

Australia-China Relations
Institute
澳中关系研究院



UTS:ACRI

Annual Report

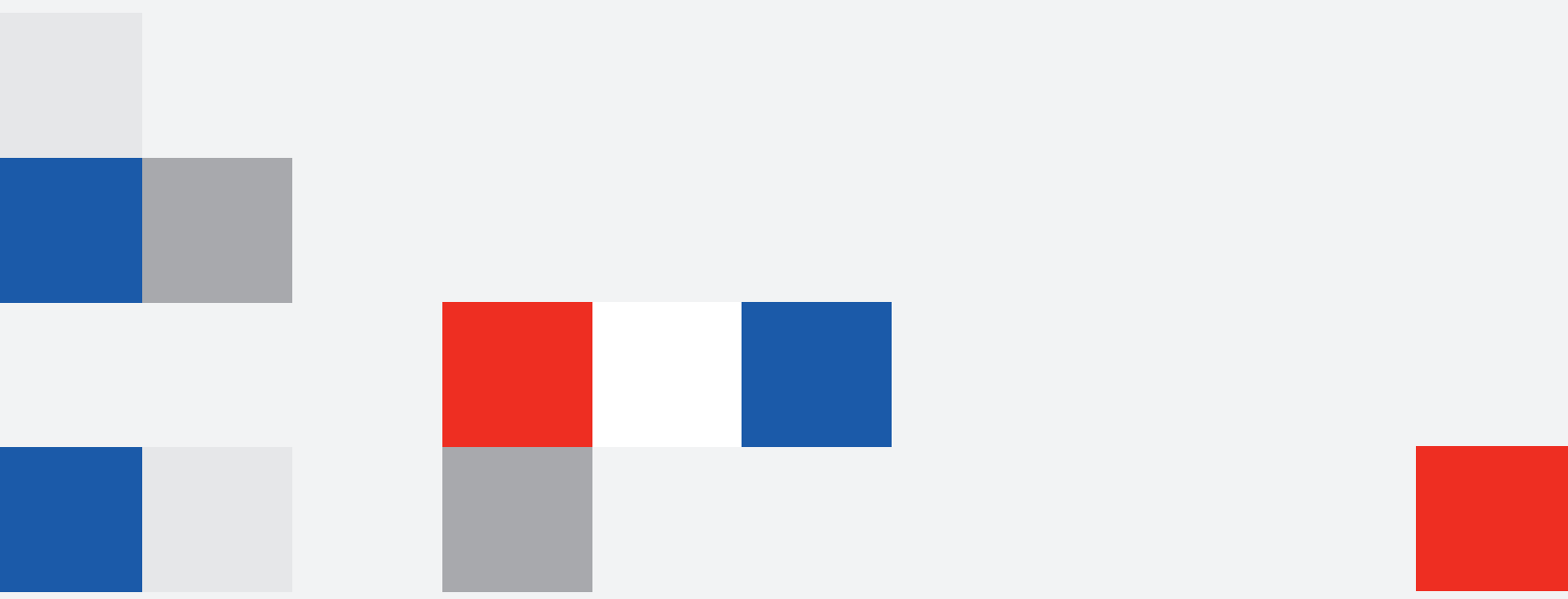
2025





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About Us



Overview

The Australia-China Relations Institute (UTS:ACRI) is an independent, non-partisan research institute established in 2014 by the University of Technology Sydney. Chinese studies centres exist in other Australian universities. UTS:ACRI, however, is Australia's first and only research institute devoted to studying the relationship of these countries.

In the past Australia's dominating economic relationships have been with the British Empire, the United States and Japan. Australia's most important trading relationship is now with China, a nation very different in governance, politics and values. As China's economy grows, so too does its strategic weight and the challenges and opportunities this presents to Australia.

UTS:ACRI seeks to inform Australia's engagement with China through research, analysis and dialogue grounded in scholarly rigour.





Message from the Director



In 2025, Australia's relationship with the People's Republic of China (PRC) continued along a cautiously stabilising path. Notably, Canberra and Beijing reinstated the annual Defence Strategic Dialogue for the first time since 2019, restoring a key, albeit limited, channel for military communication. The re-election of the Albanese government in May provided policy continuity, reinforcing its emphasis on dialogue as the primary tool for managing strategic differences.

Diplomatic engagement was sustained at the highest levels. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese visited the PRC in July, meeting with President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang and National People's Congress Standing Committee Chairman Zhao Leji. Chairman Zhao's subsequent visit to Australia in November further signalled mutual intent to maintain stability in bilateral relations. However, the practical impact of these exchanges remains constrained by persistent strategic mistrust and divergent regional objectives. The restoration and maintenance of dialogue mechanisms should therefore be understood as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for longer-term stability.

Economic ties continued to underpin the bilateral relationship, with 2025 marking the 10th anniversary of the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA). Both nations committed to a formal review of the agreement as they adjust their economic strategies amid intensifying global competition. While trade volumes have remained strong following the removal of earlier restrictions implemented by Beijing, the relationship is increasingly shaped by risk management considerations, particularly in sectors such as critical minerals and advanced technology. Economic interdependence continues to function as both a source of resilience and a potential point of vulnerability.

At the same time, stabilisation has not resolved underlying tensions. Differences over regional security dynamics, including maritime disputes in the South China Sea and tensions in the Taiwan Strait, continue to define the boundaries of the relationship. These risks were evident throughout 2025, including multiple unsafe interactions involving the PRC's military reported by Australian Defence Force, as well

as live-fire exercises conducted by PRC vessels in the Tasman Sea.

Expanded people-to-people exchange, supported by the PRC's extension of visa-free travel for Australians as well as initiatives backed by the Australian government's National Foundation for Australia-China Relations (NFACR), has contributed to increased societal engagement. Yet this increased connectivity sits uneasily alongside ongoing concerns regarding human rights and unresolved consular cases, including that of Dr Yang Hengjun, who remains detained in Beijing and faces a suspended death sentence handed down in 2024 following his 2019 arrest.

The persistence of both stabilisation and tension underscored the need for independent, evidence-based analysis – work that the Australia-China Relations Institute at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS:ACRI) continued to advance throughout 2025.

UTS:ACRI scholars published 33 peer-reviewed journal articles, five book chapters, six major reports and 97 commentary pieces. They edited two books and delivered 21 conference presentations and papers. Additional outputs included contributions to the Institute's *Perspectives, Analysis and Brief* series. UTS:ACRI also launched the *Fast Focus* series, delivering concise, expert commentary on key developments in Australia-PRC relations.

In addition, the Institute marked five years of the *UTS:ACRI/BIDA Poll*, a flagship research initiative led by UTS:ACRI Head of Research Analysis Elena Collinson and Centre for Business Intelligence and Data Analytics Deputy Director Paul Burke. Over this

period, the poll has become an important longitudinal resource, offering nuanced data on Australian public attitudes toward the PRC and bilateral relations.

UTS:ACRI experts continued to be sought after for media commentary and expert analysis, offering timely insights into developments shaping Australia-PRC relations in domestic and internal media outlets and policy forums.

With ChAFTA in focus, I authored a quantitative assessment of its core outcomes a decade on, while Associate Professor – Research Marina Zhang extended this work through a firm-level analysis drawing on more than 40 interviews with industry stakeholders. I was also pleased to contribute post-data collection analysis to two reports based on surveys conducted by the China-Australia Chamber of Commerce, capturing the sentiment of senior executives engaged in the bilateral economic relationship.

UTS:ACRI Research Principal Professor Xunpeng Shi was named to the Clarivate Highly Cited Researchers 2025 list, placing him in the top one percent globally in energy economics. Elena Collinson's pre-election report, *Framing the Future*, was among the most downloaded publications in the International Relations category of Australian Policy Online's (formerly the Analysis and Policy Observatory), underscoring the Institute's policy relevance and reach.

We were pleased to welcome Dr Edward Chan as the China Matters-UTS:ACRI Fellow for 2024-25, under the mentorship of China Matters Founding Director Linda Jakobson and myself. His research project focused on Australia-PRC relations and maritime security in the South Pacific, with fieldwork conducted in the PRC, Fiji and Solomon Islands. The publication of this work was marked by an event at which Michael Wesley, Professor of International Relations and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Culture and Engagement) at the University of Melbourne, delivered the keynote.

This work formed part of a broader program of engagement across the year. Our events program addressed a range of critical and emerging issues, including RMB internationalisation and de-dollarisation, the implications of political developments in the United States under the second

Trump administration for PRC policy, the trajectory of bilateral trade and investment and the political dynamics of Australian-Chinese communities. In partnership with the Australian National University, we co-hosted a roundtable of energy experts from Australia and the PRC, held at UTS:ACRI and supported by the NFACR.

We were honoured to host Australia's Minister for Trade and Investment, Senator the Hon Don Farrell, as keynote speaker at an event reflecting on ChAFTA, which also convened two former trade ministers, the Hon Andrew Robb and the Hon Craig Emerson. Minister-Counsellor Gao Feng also delivered special remarks on behalf of PRC Ambassador to Australia Xiao Qian.

During the year, we farewelled our Events and Communications Officer, Amy Ma, after six years of dedicated service to UTS:ACRI, during which she made a valued contribution to the Institute's events and communications, supporting the delivery of our public engagement activities and contributing positively to the Institute's work and culture. We also acknowledge the departure of Iain Watt as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International) at UTS after seven years in the role, and thank him for his leadership and sustained support of the university's international portfolio, within which UTS:ACRI operates.

UTS:ACRI remains grateful for the guidance of its Advisory Board, chaired by the Hon Warwick Smith AO, and for the continued support of its industry partners: China Construction Bank, John Holland and King & Wood Mallesons.

As Australia-PRC relations continue to shift, UTS:ACRI is committed to continuing to contribute rigorous, policy-relevant analysis and sustain engagement across government, industry and academia, supporting informed discussion and deeper understanding of the challenges and trade-offs shaping the relationship.



Professor James Laurenceson
Director, UTS:ACRI



Farewelling UTS Deputy Vice Chancellor (International) Iain Watt



Farewelling UTS:ACRI Events and Communications Officer Amy Ma



Our People



James Laurenceson
Director



Ming Liang
Institute Officer



Marina Yue Zhang
Associate Professor – Research



Wanning Sun
Deputy Director



Amy Ma
Events and Communications Officer



Elena Collinson
Manager, Research Analysis



Xunpeng Shi
Research Principal





Management Committee

UTS:ACRI's Management Committee monitors the Institute's activities and performance, and approves the budget and strategic direction of UTS:ACRI's research and other programs.

