



OSCAR UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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Celebrations held in Oxford and Suzhou to mark OSCAR's 3rd Anniversary

November 2021 marked the third year of OSCAR's full operation. Celebrations took place at both Oxford University, and at OSCAR, honouring a remarkable track record of achievements over the past three years.

On 17th November, OSCAR Principal Investigators and Research Scientists gathered at St Peter's College in Oxford to mark the occasion, looking back on OSCAR's academic outputs and operational performance, and mapping the path forward. Also in attendance at the event were Vice-Chancellor Prof. Louise Richardson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof. Patrick Grant, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof. David Gann, and Head of the MPLS Division Prof. Sam Howison.

One particular case recognised at the anniversary event was the rapid testing technology for COVID-19 developed by a team from OSCAR, led by Prof. Zhanfeng Cui and Prof. Wei Huang. The technology uses RT-LAMP technology to give results within 15 – 30 minutes, which at the time was over three times faster than standard PCR. It was also more accurate, with 96% sensitivity, and has since been used in airports such as London Heathrow.

The rapid testing technology went on to be spun out into the company 'Oxsed,' and led to a collaboration with Prenetics Limited, a global leader in diagnostics and genetic testing, in April 2021. The hope for the future is to see the technology used for other infectious diseases around the world.



A separate anniversary event was held in Suzhou, China, where OSCAR is situated. On 21st November, a Family Day took place inside of the OSCAR building, where employees and their families were invited to observe OSCAR's 3rd Anniversary. Close to 80 employees and their family members showed up for the Family Day which featured activities including building tours, games, gift-exchanging, and a cake cutting ceremony.

Over the last three years, OSCAR has worked hard to demonstrate the value of international collaboration on the world stage. OSCAR's unique marriage of Oxford's research strength within the fertile translational environment of the Suzhou Industrial

Park has brought together some of the brightest minds in the world with some of the best facilities available, all within an active and thriving research and development ecosystem.



Prof Mark Moloney, the Deputy Director of OSCAR and Professor of Chemistry, says, 'The facilities and support at OSCAR is truly the best in the world, and the 'can do' attitude and the vibrant culture at OSCAR is refreshing. At OSCAR, we can tackle major problems like healthcare and the environment that face human society with the well-funded infrastructure of the Suzhou Industrial Park. Being close to the major manufacture and industrial base makes translation from lab bench to end users much easier.'

Prof Zhanfeng Cui, Director of OSCAR and the Donald Pollock Professor of Chemical Engineering, says, 'OSCAR is a flagship project to show the added value of international collaboration. We have a great team on the ground to implement the Oxford University culture, governance, IP and data protection policies. Despite the pandemic, OSCAR has made great progress in scientific research and social impact.'

Leah He, the General Manager of OSCAR, says, 'OSCAR has become an influential and highly visible platform in Suzhou and Southeast China. The OSCAR model of international collaboration has been studied widely. The fact that OSCAR is wholly owned by the University of Oxford has made the management of the venture much more straight forward as we simply implement various University policies at OSCAR. OSCAR is a good showcase of the University of Oxford within China.'





Professor Cui elected Foreign Member of Chinese Academy of Engineering



Professor Zhanfeng Cui

OSCAR Director Professor Zhanfeng Cui was recently elected a Foreign Member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering by its members – one of only 20 foreign members elected this year. The academican of the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) is the highest academic title of Engineering and Technology in the People's Republic of China. The lifelong honour was given in recognition of Professor Cui's distinguished contribution to chemical engineering and the promotion of China-UK exchanges and cooperation.

