



## 7th ASEF Rectors' Conference & Students' Forum

Higher Education Taking Action towards the Sustainable Development Goals:  
Perspectives from Europe and Asia

### SDGs as the Core Pillars of University Governance: The Case of Soochow University

Sidong Xiong, PhD, President of Soochow University, China

13/05/2019, Bucharest





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*Who we are...*



## Soochow University was founded in 1900 by American missionaries



### Some Facts about Soochow University

- Public university
- Key university in national plans such as
- “Project 211” (112/2914 universities in China)
- “2011 Plan” (14/2914 universities in China)
- “Double First Class University Plan”





## Suzhou: A historic city: established 2,500 years ago

A well-developed city: GDP ranking # 7 among 334 Chinese cities.

A cultural city where 1/3 of Chinese Masters came from in Ming and Qing Dynasties (1368-1910).



### Some Facts about Suzhou

Population: 13 million

Area: 8488 km<sup>2</sup>

GDP: 254 billion USD

Location: 75 km northwest of Shanghai

- Well-known for its lakes, canals and rivers. 42% area of the city is covered by water
- Praised as "Venice of the East" or "Venice of China"





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*Where we are...*



## Suzhou is a piece of double-sided embroidery



**Side A — A Traditional Chinese City**

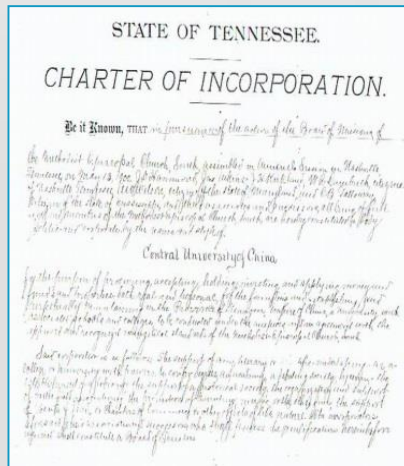
**Side B — A Modern City**







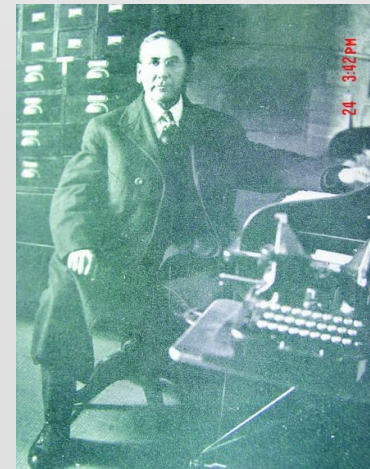
## The first university taking a western-style education system in China.



Charter of Incorporation  
secured by the State of  
Tennessee



First President  
D. L. Anderson



Second President  
John W. Cline



Third President  
W. B. Nance



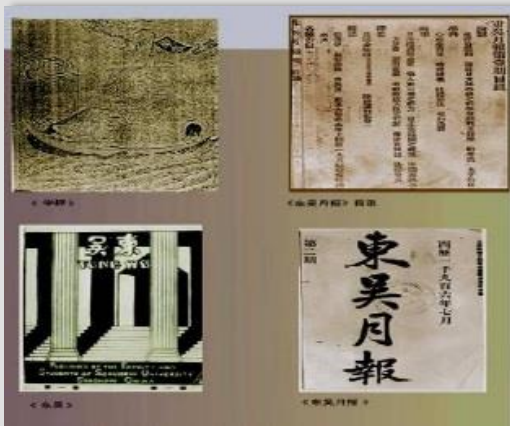
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Who we are...



- The first university issuing a journal in China (1906)
- The first university offering Anglo-American law courses in China (1915)
- The first university granting a master's degree in China (1917)



The first journal in a university



Mr Jinghan Xu  
the first Master of Chemistry in China



The first diploma of a Master's degree





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### Students in 26 Schools & 2 Residential Colleges

Type	Number
Undergraduate Student	27095
Graduate Student	16968
International Student	3250
Vocational Students	12381
Total	59,694

*Who we are...*



#### Staff & Faculty

- ❑ Total: 5353
- ❑ Full-time faculty: 2707
- ❑ Professors: 2646





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Who we are...



