



科博国际教育
HOPE International Education
— Since 2000 —

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Inside HOPE

- ✧ *2024 Passed with Lots to Recall, 2025 Leaves More to Expect*
- ✧ *HOPE Explores Cooperation with Southeast Asian Institutions*
- ✧ *Celebrating Achievements and Expressing Gratitude: Annual Appreciation Parties Witnessed Growth of HOPE Community*
- ✧ *Photo news from December*

Highlights from local media

- ✧ *Youth exchanges seen as vital to future of China-US relations*
- ✧ *Sustained engagement urged in Sino-UK relations*
- ✧ *China's visa-free policy paves way for stronger cultural, business ties*
- ✧ *Global MOOC Conference held in UK*

Inside HOPE

2024 passed with lots to recall, 2025 leaves more to expect

The year 2024 was a year full of challenge and hope for HOPE! Confronting the complexity of international affairs, economic situation and changeable foreign and domestic policies, HOPE has been transforming its business steadily to cater for the new market demand. The key words of the year are ‘diversification’, ‘innovation’ and ‘sustainability’!

Diversified products and service. HOPE continued to attach great importance to developing new education products and services for clients after pandemic. For instance, with more and more enquiries on studying in Southeast Asia countries, HOPE explored an academic camp with National University of Singapore, established partnership with University of Southampton Malaysia Campus, Epsom College in Malaysia, Forest City International School in Malaysia. These will be useful supplement to our existing main partners in the UK, US, Australia and Canada.

Tutoring service for top university application and interview is another service attracting more students. Joining HOPE UK office, the company recruited and partnered with more tutors and specialized institutions overseas to expand the online tutoring service from subject training to Oxbridge and G5 universities application. This service has been particularly popular among students of international schools in China.

Teacher training. Apart from jointly organizing school link forums, HOPE has been working more closely with local education bureau, local education associations to provide teacher training with its educational resource both at home and abroad. HOPE's service also extended to helping Chinese institutions to recruit international students overseas. In November, HOPE organized Westlake University, a top research university in Hangzhou, visited several UK schools for recruitment. Similarly, HOPE's service expanded to parents of HOPE students. An in-depth UK culture tour/camp is being designed for next year after two domestic excursions for parents were organized in 2024.

Innovative events. Traditional marketing and promotion events such as education fairs can hardly attract good number of clients now with so many similar events in the market. HOPE has been innovative in designing and organizing more cost-effective and innovative events to promote our partner institutions. For example, School Link Forum followed by School and Summer/Winter Camp Fair was a practical and influential event HOPE organized in October 2024. With 11 schools from UK, Singapore, Malaysia and 32 schools from China, the forum provided an excellent opportunity for in-depth discussion on partnership and good chance for profile raising and networking. While the Fair held in Shanghai Municipal

Children's Palace combined Parents' Class, panel discussion and individual counselling, attracting 110 families to attend.

Another event proved to be both innovative and influential was the carnival for autism children held in Shanghai Botanical Garden in March just before the 'World Autism Awareness Day' with over 400 students, parents, partner UK and Chinese institutions representatives, local government representatives joining. Such type of charity events for autism children have been carefully designed and organized by HOPE, local autism rehabilitation centre and local government for many years. Charity walk and cycling, photography contest, exhibition, auction sales, camps, donation, all those events showcased the participants and HOPE's social responsibilities as well as their love and care to the autism children and their families. More and more our overseas partner institutions such as Loughborough University, University of Southampton, not only joined the events but also donated teaching and sports equipment or sponsored part of the events.

Inviting visiting academic staff from overseas institutions to local international schools to conduct master classes, and organizing students and parents to visit UK returned alumnus' companies were also welcomed by many of our institutional and individual clients.