The Management Committee is headed by UTS Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International) Mr Leo Mian Liu and comprises Professor Michael Fabinyi, UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences; Professor James Laurenceson, UTS:ACRI Director; and Professor Leona Tam, UTS Business School.



Advisory Board

The role of the UTS:ACRI's Advisory Board is to provide advice for the UTS:ACRI Management Committee's consideration.



The Hon. Warwick Smith AO
(Chair)

The Hon Warwick Smith AO is Chairman of the Advisory Board at Australian Capital Equity, holders of interests in Seven Group Holdings of which he is a Board Director, Seven West Media, Coates Hire, Beach Energy, WesTrac and Caterpillar industrial services and equipment in Western Australia and New South Wales. He is a Board Director at Estia Health Ltd, SGSPAA and Jemena Northern Gas Pipeline. He is the Chairman of Ord Minnett. He is the Chairman of the National Museum of Australia. With Rio Tinto, he is a China Advisory Panel Member and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of International Affairs. At the Business Council of Australia, he is the Chairman of the Global Engagement Committee. He has served as Chairman of the Australia-China Council for over 8 years and was the inaugural Chair of the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations.



Ms Heidi Yaqi Han JP

Heidi Yaqi Han JP is a former journalist, community leader, and Head of Marketing and Communications of eBest Pty Ltd. Born in China and educated in New Zealand and Australia, she is an experienced multicultural media and communication professional in Australia, excelling as a bilingual journalist and specialist in cross-cultural communications. She has over a decade of impactful experience in community media, *SBS*, *The Australian*, and consultancy roles for major CALD marketing campaigns, events, and cultural policy. She has worked with organisations including the City of Sydney, Cultural Perspectives, and NSW Health, and with advertising and PR agencies such as Publicis and M&C Saatchi. She was a fellow of the Asialink Leadership Program and the Dr John Yu Fellowship and served as a committee member for the Australian Chinese Charity Foundation for over 12 years. Currently, she is a committee member of Chinese Australian Forum and Vice-president of the Australia-Shandong Association.



Ms Renae Lattey

Renae Lattey is the Chief Executive Partner, Australia for King & Wood Mallesons. Prior to her appointment, Ms Lattey was the Managing Partner, Clients and Mergers & Acquisitions. Before her time in management, Renae had established a strong international profile having acted for major telecommunications clients throughout the Asia Pacific, particularly on projects in Singapore, Malaysia and New Zealand as well as in UK and Europe. Her work included advice to regional governments on World Bank telecommunications projects in developing countries and advising international communications providers on the Australian regulatory environment.



Professor James Laurenceson

Professor James Laurenceson is Director of the Australia-China Relations Institute at UTS. He has previously held appointments at the University of Queensland (Australia), Shandong University (China) and Shimonoseki City University (Japan). He was President of the Chinese Economics Society of Australia from 2012-2014. His academic research has been published in leading scholarly journals including *China Economic Review* and *China Economic Journal*. Professor Laurenceson also provides regular commentary on contemporary developments in China's economy and the Australia-China economic relationship.



Dr Angela Lehmann

Dr Lehmann is a leading voice in the Australia-China education and research relationship and has published widely on China-Australia's education relationship. She speaks regularly at conferences and symposia about international education and China-Australia higher education ties. Dr Lehmann is the Head of Research at The Lygon Group. She also holds the position of Vice President of the Australia China Business Council's Australian Capital Territory branch and has previously worked with Universities Australia in Canberra. Dr Lehmann was awarded a PhD in sociology from the Australian National University.



Dr Garry Willinge

Dr Garry Willinge is Managing Director of Cbridge Limited (HK), a management consulting, corporate advisory, capital markets and leadership development firm. He has interests in companies across a number of sectors around the world and facilitated early stage companies' growth, IPO and exits. He is an Adjunct Professor of Business Studies at Curtin University in Australia and previously served a full term of nine years on the Advisory Board of Curtin Business School. In November 2013, he received an honorary degree of Doctor of Technology from Curtin University.



Mr Peter Osborne

From 2009 to February 2020 Mr Osborne was Managing Director Asia for Blackmores Limited, Australia's leading ASX listed natural healthcare company. Mr Osborne was responsible for the overall strategy for Blackmores' growth objectives in Asia. Prior to working for Blackmores, Mr Osborne was Australia's most senior trade diplomat in China as the Minister (Commercial) and Austrade's Country Manager for China in the Australian Embassy Beijing. Mr Osborne also previously held Australia's Senior Trade Commissioner positions in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Taipei.



Professor Daojiong Zha

Professor Daojiong Zha is a professor of international political economy in the School of International Studies, Peking University, where he also directs a Center on Transnational Issues and holds a professorship in the University's Ocean Research Institute. He specialises in studying non-traditional security issues in China's foreign relations, with a particular focus on energy, food, and trans-boundary water issues. His recent research interest has expanded to political risk management for Chinese investments overseas, which took him on field trips to Africa, Australia, and Southeast Asia.







Honorary Appointments

Through its honorary appointments program, UTS:ACRI values its engagement with research, educational and industry partners.

UTS:ACRI honorary appointments are made in line with the UTS Honorary Titles and Awards Policy.

Adjunct academic titles are awarded to academics from other universities on the basis of their achievements and expertise.

Adjunct industry titles are awarded on the basis of expertise and recognition in business, public sector, not-for-profit, professional or cultural communities.

Emeritus Professors



Professor David Goodman
Professor of Chinese Politics,
University of Sydney

Adjunct Professors



Professor Greg Austin
China cyber and strategic policy
expert



Professor Louise Edwards
Emeritus Professor of Chinese History, School
of Humanities and Languages, University of
New South Wales; Honorary Professor, School
of Modern Languages and Cultures, University
of Hong Kong



Professor Mark Beeson
Professor of International Politics,
University of Western Australia



Professor Greg McCarthy
Former BHP Chair of Australian
Studies, Peking University



Professor Jocelyn Chey AM
Former Australian Consul General
to Hong Kong



Professor Guanghua Wan
Director, Institute of World Economy,
Fudan University

Adjunct Associate Professors



Dr James Cheong
Associate Professor, Hang Seng
University of Hong Kong



Dr Michael Clarke
Senior Lecturer, Centre for Future
Defence and National Security,
Deakin University



Dr Chengxin Pan
Associate Professor of Political Science, Department of Government and Public Administration, University of Macau



Professor Junji Xiao
Associate Professor, Lingnan University of Hong Kong



Dr Jingdong Yuan
Director, China and Asia Security Programme, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

Adjunct Industry Fellows



Mr Murray Davis
Regional Manager – Greater China, Meat & Livestock Australia



Ms Glenda Korporaal OAM
Former writer and columnist, *The Australian*

Adjunct Fellows



Dr Corey Lee Bell
Adjunct Fellow, Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney



Mr Kevin Magee
Former Australian Ambassador and senior Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade official



Dr Edward Chan
Inaugural recipient, China Matters–UTS:ACRI Fellowship 2024–2025; Postdoctoral Fellow, Australian National University



Mr Muyi Yang
Senior Electricity Policy Analyst, Ember



Ms Yun Jiang
Public policy specialist



Dr Frank Yuan
Postdoctoral Fellow, Australia Institute



Dr Minran Liu
Lecturer, School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland

Visiting Fellows



Dr Pei Duan
Associate Professor and Master Tutor, Shanxi University of Finance and Economics



Visiting Scholars

UTS:ACRI maintains an active visiting academic program. Visitors are PhD students from other institutions.

Name	Institute	Research Topic	Start Date	Duration (Months)
Xi Chen	East China Normal University	China-Australia Antarctic cooperation: Preservation and development	10/11/2023	18
Yanhui Wei	Shandong Technology and Business University	From surplus promotion to open symbiosis: Research on coevolution of sleeping patent sharing value	16/09/2024	12

Research Associates

Dr Lai-Ha Chan

UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Dr Peter Choi

UTS Faculty of Science

Associate Professor Dana Cordell

UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures

Dr Camille Dickson-Deane

UTS Science

Dr Rebecca Dong

UTS Business School

Dr Kamal Dua

UTS Health

Dr Sameera Durrani

UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Associate Professor Michael Fabinyi

UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Dr Alexandra Grey

UTS Faculty of Law

Professor Youguang Guo

UTS Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

Professor Tim Harcourt

UTS Institute for Public Policy and Governance

Associate Professor Colin Hawes

UTS Faculty of Law

Dr Keith Heggart

UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Associate Professor Christina Ho

UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Emeritus Professor Andrew Jakubowicz

UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Associate Professor Yongjian Ke

UTS Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building

Dr Brent Keogh

UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Associate Professor Kaveh Khalilpour

UTS Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

Associate Professor Susie Khamis

UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Dr Doris Li

UTS Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building

Associate Professor Grace Li

UTS Faculty of Law

Associate Professor David Lim

UTS Health

Associate Professor Zhen Luo

UTS Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

Associate Professor Shiko Maruyama,

UTS Business School

Associate Professor Ofer Mintz

UTS Business School

Professor Michele Rumsey

UTS Health

Associate Professor Song Shi

UTS Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building

Associate Professor Natalie Stoianoff

UTS Faculty of Law

Professor Kathy Walsh

UTS Business School

Associate Professor Jianxin Wang

UTS Business School

Associate Professor Dongbin Wei

UTS Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

Professor Stuart White

UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures

Dr Robert Wu

UTS Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

Associate Professor Jingqing Yang

UTS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Associate Professor Yang Yang

UTS Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

Dr Litao Yu

UTS Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

Associate Professor Jun Zhang

UTS Business School

Dr Yi Zhang

UTS Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology



Institute Operating Principles

UTS:ACRI is a UTS entity providing rigorous and independent scholarly research and evidence-based analysis of the highest quality to key stakeholders in the Australia-PRC relationship, including the Australian public.

UTS:ACRI's day to day activities and the strategic actions of the Management Committee and Members are bound by UTS policies and procedures relating to academic integrity, independence and transparency.

