Inside NeurIPS 2026

Who's Publishing AI Research?

WIRESCREEN BRIEFING · NOVEMBER 16, 2026

China's presence at one of the world's most important artificial intelligence conferences has fallen sharply, following a dispute earlier this year that prompted Chinese scientific organizations to call for a boycott.

An analysis by WireScreen found that the number of accepted papers with authors affiliated with institutions in China or Hong Kong fell 9%, to 2,352, even as the overall number of papers in the dataset rose 11%. China's share dropped from nearly 45% last year to about 37%.

Research collaboration between China and the United States also declined. The number of papers with authors affiliated with institutions in both countries fell 24%, to 535.

The findings offer a revealing look at the changing geography of AI research. But they leave an important question unanswered: Did Chinese researchers submit fewer papers after the boycott call, or were fewer of their papers accepted? The data cannot tell us. The dispute itself is recounted in the Context note at the end of this page.

What we count. Accepted papers, with each author's listed affiliation classified by country: universities by where they are based, companies by home country unless the affiliation names a location. "Classified as U.S." means this rule, not a verified workplace. A paper with affiliations in two countries counts once for each. In the charts, each bar is 2026 and the figure after it is the change from 2025. Full method and cross-checks are in the notes at the end.

6,437
accepted papers in the dataset for NeurIPS 2026, up 11% from 5,812 in 2025

2,352
papers with at least one affiliation classified as China or Hong Kong, down 9% in a year

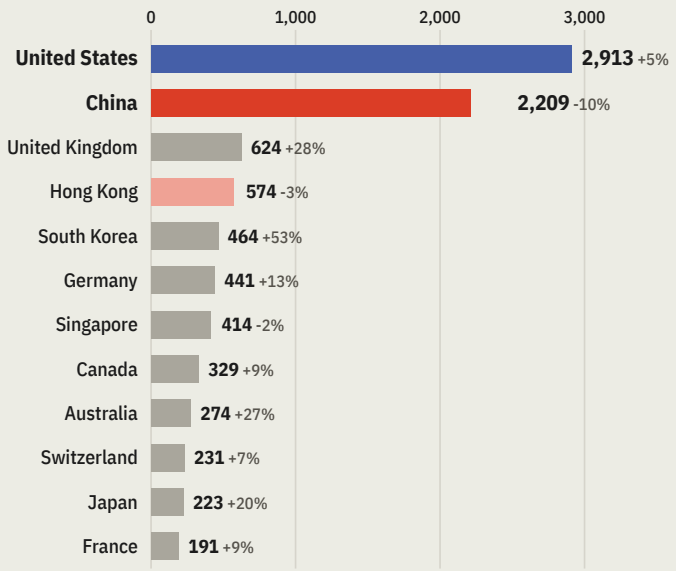
2,913
papers with at least one affiliation classified as U.S.; up 5% under WireScreen's rules, flat under the source's own labels

535
papers with both Chinese and U.S. affiliations, down 24%

1,244
papers with no affiliation classified outside China or Hong Kong, down from 1,356

1 China's paper count fell as most other countries gained

Papers with at least one affiliation in each country or territory. China and Hong Kong combined fell from 2,592 to 2,352.