Sustainable development. It is substantially important to establish a healthy eco-environment of the industry if a bigger market needs to grow. Agent-institution relationship and agent-agent/sub-agent relationship are vital to this environment. HOPE has been leading to build this healthy environment by organizing and sponsoring 2-3 education conference and study tour in China each year, and in 2024, such event even included tour to institutions in Singapore and Malaysia as well! Discussing the hot topics in international education, proposing the solutions to the challenges all are facing, promoting partnership and collaboration are main purposes HOPE wants to achieve for a sustainable development of the industry.

The year 2025 will witness HOPE's 25th anniversary. Although more challenges are ahead for HOPE and the whole industry, the company will continue to make its contribution towards international education exchange and collaboration as well as students mobility domestically and globally.

HOPE Explores Cooperation with Southeast Asian Institutions

After the epidemic, the international education and overseas education market has changed a lot. One of the obvious features is the diversification of study destinations. In addition to the traditional study countries such as UK, US and Australia, Southeast Asia especially for Malaysia and Singapore and Hong Kong are more and more favored by Chinese Students. These regions have high-quality institutions and Southeast Asian campuses of renowned universities in UK, US, and Australia. As a supplement to the market of UK, US, Australia and Canada, HOPE International Education is establishing close cooperation with local famous universities and boarding schools in Southeast Asia. At the same time, we also hope to share these quality resources that are urgently needed in the market with our peers in order to achieve mutual improvement and win-win cooperation.



Group photo in National University of Singapore (NUS)

Adhering to this concept, from 7th to 10th December, HOPE invited about 30 principals, academic directors, school counsellors, and heads of agencies, from more than 20 international schools and partner agencies in China for a 4-day South-East Asia tour. Led by HOPE staff, the group visited National University of Singapore (NUS), University of Southampton (Malaysia Campus), University of Nottingham (Malaysia Campus); well-known traditional boarding schools Epsom College and Forest City International School Malaysia campus.

Witnessed by the peers, HOPE signed a MOU agreement with University of Southampton and Epsom College Malaysia Campus respectively to mark the beginning of the

collaboration in areas of students recruitment for both long term UG, PG, A level programme and short term summer camp programme.



HOPE Signed MOU agreement with University of Southampton Malaysia



MoU signing and certificate awarding



ceremony at Epsom College in Malaysia

The tour also helped HOPE’s partners to learn more about the strength of institutions in Singapore and Malaysia for future promotion. The visit and collaboration with two new partners was also a follow-up after Daniel Zheng, Managing Director of HOPE’s visit last September. HOPE's marketing strategy in Southeast Asia is to establish partnership with high quality UK institutions Malaysia campus as a first step, and then to extend to other high quality local institutions for enrollment for both long term degree and short-term programs according to the market demand.

Celebrating Achievements and Expressing Gratitude: Annual Appreciation Parties See Growth of HOPE Community

On 28th and 29th of December, HOPE hosted its annual appreciation events in Shanghai and Hangzhou respectively, witnessing increasingly bigger achievements made by our students as well as the growth of HOPE community of students and parents in the past year. The gatherings underscored the HOPE's commitment to fostering a vibrant community among parents and students and served as a platform for both parents and students to share their experiences with HOPE, fostering an environment of mutual support and encouragement.



In front of Shanghai White Horse Cafe, a historic cafe with 82-year-history in Shanghai



Hangzhou event at a tea house near West Lake

One of the highlights of the event in Shanghai was the display and sharing of the outstanding achievements made by the students in the past years. This is not only a recognition of the students' personal efforts, but also the best proof of the quality and effectiveness of HOPE's service.



Parents (left) and student representative (right) sharing in front of audiences

Parent representative: Mr. Dongxiao Zhou , as the deputy general manager of Jinjiang Group, he has worked in the Foreign Affairs Office of the Shanghai Municipal Government for decades and has a wealth of international horizon. Mr. Zhou shared his son's valuable experience of how he successfully applied for a bachelor's degree at the University of Edinburgh through the professional guidance of HOPE. Now, his son has taken a position in Bloomberg in London.

