



Annual Meeting of  
the New Champions  
Tianjin 2025

# Outcomes from the Meeting

ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR A NEW ERA

24 – 26 June 2025

Tianjin, People's Republic of China

# Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2025

The meeting gathered over **1,700 leaders** from government, business, academia, civil society, media, and from among top innovators to reignite growth through entrepreneurship and innovation amid a fast-evolving geoeconomic landscape and technological disruption.





# Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2025

The programme, comprising over 200 dialogues, focused on five thematic pillars: deciphering the world economy, outlook on China, industries disrupted, investing in people and planet, and new energy and materials.



# Co-Chairs of the Annual Meeting of the New Champions



**Liu Qiangdong,**  
Founder and Chairman,  
JD.com, People's Republic of  
China



**Li Dongsheng,**  
Founder and Chairman of TCL,  
People's Republic of China



**Annette Mosman,**  
Group Chief Executive  
Officer of APG Group,  
Netherlands



**Noor Ali Alkhulaif,**  
Minister of Sustainable  
Development of Bahrain, Chief  
Executive of Bahrain Economic  
Development Board, Bahrain



**Liao Lin,**  
Chairman, Industrial and  
Commercial Bank of China  
(ICBC), People's Republic of  
China



**Rania A. Al-Mashat,**  
Minister of Planning, Economic  
Development and International  
Cooperation of Egypt



**Ilham Kadri,**  
Chief Executive Officer and  
Chairman of the Executive  
Committee, Syensqo, Belgium



**Henadi Al Saleh,**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
AgilityGlobal, Kuwait



**Dai Houliang,**  
Chairman of China National  
Petroleum Corporation  
(CNPC), People's Republic of  
China



**Qian Chaoyang,**  
Director of the Board and  
President of China Southern  
Power Grid, People's Republic  
of China



**Aguinaldo Jaime,**  
Chairman of Unitel, Angola



# Deciphering the World Economy

The recently released [Global Economic Futures: Competitiveness in 2030](#) report outlines four scenarios for global competitiveness and offers strategic recommendations across sectors to navigate regulatory and geo-economic complexity.

The [Future of Growth Initiative](#) continued its work on the bringing together CEOs and ministers to discuss the current economic outlook and pathways to revitalizing economic growth through policy reforms and deeper public-private collaboration, particularly in emerging markets.

The [Brain Economy Action Forum](#) was launched, aiming at uniting a broad coalition of stakeholders committed to reshaping markets, investments, and policy frameworks that prioritize brain health and mental well-being.

Senior leaders from across global financial services developed a blueprint for decision makers to predict how the financial system will evolve by 2030 in light of increasing [financial system fragmentation](#) and rising geoeconomic tensions, touching upon core elements related to the global financial architecture and safety net, currencies and capital flows, and the changing role of global financial hubs.





As global payments evolve, participants explored how to bridge traditional payment systems with [emerging blockchain-based solutions](#) such as stablecoins and digital cash, highlighting the need for agile regulatory frameworks.

Leaders from ASEAN convened to reaffirm their commitment to inclusive and sustainable growth under the framework of the [ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement \(DEFA\)](#).

Lawrence Wong, Prime Minister of Singapore, shared insights on ASEAN's growing role in a multipolar world and emphasized the need for continued improvement of the multilateral trading system. Pham Minh Chinh, Prime Minister of Viet Nam, underlined the need to maintain a strong growth trajectory and respond to rising challenges and called for a regional alliance to accelerate innovation.

A trilateral meeting brought together stakeholders from China, Japan and the Republic of Korea to enhance regional economic and diplomatic engagement. Over 70 leaders from ASEAN and China discussed new areas for quality cross-regional growth.

Business leaders from the GCC and China identified opportunities for deepening cooperation around supply chain rebalancing, energy transition, and water desalination. At the same time, GCC private capital is increasingly targeting China's clean tech and robotics sectors. The dialogue emphasized the importance of long-term trust, cultural exchange, and diversified investment strategies.





Leaders from Europe, the Middle East, China and the United States [debated](#) how to navigate current trade volatility and renovate global economic collaboration.

More than 140 leading experts, including scientists, researchers, and other prominent academics from the Global University Leaders Forum, shared the latest insights on how research security, collaborative innovation, and investments in fundamental research are evolving in today's complex geoeconomic landscape, and what partnerships are needed to sustain investments in these areas and fuel economic growth.

The [Future of Global Fintech](#) report provided new data and insights drawn from a global survey of 240 fintech companies.

[Redefining Value: From Outcome-Based Financing to Tradeable](#) white paper highlights the overall concept of impact currency and impact exchange. It examines macroeconomic considerations, such as money supply control and central bank mandates, alongside impact measurement frameworks, political and governance factors.

