



INSPIRING THE DREAMS OF OUR FUTURE



# Microsoft helps 14 Shanghai startups

Incubating program will provide US group's tools and resources

By HE WEI in Shanghai  
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A clutch of 14 startup entrepreneurs will undergo a 16-week incubating program in a Microsoft Corp-backed accelerator in Shanghai, the latest such endeavor by the software giant.

It is the eighth such incubator under an initiative empowering entrepreneurs, by providing Microsoft tools, resources and connections they need to develop late-stage startups.

The 14 shortlisted groups out of more than 1,000 applicants will focus on cloud computing, artificial intelligence and big data.

Microsoft does not take equity in these firms, or provide funding. But it will sponsor 3 million yuan (\$436,260) worth of service via its Azure cloud platform for three years, in an effort to tap into China's growing cloud industry.

"Through Microsoft Accelerator Shanghai, we will share our advanced technologies, resources and experiences and help startups achieve more in Shanghai, an international innovation and entrepreneurship hub," said Hsiao-Wuen Hon, vice-president of Microsoft.

The selected startups will utilize a workspace in Shanghai's Caohejing High-Tech Park, equivalent of Silicon Valley in the United States, thanks to support from

“Through Microsoft Accelerator Shanghai, we will share our advanced technologies, resources and experiences and help startups achieve more in Shanghai.”

Hsiao-Wuen Hon,  
vice-president of Microsoft

Shanghai's Xuhui district and electronic company INESA (Group) Co Ltd.

The accelerator has attracted numerous startups, partners and expert staff, creating an open and dynamic innovation ecosystem in Xuhui district, said its governor Fang Shizhong.

Startup firms are set to benefit from strong, ongoing mentorship from top executives and technologists in Shanghai, as well as access to third-party professionals who offer free services directly to startups — including legal, accounting, marketing or business support services,

said Tzahi Weisfeld, general manager of Microsoft Global Accelerators.

Three out of its 520 graduate projects globally went public and were all from China, he added.

As China seeks to spur local innovation, incubation programs have mushroomed across the country with varying degrees of success. In Shanghai alone, the number of incubators totaled more than 150 in 2015, according to a study on the city compiled by office leasing service provider Ma3Office.

China is the only country in which the company hosts two such acceleration programs. Apart from Beijing and Shanghai, another six incubators were launched in global startup hubs in London, Bangalore, Berlin, Paris, Seattle and Tel Aviv.

Its Beijing accelerator has seen 140 projects graduate, providing services to hundreds of million users since its establishment in 2012, said Microsoft's Hon. Over 90 percent of projects have won venture capital financing, with combined market valuation amounting to 40 billion yuan.

Wang Guanchun, chief executive officer of scheduling app Assistant, said he believes the incubating program helped his business attract top-notch experts.

"We managed to interview candidates for an important position on iOS development in a decent office area at Microsoft's China headquarters, which is a courtesy provided by the incubator," Wang said.



Yao Weiwei (right), general manager of PepsiCo Greater China, delivers a package to a poverty-stricken mother in Mashan county, the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

## PepsiCo adds fizz to charity appeal

By ZHANG LI in Nanning  
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PepsiCo Greater China launched its annual New Year charity campaign — Postal Parcels for Mothers — on Saturday and delivered parcels to poverty-stricken women at Longchang village, Mashan county, one of the poorer areas of the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region.

"I guess it is a quilt as the weather is growing cold," said Tang Meihua, a 43-year-old villager who looks after five children.

Almost 1,000 women in the village received the same parcel valued at 200 yuan (\$30) which contained blankets, gloves and hats.

"It's very useful," Tang said. The parcels prove invaluable for families whose annual per capita income is below 2,300 yuan.

Tang said: "Every penny is very welcome."

Started by the China Women's Development Foundation in 2012, Postal Parcels for Mothers was set up to offer aid to women in poverty-stricken areas and has won the highest charity award in China.

PepsiCo joined the project in 2013.

Yao Weiwei, general manager of PepsiCo Greater China, said: "This year we are not only delivering parcels but we are being joined by actor Zhang Yishan, who starred in the television sit-

**10,000**

the number of parcels PepsiCo has donated in the past five years

has grown to be PepsiCo's signature marketing program in China.

Zhu Baoming, director of the mother health express department of the CWDF, said: "As our long-term strategic partner, PepsiCo has been supportive since the Water Cellars for Mothers program since launch in 2001. We hope more companies like PepsiCo get involved in welfare works, making contributions to society while expanding their own businesses."

As a global food giant, PepsiCo serves 1 billion consumers in 200 countries every day. The company generated more than \$63 billion net revenue in 2015.

com *Home with Kids*, to hand out the parcels to the mothers. A parcel won't help them out radically, but we hope to encourage more young people to engage in welfare programs."

According to Yao, in the past five years, PepsiCo has donated more than 10,000 parcels amounting to a total donation of 4 million yuan.