Key UTS policy instruments relating to the work of UTS:ACRI include:

- Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression
- Academic Integrity
- Code of Conduct
- Data Governance
- Gifts and Benefits
- Honorary Titles and Awards
- Industry Advisory
- Research Policy
- Risk Management
- Use of AI in Research

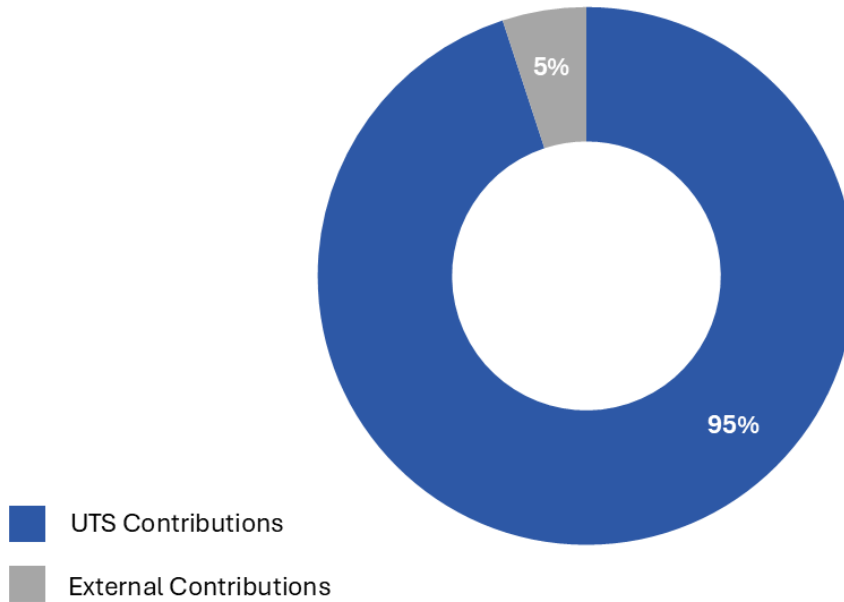
All policies are available via UTS Governance online at:

<<https://www.uts.edu.au/about/leadership-governance/policies/a-z>>.





Funding



UTS contributions \$1,675,809.54

95 percent of UTS:ACRI's funding in 2025 was derived from contributions by the University of Technology Sydney.

External contributions \$89,050.83

5 percent of UTS:ACRI's funding in 2025 was derived from external contributions from the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and industry supporters and community contributions.

Grants

Project and research grants were received from the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.

Industry support

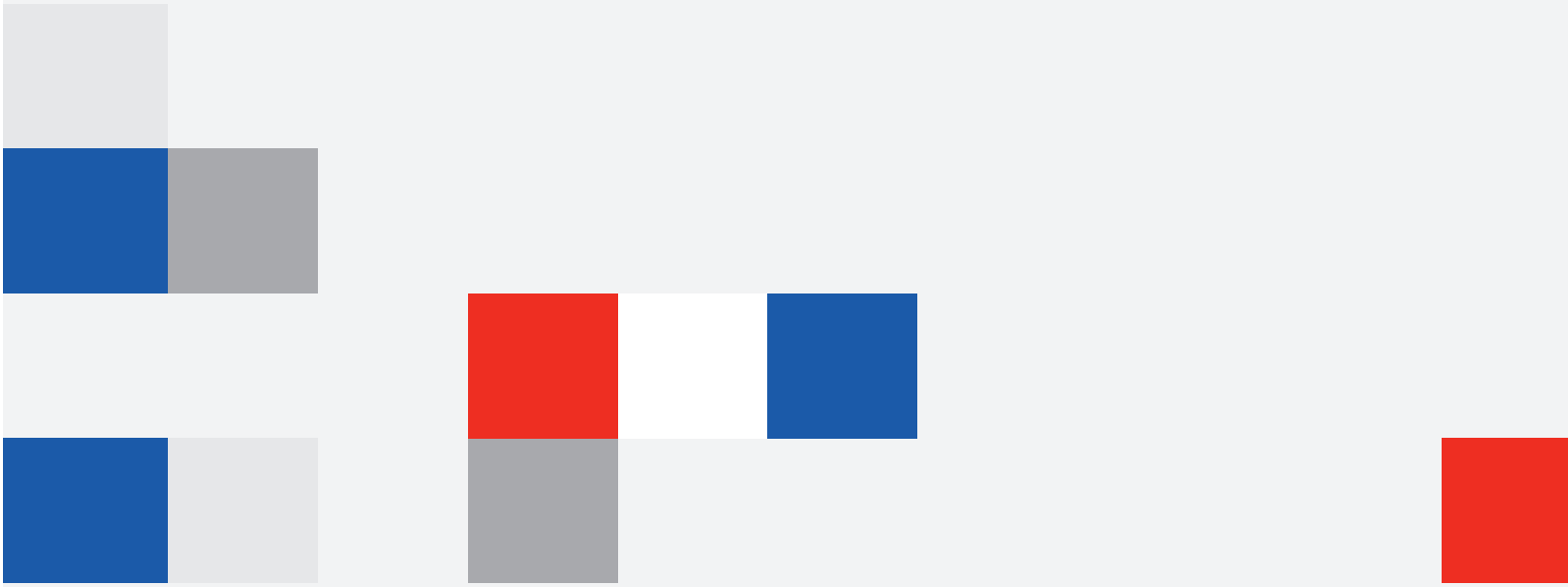
Industry contributions were received from China Construction Bank, John Holland and King & Wood Mallesons.

Community contributions

Community contributions were received from UTS' donations program.

UTS:ACRI receives funding from external contributors to support its mission to inform Australia's engagement with the PRC through research, analysis and dialogue grounded in scholarly rigour. External contributors do not provide strategic direction nor do they shape or influence UTS:ACRI's research and other programs.

Total income \$1,764,860.37



Research and Analysis



Overview

Research is the basis on which UTS:ACRI seeks to inform Australia's engagement with the PRC. By uncovering facts and deepening understanding through undertaking and supporting evidence-based analysis, UTS:ACRI research serves to promote sound public and private sector decision-making, as well as raising the level of Australia-PRC relations literacy amongst the general public.

Traditional academic output such as scholarly journal articles and conference papers are complemented by a flow of research reports, polls, fact sheets, briefs and commentary pieces that explore contemporary developments.

The analysis and conclusions in these publications are formulated independently by their authors. UTS:ACRI does not take an institutional position on any issue.

In 2025, UTS:ACRI analysts published:



33 Journal Articles



21 Conference Papers and Presentations



1 *Fast Focus* Series Piece



7 Books and Book Chapters



13 *Perspectives* Series Pieces



97 Commentary Pieces

(see Media and Commentary for a full list)



1 Poll



2 Analyses



6 Major Research Reports



2 Briefs





Journal Articles

Shanglei Chai, Wenjing Huo, Qiang Li, Qiang Ji and [Xunpeng Shi](#), 2025. 'Effects of carbon tax on energy transition, emissions and economy amid technological progress', *Applied Energy*, vol. 377, article 124578. doi: 10.1016/j.apenergy.2024.124578.

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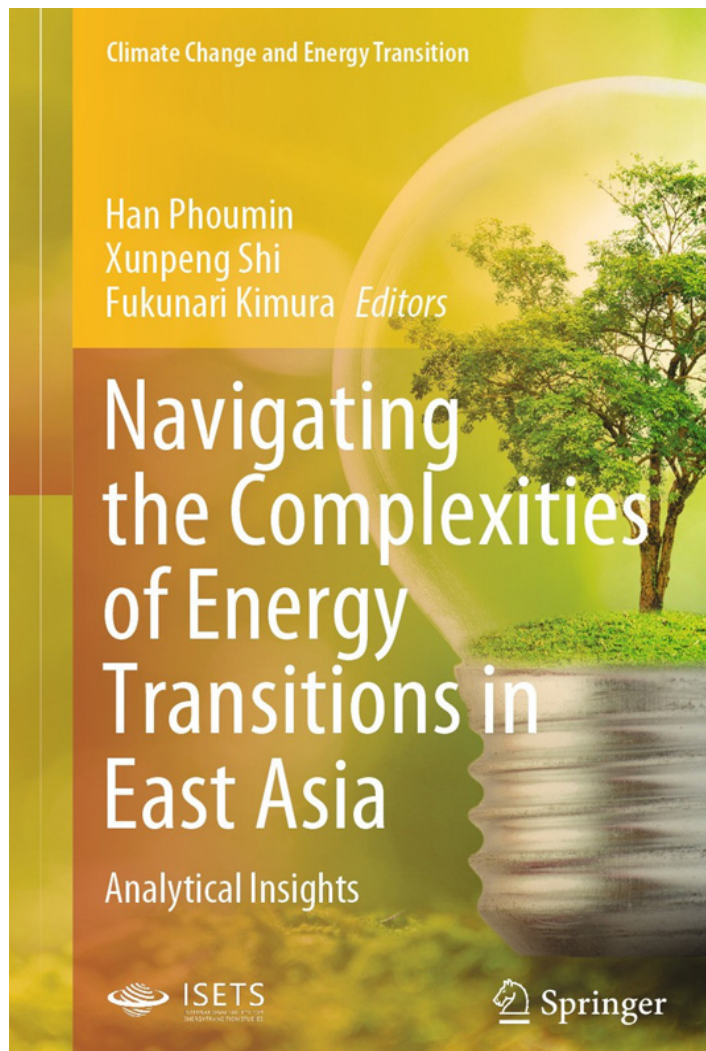
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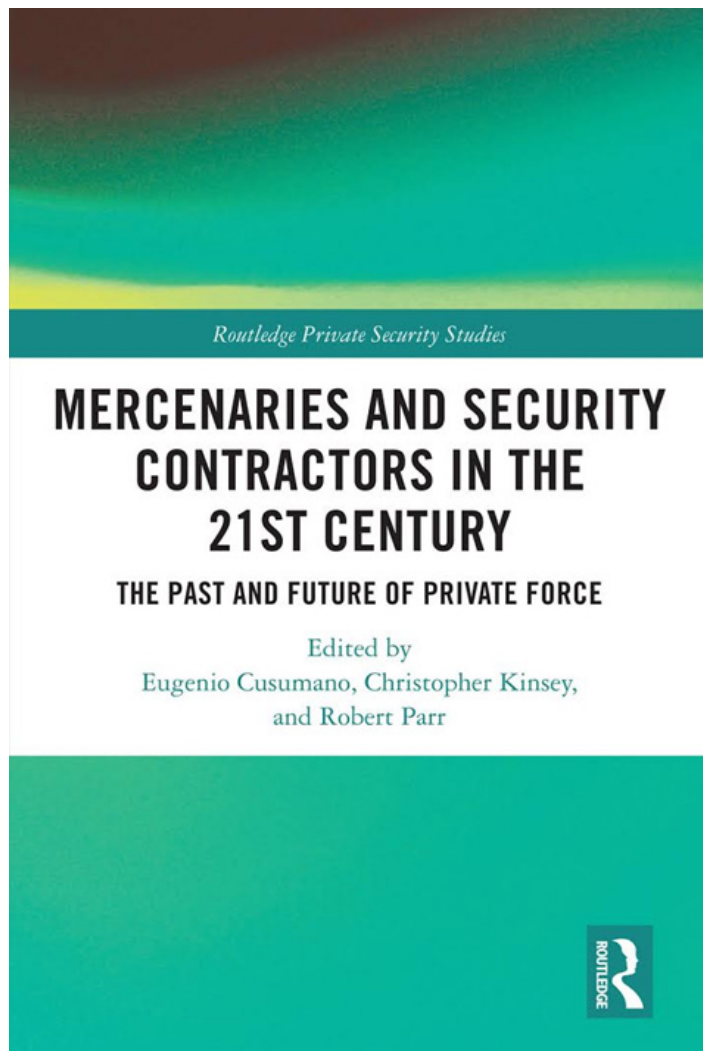
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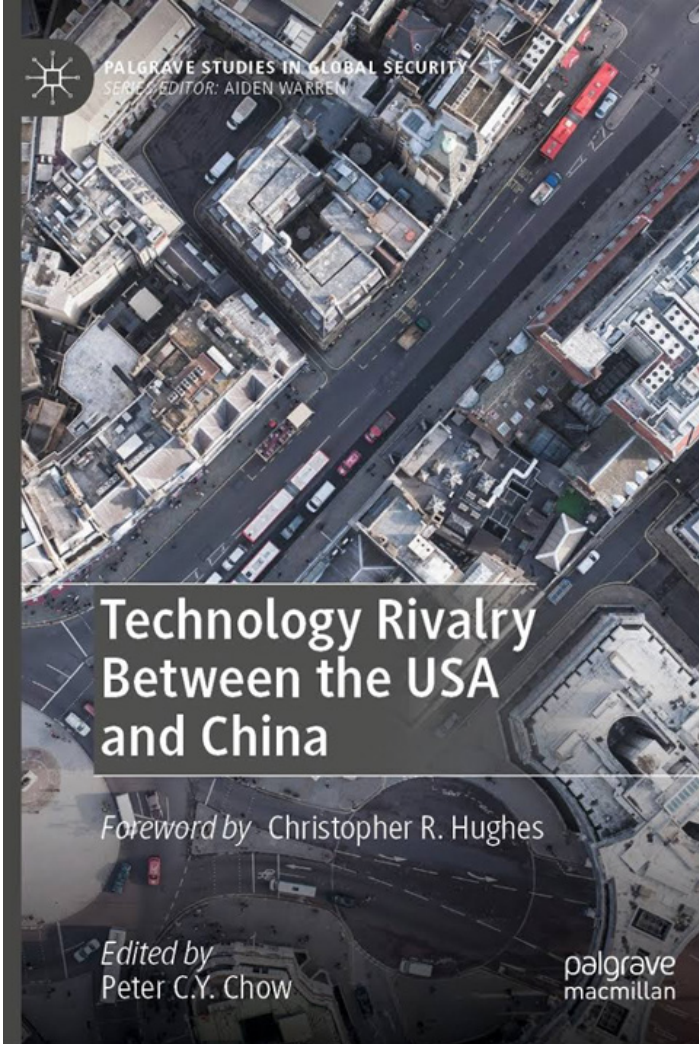
Books and Book Chapters