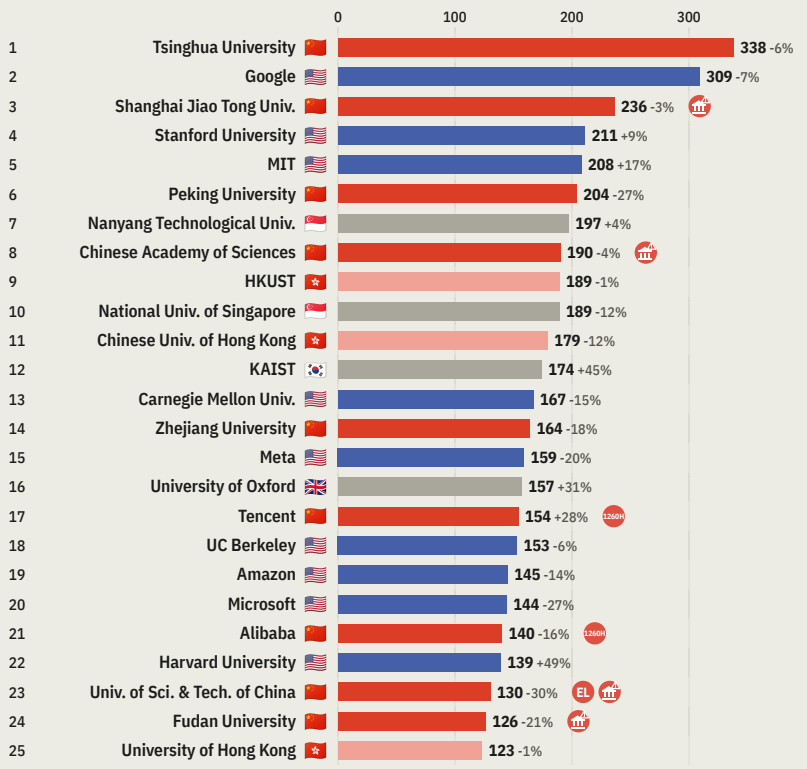


The decline extended to papers written entirely within China and to those involving foreign researchers. Papers with no affiliation classified outside China or Hong Kong fell from 1,356 to 1,244; papers pairing a Chinese institution with a foreign one fell from 1,236 to 1,108. Papers with no affiliation classified outside the U.S. rose from 1,292 to 1,491 under WireScreen's rules. Chinese teams are still bigger: 6.0 authors on an average all-China paper, 4.4 on an all-U.S. one.

2 The 25 institutions on the most papers

Accepted papers with at least one author from the institution. A joint paper counts for every institution on it. Companies: Google, Meta, Tencent, Amazon, Microsoft, Alibaba. State research body: Chinese Academy of Sciences.

China · Hong Kong · U.S. · Other · Pentagon 1260H list · Commerce Entity List · Pentagon research-institution list

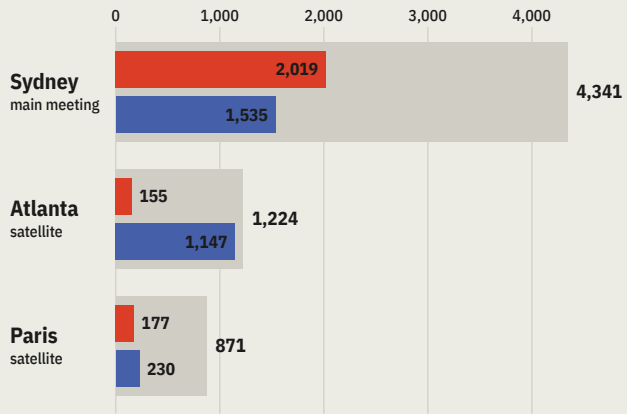


Peking University had the steepest decline among the leading institutions, from 280 papers to 204. Tsinghua stayed first but slipped from 358 to 338. KAIST, Oxford and Harvard moved into the top 25; Fudan and the University of Science and Technology of China fell toward the bottom of it.

3 Three cities, one conference. Most Chinese papers are scheduled for Sydney.

NeurIPS 2026 is the first to meet in three places at once: Sydney, with satellite meetings in Atlanta and Paris. Authors choose where to present. The gray bar is every paper scheduled for the city; the bars inside it are papers with a China or Hong Kong affiliation and with a U.S. one.

All papers at the site · China & Hong Kong · United States



2,019 of the 2,352 papers with a Chinese affiliation are scheduled for Sydney. Of the 1,224 papers going to Atlanta, 155 have an affiliation classified as China or Hong Kong and 1,147 one classified as U.S. In Sydney, papers with Chinese affiliations outnumber those with American ones, 2,019 to 1,535.

