First Chinese technology park opens

Zibo Hanhai Technology Park, on an area of almost 5,000 m² in Ismaning, is the first incubator of its kind in Bavaria and is creating new forces to attract high-tech companies from China.

It was opened on 11th July 2013 in the presence of representatives of the state capital Munich, the Chinese consulate general and Invest in Bavaria. The new project was driven forward under the leadership of the northern Chinese city of Zibo, which is situated in Bavaria’s partner province of Shangdong and is a strong location for mechanical engineering, ceramics and petrochemicals. In the previous year, China had already been in first place among all foreign investment projects successfully supported by Invest in Bavaria.

The number of Chinese companies based in Bavaria has doubled over the last five years. The Beijing Genomics Institute (BGI), one of the world’s leading institutes in the field of genetic research, chose Munich as a location in early 2012. With branches in Nuremberg, Munich and Bamberg, the Chinese network and communications equipment supplier Huawei Technologies has also been part of Bavaria’s business landscape for a while now. Our state is already home to over 12,000 Chinese citizens. Not many people know that trade relations between the two states go back to the House of Wittelsbach, who were sending increasing numbers of scholars, Jesuit priests and trade ships to China as early as the beginning of the 17th Century.

The new technology park in Ismaning is opening a new chapter in this success story. Invest in Bavaria believes that the “China Center” has great potential to attract even more high-tech companies from China.

Procter & Gamble strengthens Germany as a research location

What makes nappies more absorbent? Which flow fields are at work in electric toothbrushes? And where can renewable raw materials be used for applications in the consumer goods industry? A newly founded research cooperation between the globally active consumer goods corporation Procter & Gamble (P&G) and the Friedrich-Alexander University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU) is dealing with just this kind of question. Building on the outstanding collaboration with the Cluster of Excellence Engineering of Advanced Materials (EAM) at the FAU, the focus is now on the fields of modeling and simulation as well as research into renewable resources and biomass for applications in the consumer goods industry. The cooperation was signed and sealed on 30th July 2013 in the presence of Katja Kessel, Prof. Dr. Grüske from the University of Erlangen and many other professors. P&G was represented, among others, by the European Vice President for Research and Development, Dr. Helen Neville.

“The heart of worldwide research at P&G beats in Germany.” With these impressive words, the Vice President emphasised the significance of the cooperation from the point of view of the company. Around 1,000 of the approximately 9,000 researchers across the globe are based in Germany, working on innovations that enhance people’s everyday lives. For P&G, this cooperation with the University of Erlangen is another step in strengthening Germany as a research location. Invest in Bavaria and Bayern Innovativ – the society for innovation and knowledge transfer in the Free State of Bavaria – have been supporting P&G’s activities for a long time and are certain that this agreement will create the ideal conditions for further research and development projects for the corporation in the state.

Five minutes with …

Raymund Trost, CEO of the Joris Ide Group, Belgium.

The Belgian company is a leading manufacturer of steel products for the construction industry and recently opened a new production facility in the Brodswinden district of Ansbach, where flexibility is all-important.

Which advantages ultimately led you to choose Middle Franconia as a location?
Germany is one of the most demanding markets in Europe, especially in our segment, regarding both the quality requirements and the delivery service. Both are big priorities for us, so it was high time we established a site here. The north of southern Germany provides ideal conditions. Thanks to the sufficiently large production areas and good infrastructure in a company-friendly climate, we are able to provide products for a wide range of customer needs here.

How important is Bavaria for you as an industrial location, especially with regard to your company’s innovativeness and flexibility?
Bavaria offers us the perfect combination of all factors within Germany. We value the strong economic power of the region, with the latest industrial sectors and qualified specialist staff – and not least demanding customers right on our doorstep. The geographical position is key for Joris Ide. With the location in Ansbach, we are in a sense creating a bridge between other sites in Western Europe, such as Belgium and France, and those in Eastern Europe. This makes our group’s network tighter and allows us to orientate ourselves even more flexibly towards the market requirements throughout Europe.

How helpful was the support from Invest in Bavaria and the economic promotion services of the town of Ansbach for you?
We were able to work together in a very open and constructive way with Invest in Bavaria, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the town of Ansbach. The readiness to find solutions quickly and simply was clear to see everywhere from the very beginning. We had competent contact persons and were able to make valuable contacts both locally and across the region.

