them”.

--Mr. Lu, representative of a medical company in Jiangyin City;

VII. Follow-up plan

BC will discuss with WAST in the near future about the next phase of our collaboration, which will be very likely a reciprocal visit made by a delegation comprising industry representatives from Wuxi area along with some relevant government officials to promote further links and collaborations. The proposed time slot for this return visit could be in May 2013.

Before the return visit, BC would keep in touch with WAST and participating universities in the UK for the progress of the communications between the two sides. BC will follow up those ideas with all the partners and stakeholders to carry the project forward to the next step.

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