Student representative: Wu Yanling, a young scholar full of talent and passion. He successfully entered King's College London (KCL) MSc Addictions degree in 2023. At the gathering, Wu Yanling shared how he overcame numerous difficulties with the help of HOPE, not only achieving significant academic progress, but also taking a solid step forward in career planning. At present, he is applying for a doctoral program at KCL with the support of HOPE.



Heated discussion between parents, students and HOPE consultants

Feedback from both parents and students was overwhelmingly positive, reinforcing the event's success. Parents appreciated the opportunity to gain valuable insights while also bonding closely with HOPE parents community. Some parents sent their request directly to join in the HOPE parents community. Students, on the other hand, cherished the chance to communicate with their peers. Alumni from KCL and Southampton exchanged WeChat and establish contact. The event was hailed as a perfect blend of entertainment and networking, leaving everyone eager for the next such gathering.

Up till end of 2024, There have been 650 overseas returned students joining HOPE's Students Association while over 300 parents in HOPE's Parents Club. Annually, HOPE organizes 5-8 various events for this increasingly growing community including excursion and culture tour, parents classes and salon, career and company visits, appreciation parties.

INSIDE HOPE --- Photo news of December



On 10th and 17th December, two sessions of training lectures on international education collaboration and exchange were successfully held for 60 dedicated teachers from 60 schools in Pudong New Area, Shanghai. These were first two sessions of the teacher training project jointly organized by HOPE and Pudong Education Development Research Institute. Madam Lv Cuihong, the head of foreign affairs Office of the Education Bureau of Pudong New Area addressed at the opening ceremony on 10th December. This teacher training project include 3 modules including themed lectures, workshops and institutional visits.



On 27th of December, Chanel Zhang, General Manager of HOPE Hangzhou Office was invited by Anhui Chamber of Commerce to introduce how to develop a comprehensive family education plan for the next generation. During the presentation, Chanel gave an in-depth analysis of how to prepare for overseas study and advantage and disadvantage of different destination countries.

[News from local media](#)

Youth exchanges seen as vital to future of China-US relations

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/>

Beijing's initiative of inviting young Americans to China on exchange or study programs is "extremely valuable" and "much needed", and it should be reciprocated by Washington, said a former career US diplomat who specializes in United States-China relations.

"I really salute China for taking the initiative to create this opportunity and this platform to give American young people — great, much greater numbers of American young people — the exposure to China that I think would otherwise be difficult to obtain," David J. Firestein, inaugural president and CEO of the George H.W. Bush Foundation for US-China Relations, told China Daily in a recent interview.

President Xi Jinping, during his meeting with US President Joe Biden in San Francisco last year, announced that China would invite 50,000 young Americans on exchange or study programs over the next five years.

Since its inception, the initiative has hosted about 14,000 Americans, according to the Chinese embassy in Washington.

Firestein said that the initiative, which promotes exchanges on a mass scale, is both very valuable and essential, because it enables young people from the US to spend time with their peers and families in China and directly engage with the Chinese culture, language and people.

"And likewise, the United States should be doing similar things," he added.

Firestein proposed that the US and China redouble their efforts to create more avenues for exchanges, because that would make a real difference in the lives of young people and in the way they view people from the other country.

"The more that people go back and forth, the more we tend to humanize the other side, rather than demonize the other side," he said. "We've got to have much less demonization in this relationship and much more humanization."

Effective platform

During an event held on Dec 6 at the Chinese embassy to promote youth exchanges, Chinese Ambassador to the US Xie Feng said the initiative has provided an effective platform that brings young people from both countries closer.

It has opened up an important window for better understanding China and ushered in a new chapter of friendship between the people of China and the US, Xie said.

Students from across the US — from the state of Washington to Texas, from New York to California, from Cascade Elementary School, Muscatine High School and Lincoln High School to Harvard University and Princeton University — have actively participated in the initiative, the ambassador noted.

