



Press release

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State Secretary Mauro Dell'Ambrogio opens *Swissnex Shanghai*, Switzerland's outpost for science, technology and culture in China

***Swissnex Shanghai* was officially opened on 7 August 2008 by State Secretary Mauro Dell'Ambrogio, standing in for President Pascal Couchepin who was prevented from leaving Vietnam due to bad weather. *Swissnex Shanghai* is the fourth such outpost after Boston, San Francisco and Singapore. The outposts are an important instrument for implementing Switzerland's policy of bilateral cooperation in the areas of education, research and innovation with selected priority partner countries outside Europe, which includes China.**

Shanghai was selected as a location due to the numerous renowned universities and the fact that various well-known Swiss firms have already established a base there along with their research laboratories.

The People's Republic of China is a priority country in Switzerland's policy of bilateral cooperation in the fields of education, research and innovation with selected partner countries. A first scientific cooperation agreement with China was signed in 1989 and a structured cooperation programme was signed in 2003. The programme, which is receiving around CHF 9 million of federal funding between 2008 and 2011, is designed to promote lasting cooperation between Chinese and Swiss universities and research institutions in the areas of life sciences and biotechnology, environment, sustainable urban development, material sciences and medicine.

Swissnex Shanghai has the task of coordinating programme activities in China, serving as a link between Switzerland and the various Chinese authorities, and of establishing an efficient system for selecting students and researchers wishing to take part in the programme.

Similarly to the other outposts, *Swissnex Shanghai* also has the task of positioning Switzerland as a leading location in terms of higher education, research and innovation.

In addition, *Swissnex Shanghai* is tasked with supporting and coordinating the establishment of lasting cooperation networks which extend beyond the bilateral programme in areas of science and technology of interest to Swiss university institutions.

The *swissnex* network is run by the State Secretariat for Education and Research, part of the Federal Department of Home Affairs, in cooperation with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

Address for enquiries

State Secretariat for Education and Research, Walter Grossenbacher,
Scientific Advisor, Bilateral Research Cooperation
Tel.: + 41 31 325 79 06

Swissnex Shanghai, Eveline Winiger
PR and Event Manager
22F, Building A, Far East International Plaza
319 XianXia Road, Shanghai 200051, China
Tel.: 0086 21 6235 1889
Fax: 0086 21 6235 1365
eveline.winiger@swissnexshanghai.org

Link

www.swissnexshanghai.org