



University of
Nottingham
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA



University of Nottingham
Ningbo China
AY2025-2026
Annual Report

Table of Contents

-  **1** Message from the Provost
-  **3** Highlights of the Year
-  **7** Education and Student Experience
-  **21** Research and Knowledge Exchange
-  **32** Global Engagement and Reputation
-  **41** People and Culture
-  **48** Sustainability
-  **55** Finance and Infrastructure

Vision

Our vision is to be a university without borders, where we embrace the opportunities presented by a changing world, and where ambitious people and a creative culture will enable us to change the world for the better.

Mission

We have inspiring campuses in three countries, energising us to be a globally engaged university that is also committed to making a difference in our cities and regions. We empower and support students and staff to collaborate in learning, scholarship and discovery across all realms of knowledge, solving problems and improving lives. We are stewards of a pioneering and entrepreneurial tradition of creativity and innovation.

Values

In all we do, we value

Inclusivity

We are a community where everyone can contribute and be appreciated for who they are.

Ambition

We set the highest standards for ourselves and our work and support each other to achieve them.

Openness

We adopt a straightforward and transparent way of communicating with each other and with the world, championing the free exchange of ideas.

Fairness

Our decisions and actions are consistent, impartial and ethical.

Respect

We have regard for each other's rights and feelings, and demonstrate this in our behaviour, treating each other with kindness.

Message from the Provost

At a time when higher education is being reshaped by technological change, global uncertainty and evolving societal needs, universities are called upon to do more than transmit knowledge. This annual report reflects a year in which the University has continued to meet that responsibility with ambition, confidence and purpose, making strong progress across education, research and engagement, while staying true to our distinctive Sino-foreign model: globally connected, locally rooted, and committed to making a meaningful contribution to China and the wider world.

Our first priority remains education. We expanded our academic programme portfolio and strengthened future-ready capabilities. A major milestone was the launch of the new School of Health and Life Sciences, jointly established with the University of Nottingham, uniting Chinese and international expertise in alignment with the Healthy China Initiative. As artificial intelligence reshapes how we learn, work and solve problems, we have built a forward-looking educational ecosystem that equips students with technical competence, ethical awareness and adaptability. This year, we introduced a series of AI initiatives across the student learning journey, positioning the University at the forefront of AI-enabled education in China. We also made substantial progress in broadening students'

pathways both at home and abroad. Following landmark approval to directly recommend undergraduates for further study at China's leading universities, many students secured pre-admission offers. Internationally, our new undergraduate-to-master's articulation agreement with Monash University is another tangible outcome of our continuing efforts to expand opportunities for students to study, work and thrive around the world.

The achievements of our students remain a source of great pride. Over the year, they won more than 50 awards in national and international competitions, demonstrating creativity, technical excellence and the confidence to compete on global stages. Graduate outcomes continue to



excel: 48% of undergraduates who continued their studies overseas received offers from a world top 10 university, and 97% from a top 100 university. For six consecutive years, we have led all Chinese universities in the ShanghaiRanking indicator for value-added rate for undergraduate students. These results reflect both the quality of our students and the added value of the education and support they receive at the University.

Our research and knowledge exchange continue to grow in scale, quality and impact. Our researchers received five major awards in the 2024 Ningbo Science and Technology Awards, addressing challenges in technology finance, high-end medical equipment and green engineering construction. Several research platforms at municipal level or above were established across multiple disciplines, strengthening our research ecosystem. To support more ambitious, interdisciplinary and high-impact work, we established the Research Innovation Institute and launched its inaugural call for proposals, marking an important step in building a research culture that is both excellent and purposeful.

To accelerate the exchange of knowledge, we co-launched the Ningbo Municipal Universities Technology Transfer Centre in collaboration with the Ningbo Education Bureau, supporting the translation of research outcomes into real-world impact. This academic year, the Centre formed its first cohort of industry mentors and provided funding for the first group of promising early-stage

research projects, bringing them closer to technology transfer and commercialisation. Our research-driven innovation has earned international recognition. The Li Dak Sum Incubator was awarded the European Business and Innovation Centre quality certification, making it the first and only university incubator in China to receive this internationally recognised accreditation.

The strength of our performance across education, research and innovation has been recognised more broadly. In the 2026 ShanghaiRanking's Best Chinese Universities Ranking, we came second among Sino-foreign universities and 65th nationally, affirming the collective efforts of our students, staff, alumni and partners.

Looking ahead, we are building on this momentum with confidence. We have broken ground on a new teaching building and a new sports centre to support the expansion of our academic programmes and create new spaces for learning, discovery, collaboration and wellbeing. We have also officially unveiled our blueprint for the next five years, the UNNC Strategic Plan: Roadmap to 2030, which builds on these achievements and provides a framework for advancing our long-term vision and priorities for sustainable development.

The achievements highlighted in this report represent only part of what our University community has accomplished over the past year. Behind each milestone are the dedication of our staff, the ambition of our students, the support of our alumni and the trust of our partners.

I am deeply grateful to all who have contributed to this progress.

In the years ahead, we will continue to uphold our mission as an international university rooted in China and connected to the world. With a clear strategy, a strong foundation and a shared sense of purpose, I am confident that the University will continue to make an even greater contribution to society and to the future we are building together.

— Professor Jon Garibaldi
Provost and Pro-Vice
Chancellor



Highlights of the Year

August 2025

- UNNC secured a landmark approval from the Ministry of Education, granting it the authority to directly recommend its graduates for postgraduate study at China's top universities.

September 2025

- The module Applied Electrical and Electronic Engineering: Construction Project was awarded the National First-Class Undergraduate Module, bringing the total number of national level first-class modules at UNNC to six.
- Jointly established by the Ningbo Education Bureau and UNNC, the Ningbo Municipal Universities Technology Transfer Centre was launched to help researchers translate their research into real-world change.
- 56 scholars were named as the "World's Top 2% Scientists", marking a 40% increase from the previous year.

October 2025

- Six additional undergraduate and postgraduate programmes were approved by the Ministry of Education for student recruitment, further enriching our academic programme portfolio and enhancing educational opportunities for students.
- We broke ground on two major construction projects — a new teaching building and a new sports centre, marking a significant step forward in our continued dedication to providing world-class education, pioneering research and a vibrant campus environment.



November 2025

- We officially released the UNNC Strategic Plan: Roadmap to 2030, setting out the University's long-term vision, strategic objectives and key tasks for sustainable future development.
- Our student team won the top prize in the student category of the 2025 China Youth Science and Technology Innovation Competition in the New Energy Sector with their project, AI-based Power Battery Life Cycle Health Monitoring and Thermal Runaway Early Warning System.



- The Li Dak Sum Incubator was awarded the European Business and Innovation Centre (EUBIC) quality certification, making it the first and only university incubator in China to receive this internationally recognised accreditation.

December 2025

- Nine subjects were listed in the 2025 Shanghai Ranking's Global Ranking of Academic Subjects, representing over half of UNNC's subjects ranked among the world's best.
- The UNNC International Science and Technology Cooperation Base was successfully re-accredited by the Ministry of Science and Technology, which reaffirms our leading role in facilitating international collaboration.
- Our researchers won five major awards at the 2024 Ningbo Science and Technology Awards. Their projects addressed challenges relating to technology finance, high-end medical equipment and green engineering construction.

January 2026

- We launched the Staff Mobility Grant to support staff in pursuing impactful international mobility opportunities and to further strengthen the University's global engagement.
- Shipu Zhang, a 2012 alumnus and co-founder of NOETIX Robotics, was recognised in the 2025 Forbes China Top 100 Most Influential Chinese Elites list for his pioneering work in humanoid robotics.



February 2026



- As part of the long-term partnership between UNNC and the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), the UNGC published Innovate Forward: Guidance on SDG-Aligned Business Innovations and Example Practices, in which the University was acknowledged as its exclusive knowledge partner. This is the third report commissioned by the UNGC and highlights UNNC's commitment to the global sustainability agenda.

March 2026

- We co-founded the UNNC Process Technology Consortium alongside six leading manufacturing enterprises to promote joint research into practical industry problems and talent development initiatives. Other industrial partnerships established this year include those with Ningbo Joyson Electronics, Haitian Group, Minth Group, and State Grid Ningbo.



- We signed a new undergraduate-to-master's articulation agreement with Monash University, enabling high-achieving UNNC graduates to progress directly onto a Monash master's degree programme, without the need to take an IELTS or TOEFL test.

April 2026

- We came second among Sino-foreign universities and 65th nationally out of more than 1,000 institutions in the 2026 ShanghaiRanking's Best Chinese Universities Ranking.
- According to the Nottingham Student Experience Survey 2025 result, students' overall satisfaction as well as their satisfaction with living and support services were ranked in the top three of Asia and Global benchmark groups.
- We launched the first tri-campus careers event, creating a distinctive platform to broaden international career opportunities for both local and international students and to deepen cross-campus collaboration in employability development.
- We established the Research Innovation Institute (RII) and launched the inaugural call for proposals. The RII sets out a new, disciplined framework for university-managed research investment, supporting sustainable and high-impact research.



May 2026

- We delivered the first co-design workshop - "Your Voice, Your Experience", where students and staff collaborated as partners to shape the university experience.
- Dr Qirui Cui, a 2022 PhD graduate, became the youngest-ever recipient of the Göran Gustafsson Prize for Young Researchers, one of Sweden's most prestigious honours for early-career scientists, for his pioneering theoretical research into quantum magnetic materials.





June 2026

- We organised the inaugural university-wide town hall, where the University Management Board provided updates on UNNC's strategic direction, financial health, and key priorities that will shape the work leading to 2030.



- A team of five Aerospace Engineering students were the only undergraduates to be named finalists in the 2025-2026 IEEE ITherm Cold Plate Student Design Competition. They went on to win the global championship, achieving the best result ever recorded by a Chinese university in the competition's history.

July 2026



- We launched the School of Health and Life Sciences with the mission of bringing together Chinese and international expertise to develop the next generation of healthcare talent, innovators, and leaders, and to directly impact the transformation of healthcare in China and around the world.

Education and Student Experience

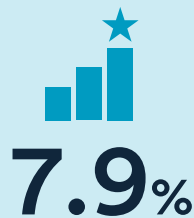
We aim to provide an innovative and inclusive international higher educational environment in China that nurtures intellectual growth, fosters student well-being, and prepares graduates for lifelong success.



Objectives

- 1 Attract and enrol a diverse pool of high-calibre domestic and international undergraduate and postgraduate students
- 2 Deliver world-class education through innovative pedagogy, experiential and interdisciplinary programmes, and promoting teaching excellence
- 3 Modernise educational spaces and leverage cutting-edge technology to create flexible, accessible and engaging learning environments
- 4 Champion a vibrant, inclusive and supportive international campus community that enhances personal growth, well-being and a sense of belonging

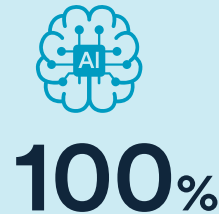
Actual performance measurement



Top % of Students
Recruited in Gaokao



Student Intake
as % of Target



% of UG Programmes
Including AI Content



Three-year Running Average
No. of T&L Schemes/Awards



53

No. of National and
International Student
Competition Awards



95.2%

UG Employment Rate
of the Year



95.8%

Student Satisfaction
with Learning Facilities



94.6%

Students' Overall Satisfaction
in NSES

Teaching and Learning excellence

Our commitment to excellence in teaching and learning keeps us consistently among the highest-ranking performers in independent teaching assessments. In AY2025-26, we further broadened students’ academic choices and development pathways, while continuing to enhance a curriculum that prepares them to stand out as sought-after global citizens.



UNNC launches School of Health and Life Sciences

On 17 July 2026, UNNC officially launched its new School of Health and Life Sciences. Jointly established by the University of Nottingham and UNNC, the School was first announced during the UK Prime Minister’s visit to China in January, marking a significant milestone in Sino-UK collaboration.

Bringing together the University of Nottingham’s world-leading strengths in education and research in health and life sciences with UNNC’s distinctive position as a Sino-foreign

university deeply rooted in China and committed to serving local needs, the School is well placed to support both regional and national priorities. Aligned with the Healthy China Initiative, it will focus on key areas including pharmacy, psychology, biomedical engineering, health big data, and public health. The School will work closely with universities, research institutes, leading enterprises, and top-tier hospitals across the Yangtze River Delta to promote joint talent appointments, resource sharing, and collaborative research. Through these efforts, it aims to become a cross-regional and internationally connected platform for high-calibre talent

development and technological innovation, contributing to the advancement of healthcare in China and to global health and wellbeing.

Professor Jon Garibaldi, Provost of UNNC said during the launch event: “The new school connects the UK’s research strength with China’s health priorities, global expertise with local needs. That is what ‘Global Expertise, China Solution’ means in practice. Our students will graduate with interdisciplinary thinking, professional depth, and social responsibility to drive the health and life sciences industry forward, here in the Yangtze River Delta and beyond.”