Madelyn Ross, who was one of the first students from the US to study in China following the establishment of US-China diplomatic relations in 1979, said that China is strengthening promotion of the "50,000 in five years" initiative.

"It's a generous program. It's a good start. We can hope that many of those students who took part in these trips will continue to pursue an interest in China and the study of China as they go through their education," said Ross, president emeritus of the US-China Education Trust, at a seminar held on Dec 12 in Washington.

In November, the US government revised its travel advisory for China from level three to level two. That eased level, which she said is a "rather common" category, will allay the concerns of US parents and university administrators about sending students to China.

Ross said she is "a little more optimistic" about having more young people from the US going to China. "We need Americans who deeply understand China in order to manage various aspects of the relationship, and indeed we've come to rely on them," she said.

There is still "quite a lot of" pent-up demand among students who were not able to go to China for several years due to COVID-19, but who had put in time to study Chinese and wanted to go, Ross added.

US Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns has said on numerous occasions that young people studying with each other and speaking each other's language is a way for the two countries to "stay connected on a societal basis".

For example, during a podcast on July 15 at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies, Burns said that China and the US need to stay engaged. He also said that he wanted to "see more American students in China", given that their annual numbers now stand at more than 800, down from 15,000 a decade ago.

In particular, Washington needs to have the next generation of China specialists "to take my place and to take the place of my colleagues" in the 2030s and 2040s to sustain this relationship, "because while we compete, we do have to live in peace with China", Burns said.

'Essential ballast'

In a commencement speech on June 14 at the Johns Hopkins University-Nanjing University Center for Chinese and American Studies, which is based in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, the US ambassador said that people-to-people ties were the "essential ballast" in the bilateral relationship, and Washington is "working hard" to increase the number of US students studying in China, in addition to providing more visas to Chinese students.

After hosting Chinese alumni from 35 US universities and US students studying in Beijing on Nov 21, Burns wrote on social media platform X: "Education is the key bridge to connect young Americans and Chinese."

Xie, the Chinese ambassador, said at the Dec 6 embassy event that the future of bilateral relations rests on young people.

"I encourage you to take up the baton of history and fulfill your responsibilities for fostering a stable, sound and sustainable China-US relationship," Xie said. "We welcome more young Americans to be part of the '50,000 in five years' initiative, and be partners and friends with your Chinese peers."

Sustained engagement urged in Sino-UK relations

By ZHENG WANYIN in London | China Daily Global | Updated: 2025-01-07



A visitor talks with a staff member at the China pavilion of the World Travel Market London

Experts in the United Kingdom have called for healthy China-UK relations, supported by consistency in policy, sustained two-way engagement, and a well-informed understanding of China within the UK.

Their comments came after good momentum in bilateral relations as leaders and senior officials of the two sides had held talks or made phone calls to each other since the Labour Party took power in July, covering areas such as foreign policy, trade, clean energy and more.

In November, President Xi Jinping and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer met on the sidelines of the G20 Leaders' Summit in Brazil, marking the first in-person meeting between leaders of the two nations since 2018.

During the meeting, Xi said China and the UK should jointly write the next chapter in the sound and stable development of Sino-British relations. He also emphasized that China and

the UK share extensive common interests and enjoy vast space for cooperation, despite differences in history, culture, values, ideas and social systems.

Meanwhile, Starmer said the UK's approach to China would be "consistent, respectful, and pragmatic" to advance shared goals on trade, global stability, green transition, and other areas, according to the Prime Minister's Office.

Noting the positive signals from recent high-level contact, Mark Logan, a former member of the British Parliament and former vice-chair of the all-party parliamentary group on China, pointed out the need for "consistency" in the UK's approach to China in an opinion piece published in October in the South China Morning Post.

While engagement was also on the agenda of the previous Conservative government, the reality was that "the UK hit the reset button so many times ... There was no consistency whatsoever," he said.

