



LI KA SHING FOUNDATION

李嘉誠基金會

‘Why Technion?’

Technion’s influence is everywhere: inventions such as the memory stick and instant messaging technology for smart phones have their roots at the Israel Institute of Technology, founded in 1912.

Recently ranked 7th top 10 colleges for Tech CEO (level with MIT) in the world by Bloomberg, Technion’s importance to Israel is evident in its impact on the area around Haifa, where the Institute is based. Companies such as Qualcomm, Google, Microsoft and Intel all have key offices in the city.

In December 2011, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced that the Technion, together with Cornell University, had been selected to create the Jacobs Technion-Cornell Innovation Institute (JTCII) on Roosevelt Island. The announcement of Technion Guangdong Institute of Technology is further evidence of the university’s importance on a global scale, as well as consolidating Shantou University’s reputation for commitment to educational reform in Mainland China.

A quarter of Technion alumni have either established their own businesses or reached the very top of senior management positions in big corporations. In the high-tech industry, the annual revenue of companies led by Technion alumni stands at more than US\$18.6bn. It also worthy of note that a quarter of Technion’s alumni have applied for or been granted a patent. As well as the aforementioned USB stick and instant messaging, innovations as varied as trickle irrigation agriculture, medication for Parkinson’s disease and the Iron Dome defensive system all have their roots at Israel’s oldest university.

Importantly, both Technion and STU share a similar set of values, as well as the same belief in the power of education and scientific research. At both institutes faculty members have independent authority in research to safeguard teaching quality. Geographically, the two universities both sit on the fringes of major cities, leading to obvious opportunities.

When asked why Technion chose to work with Shantou University on TGIT, President Peretz Lavie cited the commitment to educational reform as a crucial aspect. That STU is a relatively young university was also a factor, “The scientific level and research in the university will be elevated to new heights. What we’re doing here will hopefully act as a base for reform in other universities in China as well.”

Exposure to Technion’s teaching quality should help to ensure that TGIT becomes a world-class research based university in time. As Lavie sums up, “Israel’s nickname is ‘start-up’ nation. When you combine the innovation and entrepreneurial spirit of Israel with the unbelievable scale of China, you have a great partnership.”

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