UNNC receives approval to recommend students for study at China's top universities

In August 2025, UNNC secured a landmark approval from the Ministry of Education, granting the university the authority to directly recommend its graduates for postgraduate study at China's top universities. This opens up new pathways for our high-achieving students, and makes UNNC one of the first Sino-foreign universities nationwide to receive this distinction.

New programmes launched to meet evolving demands

To address the evolving developmental needs of students and the workforce requirements of the local community, the University applied to the Ministry of Education (MoE) in 2025 for six new academic programmes. These included three undergraduate programmes—BSc in Big Data Management and Applications, BSc in Management Science, and BSc in Financial Technology; two taught Master's programmes—MSc in Psychology (Applied) and MSc in Intelligent Infrastructure and Management; and a PhD programme in Creative Practice. All six programmes were approved by the MoE. Building on this momentum, a further batch of new academic programmes was submitted to the MoE for approval in 2026.

Driving teaching excellence and strategic impact

Our academics are deeply committed to their teaching mission and are continuously driving educational innovation, fuelled by research that points the way to better pedagogical approaches. During this academic year, the University received teaching awards

and accreditations from both domestic and international organisations.

The module Applied Electrical and Electronic Engineering: Construction Project was awarded National First-Class Undergraduate Module status in the third round. This module introduces Year 2 Electrical and Electronic Engineering students to the essential attributes that

modern engineers should possess. It incorporates hands-on problem-solving to design and develop solutions for real-world engineering challenges, laboratory-based projects, teamwork, data analysis, self-directed learning, and information presentation. This recognition brought the total number of national level first class modules at UNNC to six.



CHEE 3034 Design Project

BUSI2178 Marketing Management

ENGL1030 Introduction to Drama

CHEE 2030 Process Engineering Project

MMME2042 Design, Manufacture and Project

EEEE1039 Applied Electrical and Electronic Engineering: Construction Project



National first-class modules at UNNC

At the provincial level, we received a second prize in the 2025 Zhejiang Provincial Teaching and Education Achievement Awards for the project - Innovative "Three-Level + Four-Dimensional" Model: Integrating Yangming Culture into Higher Education and Promoting Its Global Impact - recognising our creative approach to integrating traditional Chinese culture into the higher education curriculum. Additionally, five projects were approved under the 2025 Provincial Undergraduate Teaching Transformation Project scheme and three projects were approved under the 2026 Provincial Higher Education Research Project in Teaching

Development scheme, underscoring our commitment to educational innovation.

We continue to receive international accreditation for the quality of our curriculum. The Year 1 English modules – English in Specific Academic Contexts A, English in Specific Academic Contexts B, Oral Communications Skills B and CELE Summer Pre-Sessional Programme have all been accredited by the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes (BALEAP). This positions UNNC as the third institution outside of the UK to have received full BALEAP accreditation across its suite of English for Academic Purposes modules.

Our active approach to innovation in teaching and learning has also won us British national awards. Dr Xuan Feng, Associate Professor in Human Resource Management and Organisational Behaviour, was awarded the 2025 National Teaching Fellowship by Advance HE. This award recognises Dr Feng's innovative "ECO-approach", which emphasises experiential learning and collaboration through industry-supported learning experiences, ensuring curricula meet global job market demands.

In addition to this individual Advance HE award, the Nottingham Advantage Award (NAA) team received a team award.

The NAA team comprises members from the University of Nottingham in the UK, Malaysia and the University of Nottingham Ningbo China, and has been recognised with Advance HE's Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) for its innovative, inclusive and sustained contribution to student employability and personal development across the University.

EAP provision accredited by



The global forum for
EAP professionals



Leading the integration of Artificial Intelligence in teaching and learning

Rapid advances in artificial intelligence—particularly generative AI—are reshaping expectations for curriculum design, assessment, and student support across higher education. The University adopts a strategic, institution-wide approach to this transformation, advancing AI-informed teaching and assessment, building staff and student capabilities, deploying secure AI tools, and contributing to sector dialogue through forums and global conferences.

To strengthen capabilities across the University, we have implemented a systematic AI literacy education framework that combines university-developed modules with international online learning resources to enhance students' AI competencies and professional competitiveness. This includes the Library's refreshed Riverside Academy and Digital Student programmes for AY2025–26, which

enhance students' information, research, data and digital literacies, as well as their employability; academic training for first-year students to support the ethical and effective use of AI in academic research, writing and critical thinking; and a professional development programme for staff focusing on AI-assisted teaching, the design of authentic assessments, and the effective integration of AI into learning activities.

We also integrated AI and digital technologies into the student experience through the launch of UNNC AI, an on-demand academic support service powered by enterprise editions of leading models—including Microsoft's Azure OpenAI GPT-4.1, o4-mini and DeepSeek R1—underpinned by enterprise-grade AI security. The service offers intelligent support for daily study and provides a robust, compliant platform for staff and students to conduct AI-related research and practice.

To shape best practice across the sector,

the University engaged actively with peer institutions. In April 2026, the Technology Enhanced Teaching Forum—"The Assessment Revolution: From Pilots to Practice in the AI Era"—brought together nearly 100 participants from UNNC and peer Sino-foreign universities. Keynotes and case presentations examined AI's impact on assessment design and integrity, ethics, and language learning, accelerating the move from experimentation to scalable practice.

UNNC also demonstrated leadership on the global stage at the Fourth World Digital Education Conference, one of the highest-level international forums on the future of digital education, held in Hangzhou, China, in May 2026 and hosted by the Ministry of Education of China. Sir Keith O'Nions, Chair of the University Council of the University of Nottingham, and Professor Jon Garibaldi, Provost of UNNC, delivered speeches, underscoring the University's commitment to responsible, evidence-based adoption of AI in higher education.



Students scoop national and international awards

In competitions across the globe, our students continued to stand out with their knowledge, skills and global perspective. This academic year saw them bring home 53 awards from national and international competitions in fields including language, design, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Among these achievements, students' success in technology and innovation competitions was particularly notable, demonstrating not only their strong disciplinary knowledge, but also their ability to apply creative thinking to real-world challenges.

In June 2026, a team of five Aerospace Engineering students won the global championship at the 2025-2026 IEEE ITherm Cold Plate Student Design Competition, achieving the best result ever recorded by a university in China in the competition's history. As the only undergraduate team among the finalists, they impressed the judges with an innovative liquid-cooling solution for high-performance GPU chips, which delivered significant improvements in cooling efficiency, temperature reduction and flow performance compared with the benchmark design.

Also in the technology and innovation sector, another undergraduate student

team won the Top Prize in the student track of the 2025 China Youth Science and Technology Innovation Competition – New Energy Sector. Their award-winning project addressed two critical challenges — battery health assessment and thermal runaway prevention — and impressed the judges with its innovation and practical value.

These achievements reflect the strength of our student-centred education, which encourages students to explore beyond the classroom, apply their learning in competitive and real-world contexts, and develop the confidence, creativity and capabilities to excel on national and international stages.

Student experience

We continue to develop the campus experience and provide our students with a rich and stimulating social, cultural and sporting life – an education that is more than a degree.

Each year, UNNC participates in the Nottingham Student Experience Survey (NSES), a global survey administered by a third-party organisation, to obtain feedback from our students.

The 2025 wave of the survey results showed that UNNC students' satisfaction with their overall university experience (94.6%) and the four major areas of experience – Learning (93.8%), Support (96.5%), Living (95.2%) and Arrival (97.2%) – continued to outperform the Global and Asia benchmarks. For the first time, UNNC has entered the top quartile of the two benchmark groups in all major areas. Specifically, students' overall satisfaction as well as their satisfaction with living and support services were ranked in the top three of Asia and Global benchmark groups. All major areas have shown continuous year-on-year improvement for the past four years, reaching historic highs.



94.6%

Global 88.8% Asia 87.9%

Overall satisfaction



93.8%

Global 88.6% Asia 89.6%

Teaching and learning satisfaction



96.5%

Global 87.7% Asia 87.8%

Student support satisfaction



95.2%

Global 89.1% Asia 90.4%

Living experience satisfaction



97.2%

Global 92.0% Asia 92.6%

Arrival experience satisfaction

Fostering a vibrant and inclusive international campus community

We are committed to cultivating a vibrant, inclusive and supportive international campus community that enhances personal growth, wellbeing and a sense of belonging. Through student partnership, intercultural engagement and targeted wellbeing support, we continued to enrich the campus experience and strengthen the University's distinctive global character.

To support the wellbeing of staff and students, the University Clinic expanded its services during the year. This included introducing on-site blood testing to improve access to healthcare for staff and students. In parallel, our Student Mental Health Literacy Programme engaged more than 3,300 students and achieved an outstanding satisfaction rate of 99.53%, reflecting the impact of our efforts to promote mental health awareness and support across the student community.



In May 2026, we delivered our first co-design workshop, “Your Voice, Your Experience”, aimed at strengthening multicultural integration on campus. Bringing together around 40 home and international students, the workshop provided a platform for participants to share their experiences and perspectives on the use of English across campus life. Built on the belief that students are not merely participants in education but active partners in shaping it, the event enabled students and staff to work collaboratively in co-designing new initiatives to build confidence in English communication and strengthen language proficiency in both academic and social settings.

A key highlight of our international education provision was International Education Week 2026, which featured seven signature events and attracted more than 7,000 participants. These included a STEAM exhibition, Global Village, and the Spring Symphony Concert organised in collaboration with The Tianjin Juilliard School. The week not only celebrated cultural diversity on campus, but also showcased to the local community the distinctive outcomes of our international education.



We also brought our students' creativity and global outlook to an international audience. From May to June 2026, student artworks were exhibited at Hartsfield–Jackson Atlanta International Airport in the United States, one of the world's busiest airports. The exhibition featured 36 works across a range of media, including painting, drawing, cyanotype printing and digital art. Exploring themes of internationality, travel and global perspectives, the exhibition highlighted both the individual talents of our students and the distinctive international outlook fostered by the University.

Empowering undergraduate students in research

UNNC is committed to cultivating essential research competencies among undergraduates by providing extensive opportunities to engage in faculty-led projects. In this academic year, over 1060 undergraduates participated, with many securing off-campus internships at renowned institutions. Across all faculties, students join authentic research from their early years, gaining hands-on experience beyond the standard curriculum.

The Faculty of Science and Engineering (FoSE) continued its flagship Faculty Undergraduate Research Practice (FURP) programme, spanning diverse fields such as AI, computer vision, smart cities, renewable energy, advanced materials, biomedical engineering, robotics, autonomous systems, pure mathematics, cultural heritage digitisation, and financial analytics. Participants collaborated directly with world-leading scholars and national research institutions, including the Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica, CAS and Shenzhen Bay Laboratory.

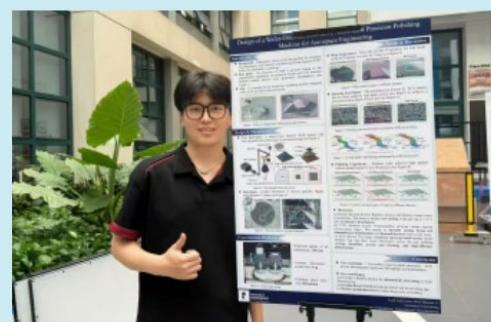


In the Nottingham University Business School China, the Research Exploration Programme under the Student Engagement and Employability Development (SEED) Scheme guides students through a full research cycle: structured training in research methods, one-to-one academic supervision, participation in and delivery of real research projects, and the presentation of student work and research outcomes. During AY2025-26, 17 interdisciplinary supervisors offered nearly 70 research assistant positions across cutting-edge projects, with a significant proportion filled by undergraduate students.

Similarly, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS) supports progression from hands-on training to involvement in staff-led projects and dissemination at the FHSS Student Research Conference. The semesterly Research Assistant Apprenticeship module equipped students with practical skills in literature review, data collection, coding, and analysis, fostering their transition to independent researchers.

Chenglong Hua (Class of 2026, BEng Aerospace Engineering) worked on a laser-thinning process for silicon wafers, and the result was published in the *Journal of Manufacturing Processes*, a leading SCI journal. He also published a co-authored paper in *Optics & Laser Technology* through an undergraduate research project, which resulted in a utility patent.

"From repeated failures to international recognition, I truly became a research practitioner," he said. "UNNC trusts undergraduates with real research and gives us the platform to lead."



Expanding international career opportunities for students

In April 2026, as part of our ongoing efforts to broaden our students' career prospects, we hosted the first tri-campus careers fair. In response to the aspirations of international students and individuals seeking global career opportunities, this year's fair had a distinctively international focus. Around 100 renowned companies from home and abroad participated, offering more than 3,500 high-quality job and internship opportunities spanning sectors such as finance, technology, manufacturing, and new energy.



To open up wider international development pathways for our globally minded students, the University signed an International Organisation Talent Cultivation Cooperation Agreement with the China-SCO Judicial Training Base this year. This made UNNC the first Sino-foreign university to join the scheme. Under the agreement, students will gain access to internship opportunities with international organisations, tailored practical training and dedicated research support, helping to accelerate their development in the field of international governance.