But interactions have continued at the non-governmental levels, Logan said.

"China is a reality that presents opportunities and many new questions for us in the UK. So, even when the previous government, or indeed politicians, refused to engage with China by speaking with angry opposition, the reality of the situation is that businesses, universities, and students continued to engage daily and with consistent intensity."

"I have argued that the UK-China relationship is an even more historic one," he added. "Our two countries have much to learn from one another. We have a lot to offer the world."

In post-pandemic times, the business community in the UK has helped spearhead engagement.

Clear commitment

In a report released in December, titled, "China-Britain Business Council Submission: HMG's Audit of the China Relationship", the council highlighted its members' "clear commitment" to the Chinese market, with nearly 75 percent of the respondents to a member survey remaining optimistic for growth in China over the next five to 10 years and a majority planning to increase investment.

The report also drew attention to the opportunities brought by Chinese investment for growth and job creation throughout the UK, with data showing its contribution to local prosperity in regions beyond London and the southeast area.

Nonetheless, the document noted bilateral trade had been impacted by the "challenging relationship" and urged a "consistent, clearer" government strategy toward China, along with a support system backed at the high level to facilitate visits, dialogues, market-entry, regulatory changes and more.

Beyond trade, an opinion piece published in August by James Keeley and Lewis Husain, fellows at the Institute of Development Studies, a research organization affiliated with the UK's University of Sussex, said that China cuts across all global challenges and those that

matter to the UK, such as climate change, energy transition, infectious diseases and antimicrobial resistance, sustainable food systems, and biodiversity loss.

"Cooperation must now be brought back to the center of the relationship," they wrote.

David Houlston, head of city policy of Manchester City Council, echoed the need for committed support from the UK government. The policy and partnership manager for the city has been working to promote trade and clean energy exchanges between Manchester and its counterparts in China.

"What cities and regions are able to do is continue the collaboration ... But having government-and-government relationships and a platform to do that does make a difference," he said. "The relationships at the local level will always continue, but what the government can do is accelerate that by showing its intentions."

Ollie Shiell, co-founding director and chief executive of the UK National Committee on China, an educational nonprofit promoting understanding of China, said the UK also needs to develop its China capabilities — "a determined effort to enhance the UK's competence in understanding and interacting with China".

Shiell deemed the strategy vital for a more "sophisticated, resilient, and civilized" China-UK relationship — one that balances mutual interests and disagreements.

He suggested this could be achieved by broadening civic leaders' perspectives on China, fostering practical skills such as negotiation, communication, and network-building for professionals, and nurturing young talent.

"Developing robust 'China capabilities' cannot be done in isolation," he said. "To make a positive difference it must extend beyond Westminster to permeate all levels of British society. After all, the bilateral relationship is not just managed by government officials — it involves the 100,000 people who actively interface with China through business, education, and cultural exchange."

China's visa-free policy paves way for stronger cultural, business ties

Xinhua | Updated: 2025-01-02



Foreign tourists take photos with Chinese tourists in a traditional neighborhood in Changsha, Hunan province, on Aug 28, 2024.

ZAGREB -- Former Croatian deputy parliament speaker Davorko Vidovic has welcomed China's decision to expand its visa-free policy to Croatia, expressing optimism that it will enhance bilateral cooperation and foster exchanges.

In a recent interview with Xinhua, Vidovic said this policy "can create conditions for serious improvement and increasingly better relations on the economic, cultural and political level between the two countries."

Vidovic served as deputy speaker of the Croatian parliament from December 2021 to May 2024, and prior to that, he was minister of labor and social welfare from 2000 to 2003. He has been the president of the Social Democrats, a Croatian center-left political party, since it was founded in 2022.

China announced on Nov 22 that ordinary passport holders from nine more countries -- Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Malta, Estonia, Latvia, and Japan -- would enjoy visa-free entry on a one-year trial basis starting Nov 30. Under this

policy, visitors can stay in China without a visa for up to 30 days for purposes such as business, tourism, family visits, exchanges and transit.