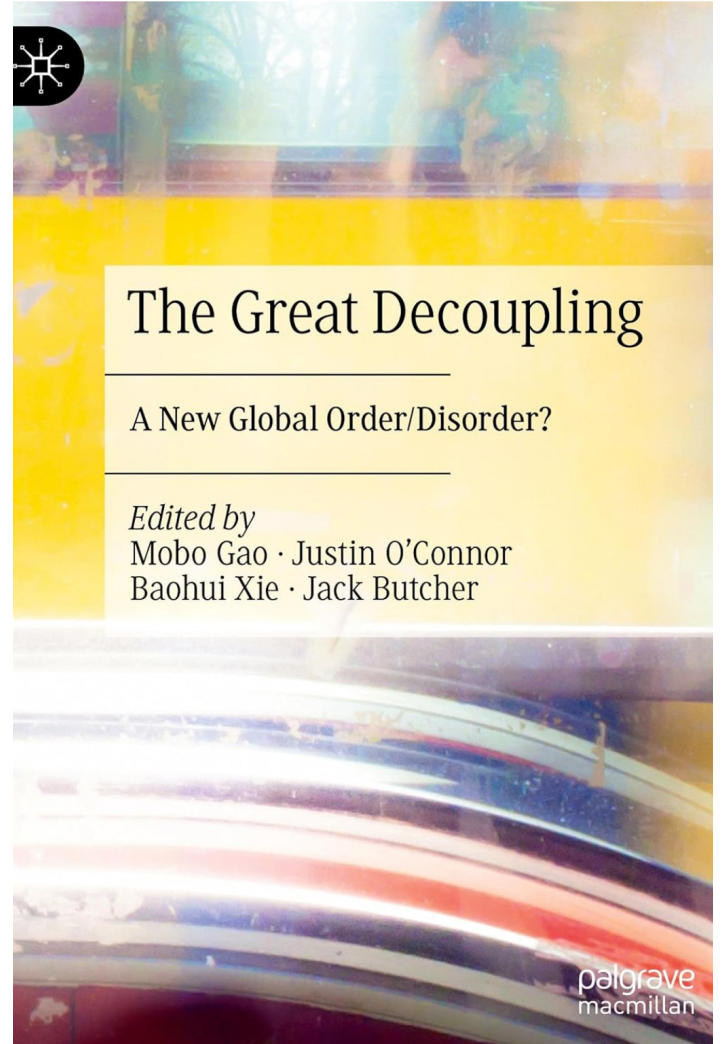
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Jingdong Yuan, 'China's Emerging Private Security Companies: Development, challenges, and future prospects', in Eugenio Cusumano, Christopher Kinsey and Robert Parr (eds.), *Mercenaries and Security Contractors in the 21st Century: The Past and Future of Private Force*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 131-147.



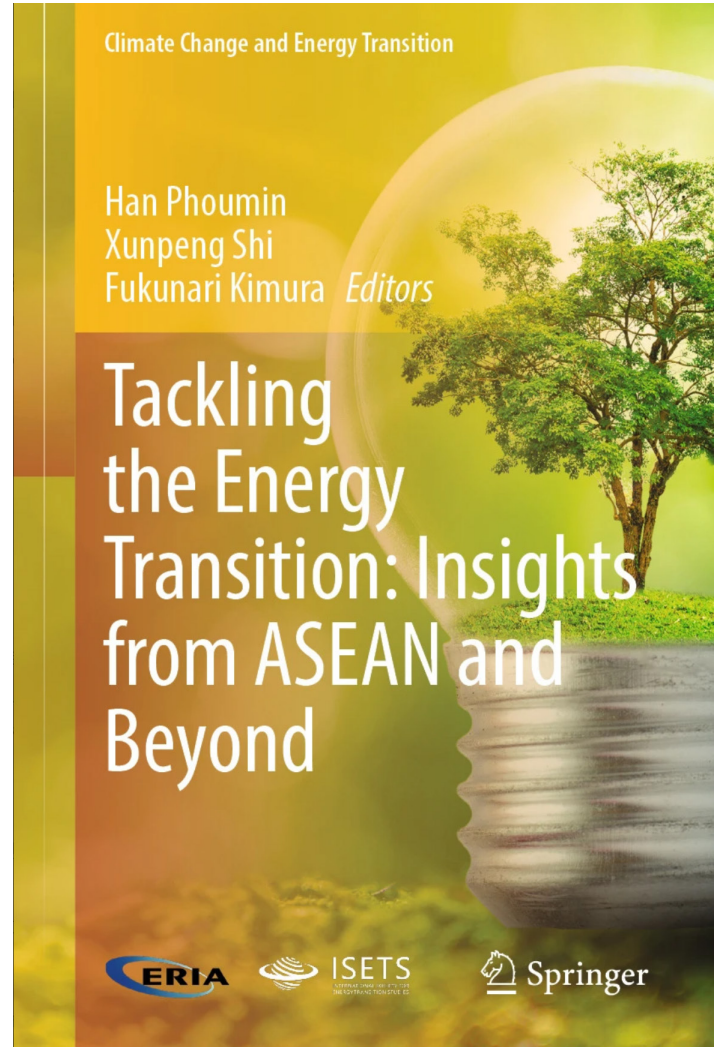
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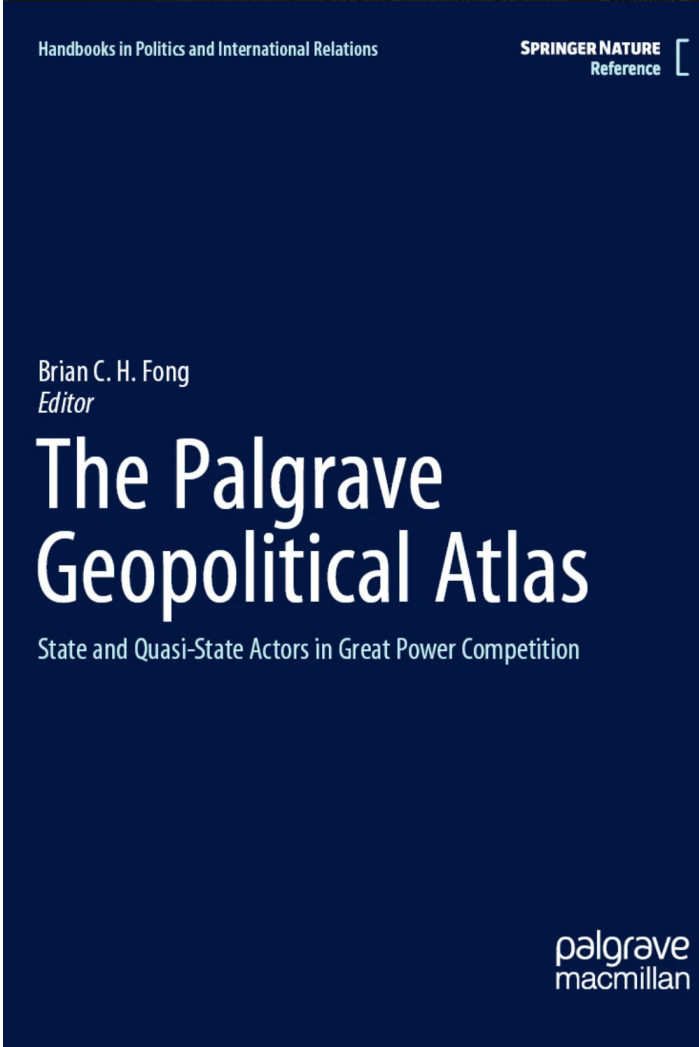
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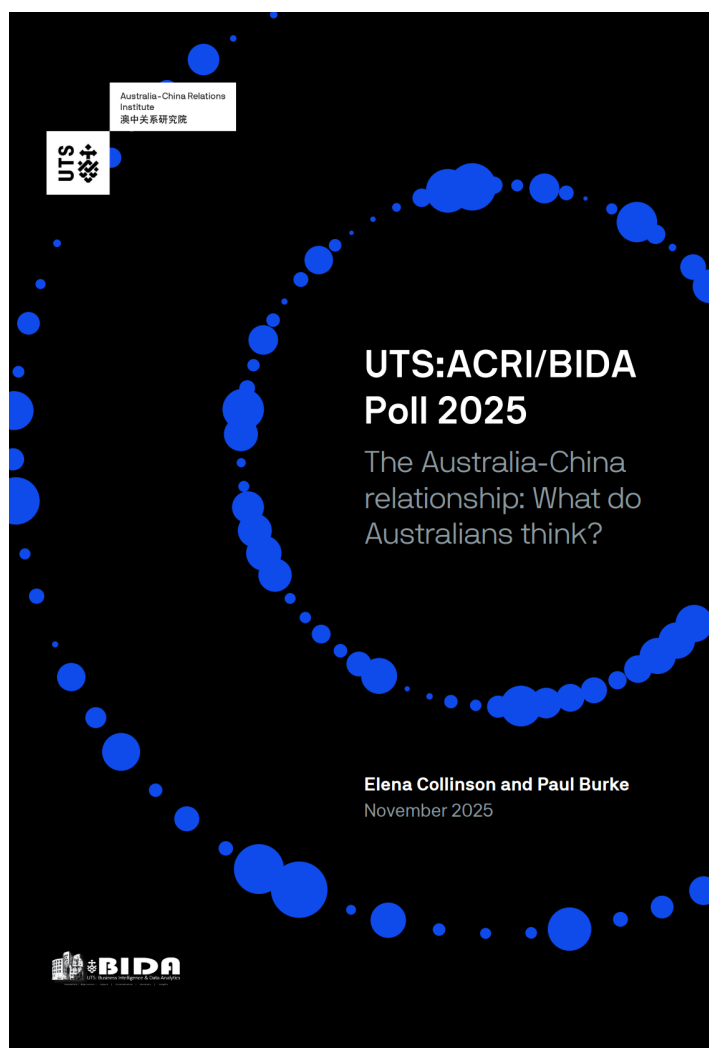
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Polling