The Chinese edition of [Business on the Edge](#) is exploring ways to strengthen infrastructure and operational resilience of business sector.





# Outlook on China

As is tradition for the Annual Meeting of the New Champions, Chinese Premier Li Qiang met with business leaders to discuss more in depth the economic priorities shared during the Opening Plenary.

The Chinese edition of the [Global Lighthouse Network](#) report was launched, showcasing advanced manufacturing transformations in productivity, talent, sustainability, resilience, and customer-centricity.

The [First Movers Coalition](#), focused on leveraging purchasing power of companies to decarbonize heavy-emitting sectors, was formally introduced to China's industrial ecosystem, paving the way for the engagement of Chinese stakeholders in the coming months.

The [Future of Financial Services in China](#) Initiative gathered financial and healthcare leaders to identify key challenges in the pension and healthcare system, and to explore opportunities for cross-sector collaboration. This will serve as the foundation for a 2025-2026 workstream on Building Resilience in Wealth and Health.

A briefing paper on [nature-related sustainable finance in China](#) highlights the need to leverage emerging technology, utilize existing corporate data and sustainability disclosure as well as convergence of policy and financial instruments to bridge the biodiversity funding gap.





# Industries Disrupted

The [Top 10 Emerging Technologies of 2025](#) report spotlighted 10 breakthrough technologies at their inflection point where scientific progress meets real-world application around four key trends: trust and safety in a connected world, next-gen biotechnologies for health, redesigning industrial sustainability, and integrating energy and materials.

The white paper [From Shock to Strategy: Building Value Chains for the Next 30 Years](#) highlights how manufacturers can harness eight driving forces to transform challenges into opportunities, building resilient, inclusive, and sustainable value chains through 2030, 2040, and 2050.

The [Future of Global Fintech](#) report, based on a survey of 240 fintech companies across six retail-facing industry verticals and six regions, provides insights on the current fintech environment.

The [Advanced Air Mobility: Paving the Way to Responsible Implementation](#) report outlines key principles on drone deployment, including responsible implementation principles, use cases, and lessons learned.

The [Next Generation Bio-Innovation: Delivering Commercial Value](#) briefing paper explores key ideas on how using biology as a technology can improve value chains and create real business benefits.

The inaugural cohort of [MINDS](#) - a selected global community of AI leaders dedicated to building Meaningful, Intelligent, Novel, and Deployable Solutions to solve real world problems - came together to showcase how AI is transforming industries.



# Industries Disrupted

Building on the insights provided by [the Cyber Resilience Compass: Journeys Towards Resilience](#), leaders discussed best practices to build robust cyber resilience strategies and confidently navigate today's increasingly complex threat landscape.

Building on the insights from the [Lighthouse Operating System: Driving Responsible Transformation](#) white paper, manufacturing and supply chain leaders emphasized the need for a new digital-first, end-to-end operating system to complement and evolve beyond traditional production systems.

Insights from the AI Transformation of Industries initiative and the MINDS programme underscored consistent patterns in AI adoption across sectors and regions. Industry leaders identified shared barriers - such as talent scarcity and governance uncertainty - alongside key accelerators of cross-sector collaboration, that will feed directly into forthcoming Forum publications on AI readiness and competitiveness.

Global tech and industry leaders explored how AI is transforming manufacturing and supply chains through real-time data integration, agentic systems, and intelligent automation. As technologies like humanoid robots and autonomous systems advance, ensuring inclusive adoption will require bridging the digital divide and addressing capability gaps across the workforce.





# Investing in People and Planet

The [Strengthening Indonesia-China Palm Oil Trade with Sustainable Practices](#) report emphasized on leveraging trade for improved sustainability.

Building on the [Global Gender Gap Report 2025](#) and the [Gender Parity in the Intelligent Age](#) publication, leaders explored strategies to accelerate women's leadership in technology and mitigate AI-related job disruption.

The Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs and, High-Tech and Industry of Armenia announced the set-up of a Country Accelerator, as part of the Forum's Accelerators Network, that will focus on addressing youth not engaging in education, employment or training and women returning to the workforce.

[Sustainability Meets Growth: A Roadmap for SMEs and Mid-Sized Manufacturers](#) provided insights on how to accelerate decarbonization and unlock growth opportunities.

[From Scarcity to Solutions: Food-Water Innovation in Asia and the Middle East](#) white paper delves deeper on the food-water nexus as critical impact multiplier for economic growth, sustainable and resilient economies.