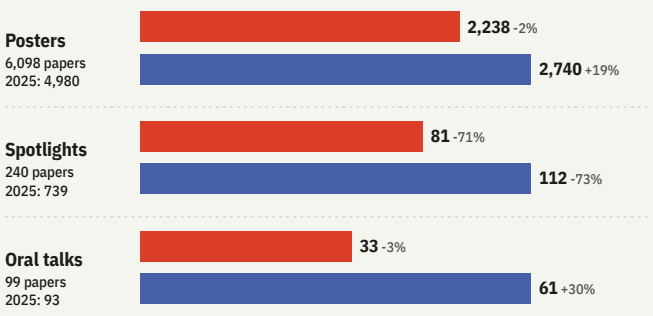
Presentation city is the poster session assigned in the program. One paper has no assigned site, so the three cities total 6,436.

Where China lost ground

Fewer papers in every acceptance tier, from the companies that drove its 2025 gains, and from Shanghai AI Laboratory

4 The U.S. pulled further ahead on posters and oral talks

Papers in each acceptance tier. Reviewers picked 99 papers for oral talks. Spotlights were cut from 739 papers to 240 this year, so both countries show large declines there.

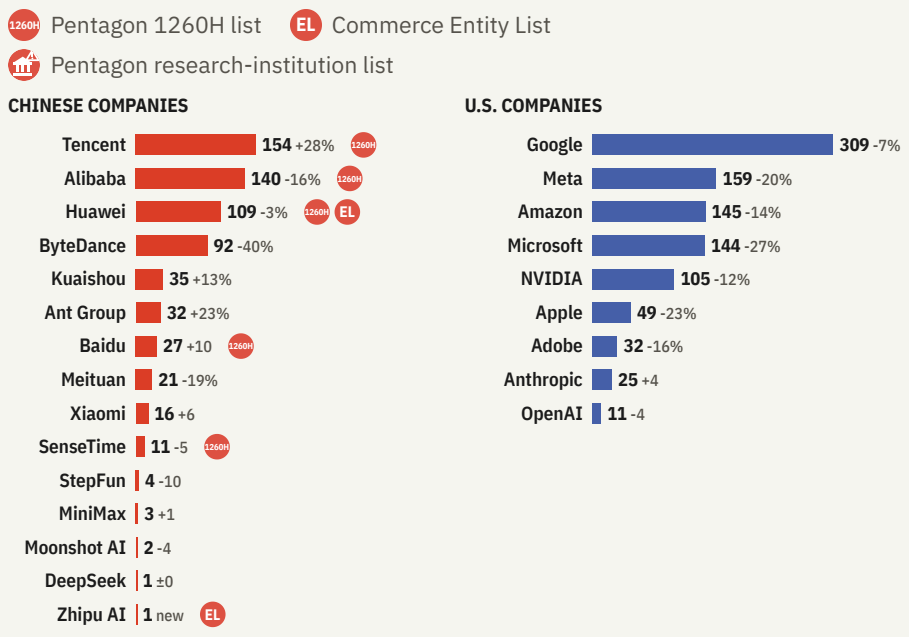


Each tier has its own scale. The figure after each bar is the change from 2025.

Chinese counts fell in every tier. On posters, 2,238 papers have an affiliation classified as China or Hong Kong and 2,740 one classified as U.S.; a year ago the counts were close, 2,280 and 2,300. The direction is the same under Paper Copilot's own labels. Of the 99 oral talks, 61 have a U.S.-classified affiliation and 33 a Chinese one. Spotlights are the exception to the widening gap: both sides fell with the smaller tier, and the U.S. share fell more, from 56% to 47%, against China's 38% to 34%.

