

Shanghai pilots special service for overseas Chinese

Shanghai's overseas Chinese affairs center has opened its first branch – in Changning District – to better serve Chinese who hold foreign passports to live and work in the city.

The move is a result of a cooperation agreement between the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of Shanghai and the Changning District government.

The aim is to attract overseas Chinese to contribute to development of the city by improving the services offered to them.

The branch, located at the Shanghai Hongqiao One-Stop Service Center for Overseas Talents in Changning, will provide consultation on policies and procedures for overseas Chinese to work and live here.

This might include verification of their identities and those of their relatives, or children's enrollment in local schools.

Changning will also be able to use "Shanghai Bridge," the city's special program for bringing in overseas talent, to publish its talent policies, recruiting advertisements or related messages.

The branch can also utilize the city office's resources to encourage overseas Chinese to bring their startups to Changning.

Xu Li, director of the Shanghai Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, said more branches are planned for other districts.

"The first branch was set up in Changning as it hosts a lot of overseas Chinese," said Xu. "In total, it has over 100,000 returned overseas Chinese."

Both local enterprises and returning Chinese in the district are glad to see the new branch.

Rong He, chief executive of the engineering company Century 3, said nearly 50 senior executives at his company were returned overseas Chinese and they had found it troublesome to deal with such matters as application processing and children's educational needs.

"We were not so clear about the policies and usually had to go to different government departments for consultation and application," he said. "With the one-stop service branch, it will be convenient and efficient."

Chengtie Wu, a professor at the Shanghai Institute of Ceramics, The Chinese Academy of Sciences, recalled his own experience five years ago when he came to work in Shanghai.

"The government had provided favorable policies for me as a member of

Thousand Talents program, but I had no idea how to enjoy them upon my arrival," he said.

"To enroll my baby to a local school alone, I spent several months. If there was such a one-stop service center then, it would have been much easier and more convenient."