The University continued to strengthen its industry partnerships to support students' career development.

New partnerships established this academic year include those with State Grid Ningbo, the publicly listed companies Haitian Group, Ningbo Joyson Electronics, Minth Group, China Minsheng Bank, SF Express and others.

To date, we have established collaborative links with over 1,300 enterprises and organisations, creating a robust platform for internships, employment, industry engagement, and talent development. This enables our students to access a broader range of high-quality opportunities in China and beyond.



Student intake

We are committed to recruiting students with the highest potential and a desire to succeed, and we take pride in being an attractive destination for top students from around the globe.

In AY2025-26, we enrolled 4% more students than our target number across undergraduate and postgraduate levels. With the enrolment of our 22nd intake of students totaling 3,766, the total number of registered students reached 10,823. This comprises 8,219 undergraduate, 1,607 postgraduate taught students and 997 postgraduate researchers. Of these, 10,062 were on campus, with postgraduate students representing 26% of the population.



The University remains an attractive destination for high-potential students. The average ranking percentile of undergraduate students recruited via Gaokao was top 7.9% this year. In terms of postgraduate intake, the quantity of students enrolled saw a year-on-year increase, while the intake quality remained high, as 55% of the new PGT students were from top universities and 87% of the PhD student intake from top universities.

78 countries and regions



3,766

New students



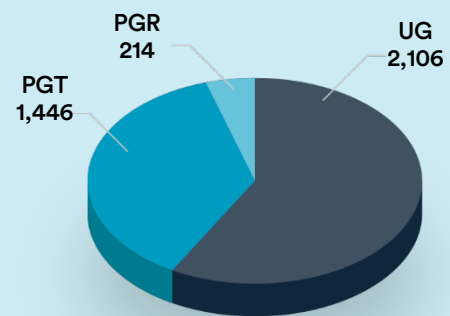
10,823

Total students enrolled



26%

of our students are postgraduate students



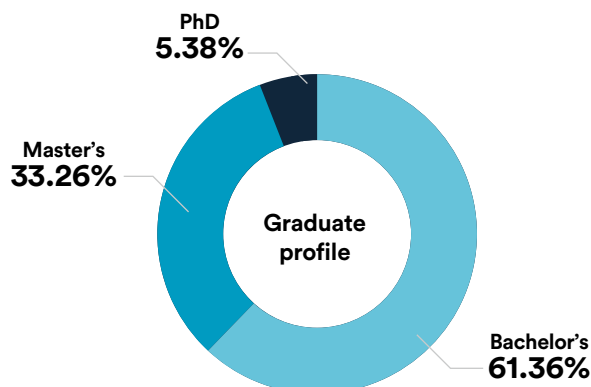
New student number by study level

Note: The total student enrolment number and postgraduate student percentage reflect the data by the end of June 2026 considering there would be a few numbers of withdrawn and suspended students during the academic year. The new student number reflects the data as of October 2025.

Graduate & Employability

The Class of 2025 had a total of 2,715 graduates. Bachelor's, master's, and PhD graduates accounted for 61.36%, 33.26%, and 5.38% of the total respectively. Employment rates for graduates at all study levels remained consistently robust.

Among all graduates who went directly into employment, 90.2% joined Fortune Global 500 companies, China's Top 500 companies, industry-leading enterprises, public institutions, and state agencies, while 70.0% of graduates are engaged in sectors aligned with China's "new quality productive forces" strategy. 70.4% of the graduates are employed in China's Yangtze River Economic Belt, supporting the national and regional development strategies.



Domestic undergraduate further study and employment destinations

A total of 1,364 graduates went abroad for further studies. Among the graduates who continued their studies overseas, 47.7% received offers from one of the world's top 10 universities, 86.7% from one of the top 50, and 97.8% from one of the top 100. Ultimately, 38.1% of students were admitted to a top 10 university, 82.1% to a top 50 university, and 96.8% to a top 100 university.



Since the University became the first Sino-foreign university to be granted the graduate recommendation qualification in 2025, our undergraduate graduates were admitted to some of the leading domestic universities including Zhejiang University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Nankai University, etc.

84.8% of those in direct employment were employed by Fortune Global 500 companies, China's Top 500 companies, industry-leading enterprises, public institutions, and state agencies. Regarding the geographic distributions, 67.5% of those in direct employment remained in the Yangtze River Economic Belt.

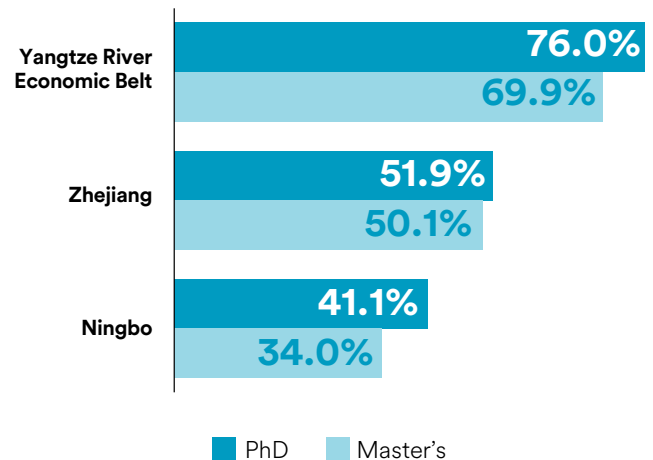


Domestic postgraduate further study and employment destinations

The employment rate of master's degree graduates is 95.0%. Of those, 85.1% proceeded directly to work, with 89.4% being employed by Fortune Global 500 companies, China's Top 500 companies, industry-leading enterprises, public institutions, and state agencies. 69.9% opted for the Yangtze River Economic Belt. Ningbo continued to be the top destination for employment, with 34.0% remaining in Ningbo and 50.1% remaining in Zhejiang.

All PhD graduates secured their employment. 98.45% secured positions at Fortune Global 500 companies, China's Top 500 companies, industry-leading enterprises, public institutions, and state agencies. Geographically, 41.1% of those choosing to work remained in Ningbo, 51.9% in Zhejiang province and 76.0% in the Yangtze River Economic Belt.

Regional retention rates of Master's and PhD graduates



Destinations of the international graduates and graduates from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan regions

15.5% of the graduates pursued further study, and 84.5% went directly into employment. Employers included large foreign and joint ventures, as well as renowned Chinese enterprises. Many master's and PhD graduates were employed at higher educational institutions, including Beihang University, University of Alberta, Aalborg University and the University of Nottingham Ningbo China. 26.2% of the graduates from overseas countries and Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan regions remained in the Chinese mainland for employment or further study.

[1] The undergraduate graduation data reflects the domestic UG students who graduated in 2025, based on government reporting requirement.

[2] The postgraduate graduation data reflects the domestic PG students who graduated from October 2024 to July 2025.

[3] The PhD graduation data reflects the PhD students who graduated in 2024 calendar year.

Research and Knowledge Exchange

We aim to deliver academically excellent research and innovation that leverages our unique position as a Sino-foreign collaboration to catalyse real-world impact.



Objectives

- 1 Deliver next generation themes of our research activity
- 2 Promote a trans-national research culture that is inclusive and people-focused
- 3 Strengthen capability to advance and broaden the international reach of research activities
- 4 Make UNNC research activity and impact sustainable through continuous improvement

Actual performance measurement

% of Publications in Top 10% Journals _
Scopus of the year



55.7%

% of Internationally Co-authored
Publications_ Scopus of the year



54.1%

No. of Publications
per Academic



3.88

Research Funding
per Academic (m RMB)



0.14

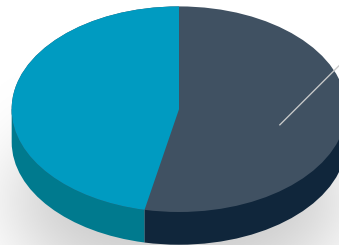
Research impact

UNNC is a fast-growing hub for excellence in research, innovation and knowledge exchange. Driven by our collaboration with government, industry partners and communities, we provide solutions to local and global challenges through world-class research and innovation.

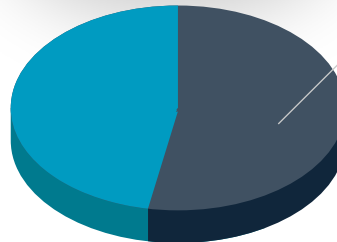
Steady progress in publication quantity and quality

Our academic staff are encouraged to publish their research outputs in high-quality journals, with comprehensive training, guidance and support provided.

Based on the data retrieved from the Scopus SciVal database, this academic year, our academic staff published a total of 1,359 publications, among which, 55.7% were published in the world's top 10% of journals, higher than in the previous academic year, with 82.2% of publications in top 25% of journals. 16.17% of our researchers' publications were among the world's top 10% of the most highly cited documents and were highly visible in the scholarly world.



55.7%
of our publications
are in top 10% journals



54.1%
of our publications are
co-authored internationally

Pushing the boundaries of knowledge

A culture of curiosity, critical enquiry and intellectual rigour continued to underpin the University's world-class research throughout the academic year. The following examples highlight some of the research breakthroughs achieved in the year, showcasing the breadth and depth of the University's research endeavours.

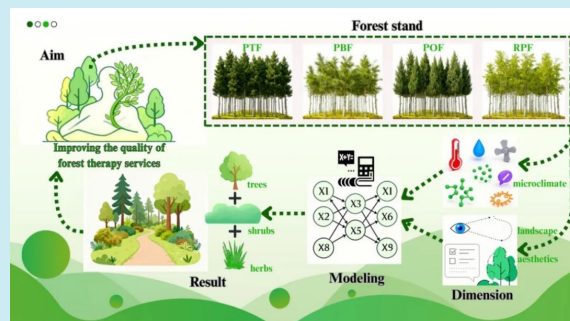
A research study led by Professor Yong Ren, a Mechanical Engineering expert, has revealed a precise temperature control strategy. This strategy uses the triple synergy of microencapsulated phase change material, expanded graphite and a pin-fin structure. It offers a new solution to the cooling challenges posed by high-power chips.

A study jointly conducted by Professor Zhuo Chen, Chair Professor in Health Economics revealed a "mental health prescription" for the elderly population. The research offered a culturally adapted perspective on mental health interventions among middle-aged and elderly populations. The study found that moving from no social participation to regular involvement in one or more activities can significantly ease depressive symptoms.



A new research led by Dr Dongbing Li, Associate Professor in Green Chemicals and Energy has uncovered the scientific factors that determine a forest's restorative power, offering valuable guidance for the development of forest wellness destinations and urban green spaces. The findings provide an evidence-based framework for planning forest wellness sites, hiking routes and urban parks.

To better assess the innovation performance of different manufacturing industries, a research co-authored by Dr Zhijing Zhu, Assistant Professor in International Business and Strategy, proposed the composite measure "Quality-weighted Revealed Innovation Advantage (QRIA)." This measure provides a new perspective for observing and analysing innovation vitality and innovation quality of worldwide manufacturing industries, while offering new insights for identifying industrial trends and investment opportunities.

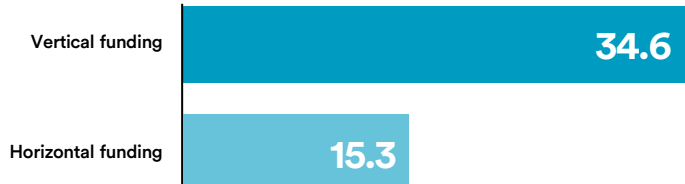


Research project funding and awards

With the growing research capabilities, the University is well positioned to drive industrial and societal advances through industry-academia collaboration and innovation.

UNNC researchers have maintained a strong track record of winning prestigious, highly competitive national strategic research grants. This academic year, our academic staff received funding totalling 49.9m RMB for horizontal and vertical projects. Seventeen of these research projects are at a national level, including twelve grants from the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC), for which our academics serve as either Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator.

Research funding (m RMB)



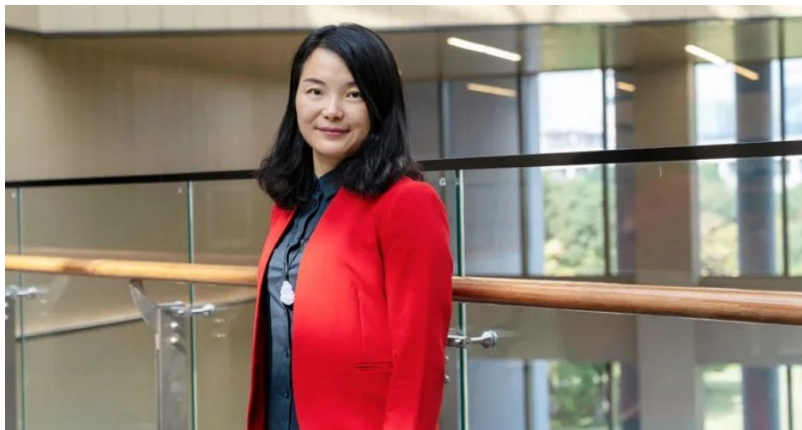
UNNC's research achievements were also recognised through major awards. In AY2025-26, UNNC staff received five major awards in the 2024 Ningbo Science and Technology Awards. The awards spanned several key categories, including the Science and Technology Progress Award, the International Science and Technology Cooperation Award, and the Youth Science and Technology Innovation Award. The three projects winning Science and Technology Progress Awards focused on areas such as technology finance, high-end medical equipment, and green engineering construction. At the provincial level, Dr. Xiaotian Li, Assistant Professor in Management, was awarded the Zhejiang Province 23rd Outstanding Achievement Award in Philosophy and Social Sciences, further demonstrating the University's growing academic influence across disciplines.