5 Tencent overtook Alibaba as ByteDance's paper count plunged

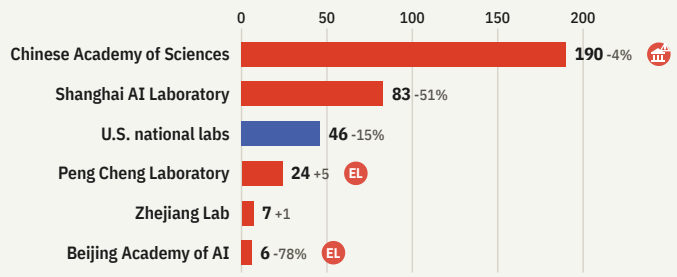
Accepted papers with at least one author from the company. Company names and their variants are normalized (Alibaba includes Qwen and DAMO; Google includes DeepMind), and a paper with authors at two companies counts for both.



Several major companies had fewer accepted papers. ByteDance went from 153 papers to 92, Microsoft from 197 to 144, Meta from 200 to 159. Tencent rose from 120 to 154, and Baidu, Kuaishou, Ant Group and Xiaomi also gained. China's model makers still barely publish here: DeepSeek, MiniMax, Moonshot, Zhipu and StepFun together appear on 11 papers.

6 Shanghai AI Laboratory published half as many papers as last year

Accepted papers with at least one author at a state research body. The Chinese Academy of Sciences counts all of its institutes as one body; U.S. national labs are combined.



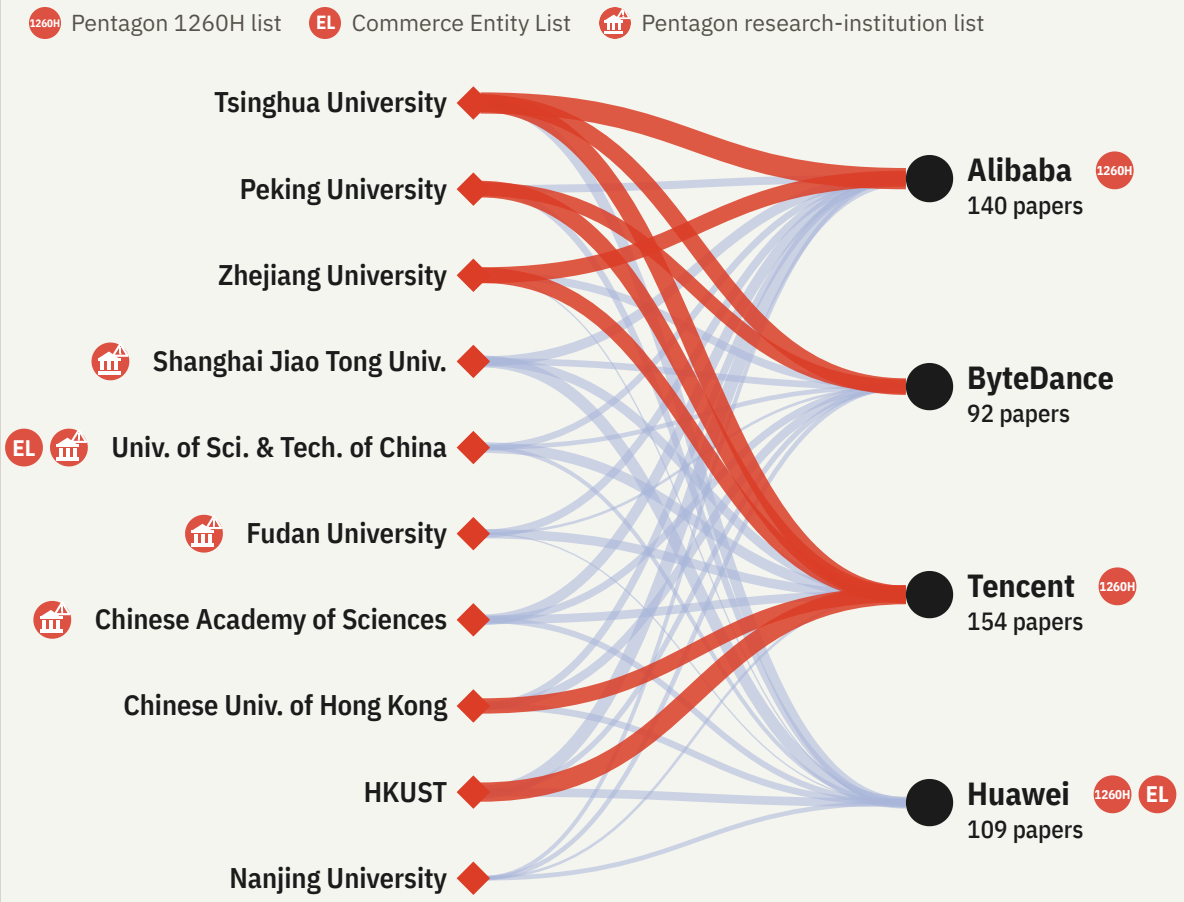
Shanghai AI Laboratory fell from 171 papers to 83. The lab, unveiled by Shanghai's acting mayor at the World Artificial Intelligence Conference in July 2020 and described on its own site as a "new-type research institution," was one of China's fastest-rising institutions in 2025, when its count went from 99 papers to 171. The Beijing Academy of AI went from 27 papers to 6. Shanghai AI Laboratory is on no U.S. restriction list; Peng Cheng Laboratory and the Beijing Academy of AI are both on the Commerce Department's Entity List. The Chinese Academy of Sciences slipped from 198 papers to 190, about four times the combined count of the U.S. national labs.

