MONTHLY REPORT

2025.11 University of Science and Technology of China

第12期



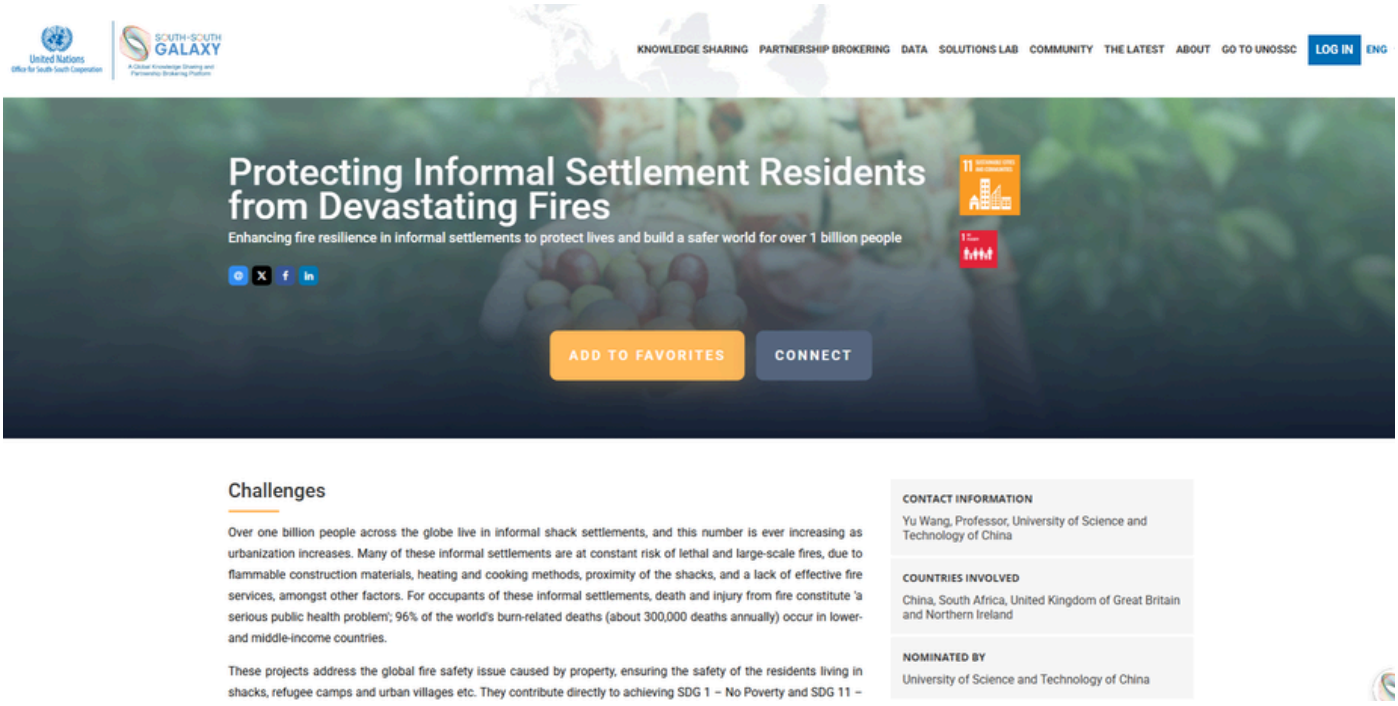
Abstract ◎ Research ◎ News ◎ Alumni

RESEARCH

Nov. 17

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USTC research selected as a Good Practice by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation



Recently, the fire safety resilience research on informal settlements (such as slums, refugee camps and urban villages) jointly conducted by the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC), University of Edinburgh (UK) and Stellenbosch University (South Africa) was selected by United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) as a Good Practice in South-South and Triangular Cooperation. This research was officially featured as a Solution on South-South Galaxy (UNOSSC' s global knowledge-sharing platform) on the 10 th of November. This is the first Good Practice and Solution on the keyword of "Fire Safety" by the UNOSSC, and the first time our university's research results have been selected.

NEWS

Nov.4

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Global Spirit Shines at the 56th USTC Sports Gala

On October 31 and November 1, the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC) hosted its 56th annual Sports Gala. This vibrant event brought together over a thousand students from various schools, departments, and research institutes, celebrating athleticism and camaraderie in a spirited showcase of talent and unity.













