



A panoramic view of Qianhai, an experimental zone in Shenzhen, Guangdong province. FENG XIAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Qianhai takes leading role in deepened reform

Experimental zone in west Shenzhen has completed more than 700 institutional innovations so far, which have inspired others to follow

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Qianhai, an experimental zone in west Shenzhen that aims to strengthen collaboration between the city and neighboring Hong Kong, is to lead the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in deepening reform and innovation.

The Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone was approved by the State Council in August 2010.

Set in tidal-flat areas and land reclaimed from the sea, the zone in Guangdong province has carried out a package of experimental activities in fields including Shenzhen-Hong Kong collaboration, investment and trade assistance and the opening-up of the service industry.

Its role as a reformer was strengthened in a new plan, released by the State Council in September 2021, to comprehensively deepen reform and opening-up.

According to the Qianhai

authority, it has accumulatively rolled out 725 achievements in institutional innovation so far, of which 72 have been followed and practiced by provinces outside Guangdong.

In October, seven innovative practices and related experiences of the comprehensive reform pilot work in Qianhai were highlighted by the National Development and Reform Commission in a report.

They cover fields such as intellectual property protection, legal services, talent management and healthcare.

Pilot measures

Qianhai is making breakthroughs in setting up a world-leading system to protect IP rights by using big data technology, introducing the role of technical investigators to solve problems in IP cases and implementing punitive damages over IP infringements.

In terms of talent management, Qianhai has built an international talent port and established an international talent services sta-

82.11 billion yuan

in GDP that Qianhai achieved in the first half of 2022

725 achievements

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tion to assist foreign scientists, scientific leading talents, entrepreneurs and highly-skilled talents with their border entry and accommodation issues.

The authority has mapped out an occupation list of foreign talents to meet the needs of companies in Qianhai.

Meanwhile, several government departments in Shenzhen have removed barriers to allow international talent into the zone. One of the measures is to relax occupation

restrictions for Hong Kong and Macao professionals.

For example, Hong Kong construction professionals in 11 categories, including planners, architects, engineers and surveyors, can work in Qianhai after registration with the local authorities.

At the same time, tax professionals from Hong Kong and Macao no longer need to pass job qualification tests or have at least 180 days of working in tax and accounting firms before working in Qianhai.

As of the end of September, a total of 51 professional institutions and 482 professionals had registered in Qianhai, including 69 people from Hong Kong and Macao.

The Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration has explored a cooperation system for cross-border arbitration and introduced mediation to solve disputes.

The court has signed agreements with several international organizations and renowned arbitration institutes to carry out arbitration cooperation. It also set up a Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao arbitration alliance with more than 10

representative institutions in the Bay Area to work out dispute resolution rules and a list of mediators.

So far, the arbitrator list of the court covers 114 countries and regions, including 567 foreign arbitrators.

In September, the first internationally certified hospital accreditation standard was released in Qianhai. It is the first of its kind on the Chinese mainland, which paves a way for domestic hospitals to comply with international standards.

Robust growth

The open and innovative governance of the Qianhai authority has stimulated strong economic growth in the zone. Its GDP surged 10.5 percent year-on-year to hit 175.6 billion yuan (\$24.3 billion) in 2021, according to the Qianhai authority.

During the same period, the paid-in foreign investment grew roughly 15 percent year-on-year to \$5.8 billion while imports and exports rose 20.3 percent to 1.74 trillion yuan.

The trend continued into 2022.

In the first half of this year, Qianhai's GDP reached 82.11 billion yuan, up 2.6 percent year-on-year. The paid-in foreign capital in the zone climbed 17.4 percent year-on-year to \$3.53 billion in the period.

Yu Tianlong, deputy general manager of Kerry Properties (Shenzhen), said Qianhai is increasingly attractive to investors with its incentive policies in deepening reform and opening-up, Shenzhen Special Zone Daily reported.

A group of companies have moved into their new offices in Qianhai, which were put into operation at the end of 2020. They include several leading corporations, industrial leaders and high-growth enterprises in the sectors of technology, finance, design and commercial services such as Siemens, IBM, MUFG Bank, Hang Seng Qianhai Fund Management and Immotor.

Qianhai will strengthen cooperation with Hong Kong and deepen reform and opening-up in line with the central government's requirement to serve the mainland and embrace the world, according to the authority.



A view of the Shenzhen World Exhibition and Convention Center. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Industrial hub attracting Hong Kong entrepreneurs

By YUAN SHENGGAO

By offering a package of incentive policies and a favorable working environment, Qianhai in Shenzhen has been a hub for Hong Kong people to start up companies and move in their research and development institutes.

