

National Foundation for Australia-China Relations

Strategic Plan 2020-21



NATIONAL
FOUNDATION FOR
AUSTRALIA-CHINA
RELATIONS

澳中基金会

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Foreign Minister's Foreword

The Government's decision to establish the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations demonstrates our commitment to a constructive relationship with China, one that is founded on mutual benefit and respect, and a clear understanding of our national interests.

The Foundation will work to support and deepen Australia's understanding of China; the value of the bilateral relationship and the extensive people-to-people links that underpin it – including the contribution of Chinese-Australians to Australia's story, and Australia's strengths and contributions to China's development.

The Foundation will strengthen cooperation on important shared interests in support of Australia's future prosperity and security. It will build on existing ties and nurture new ones, harnessing the efforts of industry, government; our cultural, sporting and education sectors; and our vibrant Chinese-Australian community.

As an innovative national platform, the Foundation will bring together stakeholders to strengthen our national approach in engaging China. It will modernise and catalyse our efforts in developing new, emerging and yet untapped areas of cooperation.

I am delighted Ms Bennett has agreed to be the Foundation Chair. The Foundation aims to be a national Foundation with a broad remit. It reflects on earlier work by the Australia-China Council and I would like to thank all board members of the Australia-China Council over the past four decades for their commitment and dedication to promoting Australia-China ties.

In 2022, Australia and China will celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. The connections between our peoples are even longer. I am confident this Foundation will provide impetus to strengthen this important relationship into the future

Chair's Introduction

I am honoured to take up this position and to help establish the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations at this crucial time. It's a significant opportunity to make a constructive contribution to the Australia-China relationship. A relationship which is incredibly important, substantial and complex and will contribute to shaping our future.

It is also an opportunity to help create a national platform that engages governments, business and communities to support and find ways to engage constructively with China, to engage across greater China, to involve our diverse stakeholders and communities. There are many shared problems in the world that need shared solutions - sustainable open trade and growth, healthy ageing, food and energy security, environmental management to name a few - where Australia and China have expertise and capability and a need to work together to mutual benefit and consistent with our national interests.

I am particularly committed to ensuring effective dialogue between business and community stakeholders and working with Australian Government/s on how we can manage engagement in practical and well-informed ways going forward, confident of our strengths and to ensure our own resilience. I'm committed to establishing a foundation that has good governance and constructive practical engagement as its focus. It's clear to me that it needs to strive to be a model organisation and gain the trust of Australians by engaging on China related issues with due diligence.

With the support of its board and our stakeholders we can position the Foundation to be a long-term asset for Australia.

Our Mission Statement

To support engagement with China, based on mutual benefit and respect, consistent with our national interest and the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. And to engage Australia's diverse communities, acknowledging their historic and current contributions, as part of this endeavour.

Our Context and Intent

The National Foundation for Australia-China Relations demonstrates the Australian Government's commitment to a mutually respectful relationship with China, one that is shaped by a strong sense of Australia's values and national interests, as well as mutual benefit.

Australia and China have made significant and lasting contributions to each other's development and history. Our economic and trade complementarities, underpinned by the World Trade Organisation and our Free Trade Agreement, have driven prosperity in both countries.

Beyond economic opportunity, the relationship is underpinned by strong people-to-people links with wide ranging cooperation across all industries, sectors and community groups. This cooperation delivers significant dividends to both countries.

For over 200 years, Chinese-Australians have been making substantial contributions in all fields of Australian life, including trade and investment. Their contributions have enriched us as a country, and Australia is a better and stronger nation for it. Chinese-Australians play an essential role in the bilateral relationship through community and cultural links.

The Foundation will fulfil its mission statement through focusing its work on four strategic pillars: promoting connections and practical cooperation; building understanding and exchange; showcasing Australian excellence; and engaging Australia's diverse communities.

How we will work

The Foundation will:

- uphold Australia's commitment to freedom and democracy
- support collaborative partnerships, where all parties act with mutual respect and bring their expertise and experience to support the Foundation's objectives
- be inclusive, to ensure a wide range of Australian stakeholders in the bilateral relationship are engaged in the Foundation's work, including all sectors, levels of government and communities
- respect diversity, by reflecting the cultural, linguistic, historical, religious and geographic diversity of Australian society
- work fairly and ethically, to ensure the Foundation and its partners act in an open and accountable way.

Our Strategic Objectives

Promoting connections and practical cooperation

The Foundation will develop, promote and strengthen engagement, including by nurturing new connections through practical support, seed funding and by harnessing networks and expertise.

Sectoral cooperation will be tailored to fields where Australian capability and economic priorities match China's growth and economic priorities. These will be determined in collaboration with business, state and territory governments, federal government agencies and other stakeholders.

The Foundation will assist in efforts to understand and more effectively engage with China, including through mapping engagement, commissioned research, and developing specialised training programs and tools highlighting best practices.

Building understanding and exchange

The Foundation will be a resource for all sectors, levels of government and communities, providing expertise and facilitating connections to deepen leadership, industry and community networks.

The Foundation will support exchange and programs that contribute to better understanding, including through bilateral 1.5 and 2 track dialogues and exchange programs across industry, government, and education, sporting and cultural sectors. It will develop and support research, information, tools and advice which strengthen Australian stakeholder understanding and ability to engage confidently in the national interest, including in areas such as e-commerce, sectoral matching and mapping areas of existing engagement.

Showcasing Australian excellence

The Foundation will build on Australia's existing reputation for excellence in many fields of science, research, industry, arts, culture, and sports. It will promote and strengthen Australia's value as a partner in the international community, in our region, and in business. It will help showcase the quality of our technical expertise; the vibrancy of our sporting and cultural sectors; and highlight Australia's attractiveness as a tourism, study and investment destination. It will help underline our well-earned reputation as a safe and reliable exporter of high quality goods and services and a destination for investment.

Engaging Australia's diverse communities

The Foundation will build on the already extensive people-to-people links between Australia and China through engaging at the community-level and supporting community-led activities. It will seek to build new engagement and partnerships across Australia's culturally and geographically diverse communities to support two-way links and understanding between Australia and China.

Recognising the contributions of Chinese-Australian communities to Australian society, and the important role they play as advocates and stakeholders in our international relationships, the Foundation will engage these communities as a priority.

The Foundation will seek pathways for Chinese international students to connect more with the broader Australian community and improve their experience of studying in Australia.

The Foundation will seek ways to improve access to information for stakeholders, including through bilingual services where possible.

It will engage with Australian and Chinese language media to build understanding of Australian society and values, support a balanced and accurate commentary on Australia's domestic and foreign policy agenda and to communicate the importance of the relationship and the benefit it brings to both countries.