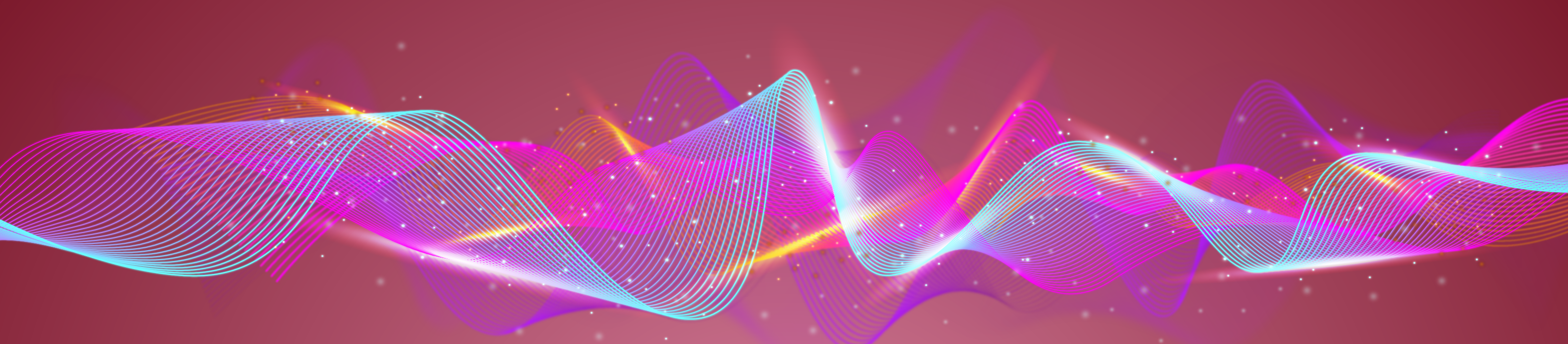
The Chinese Academy of Engineering is the national academy for engineering and related disciplines of the People's Republic of China. Collectively known as the "Two Academies" along with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, it functions as the national scientific think tank and academic governing body, providing advisory and appraisal services on issues stemming from the national economy, social development, and science and technology progress.

As an overseas Academician, Professor Cui will have the opportunity to provide recommendations on the development of Chinese engineering science and technology.

The Donald Pollock Professor of Chemical Engineering and Fellow of Hertford College at Oxford since 2000, Professor Cui is also Founding Director of the Oxford-Suzhou Centre for Advanced Research (OSCAR), Oxford University's first overseas centre for research in physical sciences and engineering.

In receiving this honour, Professor Cui said "I am delighted to be recognized by China, where I was born and educated. This is also a great recognition to the Department of Engineering Science and to Oxford Chemical Engineering".

Professor Cui elected Foreign Member of Chinese Academy of Engineering. Sourced on 29 Nov 2021, from website of Department of Engineering, Oxford University.
<https://eng.ox.ac.uk/news/professor-zhanfeng-cui-elected-to-chinese-academy-of-engineering/>





Fourth Meeting of the Oxford-SIP Cooperation and Development Board



The Oxford-SIP Cooperation and Development Board met via virtual link for its fourth annual meeting on 25th November.

The meeting elected Mr Qian Ni, Member of SIP CPC Working Committee, and Vice Chairman of SIP Administrative Committee, as the new Co-chair of the Board, replacing Mr. Xiaoming Lin, who was recognized at the meeting for his part in OSCAR's development.

Both Oxford and SIP recognised the progress achieved since last meeting. Oxford spoke of its collaboration with SIP as the best choice of partner to deliver on its research ambitions in China, while SIP recognized the added value of OSCAR as a flagship project of Oxford-SIP international cooperation. OSCAR's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 was reviewed and agreed on by the Board.



Meet OSCAR's New Researcher



Wenju Qian
Research Engineer
in OSCAR-Prenetics ITC

Wenju Qian joined OSCAR on 1st November, 2021, as a Research Engineer in the OSCAR-Prenetics Innovation and Technology Centre for Advanced Diagnostics (OSCAR-Prenetics ITC). He obtained his master's degree in 2021 at the Shanghai Institute for Nutrition and Health, Chinese Academy of Sciences. His previous research mainly focused on the function of alternative splicing factor SRSF1/2 protein in mice pancreatic beta cells and the correlation with Type I diabetes.

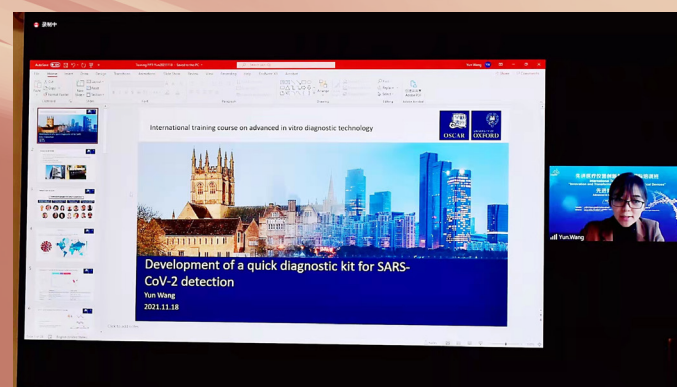
"It is my great honour to join the OSCAR family," Wenju said, "OSCAR is a great place to carry out research with a top-level research environment, pleasant work atmosphere and very professional research groups." At OSCAR, part of Wenju's research is bioinformatics, including nanopore sequencing and metagenomics analysis. He intends to apply these new methods to in vitro diagnosis, which shows great application potential in the rapid detection of infectious pathogens. Wenju feels particularly delighted to participate in the further development of the COVID-19 rapid test kit, as this project has brought great benefits to countless people all over the world. "I feel very lucky to work in such an excellent place, and I'm very confident of developing my career in OSCAR," said Wenju.