## A Comprehensive university: 12 out of 13 categories (MOE of China)

Except Military Science



Science



Engineering



Medicine



Agriculture



Literature



History



Philosophy



Art



Administration



Economy



Education



Law



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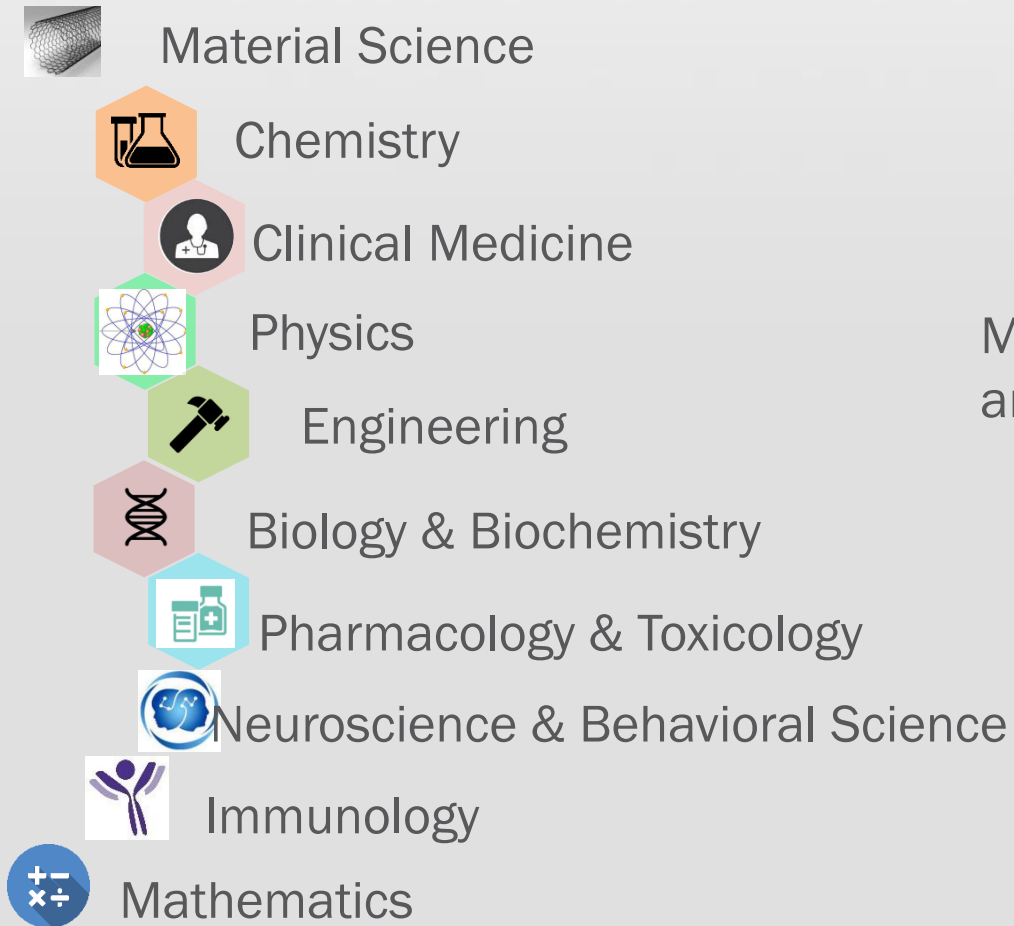
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*Who we are...*



## Disciplines Rankings

### 11 Top 1% Disciplines in the Global Disciplines Rankings ESI



Material Science and Chemistry were ranked among the top 1‰



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Who we are...



Lists	Soochow University		Notes
	2015	Present	
THE Asia-Pacific University Rankings Chinese Mainland/Asia-Pacific	17/—	16/86	
US News Best Global Universities Chinese Mainland/World	32/511	21/409	
Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) Chinese Mainland/World	28-32/401-500	13/201-300	
Assessment of Chinese Universities by China Academy of Management Science	32	24	
Nature Index Chinese Mainland/World	12/97	9/46	No. 192 in 2013 at highest rising speed worldwide
Nature: World's most innovative universities & institutions Chinese Mainland/PRC/World	—	1/3/173	
Essential Science Indicators (ESI) Chinese Mainland/World	28/-	19/404	11 top 1% of ESI 2 top 1‰ of ESI
THE University Impact Rankings Chinese Mainland/World	/	1/101-200	





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### Mission



**Located in Suzhou, our mission is to become a place for learning, discovery, innovation, expression, and service.**



#### Education

Fostering quality and successful people for the society



#### Research

Providing solutions to challenges & power for future development



#### Service

Granting sharable service to all human-beings



#### Culture

Connecting people from different background and different cultures

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*Our Mission vs SDGs  
A well match*





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### Taking action at home: Three examples at Soochow University



#### Quality Education

- Equal opportunity
- High quality



#### Research development

- Innovative research
- Entrepreneurial character



#### Social Service

- Public healthcare
- Normal education





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### Quality Education

- Equal opportunity
- High quality

- Fostering quality people is the intrinsic nature of universities.
- High quality education can help to achieve SDGs via continuously providing high quality talents



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### Taking action at home: Quality Education Equal opportunity



- Students from poverty area: No less than 7% of freshmen each year
- Free tuition, living stipend
- Customized courses upon request: foreign language, Mandarin, Computer science, etc.
- Gender equality for all disciplines



## Taking action at home: Quality Education High quality

- New disciplines adapt to social development: New Energy, Big data, Artificial intelligence, New materials, New medicine, etc.
- New evaluation system: teaching-oriented, research-oriented, internationalization, etc.
- Synergy between: research and teaching, online and offline teaching, domestic and international education

nature
International weekly journal of science

College of Nano Science & Technology

### Innovative pioneer of higher education in China

Researchers at the Institute of Functional Nano & Soft Materials are leading the way at the forefront of interdisciplinary disciplines.