Number of the month

22 cities

... from Bavaria hold top positions in the Germany-wide city ranking. According to a study conducted by the Cologne Institute for Economic Research, 22 Bavarian cities are among the 50 economically strongest cities in the Federal Republic of Germany. Four Bavarian cities made the top ten list: Schweinfurt is number three, Ingolstadt ranks number four, followed by Regensburg in seventh place and Erlangen at number eight.

Which starting points do you see for your company in the Ansbach/Middle Franconia region?
A strong economy needs buildings that are intelligently constructed and efficiently built. Ansbach is our headquarters for the German-speaking market and we will be expanding consistently over the next few years. We see interesting prospects with partners in the construction industry throughout the region, as well as with reliable logistics partners from all over Germany.

How important is Bavaria’s mix of culture, leisure value and quality of life for you and your staff?
Hugely important, without a doubt. We value long-term, stable cooperation, including, or indeed especially, within our company. The well-being of our staff is therefore very important. Ansbach and Middle Franconia have a lot of offer in this respect. There is a lot to discover and relaxation is never far away.
The label “Made in Germany” has remained significant as an indication of the origin and quality of a product even in the age of globalisation, especially when it comes to the law. German law today makes a key contribution to the attractiveness of Germany as an investment location. Legal security, transparent processes and efficient, independent jurisdiction are seen in a positive light by foreign investors and create the conditions for good business – from the ease and simplicity of founding a company to the reliable protection of intellectual property.

What does that mean in practice day-to-day?
Investors can expect fast and reliable judicial procedures and benefit from short, clear contractual constructs and favourable conditions. For example, contracts between two companies are much shorter under German law than in England, the USA or the Commonwealth nations, hourly rates for lawyers are low compared to other countries, and German courts have an excellent reputation for efficiency. Most cases at district courts are concluded within three months. These are clear advantages for investors who value reliable conditions.

German law as an export hit
The German Civil Code is considered exemplary even beyond the country’s borders, and large parts of it were adopted by many eastern European states after the fall of the Iron Curtain. And its influence goes even further than that: since 2000, there has been a so-called constitutional state dialogue between the Federal Republic of Germany and the People’s Republic of China, in which Germany is supporting China in introducing legal and economic reforms.

Founding companies without hurdles
Everything you need to get off to a flying start: founding a company in Germany is easy, simple and good value. For example, foreign investors have the option of founding an independent branch (not a legal entity) or a subsidiary (legal entity). Crucial criteria in this decision often include the desired role of the shareholders, possible limitations of liability and tax-related aspects. Thorough consulting in advance is strongly advised to ensure that the right legal form is chosen and all arrangements are orientated towards the purpose of the company as well as they can be. Invest in Bavaria brokers contact to proven experts in all specialist fields – from solicitors to lawyers for brand, tax and business law – and supports customers in all phases of founding a company and well beyond that.

→ www.muenchen.ihk.de/de/recht/Firmenrecht-Gesellschaftsrecht
Traditional costume parade to Munich’s Oktoberfest

It can be counted among the largest parades of traditional costumes in the world: the traditional costume parade to Munich’s Oktoberfest. On 22nd September 2013 at 10:00 am, it’s that time again. Around 9,000 people are involved in the seven kilometre long parade, showing off an impressive variety of costumes, traditions and folk dancing. Taking part in the parade are not just Bavarian societies from many regions of the state, but groups from all over Germany and Europe (including Austria, Italy, Poland, Croatia, Greece, the Czech Republic, Turkey and Switzerland), whose unusual costumes and bands make the parade particularly worth watching.

The Münchner Kindl, the emblem of the city, leads the traditional costume parade, followed by a colourful mixture of magnificent costumes, mountain troops, bands and flag-wavers. As the grand finale, a few of the bands and orchestras enter the beer tents and complete the parade with a piece of music.

The traditional costume parade was held for the first time in 1835 in honour of the silver wedding anniversary of King Ludwig I and Therese of Bavaria. Since 1948 it has been an established part of Oktoberfest, held on the first Sunday of the event. The spectacle can be enjoyed for two hours from one of fourteen viewing platforms. Alongside Munich’s breweries, who are represented every year with their splendid vehicles, over 40 wonderfully decorated floats and horse-drawn carriages make the parade truly unique. Many of them are decorated with depictions of crafts and traditions, bringing the past back to life.

The world comes together in Bavaria, and there can be few other events that put the advantages of the location against a more beautiful and magnificent backdrop than the traditional costume parade.

→www.oktoberfest.info/events/trachten-und-schuetzenzug