

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

PhD Programs at the Institute of Global Development

September 2026 Intake – Urgent Call for Applications

Background

On November 22, 2025, Chinese Premier LI Qiang announced in his address at the 20th G20 Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, that “China will establish the Institute of Global Development to promote common development among all countries.” The Institute is intended to advance shared prosperity, strengthen global cooperation, and support evidence-based development governance.

Zhejiang University (ZJU), one of China’s leading research institutions, has been entrusted by the Chinese government with the establishment of the Institute of Global Development and will officially launch its inaugural PhD programs in September 2026.

Program Overview

The Institute of Global Development will begin with two doctoral majors (15 vacancies each year):

- PhD in Applied Economics

Institute of Global Development

On November 22, 2025, Chinese Premier LI Qiang announced in his address at the 20th G20 Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, “China will establish the Institute of Global Development to promote common development among all countries.” This new initiative is to effectively pool the wisdom and resources of key stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of the UN 2030 agenda and to address the bottleneck issues in the process of global development. Zhejiang University (ZJU), a top university in China, has been entrusted by the Chinese government with the establishment of the Institute of Global Development

Our mission is to harness the power of talents and ideas to strengthen development capacities globally and promote common development among all nations.

Our vision is to establish a new, innovative institute to deliver **high-level degree courses** for mid- to senior-level government officials and executives from leading enterprises, **provides high-end talent training programs**, and **conducts high-quality academic studies**. The Institute aims to become a **world-leading platform for cultivating future leaders and a global hub for development research**.

The Institute is guided by the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. It is organized by the Institute for National Strategy and Regional Development, together with the College of International Education, the School of Economics, and the School of Public Affairs at Zhejiang University. Leveraging Zhejiang University's rich educational resources, strong academic foundations, extensive international exchange and cooperation network, and diverse approaches to talent development, as well as Zhejiang Province's rich practices in innovation and entrepreneurship, the Institute undertakes work in three major areas:

First, the Institute offers **high-level degree programs** under two first-level disciplines—“**Applied Economics**” and “**Public Administration**”—to cultivate talents with a long-term and strategic vision for global development. It admits 80 postgraduate students annually. A significant proportion of these students will be outstanding international students, primarily from the Global South, including government officials, staff members of international organizations, and executives of renowned companies. It is committed to cultivating future leaders with a global perspective, solid professional expertise, and cross-cultural

communication skills, and empowering them to contribute meaningfully to global development.

Second, the Institute provides **non-degree education programs** to respond precisely to immediate needs in the field of sustainable development. Building on its branded programs, such as the “ASEAN-China Digital Economy Workshop” and the “Advanced Seminar on Anti-Poverty Issues in Developing Countries,” the Institute will train approximately 300 participants each year. The Institute will also collaborate with relevant United Nations agencies, universities and research institutions, and other international organizations. Focusing on the core objectives of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the priority areas of the Global Development Initiative, the Institute will continue to design and develop thematic training programs to strengthen participation, capacity, and action in international governance and global development.

Third, the Institute conducts **high-quality academic research** to establish a world-class academic and policy research hub for global development. It will be a full-chain innovation platform integrating basic research, applied research, and the commercialization of research outcomes. With a particular focus on the Global Development Initiative, the post-2030 global development agenda, and other major global development issues,

the Institute will produce practical insights to support decision-making and provide intellectual solutions to global development challenges. Furthermore, leveraging Zhejiang University's academic strengths and research capacity in AI, digital economy, and other related strategic areas, the Institute will promote the transfer of relevant technologies to developing countries through joint laboratories and technology transfer centers, while fostering high-level dialogue platforms engaging government, industry, and academia.

- PhD in Public Administration (with development-governance focus)

The program duration is 3.5 years. All students must take their classes in China for the first academic year (approximately 10 months) to complete coursework and required credits. After meeting the credit requirements, students may return to their home countries and come back to China periodically for field visits, surveys, institutional secondments, or short research stays. The program also welcomes outstanding representatives from related fields and promising young talents.