The annual charity event

## Festive choices



Residents choose Spring Festival couplets in Fuzhou, Fujian province. Industrial Bank Co Ltd, in cooperation with local calligraphers, provides free couplets to local people, celebrating the upcoming Spring Festival. XINHUA

## Birds fly out to work in Laos

By CHEN MEILING in Beijing and YANG JUN in Guiyang  
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A group of Chinese technicians can be seen working hard among the watermelon patches in the blinding sunlight of Laos every January. Two months later, these watermelons will be sent to Xi'an, the starting point of the Silk Road.

Every autumn, these so-called "migratory birds" — technicians from Kouzhai village in southwestern China's Guizhou province — fly to Laos to plant watermelons and return to China the next spring to start their own farm work.

Yang Canxi, former Kouzhai village Party chief who is also an agricultural technician, said the village was lifted out of poverty through its strength in agricultural technology.

He said Kouzhai village

**40,000**  
yuan

amount that an agro-technician could earn in 1998

was the first to promote small-sized watermelons in the county, and it introduced a new technology to grow watermelons from the newly generated vines after reaping the old ones, thus doubling the sale to 15,000 yuan (\$2,190) per unit area.

In 1997, an official from Laos came to Yang for agricultural training. Twenty professionals were sent to provide watermelon planting skills services there, he said.

"At that time, much of the land in Laos was barren except for that used to grow rice. The locals saw technicians plant watermelon and

even gave them the nickname of Chinese watermelon princes," he said.

Each technician earned roughly 10,000 yuan in the first year, which was increased to 40,000 yuan a year later.

"Villagers flew into my office, asking to go abroad too," he said.

The business was soon expanded to Laos where Yang Guangyue, 50, and some friends decided to begin their own business in 2013.

The local credit cooperative lent them 800,000 yuan to establish a 13-hectare watermelon base in Laos, which was expected to reap roughly 2 million yuan a year.

"Laotians were also hired to work in the watermelon patches and they learned planting skills from us," he said.

Yang Canxi said now half of the income of Kouzhai village comes from this way of working.

### Briefly

#### Brand New way to alleviate poverty

Brand New China, which promotes clothing, furniture and household items by Chinese designers and Serve For China — a project to improve the environment and end poverty — jointly held a charity event in Beijing on innovation in villages. Produce from farmers who benefited from the project Serve For China, were on display. Qin Yuefei, the founder of the project, shared his ideas about it and called for more focus on impoverished rural areas.

#### Women's care charity celebrates

Organizers of the Post-Abortion Care project celebrated the welfare project's fifth anniversary at an event in Beijing on Jan 15. The organization promotes high-quality medical services for women who have miscarried or had an abortion. The project has helped roughly 6 million women and has established clinics in medical institutions. The charity has also offered specific training to more than 4,000 medical workers.

#### Program helps girls get schooling

The theme song *Love in the Spring Buds*, part of Spring Bud project, and its music video, were released online on Monday. In 1989, China Children and Teenager's Foundation launched the Spring Bud project — a social welfare initiative to help girls in poor areas go back to school. The project has established practical technology training for around 5 million girls and has handed out 1.5 million brochures on the protection of girls' educational rights, an official said.

#### Breastfeeding rooms in Suzhou

Suzhou, in East China's Jiangsu province, has recently installed 30 new breastfeeding rooms in public places. The mother-and-baby rooms, which are located in transport hubs, malls, museums and libraries, can also be used for diaper changing. The latest measure was introduced to keep up with increasing demand after the adoption of the two-child policy, officials say.

AGENCIES

## Working in New Year? JD pays kids' trips

By FAN FEIFEI  
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JD.com Inc, China's second-largest e-commerce player, announced it will invest about 75 million yuan (\$10.9 million) to let the children of its employees reunite with parents who have to work during the upcoming Spring Festival holiday.

For some families, the Spring Festival holiday is the only time during the year when they can all be together, as those who left rural areas to work in the cities travel home to reunite with family and friends, and others travel from the countryside to cities or distant towns where their loved ones work.

JD Chairman and CEO Richard Liu initiated a project in 2014 to give employees who live apart from their children a subsidy of 3,000 yuan if they have a child, and an additional 3,000 yuan if they have more than one, so that the children can travel to visit their parents during the Spring Festival.

Since the project launched in 2014, JD has spent around 200 million yuan to help more than 20,000 JD employees enjoy time with their families during the holidays.



Workers of online marketplace JD.com check goods at a warehouse in Langfang, Hebei province. AFP

The program was extended to childless employees so that they can get an extra stipend for their hard work during the holiday since many of them have to spend it apart from their loved ones as well.

JD has decided to continue offering services including logistics and delivery during the Spring Festival holiday to satisfy consumers' needs since 2013. This allows people to

bring gifts to their families or even to have packages shipped directly to them throughout the holiday.

It plans to strengthen the service during this year's Spring Festival. Proprietary regular orders in 110 cities across the nation, big orders from 446 cities, districts and counties, and the orders involving in fresh food and cold-chain logistics from 69

cities will be delivered uninterrupted, which means tens of thousands of employees have to be on duty.

Most of the employees of JD come from rural areas.

"I missed my family so much and was disappointed when I thought I wouldn't see them on the Lunar New Year's Eve," said Yan Yong, a deliveryman at JD's Temple of Heaven office in Beijing.