A key institutional development in the year was the establishment of the Research Innovation Institute (RII), introduced as a new platform to promote research innovation, and support sustainable and high-impact research. With its inaugural call for proposals, the RII sets out a new, disciplined framework for university-managed research investment. It is designed as a project-oriented platform to support time-bound, semi-autonomous research ventures that are strategic, high-potential, and cannot be effectively pursued within standard faculty-based structures.

Award-winning project in technology and finance

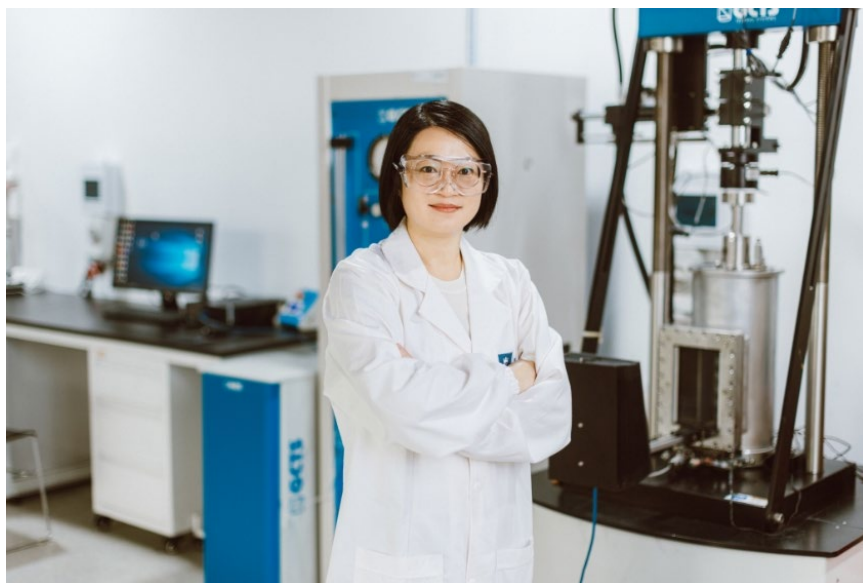
Professor Hua Xiuping's team has developed an "AI and Big Data-based Multi-dimensional Holographic Profiling Technology for Technology Enterprises", for which her team won a municipal Science and Technology Progress Award. The system acts like a "CT scan" and "genetic test" for companies, helping financial institutions and government agencies better identify the innovation capabilities and future potential of technology enterprises. Based on data from nearly 30,000 enterprises, this innovation-focused evaluation framework goes beyond conventional financial indicators and incorporates policy priorities and local industrial needs, enabling it to identify technologies that can address practical challenges and contribute to regional development.

Since 2013, the technology has supported local government initiatives and has been applied in Ningbo's innovation capability evaluation system for technology enterprises, as well as in generating "white lists" for credit support policies. To date, it has served more than 10 financial institutions and over 2,900 enterprises, facilitating approximately 47bn RMB in credit support for companies in strategic emerging industries and future-oriented sectors.



Award-winning project in green construction

A research team led by Professor Wang Juan from the Department of Civil Engineering has developed an innovative method for transforming construction spoil into high-performance motorway subgrade material, offering a sustainable solution to one of the construction industry's most persistent environmental challenges. The team's integrated three-step process - flocculation, modification and reinforcement - enables waste spoil generated during motorway construction to be fully recycled and reused on site.



The technology has already been successfully applied in the Hangzhou-Ningbo Expressway extension project, marking Zhejiang Province's first large-scale use of engineering spoil in motorway main carriageway construction. All spoil from the Hangzhou-Ningbo Expressway extension project was reused on site, eliminating the need for off-site disposal and reducing transport-related carbon emissions, demonstrating both economic and environmental benefits.

This technology has since been promoted across multiple motorway projects in the region, contributing to the development of "zero-waste construction sites". For this innovation, the team won a municipal Science and Technology Progress Award.

Doctoral Training Programmes

Through Doctoral Training Programmes (DTP), we provide research talent with practical research opportunities that normally involve collaboration with top domestic universities, leading research institutions or industrial organisations, and we are continuously working to develop and strengthen external links.

As of AY2025-26, we have established 18 Doctoral Training Programmes (DTPs) across a range of research areas in collaboration with institutions under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, domestic universities, research laboratories and industry partners. Of these, four were launched during the year, including programmes developed with the Yangtze River Delta Carbon Fiber and Composites Innovation Centre, Ningbo University, Ningbo Joyson Electronic Corp., and Ningbo PIA Automation Holding Corp.

By bringing together the academic strengths and research resources of UNNC and its partner institutions, the DTPs enhance doctoral students' research capability and employability. Since the first cohort was admitted in 2018, total enrolment on the programmes has reached 374, of whom 113 have graduated. These graduates are in demand at world-renowned universities, research institutes and leading companies.

One notable example of DTP success is Dr Qirui Cui, an outstanding graduate of the programme who is currently a postdoctoral researcher at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Sweden. In recognition of his breakthrough theoretical research on quantum magnetic materials, he was awarded the 2026 Göran Gustafsson Prize for Young Researchers, one of Sweden's most prestigious honours for early-career scientists. He is the youngest recipient in the history of the award and was the only Chinese awardee at KTH that year.



Ningbo Institute of Materials Technology and Engineering, CAS

Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resource Research, CAS

Shanghai Advanced Research Institute, CAS

Institute of Urban Environment, CAS

Shenzhen University

Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica, CAS

Shenzhen University of Advanced Technology

Zhejiang University Ningbo Campus (Ningbo Innovation Centre, Zhejiang University)

College of Business, Southern University of Science and Technology

Shandong University

Yongjiang Laboratory

Shanghai No. 6 People's Hospital

Hangzhou Institute for Advanced Study, UCAS

Wenzhou Institute of Technology

Yangtze River Delta Carbon Fiber and Composites Innovation Centre

Ningbo University

Ningbo Joyson Electronic Corp.

Ningbo PIA Automation Holding Corp.



**DTP programme
partners**

Knowledge exchange

Our research and innovation makes a tangible contribution to society. Through collaboration with research institutions, industry partners, policy-makers and the general public, we deliver impactful research and knowledge exchange activities to make a difference to the community.



96
New patent applications



57
New patents granted



1
New IP commercialisation created

This academic year, UNNC continued to strengthen its end-to-end professional services, spanning research disclosure, proof of concept, technology transfer and commercialisation, to translate research into real-world applications.

The Ningbo Municipal Universities Technology Transfer Centre, jointly established by the Ningbo Education Bureau and UNNC, was officially launched. Drawing on the University of Nottingham's international educational network and world-leading research resources, the Centre integrates funding, facilities and industry resources to create a clear pathway from laboratory research to the market. It supports Ningbo's industrial upgrading ambitions while extending its reach across the Yangtze River Delta.

The Centre formed its first cohort of industry mentors, covering healthcare, petrochemicals, automotive and new energy, and selected 14 projects for support through its Proof-of-Concept (PoC) Fund. One project won the Gold Prize at the 3rd "AI + Green Energy" Competition held by the Yangtze River Delta National Innovation Centre par Excellence and secured a commitment in principle for 2.6m RMB in follow-on funding. This achievement demonstrates the potential of the Centre's proof-of-concept model to catalyse deep-tech commercialisation. By the end of the academic year, UNNC had secured 57 granted patents, representing a year-on-year increase of 39%.



The official site of the Centre, which is located in an off-campus building, is set to open in September 2026. This new facility will significantly expand our physical space and service capacity, marking a solid step forward in our mission of research-driven entrepreneurship, innovation-led growth and locally based, globally connected collaboration.

Industry engagement

In January 2026, UNNC established the Sci-Tech and Industrial Innovation Alliance, co-initiated by Ningbo Nottingham Technology Co., Ltd. - UNNC's research commercialisation arm - with leading enterprises, technology investors and service providers. Through joint projects, resource sharing, co-incubation and capital matchmaking, the Alliance accelerates the translation of university research into industrial applications.

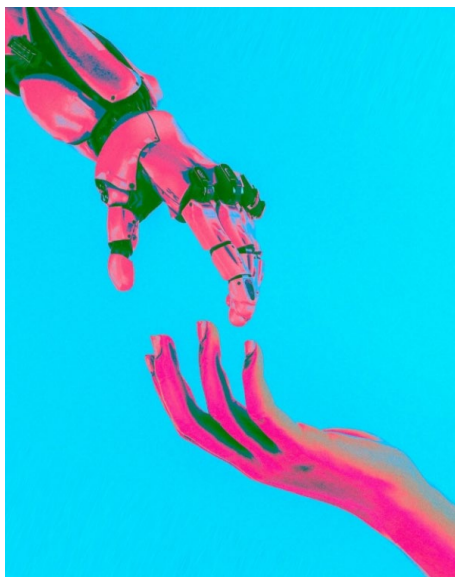
Lian'ou Technology (Ningbo) Co., Ltd., a UNNC-incubated enterprise leveraging the University of Nottingham's Centre for Additive Manufacturing, exemplifies this approach. Specialising in next-generation 3D-printed liquid-cooling heat sinks, the company has secured international awards for two consecutive years. With University support, it has relocated to the Li Dak Sum Incubator to expand into high-performance computing, electric motors and humanoid robotics.



We deepened industry-education integration through targeted partnerships. In March 2026, UNNC and six leading manufacturing enterprises launched the Process Technology Consortium to bridge the “last mile” between academia and industry. The Consortium focuses on addressing industrial challenges, nurturing specialised talent, advancing research infrastructure and knowledge, promoting sustainable development, and creating opportunities for students.

UNNC also signed strategic partnership agreements with State Grid and Geely. Through the Institute of Excellence (IoE), built upon the Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTP) with Industries, the University entered into agreements with Ningbo Joyson Electronics, Haitian Group and Minth Group to advance industry–university–research collaboration and joint doctoral training programmes. The “Technology Vice President (TVP)” and “Industry Professor” schemes were also rolled out, with six TVPs signing formal contracts with partner enterprises.

In July 2026, the Guideline on Performance Cost Application was implemented to enable academics to apply for performance incentives from horizontal research project funding, creating a sustained mechanism for encouraging industry-oriented research.



AI initiatives

In February 2026, UNNC approved the establishment of the AI Research Institute (AIRI), a university-level platform bringing together AI-related activity and strengthening links between research, external partners and regional priorities.

UNNC also secured its first project under the China University–Industry–Research Innovation Fund, administered by the Ministry of Education's Science and Technology Development Centre. Led by Dr Pushpendu Kar from the School of Computer Science, the project integrates knowledge graphs and AI to develop intelligent teaching technologies for engineering and cybersecurity education.

The University further contributed to emerging AI governance through the development of a specification on Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO), trusted information dissemination and information ecosystem governance. Professor Alain Chong, Vice Provost for Research and Knowledge Exchange, was appointed as a contributing expert to the initiative led by the China Association of Press Technicians, strengthening UNNC's influence in trusted AI and information integrity.

Li Dak Sum Incubator

The Li Dak Sum Incubator is an inspiring place that nurtures international start-ups, a bridge that connects international talent and business resources with the local needs of Ningbo.



74

**Tenants
supported**



161.38m RMB

**Turnover achieved
by tenants**

The Li Dak Sum (LDS) Incubator continues to provide a vibrant environment in which innovation can flourish. The number of tenant start-ups increased to 74, and together they generated a combined turnover of 161.38m RMB.

Among the Incubator tenants, Ningbo Nuoyun Drive Technology Co., Ltd. is an alumni-founded company specialising in the research and development of aviation-grade electric drive systems. This year, it successfully completed a new round of financing, attracting leading investors and listed companies from the automotive sector. This multi-tiered strategic support will help the company accelerate product certification and mass production, further consolidating its leading position in electric propulsion for new-energy aviation and supporting the independent development and localisation of key technologies for the low-altitude economy.



Our research-driven innovation has earned international recognition. In November 2025, the European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN) officially announced that the LDS Incubator has been awarded the European Business and Innovation Centre (EUBIC) quality certification, making it the first and only university incubator in China to receive this internationally recognised quality mark. This milestone signifies that UNNC's excellence in research-driven entrepreneurship, innovation-led growth, and locally rooted global collaboration has been strongly endorsed by an authoritative international body.