Universities and the tech giants

Who writes with whom, and what else the count shows

7 Where China's universities and technology companies work together

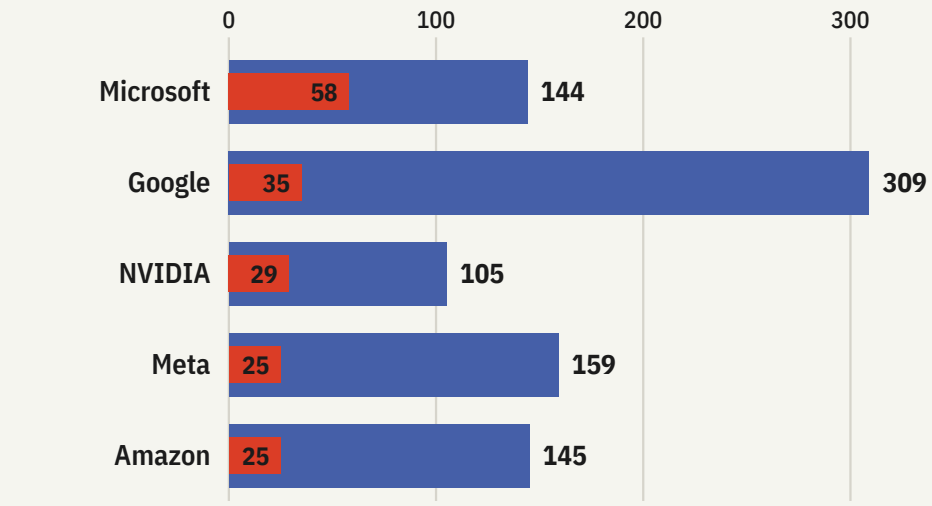
Papers co-written by ten leading Chinese universities and research bodies with four companies. Thicker line, more joint papers. Hover a name to isolate its links. HKUST and the Chinese University of Hong Kong mean the Hong Kong campuses; their Guangzhou and Shenzhen campuses are counted separately and are not shown.



Tsinghua–Alibaba is the busiest pairing (31 papers), followed by HKUST–Tencent (28, up from 16). Tsinghua–ByteDance, which led in 2025 with 41 joint papers, has 24. Tencent now has 20 or more joint papers with five different universities.

8 Microsoft's China ties, and Google's

Papers from each U.S. company, and how many of them include a co-author whose affiliation is classified as China or Hong Kong.



Microsoft appeared on 144 accepted papers this year, down from 197 in 2025. Of those, 58 involved researchers affiliated with institutions in China or Hong Kong, compared with 100 last year. Twenty of the 58 listed Microsoft Research Asia, which operates in several countries; the other 38 paired an author identified simply as working for Microsoft with a researcher at a Chinese university or company. Google appeared on 309 papers, including 35 involving researchers at Chinese or Hong Kong institutions.