The [Adaptation Toolkit](#) offers new guidance on how to leverage technology for value chain resilience. The initiative also published the [Harnessing Digital Technologies for Smarter Water Management in Agriculture](#), showcasing how advanced technologies such as AI, internet of things (IoT) and remote sensing can monitor water availability, optimize irrigation, guide crop selection and help harvest rainwater.





# New Energy and Materials

The [Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2025](#) report, benchmarking the performance of energy systems of 118 countries, finds that the global energy transition is picking up speed, but energy security and financing challenges persist.

The [Circularity in Renewables: Wins from China and the World](#) presenting four priorities for scaling circularity in the renewables sector from enhancing operational efficiency to exploring innovative business models.

Leaders from Manufacturing and Energy companies emphasized the critical importance of ensuring that emerging technologies are accessible and harnessed across regions, and by all enterprises - from startups to large-scale manufacturers.

Leaders across energy and finance ecosystems have underscored the need for improved risk data transparency, standardized sustainability reporting via ISSB, and better coordination between public, private, and philanthropic actors, that can help lower the cost of capital for clean energy in emerging and developing economies.

Participants stressed the urgency of aligning AI deployment with energy and climate objectives, reinforcing the case for coordinated multistakeholder action. Building on the dialogues at the meeting, [AI and Energy Initiative](#) will develop a strategic roadmap to ensure that the use of AI contributes positively to environmental sustainability.





A briefing paper on [Circularity in Renewables: Wins from China and the World](#) explores the integration of circularity into renewable energy projects. It highlights successful case studies and key trends that are scaling circular practices in the renewables sector globally, with a focus on China's significant contributions and innovations.

Leaders of the International Energy Community identified priority areas for regional and global collaboration and examined the policy direction shaping China's energy transition in the lead-up to the launch of China's 15th Five-Year Plan.

The application potential of quantum technologies in energy and materials sparked strong interest among stakeholders from energy and technology sectors. The World Economic Forum's Quantum Application Hub, developed in collaboration with industry partners, continues to serve as a key platform for advancing practical quantum solutions in energy and materials.



