

Institute for State Cybersecurity: cradle for Chinese talent in cybersecurity

On the afternoon of July 26, Wang Han, a student from Tianjin University, along with her roommates dressed in T-shirts printed with "Summer School of the Institute for State Cybersecurity," walked into the conference center in the Wuhan Airport Economic Development Zone (AEDZ). In the previous 11 days, Wang and her classmates had been engaged in semi-closed intensive training. "Vivid illustrations and advanced teaching approaches used by the lecturers enhanced my knowledge about current issues on cyberspace science," said Wang.

Since February of this year, the Wuhan AEDZ has begun cooperation with Wuhan University. The two parties will continue to work together on bringing in professional talent and teams from home and abroad, pioneering innovative school management patterns, enlarging the faculty and student scales, and establishing the Institute for State Cybersecurity in the the National Cybersecurity Talent and Innovation Base (NCTIB), with the goal of building it into a leading institute for training cybersecurity talent in China.



Nourishing talent in cybersecurity

In early March, the newly drafted Construction Plan of the First-class Cybersecurity Institute was endorsed by leaders and professionals of the Cyberspace Administration of China and the Ministry of Education.

In June, the Wuhan AEDZ and Wuhan University signed further agreements in which a special fund of RMB 20 million was allotted to introduce top talent and to meet the operating costs of the cybersecurity institute.

As introduced by Hu Ruimin, dean of the School of Computer, Wuhan University and executive dean of the Institute for State Cybersecurity (ISC), Wuhan University pledged to offer an annual salary of RMB 400,000 to 500,000 to attract more talent. With the support of the

government, the institute promises to double that salary for the "One Thousand Young Talents" which will be RMB 800,000 to 1,000,000 a year.

On August 8, the Cyberspace Administration of China proposed a new goal — to establish four to six nationally recognized and globally influential cybersecurity institutes between 2017 and 2027. These schools will explore new ideas, new systems, and new mechanisms for the cultivation of network security talent through reforming, innovation, and piloting. They will adopt more flexible policies and funding methods. The ISC in the AEDZ was established at the right time. Both its hardware and software development is ahead of other such institutes nationwide.

Five major innovations of the institute

The Institute for State Cybersecurity (ISC) is expected to recruit 5,000 students for diploma education (bachelor degree, master degree, and doctorate degree) per year and 2,000 students for training education.

The institute highlights five major innovations.

First, it will adopt an innovative model which combines planning with marketing, attracting top-level talents and corporate R&D organizations, and flexibly allocating its faculty resources.

Second, in terms of talent aggregation innovation, the ISC will join the "City Partner" project of Wuhan, drawing in top-level talents and teams from home and abroad; it will set independent quotas and programs for

directional independent enrollment of postgraduate and doctorate students.

Third, in terms of talent innovative cultivation, the ISC will offer various modes, including the general & practical education mode, special classes for young people and professional training, which will lead students into real challenging practical exercises; postgraduate and doctorate students will enjoy a dual-mentor system of strategic scientists and innovative entrepreneurs.

Fourth, in terms of capacity assessment, the ISC will seek a breakthrough that will replace the traditional examination mechanism with an academic competence assessment system, emphasizing national strategic orientations and problem inspiration.

Finally, in terms of the innovation of

industrial parks, the ISC will start strategic cooperation with local governments and enterprises, fulfilling the integration of production, study, research and application, and forging a coordinated line of research and development, incubation, training, and services.

Apart from Wuhan University, Tsinghua University and Huazhong University of Science and Technology will soon enter the AEDZ. Many important platforms in planning such as the cybersecurity open laboratory, the cyber hacking and defense test-bed, and the cyberspace security target range will invite enterprises for cooperation, including the investment of social capital, to integrate the educational, science and research, and industrial strengths nationwide.