



China-Britain Business Council

(Beijing) Co., Ltd. 英中联合投资咨询(北京)有限公司

China-Britain Business Council (CBBC)/英中贸易协会

The China-Britain Business Council (CBBC) is the UK's leading independent source of China business information, advice, consultancy and services for UK industry.

For more information about us, please visit our website at <http://www.cbbc.org>.

In conjunction with our member organisation, Durham University, CBBC is currently looking to recruit a candidate for the following position.

Head of Strategic Partnerships, China – Durham University

Location: Beijing or Shanghai

Department: International Office

Reporting to: Head of International Partnerships and Global Opportunities (Durham)

Package: Competitive Gross salary range between RMB 27,000 – RMB 32,000 per month (13-month scale) based on matched qualifications and experiences



Durham University:

Durham University is one of the world's leading research-intensive universities, with a strong global reputation across the Arts and Humanities, Business, Sciences and Social Sciences. International partnerships are central to Durham's strategy, enabling excellence in research, education, innovation and global engagement. China is a priority country for the University, with a growing portfolio of strategically important institutional partnerships.

Role Purpose

The Head of China Partnerships is a senior, China-based leadership role responsible for shaping, developing and managing Durham University's strategic institutional partnerships in China. This is a new post, reflecting the increasing scale, complexity and strategic importance of Durham's engagement in China.

The postholder will act as Durham's senior in-country lead for partnerships, providing strategic oversight of existing collaborations and identifying, developing and negotiating new high-value partnerships aligned to the University's Global Strategy, working with key colleagues in Durham including the Head of International Partnerships and Global Opportunities, Deputy Head (Transnational Education), faculties and departments. These partnerships may span education, research, innovation, mobility, and broader institutional collaboration.

Based within the China–Britain Business Council (CBBC) in Beijing or Shanghai, the role will manage a China-based Partnership Manager and work closely with senior colleagues in Durham, including academic leaders and professional services teams. The postholder will represent Durham University to senior external stakeholders in China, including partner institutions, government bodies and sector organisations, while ensuring that all partnership activity meets Durham's governance, quality assurance, legal and reputational requirements.

Key Responsibilities

1. Strategy, Leadership and Representation

- Lead the development and delivery of Durham University's China partnerships strategy, aligned with the University's Global Strategy and wider institutional priorities.
- Act as Durham's senior representative in China for institutional partnerships, building and maintaining relationships with key external stakeholders.
- Provide authoritative in-country advice to senior leaders in Durham on the Chinese higher education and research landscape, policy environment and emerging opportunities.
- Contribute to institutional planning by producing strategic briefings, reports and market intelligence on China.

2. Partnership Development and Management

- Provide strategic oversight of Durham's portfolio of institutional partnerships in China, ensuring they are high quality, sustainable and aligned with institutional priorities.
- Identify, scope and develop new strategic partnership opportunities, working with academic departments and professional services colleagues in Durham.
- Lead or support the negotiation of partnership agreements, working closely with Legal, Quality Assurance, Research Development and other relevant teams.
- Ensure partnership activity complies with Durham's governance frameworks, policies, contractual obligations and risk management processes.

3. Governance, Quality and Risk

- Work with colleagues in Durham to ensure robust due diligence, risk assessment and approval processes are followed for all partnership activity.
- Support the effective operation of partnership governance structures, including joint committees, review processes and reporting mechanisms.
- Maintain awareness of regulatory, political and reputational considerations affecting UK–China higher education collaboration and advise accordingly.

4. Line Management and Team Leadership

- Line manage the China-based Partnership Manager, setting clear objectives, supporting professional development and ensuring effective delivery of operational activity.
- Foster a collaborative, high-performing team culture across China- and UK-based colleagues working on partnerships.

5. Internal Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

- Act as a key interface between China-based partners and Durham-based academic and professional services teams.
- Work closely with colleagues across International Office, Research & Innovation, Education, Legal, Quality Assurance, Marketing and Communications.
- Support visits by Durham senior leadership and academic delegations to China, and visits by Chinese partners to Durham working closely with relevant colleagues in the Partnerships and Global Opportunities Team.

6. Intelligence, Reporting and Continuous Improvement

- Monitor developments in the Chinese higher education, research and innovation environment, identifying opportunities and risks for Durham.
- Use data, insight and evaluation to review partnership performance and inform future decision-making.
- Share best practice and lessons learned from China engagement to support continuous improvement across Durham’s global partnerships portfolio.

7. Resource Management

- Plan and allocate staff and non-staff resources effectively to meet regional and institutional targets. Manage the China partnerships budget, ensuring effective allocation, monitoring, and reporting to achieve optimal return on investment.

Person Specification

Essential

Qualifications & Experience

- Degree-level qualification or equivalent professional experience.
- Significant experience (normally 5+ years) working in international higher education, research collaboration, international partnerships or a related field, with substantial experience in or with China.
- Proven track record of developing and managing complex institutional partnerships, including negotiation and relationship management at senior level.
- Strong understanding of the UK higher education sector and its international operating environment.
- Experience of working with governance, quality assurance, legal and compliance frameworks in a university context.
- Experience of managing staff and/or leading cross-functional teams.

Skills & Competencies

- Excellent written and spoken English and Mandarin Chinese.
- Outstanding interpersonal, negotiation and influencing skills, with the credibility to engage senior academic and external stakeholders.
- Strong strategic thinking and analytical skills, with the ability to translate strategy into deliverable plans.
- High levels of cultural awareness, diplomacy and political sensitivity.
- Ability to work independently in a senior in-country role, managing competing priorities and operating across time zones.
- Willingness to travel within China and internationally, and to work flexibly as required.

Desirable

- Postgraduate qualification.
- Direct experience of UK–China institutional partnerships (e.g. joint programmes, research centres, dual awards, offshore delivery).
- Experience working with or alongside organisations such as CBBC, British Council or government bodies.
- Knowledge of the Chinese research and innovation ecosystem.

Additional Information

The role holder will be based at CBBC offices in China and will report functionally to the Head of International Partnerships and Global Opportunities at Durham University in the UK, with administrative support provided locally. The post will require close collaboration with colleagues in Durham and regular engagement with partners across China.

Benefits

- Competitive salary package, including basic gross salary, social insurance, medical insurance, housing fund, and generous leave entitlement.
- Annual pro-rata leave entitlement of 22 days.
- Opportunity to lead Durham University's strategic growth in its most important international market.

How to Apply

Interested candidates are invited to send a **one-page cover letter** explaining how your personality and experience meet our requirements and an indication of your current and expected salary together with **up-to-date CV** to the following email address: CBBCLPHR@cbbc.org. Please use "**Durham University–Partnerships–City-Candidate Name**" as the subject of the email.

We regret that only shortlisted candidates will be notified and that applicants who fail to provide a cover letter and use wrong subject of the email will not be considered.

The closing date for applications is **31 March 2026**. Shortlisted applicants are likely to be invited for interview in CBBC Office in the week of 13 April.

Telephone enquiries and personal visits will NOT be accepted.