Calling China "a huge, beautiful country with a fantastic history and beautiful landscapes," Vidovic said: "I think that China ... can be a truly top-notch lure and a world-famous destination for Croatians, and as far as I know, there is great interest in visiting China."

Recalling his six visits to China, Vidovic said each time he returned with "incredibly rich new knowledge and experiences with the fascinating development of China in all areas."

During his last visit to China in 2023, Vidovic went to the innovation centers in Hefei, provincial capital of Anhui province. He was greatly impressed by China's rapid developments in the fields of communications and transportation.

"We had the opportunity to ride a high-speed train from Beijing to Shanghai running at almost 400 km an hour. You cannot see that speed, that progress, anywhere else in the world," he added.

Meanwhile, the number of Chinese tourists visiting Croatia in 2024 is approaching the record of 300,000 in 2019. Through this tourist exchange, there will be "better connections, better ties between the two countries in all areas," he noted.

Vidovic also expects the visa-free policy to significantly facilitate doing business with China and open up the prospect of stronger involvement of business communities, business people and joint investments.

Croatia has "good experiences" in cooperation with Chinese investors, he noted, citing the Chinese-built Senj Wind Farm and the Peljesac Bridge as two examples.

"Croatia and China have enormous opportunities for cooperation: Croatia can be a hub for a whole range of Chinese products, and space is opening up for cooperation in the fields of technology, science, education and culture," he said.

Global MOOC Conference held in UK

http://en.moe.gov.cn/news/press_releases/202412

The Global MOOC and Online Education Conference (GMC) 2024 was held at Queen Mary University of London from Dec. 12 to 13. With the theme of "Reimagining the Future of Higher Education in the Intelligence Era," the conference announced for the first time that higher education worldwide is entering a new era of smart education. UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education Stephanie Giannini, China's Vice Minister of Education Wu

Yan, and UK Education Minister Jacqui Smith delivered speeches during the main session of the conference.

Two important reports were presented at the conference along with a unique scenario showcasing the application of AI technology in education.

The Report on the Digital Development of Global Higher Education 2024 was compiled by nearly 100 experts from 30 universities, governmental bodies, international organizations, and industrial players. The report comprises three sections: “Creating a New Era of Smart Education,” “New Pathways for Smart Education,” and “A Common Mission: Opening the Door to Smart Education (ODSE).” It presents 95 cases from around the world and proposes the ODSE Plan, which advocates harnessing the great potential of AI to build more resilient and sustainable higher education systems.

Another report — the Digital Development Index of Global Higher Education 2024 — consists of four primary indicators, 10 secondary indicators, and 17 specific attributes. Based on data from 94 countries, it analyzes current trends in educational digitalization across multiple dimensions, providing a valuable guide for policymakers in designing strategies for digital transformation in higher education.

The scenario, titled “Teaching Computational Biology with the Assistance of Artificial Intelligence: A Case Study of Monkeypox Virus,” was developed by 13 teams from four countries, including China, the UK, and Austria. It demonstrates the application of AI, Digital Twin, virtual simulation, and other new technologies to create smart classrooms.

An exhibition was also held during the conference, presenting 25 projects from 17 universities, including Tsinghua University, Beihang University, Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications, Queen Mary University of London, and Nanyang Technological University, as well as eight leading AI companies. These projects demonstrated the potential of new technologies to empower teaching, learning, and experimental research.

Four symposiums were organized, focusing on issues such as reshaping higher education, the ethical risks of AI, professional competences and digital literacy, and new practice-based pedagogical paradigms.

The conference also announced that the Technological Institute of Monterrey and Edraak, the first massive open online platform in the Arab world, have joined the Global MOOC and Online Education Alliance.

A total of 340 representatives from 135 universities, online education institutions, international organizations, and government agencies across 28 countries attended the conference.