The people

An exploratory look at the 35,195 author listings on the 6,437 papers, which carry 25,866 distinct names: which names appear most often, and where the 2025 leaders went. A name is not a verified person, so these counts are less certain than paper and institution counts.

9 The author names on the most papers

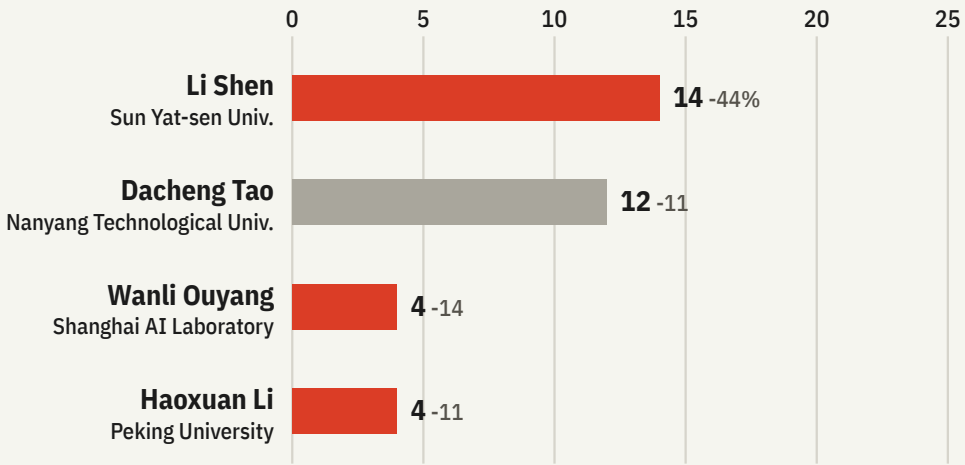
Accepted papers per author name, with the institution listed most often. These are counts of names, not of uniquely identified researchers: we excluded names with obvious signs of ambiguity, but have not verified every author's identity (see note).



Names that belonged to more than two OpenReview profiles in 2025, or whose papers are spread across many institutions, are left out: common names such as Yang Liu (24 papers under that name) or Hao Wang (18) cannot be assigned to one researcher. A name with two profiles can still combine two people, so the ranking is of names, not verified individuals. Oral talks: Yilun Du, Dawn Song, Junchi Yan, Kun Zhang and Tianlong Chen each have one.

Last year's leaders published less

Four of the five leading names in WireScreen's 2025 ranking, all listed in China or Singapore. Two of them, Li Shen and Dacheng Tao, are still among the 16 names ranked for 2026. The fifth, Lei Bai, is left out because his 2026 records list a different institution.



Bar: 2026 papers. The figure after each bar is the change from 2025.

Harvard's Yilun Du leads the 2026 count with 17 papers, up from 8, and three of the six names with 13 or more papers are at U.S. institutions: Du, Dawn Song (UC Berkeley) and Sanmi Koyejo (Stanford). In 2025 the leading names were listed in China or Singapore. Wanli Ouyang of Shanghai AI Laboratory, with 18 papers last year, has 4 this year; Haoxuan Li of Peking University went from 15 to 4.

Author counts by name, same method as panel 9. A 2025 author whose name appears under a different institution in 2026 is shown as listed. Team size: an average all-China paper has 6.0 authors, an all-U.S. paper 4.4.

Who decides

The conference is run by a foundation board and a volunteer committee; the papers are judged by other researchers

10 Who runs NeurIPS 2026

The conference belongs to the Neural Information Processing Systems Foundation. Its board appoints each year's organizing committee of volunteer academics and corporate researchers.

FOUNDATION BOARD

Terrence Sejnowski, Salk Institute, president · **Marian Stewart Bartlett**, Apple, treasurer · **Michael Mozer**, Google DeepMind, secretary. The two 2026 general chairs also sit on the board.

