

Guangdong signs 3 agreements with University of Birmingham

South China's Guangdong Province signed three agreements with the University of Birmingham recently in the UK.

Hu Chunhua, Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Guangdong Provincial Committee, and Wen Guohui, Mayor of Guangzhou City, joined China's UK Ambassador Liu Xiaoming to lead the 20-strong delegation.

The leaders and their fellow delegates attended a special ceremony hosted by Birmingham City Council, where the University of Birmingham Provost Professor Tim Jones signed agreements with three partners from Guangzhou to further strengthen the university's research and teaching presence in the province.

Professor Jones signed an agreement with senior leaders from Sun Yat-Sen University (SYSU) to establish a primary care training centre at the First Affiliated Hospital of SYSU that will help to boost the numbers of Chinese doctors in general practice. The University of Birmingham will help to provide high-quality training, education and academic projects.

He joined academics from the Guangdong Academy of Sciences (GDAS) to launch a partnership that will see Chinese research students joining their Birmingham counterparts to explore a range of areas in metallurgy and materials, as well as mechanical engineering.

The Provost also formalized a new partnership with Jinan University that will allow students to study in China and receive degrees from each university. Students will be able to take dual degrees in economics, information computer science, pure mathematics, and statistics – taught by both Jinan and Birmingham academics on site.

Professor Jones said: "I am delighted to meet the delegation from Guangdong, the region in which the University of Birmingham has particularly strong links with China.

"Today marks another milestone of the university's development in Guangzhou, as we are signing three major projects with our partners, which allow us to bring both our research and teaching excellence into Guangzhou.

"Through these projects, we are pleased to contribute to Guangdong's regional social and economic development by nurturing talent for the big data economy, upgrading manufacturing technologies, and enhancing innovation for health.

"The University of Birmingham is playing a pivotal role in helping to deliver China's £85 billion health reform investment, which is focused on developing primary care and training an extra 300,000 GPs by 2020."

Under the leadership of Professor KK Cheng, Director of the Institute of Applied Health Research, the University of Birmingham has delivered training

programmes, both locally and in the UK, to some 500 senior managers, over 4,000 doctors and 1,000 GP trainers.

It has also jointly established six “China-UK Collaborating Centres for General Practice Training” in Guangzhou, three of which are officially listed among the “Best 100 Community Health Centres” in China.

The university has been participating in joint research programmes with GDAS since 2013, especially in the fields of new materials, advanced manufacturing, and hydrogen storage.

GDAS is the largest research-focused academy in Guangdong province, with six major institutes. Its main research areas include: resources and environment, materials and chemical industries, advanced manufacturing, electronics and IT, biotechnology and health, and industrial services.

The launch of dual degrees with the Jinan University further expands the University of Birmingham’s global teaching offer, with academic partnerships already well established with institutions in China and Singapore. Birmingham has also recently unveiled plans to develop a branch campus in Dubai.

Birmingham City Council Leader, Councillor John Clancy, said: “We’ve forged many links between Birmingham and Guangdong province over the last decade, working together in the world of business, local government, culture and, of course, education. So I’m delighted to welcome such a high profile delegation to the city.

“The three agreements with the University of Birmingham further cement those strong ties and I have no doubt that this special relationship will continue to deliver for both Birmingham and Guangdong province.”

Professor Jon Frampton, Director of the university’s China Institute and Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (China), said: “The University of Birmingham has achieved a great deal since opening our Guangzhou office in 2011. We’ve launched 28 joint research projects with our Guangzhou partners and established collaborations with all major education institutions in Guangdong.

“We look forward to bringing our collaboration with Guangzhou to a new level in research, education and public health, as well as expanding our impact wider in the Guangdong region thanks to the continued support of the Guangzhou and Guangdong governments.”