NEWS

Nov.13

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USTC International Students Shine in the 3rd Anhui Story Sharing Contest for Foreigners

After nearly two months of intense competition, the 3rd Anhui Story Sharing Contest for Foreigners successfully concluded on November 10 at Anhui TV Station. International students from the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC) achieved outstanding results, captivating the judges and audience with their heartfelt stories, engaging performances, and diverse perspectives. Ravanov Eldar from Azerbaijan won the Second Prize, while Sahaza Delis Rakotondrasoa from Madagascar and Nasya Khosasi from Indonesia received the Third Prize.









NEWS

Nov.19

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The 9th USTC Sino-Foreign Cultural Exchange Festival Successfully Concludes



On the afternoon of November 15th, the Student Activity Center Square in the East Campus of the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC) was transformed into a vibrant stage for cultural convergence, as the university’ s 9th Sino-Foreign Cultural Exchange Festival drew to a successful close. With the theme "Bridging Mountains and Seas, Connecting China and the World - Saying Hello to the Globe", this year’ s festival was elaborately organized by the International College. It attracted over 300 international students from 29 countries, and gathered more than 2,000 Chinese and foreign faculty members and students through distinctive cultural booths and splendid artistic performances. Laughter and joy filled the air, leaving an indelible mark on cross-cultural exchanges.

NEWS

The venue buzzed with energy as visitors explored the international cultural booths. International students fully showcased the unique charm of their respective cultures through diverse media, including traditional cuisine, ethnic costumes, native languages, and interactive games.



NEWS

Chinese and foreign students shared the stage, presenting a wonderful fusion of Eastern and Western cultures. From vocal and instrumental performances brimming with youthful vitality to dance and martial arts displays that balanced strength and grace, each act drew enthusiastic applause from the audience, showcasing the beauty and allure of cultural integration.



ALUMNI

Abdul Rahim Rasa

BL20232006

Safety Science and Engineering

AFGHANISTAN



Study in China: Over a Decade of Learning and Growth



My journey of higher education in China, from studying the Chinese language at Tongji University to completing undergraduate and master's degrees at Hefei University of Technology (HFUT), and later earning a PhD at the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC), has been a story of perseverance, discovery, and cross-cultural growth. Over a decade, I have experienced firsthand how China's world-class education system nurtures talent, promotes global collaboration, and shapes both professional and personal development.

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Academic Journey and Research

My academic path began at Tongji University in Shanghai, where I completed a one-year pre-college Chinese language program. This provided me not only with a strong linguistic foundation but also introduced me to Chinese culture, customs, and values, an essential step that prepared me for my later studies.

Afterward, I pursued both bachelor’ s and master’ s degrees in Civil Engineering at HFUT, which strengthened my scientific knowledge, research ability, and determination. These formative years inspired me to pursue advanced studies in safety science and engineering.

At USTC, I joined the State Key Laboratory of Fire Science (SKLFS) for my doctoral research. My work focused on fire safety and human behavior during emergency evacuations, particularly how people move and make decisions when confronted with obstacles in high-rise buildings. Under the guidance of my supervisor and alongside a talented research team, I developed strong technical expertise and learned the value of collaboration, skills essential for addressing complex scientific challenges.



The bright day of arrival to USTC

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During my PhD, I conducted research on human–obstacle interactions during high-rise building evacuations. I published five research papers, as first and co-authors, contributing new insights to the field and advancing understanding of fire safety and pedestrian evacuation dynamics. I also participated in the National Key Research Project on Mechanism of High-Density Crowds and Evacuation Safety, and the Anhui Provincial Fire Safety Development Program, gaining valuable experience in applied scientific investigations.



Presentation on Pedestrian Traffic and Evacuation Dynamics

After completing my PhD, I was honored with the Outstanding International PhD Graduate Award in recognition of my academic performance and research achievements. I also became the first Afghan PhD graduate from USTC, a milestone that reflects perseverance and the growing academic ties between Afghanistan and China. Over the years, I became fluent in Chinese and achieved HSK Level 6, which allowed me to actively participate in academic discussions, collaborate effectively with colleagues, and engage fully in community life.