In 2026, we continued to expand our global and local footprint. This year, we signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Rennes School of Business in France and concluded a strategic cooperation agreement with 36Kr, which will be joining us as a new tenant. In June, we strengthened our engagement with Europe's innovation ecosystem at the European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN) Annual Congress, while promoting our 2026 Global Pitch as a strategic platform for cross-border collaboration and soft landing.

**The incubator turnover data reflects the performance for the 2025 calendar year based on government reporting requirement.*

Research platforms

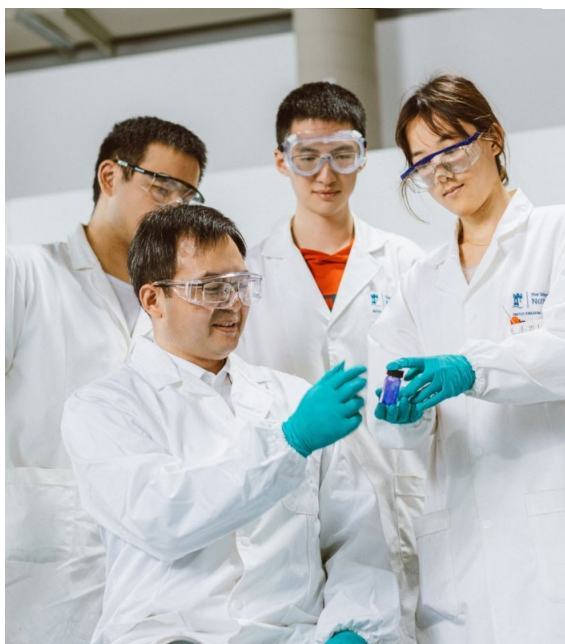
Our research platforms combine disciplines to facilitate cutting-edge research and meet the demands of government, business and communities.

UNNC International Science and Technology Cooperation Base was successfully re-accredited by the Ministry of Science and Technology, following a nationwide reassessment of all current International Science and Technology Cooperation Bases. This reaffirms the Base's leading role as a bridge for international collaboration.

Established in 2010, it was China's first international Science and Technology Cooperation Base hosted by a Sino-foreign university, representing a unique and innovative model in China's international cooperation landscape. Over the years, with sustainable future as its core theme, the Base has established itself as a comprehensive international platform integrating talent development, scientific innovation, technology transfer, and entrepreneurial incubation by leveraging the global network and disciplinary strengths at UNNC.



**9 Platforms
at provincial level
and above**



Several research platforms were established at municipal-level or above across multiple disciplines during the year, further strengthening the University's research and innovation ecosystem. Nottingham University Business School China received approval to establish the **Ningbo Key Laboratory of FinTech Governance and Innovation Mechanisms**, alongside a new municipal key professional think tank — **the Centre for Low-Carbon Economy and Technological Innovation at the University of Nottingham Ningbo China** — which also serves as a municipal centre for regional and country studies.

In the Faculty of Science and Engineering, the **Ningbo Key Laboratory of High-Value Utilisation of Typical Solid Waste and Low-Carbon Materials** was officially approved as a Class A Ningbo Key Laboratory. The Laboratory is directed by Professor Jun Liang (John) Zhou, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Engineering and Li Dak Sum Chair Professor in Sustainable Engineering and Environmental Engineering. In addition, the **Ningbo Bio-based High-Performance Materials Technology Innovation Centre**, jointly established by the Faculty of Science and Engineering and industry partners, was recognised as a Ningbo Municipal Technology Innovation Centre.

In the social sciences domain, we have similarly established a new municipal-level research platform: the **Ningbo Research Centre for International Communication of Chinese Culture**, approved in June 2026 by the Ningbo Social Science Association under its Key Cultural Research Base Scheme. Leveraging the University's distinctive international advantages, the Centre promotes global cross-cultural engagement, deepens people-to-people bonds between China and other nations, and enhances institutional capacity for international communication. It positions UNNC as a pivotal hub for Sino-international cooperation in talent cultivation and academic research.



Tri-campus collaboration for sustainability and impact

The University of Nottingham has a clear mission to deliver real-world impact through the delivery of academically excellent research and knowledge exchange activities. In June 2026, it was once again recognised among the world's top higher education institutions for its support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The University ranks among the world's top 100 for its contributions to five of the goals: Clean water and sanitation, Decent work and economic growth, Sustainable cities and communities, Responsible consumption and production, and Life on land.



A tri-campus delegation from the UK, Malaysia, and China visited Indonesia from 20 to 26 June for a series of activities held alongside the Global Sustainable Development Conference (GSDC) 2026. The visit reaffirmed the University's deep and growing commitment to the region and to advancing shared goals in research, education, and sustainable development. UNNC's commitment to sustainability has been demonstrated through two case studies: Developing sustainable cities and communities - Environmental, social and governance (ESG) indicators for Ningbo led by Professor Jing Dai and Nature-based Solutions for Climate Resilience for Smart Urban Ecosystem led by Professor Faith Chan.

AY2025-26 marks a significant milestone for tri-campus research and knowledge exchange collaboration. The RKE Office, in partnership with the UK and Malaysia campuses, delivered a series of four tri-campus RKE Webinars. Focusing on three Research Signature Strength areas - Sustainable Food and Agriculture, Health Across the Life Span and Zero Carbon - and two emerging research themes - Climate and Health and Health Inequalities - the four webinars brought together over 30 academics across diverse disciplines from the University of Nottingham in the UK, University of Nottingham Malaysia and UNNC. This has laid a solid foundation for collaboration across the University to address the complex challenges facing our planet.



Global Engagement and Reputation

We aim to position UNNC as a globally connected, forward-thinking institution that promotes a global mindset, enhances international mobility, strengthens strategic partnerships, and builds vibrant alumni networks. These efforts aim to enrich learning, advance impactful research, and promote cross-cultural exchange.



Objectives

- 1 Enhance mobility opportunities for staff and students
- 2 Strengthen global partnerships and collaborations
- 3 Enhance global reputation

Actual performance measurement



9.1%

% of International and
HMT Students on Campus



56%

% of Active Partnerships
with Mobility Programmes



8

No. of High-Level International Events/Conferences
Hosted by UNNC Each Year



55

No. of Invited Keynote/Plenary
Speakers at International Conferences

Global connections

We are consistently developing partnerships with excellent institutions worldwide, building a solid foundation for teaching and research cooperation and enhancing students' international mobility.

We have 160 partner universities across 45 countries and regions by this year, offering our students expanded mobility opportunities. Six of these were established in the AY2025-26:

- University of Sheffield
- Trisakti Institute of Transportation and Logistics
- Universitas Trisakti
- Azerbaijan Technical University
- Singapore Management University
- Monash University



In AY2025-26, 245 incoming exchange students from our partner universities enrolled at UNNC, and 401 UNNC students participated in the outbound exchange and study abroad programmes.

One flagship exchange initiative is the University of Oxford's One-Year Registered Visiting Student Programme (VSP). Following the launch of the VSP in the previous year, UNNC students

now have the opportunity to study the same courses as Oxford's full-time undergraduates and access all of the university's academic and social facilities. This year, three second-year UNNC undergraduates received offers from the VSP.

The VSP is open only to a select group of leading partner institutions and is known for its exceptionally rigorous academic selection process. Only 20

places were offered to universities across the Chinese mainland. The three students will spend the forthcoming academic year fully immersed in Oxford's academic environment. Upon completion of the programme, they will be granted lifelong alumni status at their host Oxford college.



Peng Yuwen,
BSc (Hons) Economics



Zhong Yi,
BSc (Hons) International Business Economics



Daniel Mukatov,
BSc (Hons) Economics

This year, UNNC signed a new undergraduate-to-master's articulation agreement with Monash University, a world-leading Group of Eight institution in Australia. This exclusive pathway enables high-achieving graduates from UNNC's four-year undergraduate programmes in engineering, arts and humanities, business, and science to progress directly to Monash master's degrees - without IELTS or TOEFL requirements.

UNNC credits earned during undergraduate study are recognised via Monash's Recognition of Prior Learning framework, allowing students to shorten their master's duration. Successful applicants also receive generous financial aid packages, creating a seamless "green channel" to elite international postgraduate education and reducing barriers to global academic advancement.



Vibrant campus life with a diverse student community

We are a thriving international community with students and staff from more than 70 countries and regions. This academic year, we had 924 students from overseas countries and China's Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, making up 9.1% of the on-campus student population.



A flagship initiative was the launch of the Immersive Cultural Experience Programme, which invites international students to join UNNC students and staff for authentic encounters with traditional Chinese culture during holidays, weekends and extracurricular activities. Participants learn local dialects, tour the picturesque Jiangnan region and haggle in neighbourhood food markets. From the Spring Festival to the Lantern Festival, students from over ten countries—including Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Slovakia, Spain and the UK—were welcomed into Ningbo households, immersing themselves in the vibrancy of everyday street life and forging warm, unforgettable memories.

Beyond tradition, international students were offered the opportunity to gain first-hand insight into China's innovative dynamism through a visit to Yiwu, a city widely renowned as the world's Small Commodity Centre. In January 2026, 28 international students engaged with Chinese entrepreneurs and traced the origins of product innovations, gaining a more nuanced understanding of China's business landscape. For those eyeing employment or entrepreneurship in China, Yiwu provided an ideal window into the nation's resilient supply chains and logistical efficiency.

Further enriching campus life, 29 international students and students from China's Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, collaborated to help create a striking 48-square-metre patchwork artwork, Maritime Silk Road: Setting Sail. Comprising 1,200 individual fabric pieces, the piece—unveiled at the 10th Maritime Silk Road Culture and Tourism Expo in Ningbo in October 2025—depicts iconic elements of maritime trade history, such as sailing ships and Chinese porcelain. Each patch bears a personal touch, collectively forming the silhouette of a grand vessel that symbolises shared human emotions and collective memories transcending borders and generations.



UNNC empowers international talents to thrive in China

UNNC supports international students in staying and securing employment in China after graduation through a full-cycle careers ecosystem that combines visa guidance, employer engagement and global opportunities.

In response to the streamlined information services and support measures introduced by the Ningbo Public Security Bureau, UNNC has promptly assisted international graduates with the preparation and submission of their work visa applications. This year, graduates from Germany, Indonesia, Mexico, Burundi, Bangladesh and Peru have successfully obtained visas and secured employment in Ningbo. They have taken up roles in fields such as foreign trade, computer science, hydrodynamic analysis and manufacturing. At the same time, UNNC connects students directly with employers through major international careers fairs, bringing leading employers from across China and overseas to campus and offering job opportunities in sectors including finance, technology, advanced manufacturing, new energy and media.



Strengthening external engagement for internationalisation and financial sustainability

Through a range of Business Development Office (BDO) programmes, UNNC continues to strengthen its external engagement, using the University's academic expertise to develop new partnerships, expand commercial education and training, support internationalisation, and contribute to long-term financial sustainability. In AY2025-26, these activities generated 22.5m RMB in revenue, marking the third consecutive year of more than 10% year-on-year growth.



This growth is being driven primarily by new commercial partnerships with industry. Training programmes focused on international management capabilities for state-owned enterprises such as CRRC Qingdao Sifang and Zhejiang Communications Investment Group (CICO) have expanded UNNC's executive education portfolio, while a new international MBA model developed with the Peruvian business school ESAN has created further opportunities to bring international participants to UNNC and connect them with China's business environment. Together, these initiatives demonstrate the breadth and international reach of UNNC's industry engagement activities.

UNNC's summer programmes have also continued to develop as an important platform for internationalisation and student recruitment. One example is the UNNC Summer School, which was redesigned in collaboration with Student Recruitment and Admission Office and Global Engagement Office with a focus on AI across the curriculum. Of 66 participants, 30 were international or from Hong Kong, Macao or Taiwan, demonstrating UNNC's growing international appeal and the potential of training programmes to support wider recruitment and internationalisation objectives.

Together, these developments demonstrate how UNNC's external engagement activities can generate sustainable revenue, deepen industry partnerships and support the University's wider internationalisation objectives.

Social responsibility

Our staff and students work with non-profit and public organisations to bring the knowledge and findings to local communities and change their conditions for the better.

UNNC students bring the world to rural classrooms

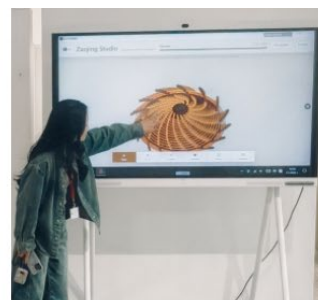
During the summer of 2026, UNNC has organised volunteer teaching trips to several provinces across China, as well as to overseas destinations including Timor-Leste and Nepal. One group of 15 student volunteers – hailing from countries and regions including Italy, Namibia, India, Indonesia, and China – brought an immersive, bilingual learning experience to two rural primary schools in Ninghai, a coastal county in the city of Ningbo. Since the programme began, over 3,500 UNNC students have taken part in educational and rural development initiatives in underdeveloped regions, benefiting more than 6,000 children in remote communities directly.