OSCAR PI gives talk at International Training Workshop on Innovation and Transformation of Advanced Medical Devices

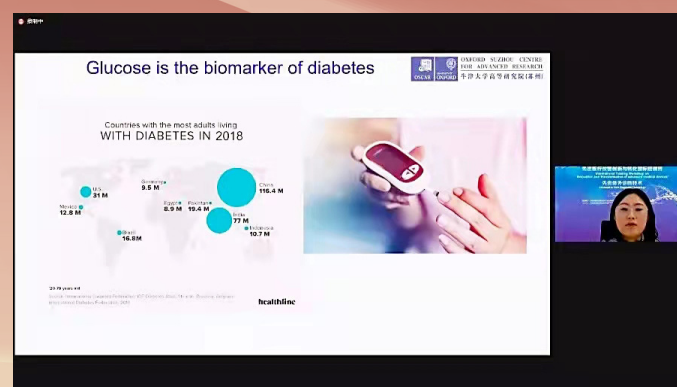
This Workshop centered on the innovation and commercialisation of advanced medical devices with 3 sub-topics: Advanced In Vitro Diagnostic Technology, Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Engineering Technology, and Medical Imaging Technology. The Workshop aims at building the capacity of countries in the Belt and Road region to address shared challenges facing advanced medical devices, through enhanced communication and collaboration.



Prof. Wei Huang gives a general introduction of the molecular diagnostic approaches for diagnosing and monitoring diseases, and for identifying therapies that work best for patients. The tools involved are biomarkers of nucleic acids, small molecules and proteins and single cell Raman microspectroscopy technology.



Dr. Yun Wang talks about the rapid SARS-CoV-2 detection technique developed as a result of collaborative research work at Oxford University and OSCAR, led by Prof. Zhanfeng Cui and Prof. Wei Huang.



Mengmeng Ji gives details on the principles of a biosensor-based platform for small molecules detection and its application in medical and environmental monitoring.





Peer institutions visit OSCAR to share good EHS practice

On 26th November, the Safety and Environmental Brigade of the Dushu Lake Science and Education Innovation District, the local safety and environment regulator, organized for a group of safety and environment professionals from local peer institutions to visit OSCAR for exchanges on good practices in laboratory safety and environmental protection.



OSCAR's Head of Building Services and EHS Supervisor gave the group a tour of OSCAR's high priority areas for EHS management, including chemical and biological laboratories, the gas cylinder room, and the temporary storage room for hazardous waste. After the visit, a workshop was organized where OSCAR's EHS supervisor explained what has been done at OSCAR to ensure lab safety and desirable environmental performance. The workshop also saw visitors exchanging insights on a range of EHS management issues shared by universities and research facilities.

The stakes are high when it comes to laboratory safety. OSCAR is open to discussion and cooperation with peer institutions in the local community, to help each other create lab environments where our scientists feel safe, ultimately benefitting their research.

OSCAR receives visitors from the University of Science and Technology of China

On 24th November, the senior leadership of Suzhou Institute for Advanced Research, University of Science and Technology of China, visited OSCAR.

OSCAR General Manager and researchers led the visitors on a tour of OSCAR's exhibition hall, laboratories, and office spaces for incubating OSCAR's spin-off companies.





SIP News in November

Suzhou listed as expats' favourite city for 10 consecutive years



annual "Amazing China" event gives an assessment by international experts and talents based on 54 indicators in five categories, covering work convenience, living convenience, social environment, peer review and dependence on foreign trade.

The International Talent Research Centre of the Ministry of Science and Technology announced the results of "Amazing China- the Most Attractive Chinese Cities for Foreigners 2020" ranking at the 2021 Euro-Asia Economic Forum. Suzhou made the list for the tenth consecutive year.

Revolving around the theme of "Openness and Talent Introduction", the

Suzhou is open to the best minds in the world and invites them to participate in Suzhou's journey of growing into an open and inclusive world centre. Here in Suzhou, consistent efforts have gone into creating a favourable environment for start-ups and innovative projects launched by international talents.

Up to now, nearly 12,000 international talents, or 46 percent of the provincial total of non-Chinese residents, are working in Suzhou. Among them are 4,693 high-end international talents, accounting for 55 percent of the total number in the province. The city now hosts 11 workstations for foreign academicians and 305 city and provincial-level international talent workshops.



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