The Institute of Functional Nano & Soft Materials (FUNSOM) is located at Soochow University in Suzhou, China — a city that has a long reputation for being a paradise on Earth. Since its foundation in 2008, FUNSOM has focused on scientific research and application development in the interdisciplinary fields of optoelectronics, new energy, environment and biomedicine. All principal investigators at FUNSOM obtained their degrees from or have had extensive experience working at world-leading universities overseas. To date, FUNSOM has been awarded 284 competitive research grants at various levels, with a total research fund of over US\$51 million. FUNSOM researchers have published over 900 Science Citation Index papers, most of which were published in high-impact journals such as Science, Nature Communications, Advanced Materials, Journal of the American Chemical Society, Angewandte Chemistry International Edition and Nano Letters. In addition, one work was selected as one of the top-ten scientific progress of China in 2015. Thanks to the

FUNSOM, Soochow University is in the top ten most improved universities in the world in terms of the weighted fractional count of Nature Index (it increased dramatically from 56.04 in 2012 to 108.47 in 2015).

**College of Nano Science & Technology**  
CNST at Soochow University was jointly established by Soochow University, Suzhou Industrial Park and the University of Waterloo in Canada. It is regarded as a leader in promoting internationalization of undergraduate education in China. Founded in 2010, CNST was selected as one of the 17 National Pilot Colleges by

honored by being designated a National Outstanding Group of Education by the State Ministry of Education.

**Collaborative Innovation Center of Suzhou Nano Science and Technology (NANO-CIC)**  
The Collaborative Innovation Center of Suzhou Nano Science and Technology (NANO-CIC) is a collaborative innovation centre established under the National 2011 Plan Program. Its ultimate goal is to become an innovative leader to promote the research development and diverse applications of nanoscience and nanotechnology, and to make China a global leader in this area.





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### Quality Education

- Equal opportunity
- High quality

**Our Quality Education can facilitate several SDGs, such as**





### Research development

- Innovative research
- Entrepreneurial character

- Leading scientists and high-quality education enable us to make great innovative research
- Suzhou city grants us the nature of entrepreneurial character



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## Taking action at home: Research development Leading innovative research



- Innovative research can provide the solutions to address current challenges
- Innovative research grant us the power for future development
- Leading disciplines: Hematology, Nanotechnology, Immunology, Materials science, Chemistry, Textile, Radiology, Mathematics, Optoelectronics, etc.



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### Taking action at home: Research development Entrepreneurial character

Leading innovative research can enhance the innovation of companies.



- Incubated ~ 500 startup companies



- 4 listed companies in Shanghai stock exchange



- ~8 billion USD revenue



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### Research development

- Innovative research
- Entrepreneurial character

**Our Research Development can help achieve several SDGs, such as**





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### Social Service

- Public healthcare
- Normal education

- Social service is the obligation of comprehensive universities
- Social service is the intrinsic function of public universities



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### Taking action at home: Social Service

### Public Healthcare

- Established and developed 17 affiliated hospitals
- Annual outpatient cases: 20 million
- A Children hospital for children
- We make Suzhou Ranked #1 in healthcare in all 300 non-capital cities
- Nursing school: Top school in China







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### Taking action at home: Social Service

#### Normal Education

- Normal school for qualified teachers in fundamental disciplines: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, etc.
- Encouraging students working in remote, rural, or poverty area after graduation
- Benefits for them: free tuition, more scholarships, advanced pedagogy, back to our university for a master degree in education (2-3 years).
- A new normal school will be launched this year.





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### Social Service

- Public healthcare
- Normal education

**Our Social Service can facilitate several SDGs, such as:**



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#ARC

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Quality Education



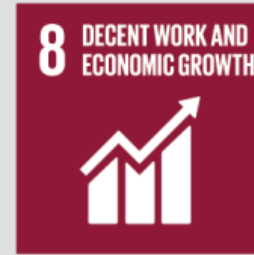
Research Development



Social Service



**Our Action at Home can match well with all SDGs**





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Future Perspectives



「01」

SDGs are global goals

「02」

SDGs are the goals of human beings

「03」

SDGs are the obligation of universities

「04」

SDGs are the core pillars of university governance



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THANK YOU