Digital heritage research showcased in Europe through landmark architectural exhibition

In July 2026, a research team brought Chinese architectural heritage to a European audience through a major exhibition at the Sofia Chinese Cultural Centre in Bulgaria, demonstrating how digital technologies can support the preservation and international promotion of cultural heritage.

Curated by Professor Jing Xie and his team from the Department of Architecture and Built Environment, the exhibition *Architecture Without Borders: Chinese Wisdom and the Global Dialogue of Architecture* combines high-precision 3D modelling, virtual reality and interactive digital experiences to showcase Ningbo's distinctive spiral caisson ceilings alongside other significant Chinese heritage buildings. The exhibition highlights how digital innovation is transforming the documentation, preservation and interpretation of traditional architecture for global audiences.





UNNC leads international young talent in exploring a sustainable future

In March 2026, 14 outstanding undergraduate and postgraduate students from leading universities in India, Indonesia, and Nepal gathered at UNNC for the China Exchange Programme for Young International Talent, themed "Innovative Sustainable Waste Management". During the intensive month-long programme, they undertook a complete research journey—from theoretical learning to practical innovation—experiencing first-hand UNNC's advanced teaching philosophy and research environment, while collectively envisioning a greener future for smart cities.

Leaders convene at UNNC to advance sustainable development

In March 2026, government, business and academic leaders gathered at UNNC for an Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) forum focused on how digital technologies can strengthen supply chain resilience and drive sustainable development. The event brought together over 100 participants for high-level dialogue and knowledge exchange.

The Digital Platform for ESG Evaluation of Manufacturing Enterprises, developed under the auspices of the Regional Centre of Expertise Ningbo on Education for Sustainable Development (RCE Ningbo), was officially launched and opened to enterprises free of charge.



Global alumni network

The University fosters a lifelong relationship with its alumni, no matter where they are in the world. This enduring connection is built on mutual support and shared interests, with alumni actively involved in the university community through volunteering, mentorship, and philanthropic support.

Our robust alumni network consists of 24 active chapters located in various cities worldwide, and two active chapters specifically tailored to industry - Healthcare Industry Club and Creative Industries Club, providing our alumni opportunities to connect with like-minded professionals beyond borders.

In January 2026, we convened the inaugural board meeting of the UNNC Alumni Association, focusing on the development of both the University and the Association. Board members forged broad consensus on future engagement, exchanging insights on alumni collaboration, strategic resource expansion, and innovations in volunteering, industry-academia partnerships, and fundraising. The Association serves as a vital bridge fostering community and progress among UNNC's worldwide alumni.

We also organised a series of

engagement activities to help our alumni stay connected. This year, they included the signature UNNC Alumni Wedding, which brought eight alumni couples back to campus, creating cherished memories and reinforcing lifelong connections. An alumni gathering with an industry panel was also held in Jakarta, Indonesia, the largest Nottingham alumni event ever held in the country and a testament to our engaged international alumni community.

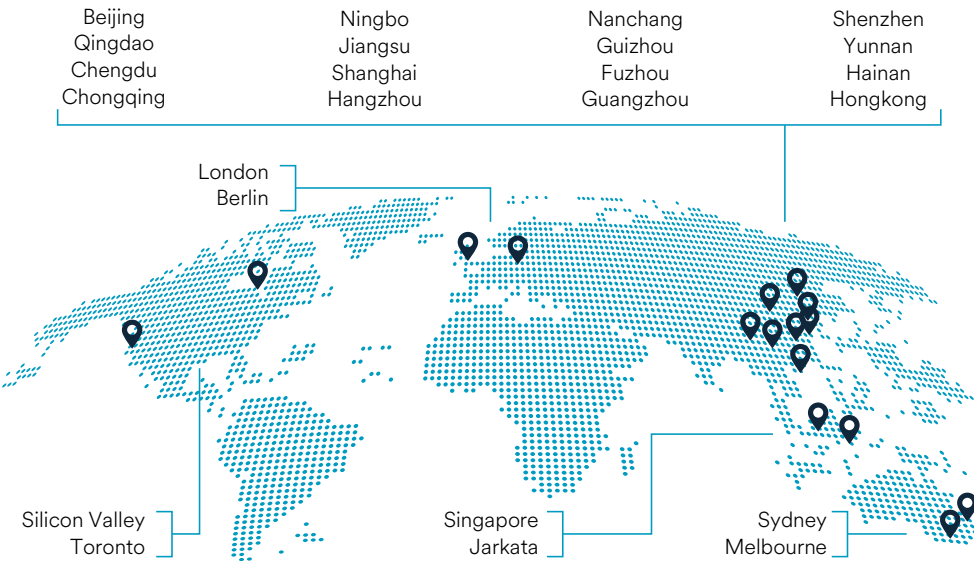
Additionally, we released the inaugural Alumni White Paper, highlighting the impact of our education. Drawing on survey data from tens of thousands of alumni from the 2007-2025 cohorts, the White Paper offers a comprehensive overview of the achievements of UNNC's young graduates across employment outcomes, entrepreneurship and academic research. Key findings include the global reach of our young alumni (average age under 30) across 34 countries and regions, primarily in major

economic hubs across China. A total of 74.51% are employed by Fortune Global 500 companies, China Top 500 enterprises, and other leading organisations, demonstrating steady progression in both remuneration and professional rank.

The 2026 annual giving campaign has attracted approximately 450 donors and raised nearly 445,000 RMB. Alumni account for nearly two-thirds of all donors, with approximately 75% of participating alumni making their first-ever gift to UNNC. An alumni participation rate of 3% is an encouraging achievement for a young institution and a testament to the growing philanthropic spirit and commitment of our alumni community.

This year's strong alumni participation reflects an encouraging trend: our alumni are not only staying connected to UNNC, but are also increasingly choosing to give back.

Alumni Global Chapters



Alumni in spotlight

UNNC alumnus makes Forbes Top 100, pioneers humanoid robots on the global stage

Shipu Zhang, a 2012 alumnus and co-founder of NOETIX Robotics, has been named in the 2025 Forbes China Top 100 Most Influential Chinese Elites in recognition of his ground-breaking achievements in humanoid robotics. Founded just two years ago with seed funding of 1m RMB and a small core technical team, NOETIX Robotics has rapidly established itself as an industry pacesetter. With more than 30 core patents, its flagship robots—such as Xiaowan Tong N2, capable of complex movements including backflips, and Bumi, the world's first high-performance humanoid robot priced under 10,000 RMB - have gained international acclaim. The company has raised nearly 1bn RMB in cumulative financing.



UNNC alumnus becomes youngest recipient of prestigious Swedish science prize

Dr Qirui Cui, a 2022 PhD graduate from UNNC, has become the youngest-ever recipient of the Göran Gustafsson Prize for Young Researchers, one of Sweden's most prestigious honours for early-career scientists. Currently a postdoctoral researcher at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Cui was recognised for his pioneering theoretical research into quantum magnetic materials, which could help enable the next generation of lighter, faster and more energy-efficient electronic devices. He was also the only Chinese scientist among this year's award recipients from KTH.

UNNC Alumna shortlisted in the UK Alumni Awards 2026

At the UK Alumni Awards 2026 ceremony held in Beijing China, UNNC alumna Jin Yuanxin, Tournament Director of China's leading street basketball brand King of Underdogs (KU), was shortlisted for the Culture, Creativity and Sport Award. Established by the British Council, the awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of international UK alumni as business professionals, entrepreneurs, and community leaders.

Jin's journey from guard on the UNNC women's basketball team to the helm of a national sporting phenomenon reflects a relentless pursuit of possibility. Under her leadership, KU has become a transformative force in China's grassroots sport scene, organising more than 600 games annually for over 50,000 young participants and cultivating an online community of more than three million followers.



People and Culture

We aim to be recognised as the leading Sino-Foreign University employer of choice where we will continue to take pride in our diverse global community of students and staff dedicated to the highest levels of excellence in education and research.



Objectives

- 1 Attract and develop outstanding and diverse talent
- 2 Promote and support our staff's health, safety and well-being
- 3 Strengthen a culture of belonging and celebrate our UNNC community, in which all feel valued and connected
- 4 Ensure the effective use of staff time through making our core policies, processes and systems accessible and aligned
- 5 Develop the potential of our staff

Actual performance measurement



No. of Existing Staff with
National Level Talent Awards

9



15%

% of Top Cited Scholars among
Research Academics



88%

Staff Engagement Rate



71%

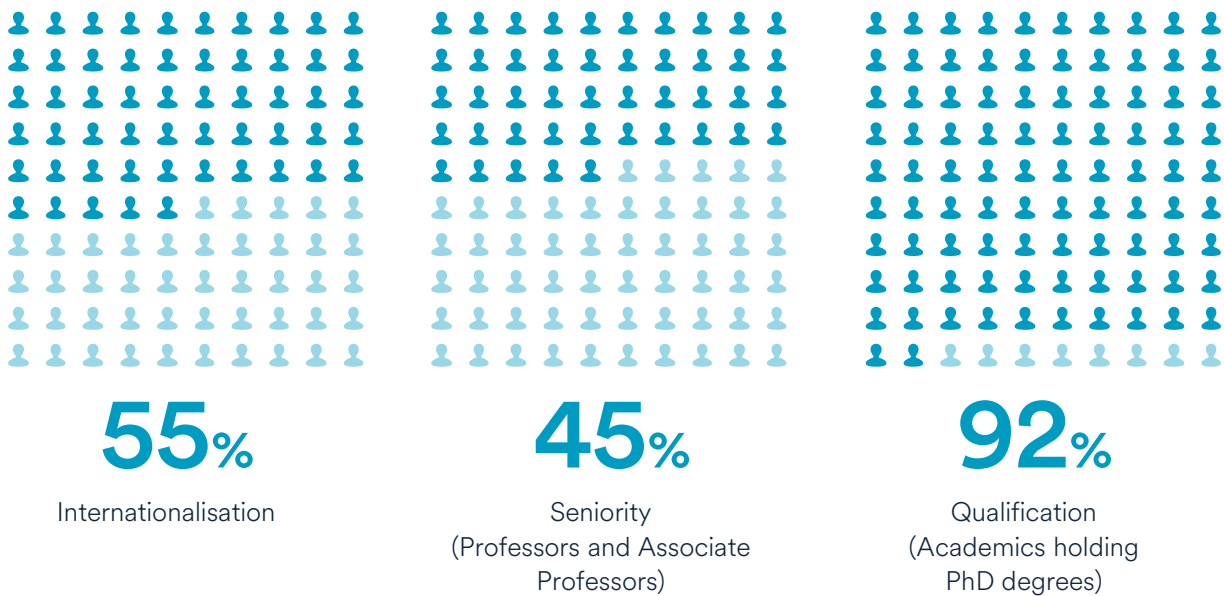
Satisfaction Rate of Wellbeing Section
in Staff Engagement Survey

Attracting the brightest minds from around the world

People are invaluable to the development of the University, and we are committed to attracting the best people from around the world.

As of the end of AY2025-26, UNNC had a total of 1,197 staff members, among which 549 are academic staff, 120 are teaching and research support staff and 528 are professional services staff.

In this academic year, 55% of our academic staff are from overseas countries and Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan regions. This ratio is among the highest in Sino-foreign universities and in the leading position among universities nationwide.



To attract and nurture outstanding academic talent, the University has continued to align its recruitment efforts with national and provincial talent programmes, while advancing targeted initiatives such as the Chair Professor scheme, dedicated research funding and support for interdisciplinary collaboration. These measures have strengthened the University’s ability to cultivate future academic leaders and accelerate progress in priority research areas.

In this academic year, 56 scholars, including visiting professors, were named among Stanford University’s “World’s Top 2% Scientists”, while 10 academics were included in Elsevier’s 2025 list of “Highly Cited Chinese Researchers”, reflecting the growing strength and international recognition of the University’s academic community.





56 scholars named as “World's Top 2% Scientists” in 2025

Buticchi, Giampaolo

Electrical & Electronic Engineering

Cao, Cong

Science Studies

Chai, Wai Siong

Environmental Sciences

Chan, Faith Ka Shun

Environmental Sciences

Chan, Hing Kai *

Operations Research

Chen, Huanhuan *

Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing

Chong, Alain Yee Loong

Information Systems

Chu, Zheng

Networking & Telecommunications

Fan, Xiaolei

Chemical Engineering

Garibaldi, Jon

Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing

Gerada, David

Electrical & Electronic Engineering

Goel, Saurav *

Materials

Greer, Jim C

Applied Physics

Haque, Mainul

Bioinformatics

He, Xiangjian

Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing

Henderson, Julian *

Archaeology

Iqbal, Shahid

Applied Physics

Jamil, Sadia

Communication & Media Studies

Jiang, Yangyang

Sport, Leisure & Tourism

Jimmy, Liu Jiang *

Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing

Khan, Fazlullah *

Networking & Telecommunications

Khan, Ibrahim

Energy

Khan, Imran Mahmood

Food Science

Law, Jodi Woan Fei

Microbiology

Lee, Boon Giin

Analytical Chemistry

Lee, Learn-Han

Microbiology

Li, Haonan

Industrial Engineering & Automation

* The academics marked with an asterisk are visiting professors.