UTS:ACRI/BIDA Poll 2025: The Australia–China Relationship: What do Australians Think?

November 18 2025



Ms Elena Collinson



Professor Paul Burke

The *UTS:ACRI/BIDA Poll 2025* offers the latest insights into how Australians understand and evaluate the evolving relationship with China. Entering its fifth year, the survey continues to track shifts in public sentiment across security, economic, political and social dimensions, revealing a more settled but still cautious national outlook.

This year's poll also introduces a new component examining the influences that shape Australians' views of China and of Australia-China relations, broadening the analytical scope beyond attitudes to include the sources and channels through which those attitudes are formed.

Findings are based on an online survey of 2,045 Australian adults conducted nationwide.



Research Reports

Framing the Future: Australia’s China Policy in the Lead-up to the 2025 Election

April 24 2025

FRAMING THE FUTURE: AUSTRALIA’S CHINA POLICY IN THE LEAD-UP TO THE 2025 ELECTION

Elena Collinson
April 2025

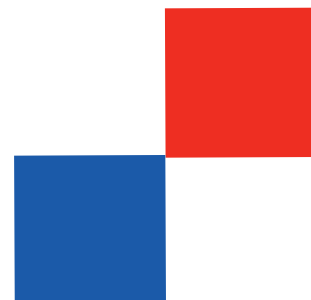


Ms Elena Collinson

Published in the lead-up to the 2025 Australian federal election, this report lays out how the two major parties are positioning their messaging and policy on the PRC and examines how these positions are evolving under increased international pressure and domestic scrutiny.

The Australian Labor Party has focused on stabilising relations with Beijing while maintaining a firm security posture. The Liberal-National Coalition is adopting a more assertive tone, challenging Labor’s approach as too passive in the face of growing threats. Despite this, public opinion, at least for the time being, continues to favour Labor’s handling of the PRC relationship.

Both parties support core strategic frameworks like AUKUS but differ in emphasis. Labor prioritises diplomatic management; the Coalition leans into security framing. Global shifts, especially a more combative US under Donald Trump and increasingly assertive behaviour from the PRC, are reducing Australia’s room to hedge. Whoever forms government will face a more volatile external environment and rising pressure to define clearer lines on the PRC.



2025 Doing Business in China

June 5 2025



China-Australia Chamber of Commerce

supported by

Australia-China Relations Institute,
University of Technology Sydney

Australia China Business Council

The *2025 Doing Business in China* report, based on the 2025 Doing Business in China survey, aims to provide a timely snapshot of business sentiment and operational conditions across the Australia-China business corridor.

Led by the China-Australia Chamber of Commerce (AustCham China) with support from UTS:ACRI and the Australia China Business Council (ACBC), the report, now in its fourth edition, surveys senior executives from companies actively engaged in the Australia-China bilateral corridor, including trade, investment, joint ventures and operational activities. Conducted online from November 30 2024 to January 31 2025, the survey recorded 858 responses, its largest dataset to date.

The role of UTS:ACRI was as an independent partner for data analysis and report contribution. UTS:ACRI's role was limited to post-collection analysis, written by UTS:ACRI Director James Laurenceson, excluding survey design, distribution or data collection, to ensure objectivity.



How Worried Should Canberra Be About China’s Security Interests in the Pacific? Perspectives from PRC and Pacific Interlocutors

July 2 2025



Dr Edward Chan

How worried should Canberra be about China’s security interests in the Pacific?

Perspectives from PRC and Pacific interlocutors
July 3 2025
by Dr Edward Chan

Executive Summary

- Persistent distrust in relations between Canberra and Beijing makes meaningful security engagement in the Pacific between the two countries unlikely.
- Military objectives in the Pacific are a low priority for Beijing, although the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has expanded its regional security presence – primarily in non-traditional areas. PRC experts see Pacific engagement primarily through the lens of broader strategic interests, such as cultivating ties with the Global South. The PRC prefers bilateral engagement with Pacific Island countries (PICs), often bypassing Australia.
- PICs welcome the PRC’s contribution to their development. However, they remain cautious about PRC’s security presence and continue to view Australia as their preferred security partner. Still, they also see real benefits from engaging with the PRC, and do not fully share Australia’s concerns about the PRC’s objectives.
- Australia should adopt a comprehensive assessment of the PRC’s regional security presence that does not immediately dismiss PRC and PIC perspectives as a threat to Australia’s interest. Rather than a blocking strategy, Australia’s interests would be better served by a multipronged approach that supports independent PIC diplomacy, one that grounds its responses in evidence-based assessments.

Introduction

Since taking office in 2022, the Albanese government has emphasised ‘stabilising’ relations with the PRC. Canberra has expressed interest in collaborating with Beijing in areas that enjoy bipartisan support like trade, as well as climate change initiatives. However, beyond participating in defence-related dialogues, it has drawn firm boundaries around joint activities related to regional security. Even port visits by People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) vessels, which occurred in 2019, now appear to be a step too far.

The Pacific is a core region of Australia’s security. Following developments such as the PRC’s 2022 security agreement with the Solomon Islands, Foreign Minister Penny Wong described Australia as being in ‘a state of permanent contest’ in the Pacific, while Minister for Pacific Island Affairs Pat Conroy said the goal is to be the ‘security partner of choice’ for neighbouring Pacific countries. Canberra has strived to block PRC attempts to grow its security presence; the Australia–Tuvalu Falepili Union treaty in 2024 is just one example.

This report examines the PRC’s security ambitions in the Pacific. While this is not the first study to tackle the topic,¹ the findings are based on the author’s

¹ For example, Denghua Zhang, ‘China’s motives, influence and prospects in Pacific Island countries: Views of Chinese scholars,’ *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 23 (2023): 33–59; Denghua Zhang, ‘China’s security interest in the Pacific region: Chinese and Pacific perceptions,’ in *Power and Influence in the Pacific Islands: Understanding Statecraftiness*, ed. Joanne Wallis et al. (London: Routledge, 2024), 158–72; Michael Wesley, ‘What should Australia do about... PRC activities in the South Pacific?’, *China Matters Explores*, China Matters, April 2021 <<https://chinamatters.org.au/policy-brief/policy-brief-april-2021/>>; Joanne Wallis et al., ‘Framing China in the Pacific Islands,’ *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 76, no. 5 (2022): 522–45; Anna Powles, ‘How strategic competition is shaping security cooperation in Solomon Islands,’ in *Navigating Strategic Pathways in Melanesia: Options for U.S. Engagement*, ed. April A. Herlevi (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2024), 33–44.

This report examines the PRC’s security ambitions in the Pacific. While this is not the first study to tackle the topic, the findings are based on the author’s extensive fieldwork in late 2024 and early 2025 at institutions across the PRC, and in Fiji and the Solomon Islands, as well as exchanges with current and former Australian officials.

The interviews conducted cannot represent the full range of views within these countries. However, these recent face-to-face interviews with PRC and Pacific Island interlocutors do offer timely insights and a diverse range of perspectives to enrich the policy debate in Canberra on Australia–PRC relations in the Pacific.

The report emphasises that while Australia has valid concerns about the PRC’s security activities in the region, Beijing’s regional ambitions are complex and military objectives are a low priority. This raises the question of whether Australia should stick to its current policy approach, which is overwhelmingly focused on contestation and blocking. The report ends with actionable recommendations that would constitute a more layered approach and better serve Australia’s interests.

In Transit: Australia-China Research Mobility and the Visa Experience

October 23 2025

IN TRANSIT AUSTRALIA-CHINA RESEARCH MOBILITY AND THE VISA EXPERIENCE

James Laurenceson, Elena Collinson, Wanning Sun,
Marina Zhang and Xunpeng Shi

October 2025



Professor James Laurenceson

Ms Elena Collinson

Professor Wanning Sun

Dr Marina Yue Zhang

Professor Xunpeng Shi

Despite its limited resources and scale, Australia operates at the global frontier of knowledge creation in emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI). Chinese nationals have played a fundamental role in making this possible. Among the world's top AI researchers who earned a graduate qualification from an Australian institution, more than half were recruited from undergraduate programs in China. Anecdotally, in recent years this pipeline of talent appears to have encountered difficulties in securing entry visas.

To provide an empirical basis for understanding these experiences, analysts at UTS:ACRI conducted a survey between August 28 and September 19 2025, targeting Chinese nationals who had applied, or were applying, for postgraduate study or research-related visas in Australia. A total of 371 valid responses were collected through academic and professional networks. As a non-probability convenience sample, the results are indicative rather than representative but nonetheless provide timely insights into applicants' experiences.