Located at the estuary of the Pearl River, Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone is more than 10 kilometers away from Hong Kong.

In 2014, four years after its establishment, Qianhai opened an innovation hub for young entrepreneurs, especially for those from Hong Kong. The facility was almost doubled in size in July, expanding by a further 92,000 square meters. The expansion space mainly serves high-growth companies with strong innovation capability and some top R&D institutes to transfer their achievements, according to the Qianhai authority.

So far, more than 600 startup teams, including 331 from Hong Kong, have been incubated at the hub and raised funds of roughly 3 billion yuan (\$276 million) in total.

Five Hong Kong-funded incubators and 21 companies, of which 13 are from Hong Kong, have settled in the new expansion area.

According to the authority, the hub will be further expanded in the near future to host mature companies which have developed as leaders of specific industries.

"Qianhai has stipulated many policies to help us attract and keep technical talent and concentrate on R&D, meanwhile greatly cutting our operation costs," said Kwok Wai-keung, a young entrepreneur from Hong Kong who started up his company in the innovation hub of Qianhai in 2016. The policies include subsidies for new products, tax cuts, apartments for skilled workers and office rent reductions, according

to a report by Nanfang Daily.

Kwok's company, which specializes in making smart suitcases fitted with a Bluetooth chip that can be operated via a cellphone, was authenticated as a national high-tech company with more than 20 patents. Kwok was selected as one of the top 30 Chinese young elites aged under 30 by Fortune magazine in 2019.

While startups keep growing in Qianhai, the authority has worked out new measures to attract R&D institutes to the zone.

Each company, university and R&D center from Hong Kong and Macao can access a subsidy of up to 10 million yuan annually for three years to build up an innovation platform with domestic entities starting from September.

The research should center on high-tech sectors that Hong Kong and Macao have strong advantages in, including artificial intelligence, healthcare, finance technology and smart city. It can also center on strategic emerging industries that Shenzhen has promoted, including network and telecommunications, semiconductors and integrated circuits, software and information service as well as intelligent robots.

Cooperation with neighboring region in bid to recruit international talent

By CHEN HONG

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After 12 years of development, Qianhai in Shenzhen has boosted cooperation with the bordering Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government and international institutes to attract talents from around the world.

It aims to be the top choice for international talents to invest and work in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, according to the Shenzhen-Hong Kong talent annual meeting held in Qianhai on Nov 6.

The Qianhai authority and the Hong Kong SAR government announced a joint effort in the meeting to attract international talents. They will do this by initiating talent attraction activities, including policy promotion, roundtable talks and talent salons, in 2023. Experts in different fields and corporate executives will be invited to attend.

The move is expected to strengthen the exchange of the professionals between Shenzhen and Hong Kong and solicit international talents.

Qianhai also signed agreements with an additional nine transnational corporations to be its international talent partners this year, bringing the total number to 15. They include Elsevier, the world's largest academic publisher; top-notch consultancy companies such as Boston Consulting, Accenture and Gartner; as well as world-leading headhunting companies, accounting firms and human resources advisers.

The Qianhai authority has carried out 110 events to attract investment and talent with its first six partners over the past year, serving more



The Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Youth Innovation and Entrepreneur Hub plays a role in attracting talent to Qianhai. QIU GENMAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

than 5,000 companies and roughly 600,000 professionals.

The authority plans to raise the number of international talent partners to 100 by the end of 2025 and jointly sponsor no less than 100 such events annually.

They have also proved to be effective methods to better lure the gathering of important companies and quality talents in Qianhai, according to the authority.

Qianhai has been serving as a demonstration zone for modern service industry cooperation between Guangdong province and Hong Kong since August 2010.

The area of the zone was expanded from 14.92 square kilometers, which was all reclaimed land, to 120.56 sq km upon a plan proposed by the State Council in September 2021 to comprehensively deepen the reform and opening-up of the zone.

After its expansion, Qianhai covers the Shenzhen World Exhibition

& Convention Center and Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport.

It has earned a reputation in the global community for spearheading efforts to keep in line with global practices, which has attracted an increasing number of international talents, especially those from neighboring Hong Kong.

According to the talent policy of Qianhai, a team that introduces high-end talents could enjoy an annual reward of up to 20 million yuan (\$2.76 million). Its core members could be given a reward of no higher than 2 million yuan every year.

The most important talents and scientific platforms in strategic industries will also be granted tailor-made policies and services, according to the authority.

Official statistics showed the number of high-end talents identified by the Qianhai authority this year more than doubled that of 2021.