Li, Jiatao **Business & Management***Lim, Kian Ming***Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing***Low, Sze Shin***Analytical Chemistry***Marsili, Enrico***Energy***Melentiev, Ruslan***Industrial Engineering & Automation***Mellahi, Kamel***Business & Management***Musyoka, Nicholas M.***Energy***Opoku, Eric Evans Osei***Economics***Qiu, Guoping***Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing***Sajjad, Muhammad***Applied Physics***Sharma, Umesh***Education***Sharma, Minaxi***Food Science***Shen, Linlin ****Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing***Shoja Razavi, Reza***Materials***Solomon, Moses M.***Polymers***Sun, Yong***Chemical Engineering***Tan, Loh Teng Hern***Microbiology***Tsiftsis, Theodoros A. ****Networking & Telecommunications***Wang, Ruili***Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing***Wormstone, Michael***Ophthalmology & Optometry***Wu, Tao***Energy***Xia, Jun***General & Internal Medicine***Xie, Fengwei***Polymers***Xie, Xincheng***Applied Physics***Xu, Zhuang***Electrical & Electronic Engineering***Yang, Jian***Acoustics***Yi, Xiaosu***Materials***Zhang, He***Electrical & Electronic Engineering***Zhou, John***Environmental Sciences*

* The academics marked with an asterisk are visiting professors.

10 academics ranked in Elsevier's 2025 list of "Highly Cited Chinese Researchers"**Chong, Alain Yee Loong***Management Science and Engineering***Li, Haonan***Mechanical Engineering***Lee, Learn-Han***Crop Science***Feng, Anwei***Pedagogy***Goldfinch, Shaun***Public Administration***Jamil, Sadia***Journalism and Communication***Jiang, Yangyang***Business Administration***Ma, Qing-Ping***Applied Economics***Phang, David***Management Science and Engineering***Cao, Cong***Business Administration*



Staff experience

UNNC is committed to enhancing the staff experience and empowering high-performing talent to unlock their full potential and develop further.

This year, more than 950 staff members took part in the University-wide Staff Engagement Survey, representing an 87% response rate. Following the survey, UNNC held results briefings and manager workshops to support the interpretation of findings and the development of follow-up actions. In response, the University launched the Staff Engagement Development Plan AY2026–27, taking a structured, evidence-based approach to advancing its People and Culture ambition of

becoming the leading Sino-foreign university employer of choice. The plan focuses on three priority areas: inclusion, collaboration, and workload and wellbeing support. Key actions include strengthening staff feedback channels, promoting inclusive leadership, enhancing recognition and belonging, improving communication and cross-departmental collaboration, and reviewing workload planning and wellbeing support. Together, these measures aim to improve staff experience, support professional development, and foster a more inclusive, connected and high-performing University community.

To strengthen staff engagement and provide more open and transparent communication methods, we organised the inaugural university-wide town hall, with attendance from over 450 staff members. More than 50 questions were submitted by staff in advance on a wide range of topics, and the University Management Board provided updates on UNNC's strategic direction, financial health, and key priorities. This event is part of the internal communications plan to strengthen leadership communication and enhance transparent and constructive dialogues within the UNNC community.

UNNC Core Values Programme

As part of UNNC's commitment to fostering a values-driven culture, a structured Core Values Programme was delivered to support leaders in translating the University's shared values—Inclusivity, Ambition, Openness, Fairness, and Respect—into everyday behaviours and practices.

The programme engaged Management Board members and senior leaders through a series of workshops, including initial and follow-up sessions with the MB and cascading workshops with senior leaders. Through these collective discussions and reflections, the University developed a set of Core Values-based behaviours, providing a shared framework to guide how colleagues collaborate, communicate, make decisions, and support one another in daily work.



Sustainability

We aim to become a beacon promoting sustainable development in global higher education by advancing the SDGs through sustainability in governance, operations, education, research, and partnerships.



Objectives

- 1 Foster carbon neutrality and environmental excellence
- 2 Integrate sustainability into education and research
- 3 Enhance sustainable operations and responsible resource use
- 4 Foster a culture of sustainability and social responsibility

Actual performance measurement



8

No. of Student-led Sustainability
Projects



3

No. of Sustainability-focus
Recognitions Achieved

Sustainability education

At UNNC, we aim to cultivate the next generation of talent with a sustainable mindset and the necessary skills. We integrate sustainability principles into our curriculum and activities across various disciplines, fostering a generation of scholars and professionals who are equipped to address global environmental, social, and economic challenges.



Sustainability project recognised as United Nations University's flagship

Since the launch of the Regional Centre of Expertise Ningbo on Education for Sustainable Development (RCE Ningbo) in the previous year, the "EmpowerChain: Youth Sustainability Accelerator" project was acknowledged as a 2025 Flagship Project (Youth-Led Category) by the United Nations University (UNU). The project has created a full-cycle empowerment

platform that integrates knowledge exchange, immersive experience, and real-world implementation. Through a wide range of practical initiatives—including the interdisciplinary "Let'S talk!" lecture and forum series, sustainable city walks, the smart Global Store Sustainable Operation Design Competition, and summer research projects on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) topics—the project equips young people with hands-on skills in sustainable development and ESG, helping them translate academic knowledge into practical, actionable

solutions. At the same time, the project fosters in-depth collaboration among youth, academia, industry, and local communities in sustainability practices, effectively responding to the real needs of Ningbo's manufacturing sector in its green transition and its growing demand for sustainability talent.



FINALIST

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

**University of
Nottingham Ningbo
China**



UNNC shortlisted for 2025 International Green Gown Awards

UNNC has been shortlisted in the “Student Engagement” category of the 2025 International Green Gown Awards for its student-led “Self-Sustained Shelters for Campus Stray Cats” project.

Launched in 2020 by YEAction, a student organisation dedicated to nurturing young leaders with both social awareness and business acumen, the project aligns closely with the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The judges commended the initiative for effectively combining student leadership, community engagement, and sustainability practices. They noted that it represents a genuinely student-led response to a real challenge and were particularly impressed by its self-sustaining model.

UNNC students tap green potential at Vehicle Sustainable Retrofitting Competition

In December 2025, UNNC hosted an intelligent vehicle retrofitting competition focused on sustainable development, bringing creativity and technology together to address real world industry challenges. The competition was hosted by the RCE Ningbo and sponsored by smart Automobile Co., Ltd. Smart also donated a smart #5 electric vehicle to support students in sustainable vehicle retrofitting design and hands on technical practice. The competition encouraged students to propose forward looking and feasible vehicle retrofitting solutions centred on green mobility and sustainable lifestyles, incorporating environmentally friendly materials and design, low carbon technologies, and improved energy efficiency. By exploring the integration of smart mobility and sustainable development, the event provided a platform for innovation grounded in real industry practice, promoted wider awareness of sustainability concepts, and fostered future-oriented green technology and innovation talent.



Students' AI-driven sustainability solutions recognised by United Nations' experts

In April 2026, the “AI for a Sustainable Future” competition, hosted by the RCE Ningbo, concluded. Two projects from the University emerged from nearly 100 entries to win second and third prizes, respectively. A defining feature of the competition was its focus on solving real-world problems. One of the winning projects, the “Otter Tide Initiative”, addressed the ecological and economic challenges facing the Eurasian otter population on Ningbo’s Jintang Island. Through field research, the team identified several key issues, including limited genetic diversity, reliance on government funding for conservation and an underdeveloped cultural tourism sector. The project proposes a sustainable model that links conservation, community engagement and tourism by integrating AI-driven cultural branding with an educational app. Revenue generated through cultural tourism is intended to support scientific research and incentivise local participation, creating a resilient cycle of “tourism–research–conservation”.



Sustainability research

The University of Nottingham (UoN) is recognised as one of the world's leading higher education institutions in advancing the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals, having been placed in the top 200 of the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024. As part of the UoN's global academic community, UNNC actively addresses complex global challenges to transform lives and achieve sustainability.

UNNC scholars lead UNGC collaboration on global sustainability

In September 2025, the United Nations Global Compact 2025 Progress Report is officially released by the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). Led by Dr Song Huimin, Professor of Practice in Accounting and Director of the University of Nottingham Case Innovation Centre, this report marks another internationally influential flagship report commissioned by the UNGC. It follows last year's release of 20 Case Examples of Private Sector's Sustainable Development in China for 20 Years, further demonstrating UNNC's academic authority and think tank leadership in the field of global sustainable development.



In December 2025, Dr Song Huimin was appointed to the UNGC's Sustainable Finance Expert Group. The Group focuses on building a collaborative platform for sustainable finance that supports the development of international standards and provides financial solutions for the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative.

The momentum continued in February 2026, with the UNGC's publication of Innovate Forward: Guidance on SDG-Aligned Business Innovations and Example Practices, the third report co-produced under UNNC's long-term partnership with the UNGC, where the University was acknowledged as the exclusive knowledge-supporting partner. This highlights UNNC's unwavering commitment to the global sustainability agenda.



UNNC Professor appointed to Independent Group of Scientists for UN Global Sustainable Development Report

In November 2025, Professor Sarah Cook, Head of the School of Economics, has been appointed by the UN Secretary-General as a member of the group of independent scientists tasked with preparing the 2027 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR). Produced every four years under a mandate from the UN General Assembly, the Global Sustainable Development Report aims to strengthen the science-policy-society interface and provide an assessment of the scientific knowledge that can support progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Professor Cook's research has broadly focused on issues of equality, gender and social justice in development processes, particular in developing economies and in China. Her appointment to the Independent Group of Scientists is a testament to her exceptional expertise in economic and social development and her dedication to advancing impactful policy research.

UNNC scholars lead UNGC collaboration on global sustainability

In March 2026, nine UNNC academics were recognised as "Green Design Engineers" at the World Green Design Parallel Forum of the Zhongguancun Forum 2026, in recognition of their profound research expertise and active contributions in the field of green energy and sustainability.

The Green Design Engineer (GDE) is an emerging international professional recognition in sustainable engineering, awarded by the World Green Design Organization (WGDO). Based on the Six Principles of Green Design and applicants' engineering works, GDE recognises professionals capable of minimising resource consumption and reducing pollution across the entire lifecycle of engineering products and projects.

Sustainable campus operations and community outreach

UNNC upholds the principles of sustainable development in both campus operations and community outreach. It is committed to building a carbon-neutral campus that minimises environmental impact and maximises resource efficiency, while supporting social initiatives that advance sustainability and social equity in the wider community.



New sustainable farm opens at UNNC

This year, the University opened its new 1,200 m² sustainable farm. Designed according to permaculture principles, the farm is intended to be zero-carbon and will serve as a sustainable living laboratory for urban farming, research and teaching. In the future, it will also promote mental wellbeing.

The farm avoids synthetic pesticides, detergents and fertilisers, relying instead

on nature-based solutions such as composting to nurture the soil. Rainwater harvesting and rigorous waste sorting practices are also adopted to maximise resource use efficiency. As well as growing organic fruit and vegetables, the farm functions as an outdoor classroom and a demonstration site for sustainability innovations in the areas of climate resilience and circular economy. It also serves as a community hub for sustainable living. Future plans include developing the garden as a community hub for empowerment and engagement workshops on sustainable

farming, sustainable lifestyles, and local species conservation. The space will help foster a culture of sustainability across campus and beyond, while connecting departments, faculties, staff families, and local residents.

The farm's launch is part of this year's Sustainability Week, featuring a variety of environmentally focused initiatives led by student societies, academic departments and community partners.

Giving campus fabrics a second life

At the end of 2025, the University's Sport Department partnered with the Environmental Sustainability Committee and B Corp Hohii Life to launch a charitable initiative on campus billboard fabric recycling – Canvas Reborn. The project addresses the often-overlooked waste generated by campus events, where reusable banners and advertising fabrics are frequently discarded after use.

Fabric collected from events during the AY2024–25 was processed and transformed into four types of practical bags: tote, cross-body, laptop and cycling bags. Each item is unique, retaining the patterns and textures of its original campus materials and giving them a second life.

The upcycled bags have been showcased and sold at events including graduation ceremonies, Open Days, 5-HT activities and Sustainability Week. By integrating sustainability into everyday campus life, the initiative demonstrates that environmental action can be practical, engaging and meaningful.

By the end of this academic year, four pop-up charity sales had raised more than 8,678 RMB through the sale of over 70 bags. 1,500 RMB has supported the campus stray-cat protection project. The remaining funds will support further student-led sustainability initiatives, creating a positive cycle of reuse, charitable giving and reinvestment in the campus community.