2025 Doing Business in China Flash Report
November 7 2025



China-Australia Chamber of Commerce

supported by

Australia-China Relations Institute,
University of Technology Sydney

Australia China Business Council

The *2025 Doing Business in China Flash Report*, led by AustCham China with support from UTS:ACRI and ACBC, provides an update on business sentiment since the *2025 Doing Business in China Report*.

Targeting senior executives active in the Australia-China business corridor, it examines shifts in perception following the ongoing April 2025 US trade measures and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese’s visit to the PRC in July 2025.

Conducted from September 26 to October 15 2025, the flash survey recorded a total of 730 responses - 360 from Chinese firms (51 percent or more Chinese-owned) and 364 from internationally-owned firms (less than 51 percent Chinese ownership, including Australian entities).

The role of UTS:ACRI was as an independent partner for data analysis and report contribution. UTS:ACRI’s role was limited to post-collection analysis, written by UTS:ACRI Director James Laurenceson, excluding survey design, distribution or data collection, to ensure objectivity.



The *2025 Doing Business in China Flash Report* was launched at the China International Import Expo in Shanghai, with the report’s findings presented by Professor Laurenceson and the Chair of AustCham China, Vaughn Barber.

Beyond the tariff: A Decade of ChAFTA and the New Rules of Engagement

December 11 2025

BEYOND THE TARIFF A DECADE OF ChAFTA AND THE NEW RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Marina Yue Zhang
December 2025



Dr Marina Yue Zhang

The China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA) marks the 10th anniversary of its entry into force on December 20 2025. Over its first decade, ChAFTA has kept trade and investment flowing through a ‘golden age’ of expansion (2015 to 2019), a period of geopolitical shock and stress testing (2020 to 2022) and the current phase of reconfiguration (2023 to present). Yet the way in which the agreement operates and how firms navigate it has changed.

This report assesses the first 10 years of ChAFTA, tracing how its impact has shifted beyond tariffs at the business level. Drawing on 40 in-depth interviews with industry stakeholders across sectors including resources, healthcare and technology, it shows that the tariff dividends of the early years have largely reached their limits. The relationship is now defined by a ‘compliance high wall’ driven by geopolitical tension and regulatory tightening in both Australia and the PRC, meaning that businesses must move from a strategy based on financial power and market access to one grounded in capability and systemic resilience if they are to survive the next decade.

This report complements the quantitative analysis published by UTS:ACRI in April 2025, *ChAFTA: An Australian Assessment of Core Outcomes a Decade On*. It extends that macroeconomic assessment by adding a firm-level perspective, analysing how ChAFTA has shaped business behaviour and commercial decision-making.



Conference Papers and Presentations

Marina Yue Zhang, 'Australia's China diplomacy', panellist at the *Australian Diplomacy Today Symposium*, AP4D, Australian Parliament House, February 25 2025.

James Laurenceson, 'China and the global power shift: Grasping realities in higher education and calibrating responses', presented at the *2025 Universities Australia Strategic Dialogue*, Canberra, February 28 2025.

Lei Guo and Marina Yue Zhang, 'Digital transformation and detour catch-up: A Chinese manufacturing firm's path from industry 2.0 to industry 4.0', presented at the *WSE Scholarship in ASEAN + Oceania: Fostering the Innovation, Strategy & Entrepreneurship Community*, Macquarie University, March 21 2025.

Zuan Xu Chen, Marina Yue Zhang, Helena Li, 'Facilitating the formation of government venture capital: A configurational perspective', presented at the *WSE Scholarship in ASEAN + Oceania: Fostering the Innovation, Strategy & Entrepreneurship Community*, Macquarie University, March 21 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, 'Innovation ecosystems and smart manufacturing', presented at the *Western Sydney Manufacturers Forum: Building Profit on the Path to Sustainability*, NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub, April 2 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, 'AI power struggle: China, the US, and the future of global regulation,' presented at the *Future Nexus Forum 2025*, University of Sydney, April 8 2025.

James Laurenceson, 'China and the global power shift: grasping realities in higher education and calibrating responses', presented to the Universities New Zealand Research Committee, April 16 2025.

Zuanxu Chen, Marina Yue Zhang, Helena Li, 'What we know about government venture capital: A review and research agenda', presented at the *11th Biennial IACMR Conference*, Northwestern Polytechnical University, June 11-15 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, Zhendong Li, Huiying Zhang, Zuanxu Chen and Yanhui Wei, 'Inter-firm resource sharing and knowledge exchanges in the development of China's

spatial-based innovation ecosystems', presented at the *European Academy of Management (EURAM) Conference*, University of Florence Italy, June 22-25 2025.

James Laurenceson, 'Outlook for Australia-China relations post-election', presented at the East China Normal University, June 24 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, Zhendong Li, Huiying Zhang, Zuanxu Chen and Yanhui Wei, 'Inter-firm resource sharing and knowledge exchanges in the development of China's spatial-based innovation ecosystems', presented at the *Academy of Management (AOM) Conference*, Copenhagen Business School, July 25-28 2025.

James Laurenceson, 'China's economy: challenges and prospects', presented to the Australian Defence College, July 30 2025.

Xunpeng Shi, 'Australia's energy transition: Progress and prospects', presented at the *11th Asia-Pacific High-Level Forum on Energy Sustainable Development*, University of Science and Technology Beijing, September 16-19 2025.

Xunpeng Shi, 'Global imbalances and the reshaping of clean energy supply chains in energy transition', presented at the *Sub-Forum on Global Energy Security of the 3rd Tongzhou Forum*, Renmin University of China, October 17 2025.

James Laurenceson, 'The experience of Chinese national applying for Australian post-graduate and other research related visas', presented at the *21st International Conference of Australian Studies in China*, East China Normal University, October 18 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'The politics of hyphenated identity: Chinese diasporas in the era of the new cold war', presented at the *Chinese Philosophy and Culture Workshop: Chineseness: (Re)production, Transmission and Consumption*, China Studies Centre, University of Sydney, November 3-4 2025.

James Laurenceson, 'Australia-China Relations', presented at the *2025 SIIS Roundtable of Global Review: Seeking Common Ground in a Turbulent World*,



Shanghai Institutes for International Studies, November 4 2025.

Xunpeng Shi, 'The multidimensional reshaping and rebalancing of energy transition', presented at the *9th International Conference on Energy and Resources Systems Engineering*, November 7-9 2025.

Xunpeng Shi, 'From resource security to technology security: Structural inequalities in energy transition and clean-tech cooperation', presented at the *14th Annual Conference of the Chinese Society of Energy Economics and Management*, November 21-24 2025.

Xunpeng Shi, 'Energy transition and international clean technology cooperation: An Australia-China relations perspective', presented at *Peak Carbon and Carbon Neutrality International Forum & Energy Expo 2025*, China Energy Association, November 24 2025.

James Laurenceson, 'Australian perspectives on China-ASEAN relations', presented at *ASEAN-China Relations in Global Transformations: Progress, Opportunities, Challenges*, University of Malaya, November 26 2025.





Perspectives

Perspectives is UTS:ACRI's commentary series, featuring pieces on topical subjects in the Australia-China relationship.

- Corey Lee Bell and Elena Collinson, 'Examining the 'why' of the PRC's live fire exercises in the Tasman Sea', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, February 26 2025.
- Wanning Sun, 'Everybody is responsible for social cohesion, from politicians to teenagers on the street', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, June 24 2025.
- Xunpeng Shi, 'Bridging rhetoric and reality in Australia-China clean energy cooperation', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, August 5 2025.
- Elena Collinson, 'Security and social cohesion: Australia's foreign interference challenge', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, August 14 2025.
- Elena Collinson, 'Talking tough? The politics of naming China a threat', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, August 19 2025.
- Wanning Sun, 'A tale of two lists: How geopolitics shaped the attendance of China's parade', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, August 29 2025.
- Elena Collinson, 'How China messaging reveals Liberal Party fault lines', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, September 16 2025.
- James Laurenceson, 'Four myths about Australia-China trade that just won't die', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, September 17 2025.
- Michael Clarke, 'China's new white paper on Xinjiang', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, September 24 2025.
- Elena Collinson, 'Managing great power rhythms: Assessing the Albanese-Trump meeting', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, October 21 2025.

- Marina Yue Zhang, 'Australia-China policy: Guardrails, not walls,' Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, October 31 2025.
- Michael Clarke, 'The PRC, arms control, non-proliferation and nuclear order,' Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, December 9 2025.
- James Laurenceson, 'ChAFTA at 10: A decade in review', Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, December 19 2025.

Analyses

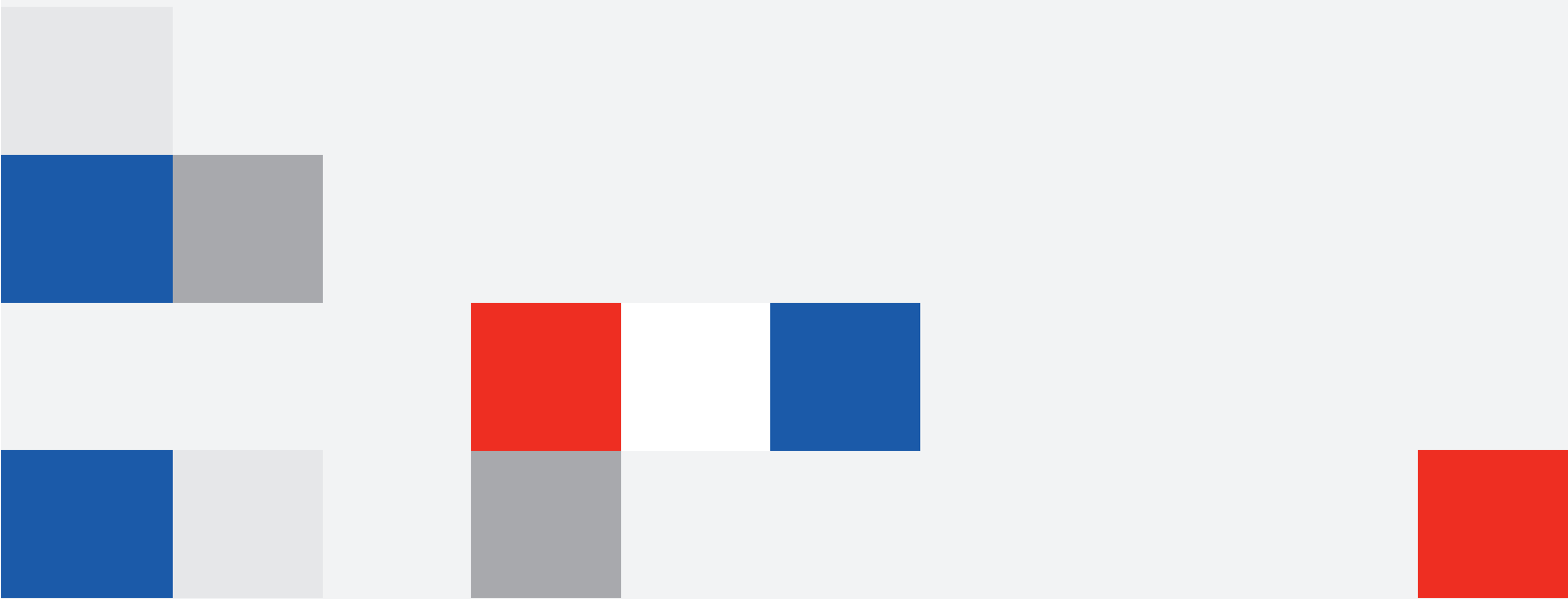
- Elena Collinson and Corey Lee Bell, *Looking back and looking forward: What to expect in Australia-PRC relations in 2025*, Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, January 20 2025.
- James Laurenceson, *The China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA): An Australian assessment of core outcomes a decade on*, Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, April 8 2025.