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Receiving congratualation right after doctoral dissertation defense





Receiving Outstanding International PhD Graduate Award

Group photo with friends





Group photo with ISO teachers

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Public Engagement

Beyond research, I actively engaged in scientific and outreach programs. I was invited to give a speech at the Future Scientists Exchange Program, sharing my study experiences and cross-cultural scientific exchanges. I also attended the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Fire Safety Training Course, connecting with experts from several countries to discuss global fire safety development.

During my PhD program, I participated in social practice programs that allowed me to travel across China, from Liupanshui in Guizhou and Xiaogang Village in Anhui, the birthplace of rural reform, to Shenzhen, a frontier of reform and opening up. These experiences deepened my understanding of China’ s development model and offered insights into global progress. I also attended two academic conferences, presenting my research and exchanging ideas with scholars working in a similar research area.



Social Practice



Perceiving China Forum

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I was also invited several times by Chinese media, including Xinhua News and Anhui TV, for video interviews and features showcasing foreign scholars' experiences in China. These programs covered diverse topics such as smart manufacturing (including new energy vehicles, industrial robots, and advanced displays), smart housing technologies designed to support the elderly, and Xuan Paper production in Anhui, one of China's most renowned traditional crafts. Through these experiences, I gained cultural insights and a profound appreciation for how science, innovation, and tradition can coexist in modern China.



XINHUANET-GLOBALink



USTC Admission Video

I was also an active member of the Foreign Students Association, where I helped organize cultural exchanges and academic activities. These experiences enriched my leadership, teamwork, and communication abilities while strengthening bonds among international students.

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Cultural Experiences and Personal Growth

Living and studying in China for over a decade has offered me a blend of unforgettable academic and cultural experiences, from exploring China’ s Northwest scenic landscapes and cultural heritage to celebrating traditional Chinese festivals in megacities of eastern China with friends and colleagues. These moments have deepened my appreciation of China’ s rich culture and further strengthened my sense of belonging within the USTC community.

Adapting to a new academic system and cultural environment came with challenges, but self-perseverance and support from teachers, peers, and friends turned these challenges into opportunities for growth. These experiences fostered resilience, cross-cultural understanding, and a lifelong curiosity about the intersection of science, technology, and society.



Sino-Foreign Cultural Festival 2020

ALUMNI

Support and Gratitude

My accomplishments would not have been possible without the invaluable support I received throughout this journey. I am sincerely grateful to the Chinese government for providing scholarships and research funds, and educational initiatives that empower international students to pursue excellence. I also thank the International Student Office (ISO) at USTC for its continuous guidance and care, which made my academic and personal life smoother and more meaningful. Most importantly, I express my heartfelt gratitude to my distinguished supervisor, Professor Song Weiguo, and the research team at SKLFS for their mentorship, collaboration, and inspiration. Their dedication greatly influenced my academic success and professional development.



Smart Firefighting and PED Research Group Photo__June 2025

ALUMNI

Looking Ahead

After completing my PhD, I have begun my postdoctoral research at the State Key Laboratory of Fire Science (SKLFS), USTC, focusing on advanced fire safety, smart firefighting, and emergency evacuation studies. This stage allows me to expand on my doctoral research, apply innovative approaches, and collaborate with international experts while continuing to share knowledge through mentorship and outreach.

Reflecting on my journey from Tongji to HFUT and USTC, each step of my academic journey has been a path of discovery of science, cutting-edge technology and culture. It inspires me to advocate for education, foster mutual understanding among nations, and encourage young minds from Afghanistan, where girls and women are denied access to schools and workplaces, and beyond, to embrace knowledge and innovation with courage, curiosity, and compassion.

To this day, my time in China has shaped me not only as an early-career researcher but also as a culturally open-minded individual who values knowledge, science and technology, empathy, and collaboration that are key engines of progress, understanding, and problem-solving in the global community with a shared future for mankind. I carry forward the lessons, friendships, and values cultivated here, deeply grateful to the country and my alma mater for profoundly influencing both my professional path and personal growth.

SHARE YOUR STORY !

WHAT YOU CAN SHARE

including but not limited to

- CAREER & RESEARCH
- LIFE AFTER USTC
- ENTREPRENEURIAL VENTURES
- CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCES
- MEMORABLE USTC MOMENTS

FORMATS

- ARTICLES OR ESSAYS
- PHOTO STORIES
- SHORT VIDEOS
- INTERVIEWS

SUBMIT NOW!

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