GENERAL CHAIRS

Hsuan-Tien Lin, National Taiwan University · **Razvan Pascanu**, Google DeepMind and Mila

PROGRAM CHAIRS, WHO OVERSEE PAPER SELECTION

Finale Doshi-Velez, Harvard, senior program chair · **Jenna Wiens**, University of Michigan · **David Rolnick**, McGill and Mila · **Nika Haghtalab**, UC Berkeley · **Marc Deisenroth**, Google DeepMind

ALSO ON THE COMMITTEE

Fei Fang of Carnegie Mellon is scientific integrity chair. Chinese institutions remain represented despite the boycott call: **Yisen Wang** of Peking University is a tutorial chair and **Lijun Wu** of Ant Group chairs the Evaluations & Datasets track.

NeurIPS 2026 foundation board and organizing committee pages, read Nov. 16, 2026. Affiliations as listed there.

11 How a paper gets in, and who gets to speak

Peer review by other researchers, run on the OpenReview platform. Authors do not know who reviewed them and reviewers do not know who wrote the paper.

1. **Submit.** Full papers were due May 6, 2026, anonymized, with an OpenReview profile for every author.
2. **Review.** Reviewers score each paper on quality, clarity, significance and originality. An area chair runs the discussion for a batch of papers and writes a meta-review; a senior area chair oversees a group of area chairs.
3. **Rebut.** Authors answered the reviews from July 27 to Aug. 3.
4. **Decide.** Area chairs made initial decisions with their senior area chair, then settled them with the program chairs. Authors were notified Sept. 24. The handbook does not say how the 99 oral talks and 240 spotlights were picked.
5. **Enforce the rules.** Authors who also review must file their reviews before seeing their own, and can be desk-rejected for skipping the work. Collusion and plagiarism cases go to the scientific integrity chair and ethics board.

The 13 invited speakers were chosen by the organizing committee, which has not published how: six in Sydney, four in Paris, three in Atlanta. Workshops were picked separately, 102 accepted from 454 valid proposals.

NeurIPS 2026 call for papers, main track handbook, reviewer guidelines, area chair pilot, July newsletter, invited speakers and workshops posts. As of Nov. 16, 2026, NeurIPS had not published 2026 submission or reviewer counts.

377

MOST PAPERS FROM CHINA'S TECH GIANTS INVOLVE UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS

Of the 450 papers with an author at Alibaba, ByteDance, Tencent or Huawei, 377 include a co-author at a Chinese university or state lab.

338

TSINGHUA STAYS AHEAD OF GOOGLE

Tsinghua appears on 338 papers, Google on 309. Both published fewer than in 2025, when Tsinghua moved ahead of Google after trailing it in 2024.

535

JOINT PAPERS FELL

Papers with both U.S. and Chinese affiliations dropped from 702 to 535, from one in eight papers to about one in twelve.

464

SOUTH KOREA'S YEAR

Papers with a South Korea–based author rose from 304 to 464, the biggest gain among the dozen countries with the most papers. KAIST went from 120 papers to 174.

−8 pts

CHINA'S SHARE OF THE CONFERENCE

Papers with a China or Hong Kong affiliation were 36.5% of the total, down from 44.6% in 2025 and back to about the 2024 level of 38%.

wire|screen

WireScreen analysis of Paper Copilot's accepted-paper records for NeurIPS 2025 (5,812 papers) and 2026 (6,437), with each author affiliation classified by country and institution. Red badges mark organizations on three U.S. government restriction lists. Every figure is reproducible from WireScreen's evidence workbook, version 3 (Nov. 16, 2026). Open the notes below for the method, the flags, the March 2026 dispute and the sources.

