

# COMPANY COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

Innovation Management Programme,  
Sino-Danish Center for Education and Research

An aerial, high-angle view of a city skyline, likely Shanghai, featuring numerous skyscrapers and a prominent tower with a spherical structure. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The background of the entire page is a solid dark red color.

**SDC**

The university partnership  
Denmark – China

# INTRODUCTION

This document introduces the Sino-Danish Center (SDC) (<http://sdc.university>) and the Innovation Management Programme at SDC as well as highlights different mutually beneficial collaboration opportunities between the Innovation Management Programme and companies as well as public institutions.

## Introduction to the Sino-Danish Center

The SDC was formally established in 2010 as a partnership between all eight Danish universities, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences (UCAS).

In the ten years that have passed since the inception of the organization, SDC has been working hard on being well-positioned to meet the challenges of tomorrow by:

- Establishing partnerships between leading Danish and Chinese research environments,
- Co-funding a significant number of PhD students annually,
- Enrolling more than 150 Master students every year,
- Working on practical relevance of its educations and making sure that its graduates are in demand and find employment,
- Collaborating with private companies and government institutions.

Sino-Danish Center is located at UCAS' Yanqihu Campus next to Huairou Science City north of Beijing. Huairou Science City is one of the most ambitious projects in the long history of our partner, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and expected to become home to one of the most advanced science and innovation bases in the world.

## Introduction to the Innovation Management Programme

The first class of students started studies on the programme in Beijing in September 2012. The programme is formally hosted by Aalborg University (AAU) on the Danish side and the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences (UCAS) on the Chinese side; it is administered by the SDC.

### Student profile

Every year, the programme enrolls approx. 30 Master students (15 from the Danish side and 15 from the Chinese side). On completion of the programme, students receive a double degree and the following titles: Master of Science in Economics and Business Administration (Innovation Management) from Aalborg University, and Master of Management Science with a major in Management Science and Engineering, Innovation Management from the University of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Students of the Innovation Management Programme taught by the faculty from top universities in China and Denmark acquire the following skills during their studies:

- How innovation systems (corporate, technological, national) work and the various factors affecting them in both local and global contexts,
- How to identify, develop and implement activities that can enhance the innovation capabilities of companies and organizations,
- How to formulate innovation strategies at various levels (project, company, value chain, industry, macro) and how to successfully implement them.

## Teaching Philosophy

The pedagogic principles underpinning the Innovation Management programme are inspired by various best practices in China and Denmark, but the main foundation is that of problem-based learning (PBL). The PBL approach is mainly realized through a semester groups project work accompanied by a number of courses, especially project-related or semester-theme-related courses (based on traditional lectures, class discussions, case work). Teaching on the programme is based on the real-world problems, which provide the context for presentation and learning. It also leads to greater conceptual understanding and long-term retention. Reflecting on the growing demands for industrial relevance, over the years, PBL has proven to be a very suitable teaching form for achieving the objectives of the programme and preparing the students for the dynamic and fast changing job market.

So it is fair to say that the programme pedagogy differs from traditional educations. Underpinned by PBL, the programme fosters:

- Students active participation and responsibility for learning,
- Project work with the starting point in real life innovation problems,
- Cross-cultural group work to benefit from diverse educational backgrounds, experiences, cultures and knowledge (Innovation Management Class 2020 is divided into 7 cross-cultural groups of 3-4 students in each).

## COLLABORATION WITH THE SDC IM PROGRAMME

There are several different setups in which companies and organizations can collaborate with the Innovation Management programme and engage with our students before they leave the university and are available on the job market to help organisation and society at large to bring innovation forward.

These are some of the examples of collaborations that SDC Innovation Management programme has tried in the past:

- Events focused on innovation,
- Cases for group projects,
- Case competitions,
- Internships,
- Master and PhD thesis collaboration,
- Guest lectures by company representatives,
- Student visits to companies,
- Formal Memorandum of Understanding.

## Events

Every year the SDC Innovation Management Programme at SDC organizes a number of events that are focused on innovation. For example, the annual Corporate Innovation Days (see [the press release from the event in 2019](#)) brought together company representatives, researchers, policy makers and students to debate and discuss innovation related issues and exchange best practices. Furthermore, companies have the possibility to initiate an event (e.g. a recruitment event, a round table discussion, networking, etc.). Please contact us, if you want to participate in our regular events or would like to organize one together with us.

## **Student group semester projects**

During their first and second semester of the programme the students are asked to work in diverse groups on real life problems that need innovation management input to solve them. Companies and organizations can propose cases and problems and then work closely together with the students to have them solved. This way you have a solution that is current, fresh and generated by a vibrant community of young and enthusiastic innovators working under the supervision of professors from Denmark and China. If this collaboration avenue is of interest, please contact us and we will work on arranging the collaboration.

## **Case competitions**

If you have an idea for a case competition that involves the subject of innovation, contact us and we are looking forward to co-organizing one together. Thanks to the close collaboration with other seven SDC programmes, to get the best possible outcome, we can initiate a cross-disciplinary activity as well.

## **Internships**

In the 3rd semester of the studies, the students are required to do an internship in a company or organization. If you decide to be an internship host, this will give you a student that is familiar with relevant theory and best practice of innovation management, while the student will get an opportunity to apply theory into practice. Internships usually start in September and last until the end of the year. Please contact us if you have an open spot for an intern with an innovation management background.

## **Thesis Collaborations**

In the final semester of their studies (February-July), our Master students must deliver and defend their Master thesis project. While the students can choose an academic project within the field of innovation management, many choose to conduct their thesis in collaboration with a company based on a real-life problem. The same applies to our PhD thesis projects, but these usually involve a longer time-line. This gives the student access to good primary data and deep learning, while the company can benefit from a scientific report about the problem that they introduced to the student. Contact us if you want to be connected to students that could be interested in developing a Master or PhD thesis based on your company's problem.

## **Guest Lectures**

We do our best to make all subjects and content tangible for our students and provide them with as many real-life examples as possible. Guest lectures can provide a tremendous value to the students as they can hear and learn from the hands-on experience. Therefore, we are always happy to host guest speakers who are willing to share their practical experience and give a reality check to the theories that our young talents study. Please contact us if you would like to deliver a guest talk at the programme and give your organization spotlight in front of the audience of students and/or researchers.

## **Invite our Students and get to know your future talents**

The Innovation Management programme has a close connection to companies and organizations. To get our students more familiar with companies and organizations, we organize many visits to companies and encourage the students to do it themselves as well. Hosting a visit provides you with the opportunity to become known to the students and get to know your future talents. It can also be a nice opportunity for your employees to run focus groups with the students or organize a mini-innovation challenge or workshop on site. Contact us if you are able to host a visit and engage with the bright minds of the future, showcase your newest products, share your progressive visions and strategies.

## **Formal Memorandum of Understanding**

For both sides to enter a fruitful collaboration, we encourage companies and organizations to sign a formal memorandum of understanding (MOU). This formal memorandum will state in which ways both sides intend to collaborate and establish a deeper long-standing relationship.

## **ANY QUESTIONS? CONTACT US ANYTIME!**

We hope that one of the options above could be of interest to your organization, but we are also open to other scenarios too. We are happy to hear from you and look forward to collaborating with you on one of the above-mentioned grounds or co-create a new form of university engagement in your organization.

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**Innovation Management:  
Create value through systematic processes**

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