The program would offer a full scholarship, covering tuition fees, accommodation, round-trip international travel expenses essential for study, basic living expenses in China, and medical insurance.

Target Applicants

The program is designed for current and future leaders committed to development, governance and global cooperation. Applicants may come from both the Global South as well as the Global North.

Eligible applicants include government-sector professionals, such as Director-level officials as well as Division Chief-level professionals; in

the academic sector, eligible applicants include senior management in the top universities of their respective countries (at least among the top 10th), such as School Deans or Vice Presidents of top universities, as well as senior academic or teaching staff in higher-education institutions; and in the business sector, eligible applicants include senior managers and executives from the top 10 companies in their respective countries.

Language Requirements

- English proficiency required (IELTS 6.5+ or TOEFL 100+)

Why Join This Program

Participants will gain:

- Advanced training in development and governance, evidence-based policymaking, and comparative global development
- Exposure to cutting-edge research environments at Zhejiang University
- Opportunities for institutional secondments with leading Chinese organizations
- A platform to collaborate with global peers and contribute to innovative development solutions

- This program is ideal for highly capable professionals with demonstrated leadership and a strong commitment to shaping future development pathways.

Application Procedures

(i) Application to the Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office of the Chinese Embassy

An applicant shall first of all obtain a recommendation from a relevant government agency in his/her home country addressed to the Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office of the Chinese Embassy regarding his/her program application. With a recommendation obtained, the applicant shall then prepare the following materials and submit them to the Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office of the Chinese Embassy for an inspection.

Documents		Requirements
1	Degrees	An original copy needs to be prepared for each degree.
2	Official Transcripts	Transcripts must list all courses taken and all scores obtained.
3	Personal Statement	Personal statement must be written in Chinese or English and be 600-800 words in length. It shall cover such essential elements as applicant's academic background, work experience, achievements, study purpose and future career plans.

4	CV	Should include, but not be limited to, contact information, rank or position, employer, and job title. Written in Chinese or English.
5	Recommendation Letters	Two letters.
6	English Language Proficiency Test Results	IELTS or TOEFL score report.
7	Physical Examination Form	A certified physical examination form issued within the last one month
8	Passport	All successful candidates must enter China and register with Zhejiang University using the same passport as used for applying for the program.
9	Non Crime Record Proof	Applicant shall obtain the proof from the relevant agency in his/her country.
10	Written Request to ECCO for a Recommendation Letter	The request should clearly state whether the applicant is willing to be considered for other programs if the applied program is already full.

For emails and addresses of the Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office, please refer to <https://www.china-aibo.cn/en/>.

All the documents to be submitted should be in either Chinese or English. Otherwise, a notarized copy in Chinese or English is required.

Applicants shall get back all the hard-copy materials from the Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office of the Chinese Embassy. If admitted, they must take the documents to China and submit them to the Institute and Zhejiang University during registration in September.

The Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office of the Chinese Embassy will issue a formal recommendation letter to the Institute and Zhejiang University directly for an applicant who successfully passes the qualification review.

(ii) Application to Zhejiang University

Documents		Requirements
1	Degrees	An original copy needs to be prepared for each degree.
2	Official Transcripts	Transcripts must list all courses taken and all scores obtained.
3	CV	Should include, but not be limited to, contact information, rank or position, employer, and job title. Written in Chinese or English.
4	Recommendation Letters	Two letters.
5	English Language Proficiency Test Results	IELTS or TOEFL score report.
6	Physical Examination	A certified physical examination form issued within the last one month

	Form	
7	Passport	All successful candidates must enter China and register with Zhejiang University using the same passport as used for applying for the program.

Application materials should be submitted to: cisdg@zju.edu.cn.

Applications who fail in qualification review with the Economic and Commercial Counselor's Office will not be processed. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted promptly for the next steps.

(iii) Application Timeline

Relevant application materials must be submitted by April 15, 2026.

If you have any questions during the application process, please contact:

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Email: yihaosun@zju.edu.cn