Briefs

- Elena Collinson, *Sussan Ley and the PRC*, Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, May 13 2025.
- Elena Collinson, *The Nationals' turn: PRC policy after Coalition breakdown*, Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, May 21 2025.

Fast Focus series

- James Laurenceson, Wanning Sun, Elena Collinson, Michael Clarke, Angela Lehmann, Peter Osborne and Daojiong Zha, *What are the key takeaways from Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's just-concluded visit to the People's Republic of China?*, Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, July 18 2025.



Media and Commentary



Overview

UTS:ACRI experts continued to contribute to analysis of Australia-China relations in the media. They provided comment on various aspects of the bilateral relationship to, and their research was reported on by a range of domestic and international media outlets such as: *10 News, 3AW, Agence France-Presse, Al Jazeera, Associated Press, The Australian, Australian Associated Press, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, The Australian Financial Review, BBC, Bloomberg, Capital Brief, Channel News Asia, China Daily, CNN, The Conversation, Crikey, the Daily Mail, Die Presse, Financial Times, Firstpost, Fortune, Frankfurter Rundschau, InnovationAus, Le Figaro, National Defense Digest, Nature, NBC News, New Security Beat, news.com.au, the New York Times, The Nightly, Nikkei Business, People's Daily, Phoenix TV South Pacific & Australia, RÆSON, Rare Earth Exchanges, SBS News, Science, Sky News Australia, South China Morning Post, the Straits Times, Sunrise, SvD Näringsliv, the Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney Today, Times Higher Education, The Washington Post, Weekly Times, Wired and Xinhua*, among others, including foreign-language mastheads based in the PRC, Japan and across Southeast Asia and Europe.

UTS:ACRI experts were also regular contributors to a wide range of publications, both in Australia and overseas. The list of published articles, featuring in policy forums and domestic media outlets, appears below.



Commentary Pieces

Marina Yue Zhang, 'Australia's predicament in navigating a new era of techno-nationalism', *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute, January 6 2025.

Corey Lee Bell and Elena Collinson, 'Year of the 'known unknowns'? Australia-China relations in 2025', *The Diplomat*, January 7 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, 'Book review: *Power and Progress: Our Thousand-Year Struggle Over Technology and Prosperity*', *Australian Outlook*, Australian Institute of International Affairs, January 14 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Will China welcome TikTok refugees?', *Crikey*, January 16 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Dutton has changed his tune on China. Will voters care?', *Crikey*, January 17 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Australia's leading strategic realist is critical of AUKUS and our foreign policy. Why?', *Crikey*, January 28 2025.

Wanning Sun and Marina Yue Zhang, 'DeepSeek's success challenges assumptions about Chinese tech companies – and the US-China competition', *The Conversation*, January 29 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang and Wanning Sun, 'TikTok's digital drama at the forefront of a new Cold War', *East Asia Forum*, February 3 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'What does the man behind DeepSeek want?', *Crikey*, February 4 2025.

Muyi Yang and Xunpeng Shi, 'China's role in financing the energy transition in the Global South', *New Security Beat*, February 13 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, 'The New Cold War race for digital currencies could redefine global power. Should Australia be in it?', *The Conversation*, February 17 2025.

Mark Beeson, 'Two cheers for the European Union', *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute, February 26 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'The Coalition and Labor are dancing around China as an election issue', *Crikey*, March 3 2025.

Michael Clarke, 'Geopolitical fantasists: No, Trump won't pull off a 'reverse Nixon'', *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute, March 4 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, 'Australia's China diplomacy: Is it ready for a world without US certainty?', *Australian Outlook*, Australian Institute of International Affairs, March 7 2025.

Michael Clarke, 'Set adrift: The Australian political class and the US alliance under Trump 2.0', *The Diplomat*, March 7 2025.

Wanning Sun, "'Never forget': Labor's anti-Dutton pitch to Chinese Australians is gaining speed', *Crikey*, March 14 2025.

Jun Fu, Jian Xu, Wanning Sun and Jia Tina Du, 'Engagement of Chinese Australians in the 2023 Australian Indigenous Voice Referendum', *Critical Asian Studies*, March 14 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Chinese blockbuster holds a lesson for China's soft power', *East Asia Forum*, March 15 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Opinion: Both parties strive for Chinese votes, Dutton speaks out "pro-China", Labor slams "hypocrisy" (photo) [观点: 两党力争华人选票, 达顿直言"亲中", 工党狠批"虚伪" (组图)]', *Sydney Today*, March 17 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Australia's universities and academics are under siege', *Crikey*, March 21 2025.

James Laurenceson, 'Australia balances between realism and liberalism', *East Asia Forum*, March 27 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, 'The public goods case for Australia's digital sovereignty', *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute, April 2 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Chinese-Australian voters were key to Labor's win in 2022. Are some now swinging back to the Liberals?', *The Conversation*, April 9 2025.

James Laurenceson, "'Alarmist nonsense': Labor and Coalition dismissed security risks over the Port of Darwin for years. What's changed?", *The Conversation*, April 10 2025.



Wanning Sun, 'Dutton's 'hawk-dove-hawk' seesaw on China keeps Labor on its toes', *Crikey*, April 16 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, 'In the trade war, China has moved to curb supply of critical minerals. Can Australia seize the moment?', *The Conversation*, April 17 2025.

James Laurenceson, 'Should Australia line up with the US and form an anti-China economic bloc?', *The Canberra Times*, April 21 2025.

Mark Beeson, 'Hirschman's warning: Forgotten lessons about Trump's trade war', *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute, April 22 2025.

Colin Hawes, 'Port of Darwin's struggling Chinese leaseholder may welcome an Australian buy-out', *The Conversation*, April 23 2025.

Elena Collinson, 'Australia's China policy in the lead-up to the 2025 federal election', *The Diplomat*, April 24 2025.

Wanning Sun, "'Treated like pawns in his political chess game': Chinese voters unleash on Dutton", *Crikey*, April 28 2025.

Michael Clarke and Jade Guan, 'Explaining Xi's PLA purges', *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute, April 30 2025.

James Laurenceson and Xi Chen, 'Australia-China: Port visits can manage tensions', *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute, April 30 2025.

Marina Yue Zhang, 'US vs China: who can endure a trade war longer?', *South China Morning Post*, April 30 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Chinese Australians are again being used to sell papers and score political points', *Crikey*, May 2 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Dutton wanted the Chinese-Australian vote... and the anti-China vote. It screwed his candidates', *Crikey*, May 5 2025.

Michael Clarke, 'Nuclear weapons are no silver bullet for Australia's strategic predicament', *The Diplomat*, May 5 2025.

Mark Beeson, 'Can Australia and China save the world?', *Global Policy*, May 12 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'Chinese Australians' rejection of the Liberal Party: Ten moments', *Pearls and Irritations*, May 13 2025.

Muyi Yang, Xunpeng Shi and Biqing Yang, 'Powering China's new era of green electrification', *Ember*, May 13 2025.

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Marina Yue Zhang, 'A map for the AI economy: What Chalmers' roundtable should decide', *Australian Outlook*, Australian Institute of International Affairs, August 18 2025.

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Marina Yue Zhang, 'The missing piece in Australia's critical mineral deal lies East', *The Australian Financial Review*, October 28 2025.

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Elena Collinson, 'Australians are markedly more worried about US interference, still wary about China: new poll', *The Conversation*, November 18 2025.

Elena Collinson, 'What Australians think of China and the US in the Trump era', *The Diplomat*, November 19 2025.

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Kathleen Walsh, Wei Li and Luke Deer, 'China reportedly wants to do more deals in its own currency. Australia's banks aren't ready', *The Conversation*, November 28 2025.

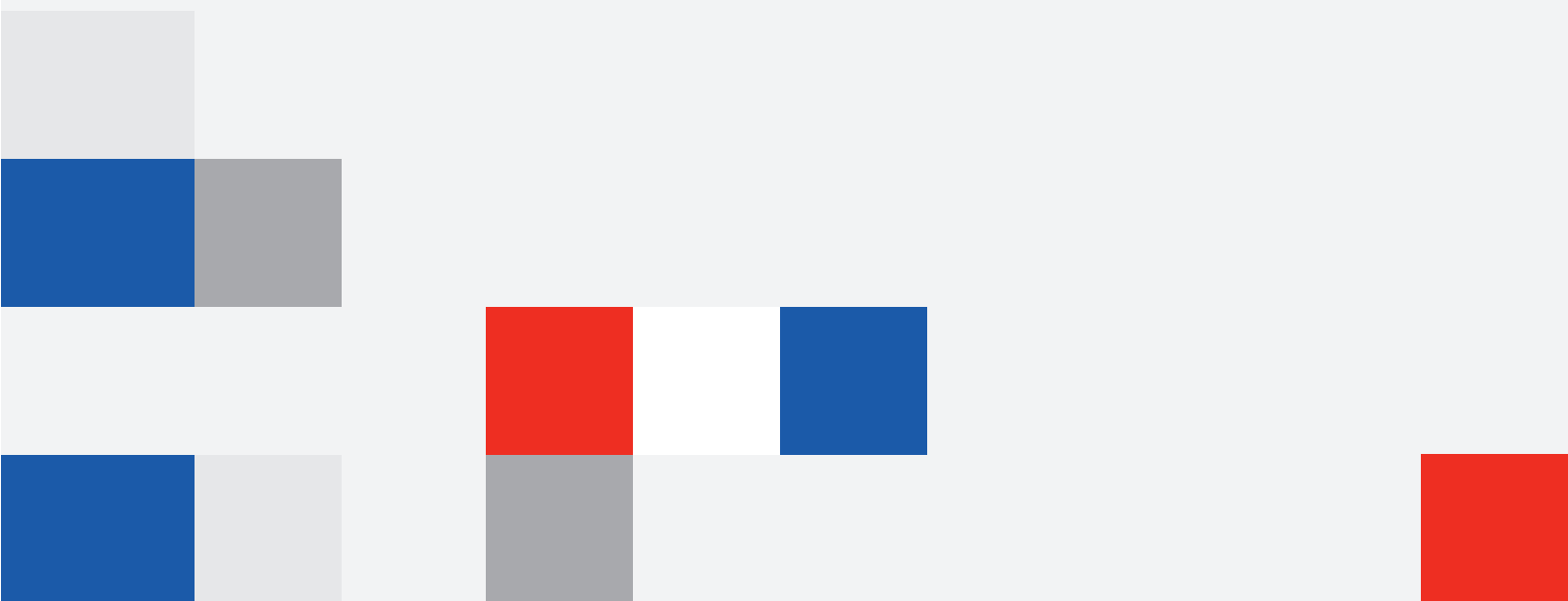
Mark Beeson, 'Hypocrisy and folly: why Australia's subservience to Trump's America is past its use-by date', *The Conversation*, December 1 2025.