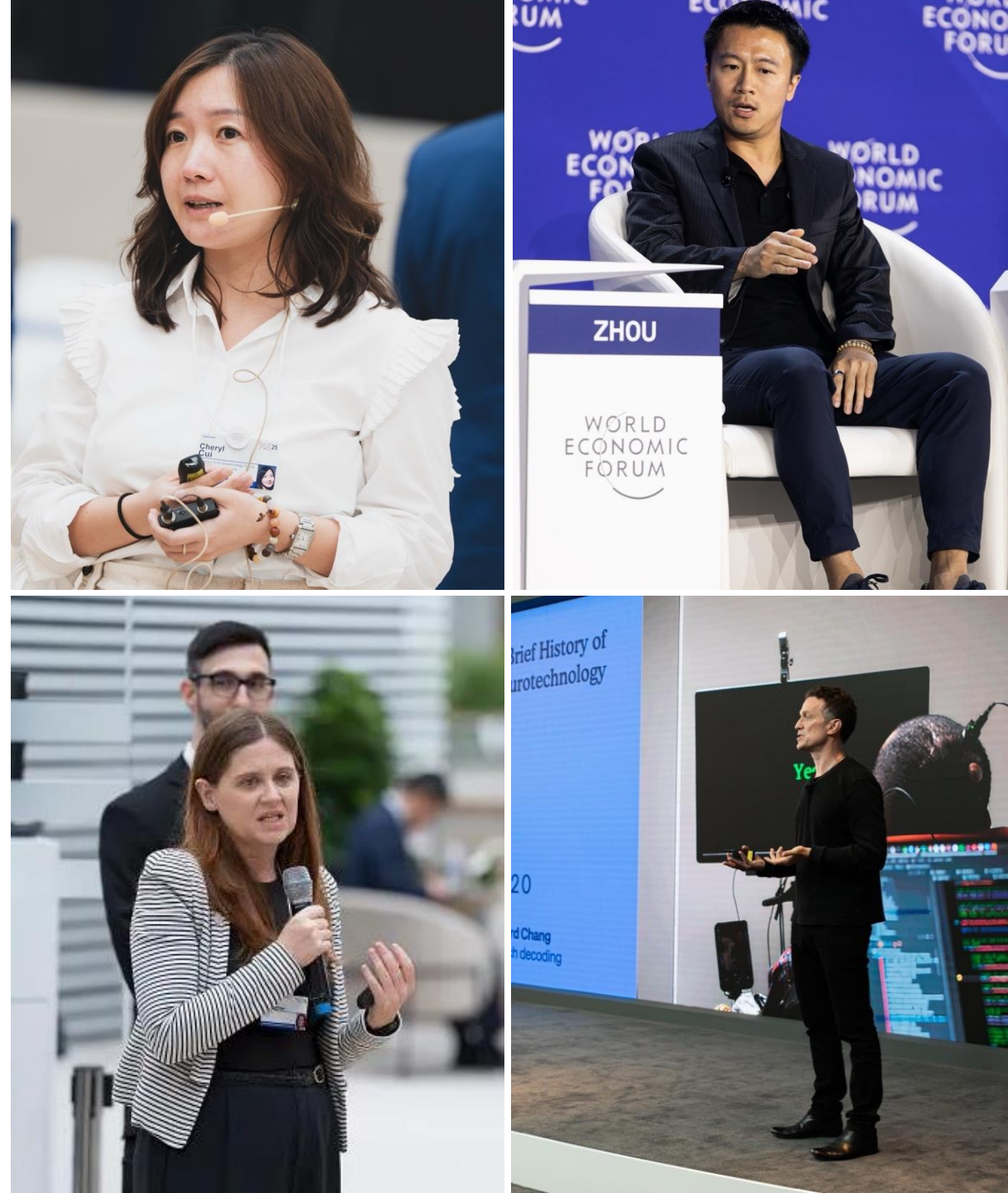
# Innovators

The meeting brought together over 200 innovators across the Forum's communities to help navigate the rapidly evolving technological landscape through solutions-oriented dialogues.

The [Technology Pioneers](#) community announced its 2025 cohort - the most diverse thus far – comprising 100 start-ups from 28 countries driving innovation across industries and borders. The 2025 cohort stands out for its focus on breakthrough innovations tackling global challenges, including advanced robotics, customizable space launch services, micro nuclear reactors, and more accessible quantum computing applications.

UpLink launched the [Water Resilience Challenge](#), the fourth innovation challenge of the Acquapreneur initiative, seeking innovative solutions that address interconnected water resilience challenges across infrastructure, agri-food, technology, and energy, driving systemic change for a water-secure future.

UpLink launched the [Nature's Return Challenge](#), to source early-stage innovators who are transforming capital deployment for nature and connect them with the Uplink community, gaining access to networks, events, and communication tools to reshape perceptions of investing in nature, food and water.





# Change-makers

Over 100 Social innovators, Young Global Leaders, and Global Shapers were in Tianjin, representing 55 countries' participants from government, business, academia, civil society, media, arts and culture.

They explored how emerging technologies, shifting generational values, and systemic global challenges are reshaping leadership, work, and social impact. Discussions ranged from AI's disruptive impact on youth career pathways and its potential for social good, to the rising influence of Gen Z consumers on sustainability-first business models. Sessions emphasized the importance of adaptive leadership, creativity, and intergenerational collaboration in navigating uncertainty.

The [Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship](#) launched a new three-year Youth and Social Innovation Initiative with the Global Shapers Community to explore how we can collectively remove barriers for emerging social innovators and build stronger cross-generational collaboration.





# Arts & Culture

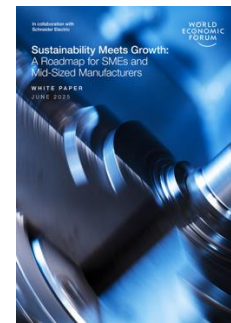
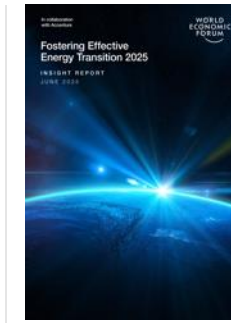
*Seeds of Tomorrow* by Ronen Tanchum and *Fungal Faculty* by Thijs Biersteker exemplified a new frontier in AI-powered art, where innovation intersected with ecology and AI. Drawing from native ecosystems and organic networks, both works transformed human interaction into evolving digital and biological landscapes. Through generative algorithms, motion tracking and sustainable materials, they challenged anthropocentric perspectives, offering a compelling glimpse into a future where technology coexists with the natural world.

Through interactive formats, cultural leaders Thijs Biersteker and Kadine James showcased how interactive formats can bridge science, art and sustainability to spotlight major environmental challenges as well as a vision for the future of fashion in immersive spaces, highlighting wearable NFTs and digital couture, grounded in James' expertise in XR and creative technology.





# Forum Insights (reports/white papers)



# Communication reach at the meeting

28K

Mentions across  
global media

41M

Audience reached through own  
media social posts

2.2M

Readers of own publications and  
blogs on the Forum website

9.8M

Views of livestreamed sessions  
across all channels

2.3M

Audience reached on the Forum's  
public website

17M

Views of videos on social media





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