Empowering communities through student-led sustainability

UNNC has maintained a long-standing partnership with local communities in Ningbo, focusing on sustainable community-building and social innovation. This collaboration is supported by curriculum-linked programmes, alongside joint outreach activities delivered by student societies and academic faculties.

In the spring semester of 2026, eight UNNC students from the Sustainability Module of the Nottingham Advantage Award (NAA) took part in a hands-on community project to design an age-friendly mobility map for the newly opened Chunfeng Market in Jiaochuan Community in Ningbo. Over two months of intensive fieldwork, the students assessed age-friendly facilities, gathered feedback from residents and identified community needs. Their findings will provide a foundation for further work in the coming semesters. The long-term aim is to produce a practical, official age-friendly mobility map for Jiaochuan Community, with potential for future expansion to neighbouring communities.

As a flagship example of UNNC's sustainability outreach, the project offers significant experiential-learning opportunities. It enables students to engage directly with grassroots sustainability challenges, translate classroom knowledge into practical, community-based solutions and contribute to local development. At the same time, it advances the University's commitment to promoting awareness of sustainable development across the wider community through student-led, practice-oriented action.

Finance and Infrastructure

We aim to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the University through growth in revenue, generating sufficient surpluses and cash resources, along with enhancing the physical and digital infrastructure on our campus in a way that inspires all that study, live and work here to achieve their ambitions.



Objectives

- 1 Enhance financial resilience across all sources of income and categories of expenditure
- 2 Develop our campus with improved sustainability and accessibility, to be an environment in which our students and staff enjoy working and living
- 3 Enhance facilities to support the continued improvement in teaching, learning and research activities
- 4 Enhance user experience and support operational efficiency by upgrading and modernising the university's information technology and digital infrastructure
- 5 Improve the University's digital capabilities by integrating advanced digital tools and technologies, creating more engaging educational and administrative environments

Actual performance measurement



1268.2

Annual Total Income (m RMB)



2.4%

% of Surplus of the Year



96.3%

Score of "The Design and Quality of Campus Buildings" in NSES

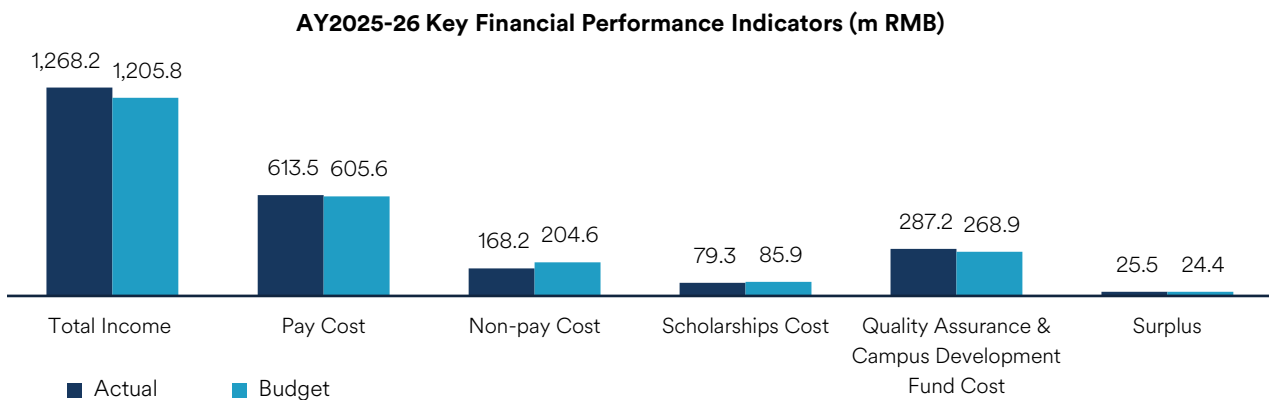


Financial overview

In AY2025-26, UNNC managed its finances in a sustainable manner, ensuring that its costs were covered by the income that was receivable such that the planned surplus was met, the main points being:

- I. Actual surplus of 25.5m RMB was generated against an approved budget surplus of 24.4m RMB, representing an increase of 1.1m RMB.
- II. Actual total income amounted to 1,268.2m RMB, representing an increase of 5.2% against the budget. This increase was primarily driven by growth in tuition income.
- III. Actual operational costs of 919.5m RMB were incurred against an approved budget of 950.9m RMB, representing a saving of 31.4m RMB.
- IV. Actual QA/CDF costs of 287.2m RMB were incurred against an approved budget of 268.9m RMB. This increase corresponds to the growth in tuition income.

The chart below displays the key financial performance indicators for AY2025-26.



Physical assets and space infrastructure

UNNC breaks ground on two new globally leading landmark buildings

As part of its ongoing commitment to enhancing teaching, research, and campus life as a leading global institution, UNNC officially broke ground on two major construction projects in October 2025 — a new teaching building and a new sports centre. These two landmark developments mark a significant step forward in UNNC's continued dedication to providing world-class education, pioneering research and a vibrant campus environment.

The new teaching building, located on the south bank of the Nottingham River, will stand opposite UNNC's iconic Yang Fujia Building and Siyuan Auditorium. Comprising four interconnected

structures with generous public spaces, it is conceived as a dynamic hub for learning, experimentation, and innovation. The facility will feature smart classrooms, collaborative spaces, advanced laboratories, and dedicated work areas for PhD students and postdoctoral researchers, fostering innovative teaching and interdisciplinary learning. The project will deliver a 30% increase in usable riverfront space and is scheduled for completion at the end of 2028.

UNNC is also making a major investment in the construction of a world-class sport, activity and wellness facility designed to redefine the student and staff experience. Whilst providing technologically enhanced facilities for traditional sports such as basketball, bouldering, climbing and squash, the centre will reflect global trends and introduce contemporary and vibrant

sport offerings including an indoor skateboard bowl and e-sports hub. The Centre will also host elite student athletes and provide professional rehabilitation and wellness spaces. Expected to open in 2027, this globally advanced facility will provide an inclusive and inspiring environment that promotes the physical, mental, and social development of the entire university community.

Throughout the design and construction process, UNNC has embedded the principles of sustainability and inclusivity. The new facilities will incorporate advanced energy-efficient technologies, environmentally responsible materials and inclusive design features to create an eco-friendly, accessible, and people-centred campus for all.

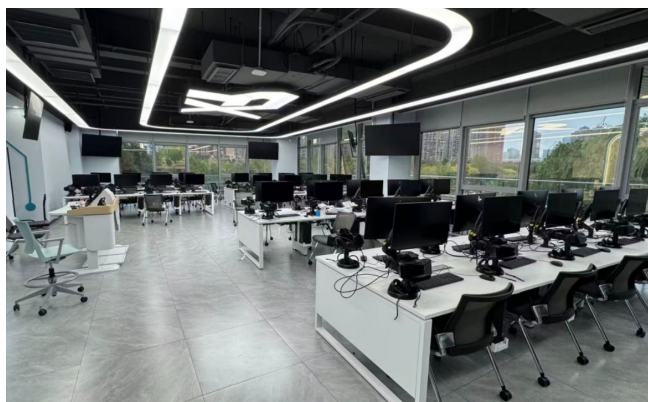


Campus facility upgrades and residential renovation

This academic year has seen transformative upgrades to key campus facilities, enhancing safety, aesthetics, functionality and the overall student experience.

The main entrance, Gate 1, has undergone a comprehensive rebuild, featuring expanded three-lane roads, dedicated pedestrian paths, and vehicle segregation to ensure safer access.

By integrating ecological restoration and humanistic care, the renovation of Trent waterfront space strikes a balance between ecological and human needs, providing staff and students with a diverse, multifunctional and pleasant outdoor environment.



In the teaching area, 18 classrooms in the Portland Building have been upgraded and its façade has been refurbished to improve insulation and reduce noise, while also achieving a sleek, symmetrical design that mirrors that of the Yang Fujia Building.

Dolby Atmos Recording and DCI Cinematic Studio, Digital Future Lab and three architecture studios have been fitted with the Trent Building and the Innovation and Enterprise Building.



In the living area, we now have a refreshed dining environment in No.1 Canteen with increased seating and new food outlets. Residence Building 12 now has reconfigured layouts, ample sockets, privacy screens, and shared kitchens and lounges to encourage integrated living, study, and socialising.



Technology infrastructure

We continue to improve our IT infrastructure to ensure seamless connectivity, optimise operations, and equip our staff and students with the ability to use digital tools and AI-enabled services effectively, enhancing user experience and satisfaction.

This year, we have made significant upgrades to the UNNC Portal, including the addition of AI-powered tools and unified service platforms. New additions include the enterprise-grade UNNC AI, the in-house knowledge agent askU, the intelligent Service Hub and the streamlined Task Centre. Together, these enhancements improve service discovery, reduce manual effort and boost overall campus efficiency. Key initiatives include:

Rollout of UNNC AI to staff and students

UNNC AI has been made accessible through the UNNC Portal, offering an advanced experience powered by OpenAI GPT and DeepSeek. All staff and students can easily access these enterprise AI tools using their UNNCIT accounts. The platform enables seamless, human-like interactions and provides task-specific assistance, backed by robust security measures to ensure safe and reliable use.

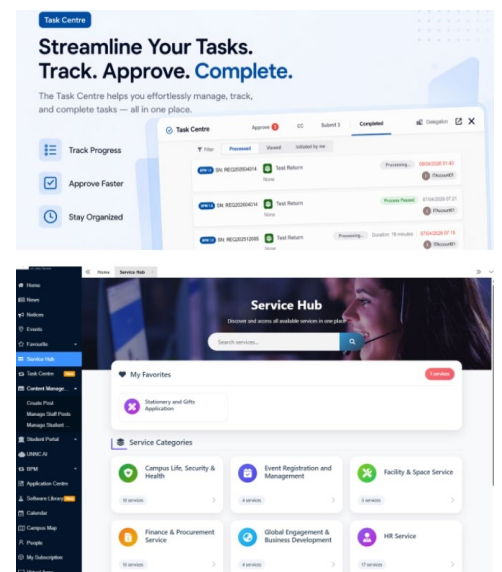


Pilot of AI agent askU

UNNC IT Services has launched a pilot of askU, an in-house developed AI agent for staff on the UNNC Portal. Integrated with university policies and general information, it enables conversational queries and provides quick, accurate access to internal knowledge, significantly reducing time spent searching across multiple sources.

New upgrades for Portal

IT Services has enhanced the UNNC Portal with the launch of the new Service Hub and Task Centre, delivering a more integrated and efficient digital experience for the University community. The Service Hub is a unified, one-stop service centre developed in-house by the UNNC IT team with support from AI-driven tools. With intelligent search, clear category navigation and personalised favourites, it enables faster and easier access to university services. The new Task Centre provides a unified workspace for BPM and BPM2.0 tasks, offering clear status indicators to support tracking of approvals, submissions and completed records. Together, these enhancements improve the way students and staff access services and manage tasks across the Portal.





Central HPC cluster refresh

We are refreshing the central High-Performance Computing (HPC) cluster with newer-generation central processing unit (CPU) nodes and integrated graphics processing unit (GPU) cards, significantly boosting computing performance, energy efficiency, and capacity for AI, machine learning, and data-intensive research. This upgrade addresses growing demand from researchers, improves long term sustainability by replacing ageing infrastructure, reduces operational risk, and expands support for emerging research areas.

Audio-over-IP solution implementation

The Audio-over-IP system has been successfully deployed at UNNC to meet the listening exam standards. It enables centralised audio broadcasting from a control room to classrooms, efficiently reusing existing equipment with no extra construction. This upgrade resolved radio-signal issues and ensured smooth, high-clarity audio performance during exams, significantly improving reliability and sound quality campus-wide.



Launch of Virtual Apps for “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD)

Virtual Apps has been launched as an upgraded replacement for the previous Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), which will soon be decommissioned. Fully integrated into the UNNC Portal, it provides secure, virtualised software and cloud desktops hosted in the campus data centre. The service enables users to access restricted e-resources, run licensed or specialised software, and use a temporary virtual PC with common tools for work and study. This upgrade delivers a unified, flexible and secure way to access university digital resources.

Main firewall upgrade

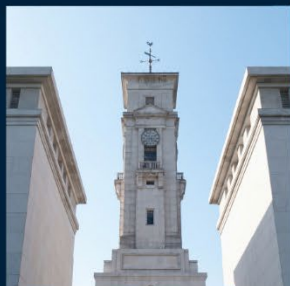
We have upgraded the University’s network firewall infrastructure by replacing the existing high-availability (HA) firewall pair, covering both the Internet Edge and the Server Zone, with new-generation HA firewalls. This upgrade improves network performance, security, resilience, and long-term stability, while addressing the risks associated with ageing infrastructure. The new platform provides greater capacity and a more sustainable foundation for protecting critical University services, supporting future network growth, and responding to evolving cybersecurity threats.





University of
Nottingham

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA



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