Wanning Sun, 'America's national security strategy forces Australia to take a cold shower', *Crikey*, December 8 2025.

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Muyi Yang, Xunpeng Shi, Biqing Yang, 'Interpreting the China Energy Transition Report 2025: How China's practice breaks deadlocks in the Global Energy Transition', *China Sustainability Tribune*, December 11 2025.





Events



Overview

In 2025, UTS:ACRI hosted nine events, including public addresses, panel discussions, webinars and invitation-only roundtables:

- Australian-Chinese voters' concerns and priorities, February 27 2025
- Are the best days of the Australia-China business and trade relationship over?, March 10 2025
- The China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA): assessing outcomes a decade on, April 8 2025
- China, the South Pacific and Australia: A perfect storm?, July 3 2025
- Roundtable on China's energy, resources and climate policy outlook, July 31 2025
- China's trade and investment in the Indo-Pacific, August 5 2025
- Roundtable with Fu Ying, September 10 2025
- RMB internationalisation, digitisation and de-dollarisation: What Australians need to know, November 18 2025
- What national conservatism and Trump's America mean for Australia's relationship with China, November 20 2025



Events List

Australian-Chinese voters' concerns and priorities, February 27 2025, UTS Balcony Room and online

Ms Erin Chew, founder of the Asian Australian Alliance; Mr Osmond Chiu, Research Fellow at Per Capita; and Professor Wanning Sun, UTS:ACRI Deputy Director were interviewed by Chinese politics, language and culture expert, Ms Linda Jaivin.

The panellists discussed the broad term 'Australian-Chinese communities' and definitions flowing from it before turning to the main factors that shaped these communities' voting choices in the 2022 federal election and issues that might be driving their voting choices in the upcoming 2025 election. They also discussed views held by first-generation migrants from the PRC in Australia, the impact of the PRC threat discourse on members of Australian-Chinese communities, as well as similarities and differences between the way Australian-Chinese voters and American-Chinese voters make their electoral choices, among other topics.





Are the best days of the Australia-China business and trade relationship over?, March 10 2025, online

Ms Lauren Gilbert, Austrade Trade and Investment Commissioner in Guangzhou, Mr Vaughn Barber, Chair of AustCham China; and Mr Murray Davis, UTS:ACRI Adjunct Industry Fellow and Regional Manager – Greater China of Meat & Livestock Australia, were interviewed by Professor James Laurenceson, UTS:ACRI Director.

The panellists examined the business landscape in the PRC for Australian companies, emphasising the ever-evolving PRC market and identifying key growth sectors. They discussed the opportunities and risks for Australian businesses and the essential considerations for operating in the PRC. They also discussed risk mitigation strategies, with a focus on market and product diversification; sentiment amongst Australian and PRC businesses regarding the bilateral relationship; and business relations at the sub-national level, among other topics.



The China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA): Assessing outcomes a decade on, April 8 2025, MA Financial Group and online

This event brought together a distinguished lineup of speakers.

Senator the Hon Don Farrell, Australia's Minister for Trade and Tourism, Special Minister of State and Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate, delivered the opening address.

Special remarks were delivered on behalf of H.E. Xiao Qian, Ambassador of the PRC to Australia, by Mr Gao Feng, Minister-Counsellor for Economic and Commercial Affairs at the Chinese Embassy in Australia.

The Hon Andrew Robb, Chair of the Robb Group and the Australian Trade Minister whose leadership saw the successful conclusion of the ChAFTA negotiations, signing the deal in Canberra on June 17 2015, and the Hon Dr Craig Emerson, eminent economist and the Australian Trade Minister who played a pivotal role in expanding trade with the PRC in the years leading up to ChAFTA's signing and has Co-Chaired the Australia-China High Level Dialogue for the last two years, were then interviewed by Ms Glenda Korporaal, UTS:ACRI Adjunct Industry Fellow and columnist for *The Australian*.

The event also featured the launch of a new UTS:ACRI Analysis, *ChAFTA: An Australian assessment of core outcomes a decade on*, with key findings presented by its author, Professor James Laurenceson, UTS:ACRI Director.

Mr Tom Parker, ACBC National CEO, guided the program as the event's MC, and Mr Andrew Martin, Head of MA Financial Group Asset Management, concluded the evening with a vote of thanks.

This event was made possible with the support of MA Financial Group.









China, the South Pacific and Australia: A perfect storm?, July 3 2025, UTS Business School

UTS:ACRI welcomed Professor Michael Wesley, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Culture and Engagement, at the University of Melbourne and previously board director of China Matters; inaugural China Matters-UTS:ACRI Fellow Dr Edward Chan; and Ms Linda Jakobson, founding director of China Matters, for an in-depth discussion on Australia, the PRC and Pacific Island countries.

The event also marked the release of Dr Chan's China Matters-UTS:ACRI Fellowship report, *How worried should Canberra be about China's security interests in the Pacific? Perspectives from PRC and Pacific interlocutors*.

The discussion was chaired by Professor James Laurenceson, UTS:ACRI Director.



Roundtable on China's energy, resources and climate policy outlook, July 31 2025, Australia-China Relations Institute, UTS Tower Building

UTS:ACRI co-hosted a roundtable on the PRC's energy, resources and climate policy outlook with the Centre for Climate Change and Energy Policy (CCEP) Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University and the International Society for Energy Transition Studies.

Participants from Australia and the PRC discussed the PRC's reshaping of its domestic energy system, industrial policy and climate strategy, with a focus on its internal drivers, constraints and outlook.

The roundtable was part of a CCEP project supported by the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations.



China's trade and investment in the Indo-Pacific, August 5 2025, Australia-China Relations Institute, UTS Tower Building

UTS:ACRI welcomed an international academic delegation led by the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES)) for a roundtable discussion focusing on the prospects for Indo-Pacific trade and economic growth in light of US and PRC policy settings, and the state of the Australia-PRC economic relationship.

The FES delegation included academics from India, South Korea, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia and New Zealand.





Roundtable with Fu Ying, September 10 2025, Australia-China Relations Institute, UTS Tower Building

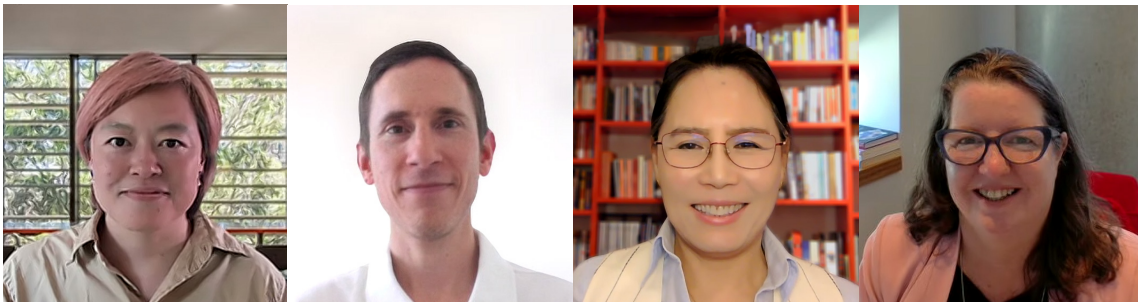
UTS:ACRI hosted H.E. Fu Ying, Senior Research Fellow at the Academy of Contemporary China and World Studies, and former Ambassador of the PRC to the United Kingdom and Australia, for a discussion on Australia-PRC relations.



RMB internationalisation, digitisation and de-dollarisation: What Australians need to know, November 18 2025, online

Dr Wei Li, Senior Lecturer in International Business, University of Sydney Business School; Dr Michael Murphree, Senior Lecturer in International Business, University of Sydney Business School; and Dr Marina Yue Zhang, UTS:ACRI Associate Professor - Research, were interviewed by Professor Kathy Walsh, Associate Dean (Research and Innovation) UTS Business School and UTS:ACRI Research Associate.

The panellists examined the internationalisation of the renminbi (RMB), the digitisation of global finance and emerging de-dollarisation trends, highlighting their implications for Australia's economic and strategic environment. The discussion drew on findings from a report by the panellists, *RMB Internationalisation in Australia's Trade and Investment with China*, supported by UTS:ACRI.



What national conservatism and Trump's America mean for Australia's relationship with China, November 20 2025, online

Mr Dan Ryan, Executive Director of the National Conservative Institute of Australia, joined UTS:ACRI Director Professor James Laurenceson to discuss the rise of national conservatism and its implications for US and Australian policy.

The conversation considered what national conservatism represents as a political movement, how influential it may remain in the US beyond the Trump presidency, as well as how a future US administration shaped by its ideas might frame policy on the PRC and expectations of allies such as Australia. It also examined whether similar thinking could begin to shape Australia's own debates about the PRC.



Recordings of UTS:ACRI's public events are available on demand, with video, audio and transcripts accessible via our website: uts.edu.au/acri.





The activities outlined in this report reflect UTS:ACRI's ongoing commitment to informing Australia's engagement with China through research, analysis and dialogue grounded in scholarly rigour.

UTS:ACRI acknowledges with thanks the contributions of its staff, research community, partners and participants across the year.





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