SCOPE AND METHOD

Scope. WireScreen analysis of the accepted-paper records for NeurIPS 2025 (5,812 papers) and 2026 (6,437 papers: main track 5,681, Evaluations & Datasets 697, Position 59; the 88-paper journal track is not in the dataset) compiled by Paper Copilot from OpenReview (paperlists repository, commit 181a850 of Nov. 12, 2026). The counts cover the papers in those files. NeurIPS had not published its 2026 acceptance totals as of Nov. 16, 2026, so the files cannot yet be reconciled against an official count. Two checks suggest they are close to complete: for 2025, the same source's main-track file holds 5,275 papers against the 5,290 NeurIPS announced, a 0.3% gap; and every 2026 record carries a unique OpenReview identifier, with 6,436 of 6,437 assigned to a poster session in the program. Paper Copilot's own summary table shows 5,681 accepted papers for 2026 because it counts the main track only. Every figure on this page is reproducible from WireScreen's evidence workbook, version 3 (Nov. 16, 2026), which lists each paper with its classified countries and institutions. Where 2024 is mentioned, the count uses the 4,518 main-conference and datasets papers in that year's file; its 44 journal-track records are excluded for consistency with 2026. Every listed author affiliation is matched to an institution and classified by country, using the same rules for every year: universities and research bodies by where they are based, companies by home country unless the affiliation names a location (Microsoft Research Asia counts as China; Google includes DeepMind). The counts classify affiliations, not authors' nationality or residence. 2025 figures are recomputed on this basis and differ slightly from WireScreen's October 2026 edition. The China decline holds under either method: WireScreen's rules give 2,592 to 2,352, and Paper Copilot's own country labels, which leave many multi-institution affiliations unplaced, give 2,606 to 2,336. The U.S. figure is method-dependent: 2,764 to 2,913 under WireScreen's rules and 2,761 to 2,766 under Paper Copilot's labels, mostly because Paper Copilot leaves affiliations such as "Harvard University/Google Research" without a country and WireScreen's rules place them. Joint U.S.–China papers are 702 to 535 under WireScreen's rules and 716 to 505 under Paper Copilot's. A "Google DeepMind" affiliation with no stated location counts as U.S., Google's home country, in both years; counting it as British instead would give 2,748 to 2,875 U.S. papers, still a 5% rise, and 700 to 529 joint papers. The data do not show whether the Chinese decline reflects fewer submissions, a lower acceptance rate, or both.

Hong Kong is shown separately; the mainland campuses of Hong Kong universities (Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Dongguan) are treated as separate institutions and, with Macau, count as China. Presentation city is the poster session assigned in the program; one paper has none. About 1% of papers list no usable affiliation and 2% of author affiliations could not be placed in a country.

FLAGS: U.S. RESTRICTION LISTS

Red badges mark organizations that appear directly on three U.S. government lists of national-security concern, according to WireScreen records as of Nov. 16, 2026: the Pentagon's Section 1260H list of "Chinese military companies" (Tencent and SenseTime since January 2025; Alibaba and Baidu since June 2026; Huawei) and the Commerce Department's Entity List (Huawei; the University of Science and Technology of China since May 2024; Zhipu AI and Peng Cheng Laboratory since January 2025; the Beijing Academy of AI since March 2025). Listings that reach a company only through an owner or partner are not badged, so Kuaishou, MiniMax, Ant Group and Moonshot carry none. A third badge marks the Pentagon's list of foreign institutions of concern for U.S.-funded research: the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the University of Science and Technology of China, Sun Yat-sen University and, since July 2026, Shanghai Jiao Tong and Fudan. Huawei is also on the Treasury Department's investment-ban list and the FCC's Covered List, which are not badged. ByteDance, Meituan, Xiaomi, StepFun, DeepSeek, Shanghai AI Laboratory and the Hong Kong universities named here have no direct listing.

CONTEXT: THE MARCH 2026 DISPUTE

In March 2026 the NeurIPS handbook linked to a U.S. government sanctions tool that, the conference later said, "covers a significantly broader set of restrictions than those NeurIPS is actually required to follow." On March 27 the China Association for Science and Technology said it would "no longer accept funding applications for scholars attending" the conference and that papers accepted there "will no longer be recognized as representative achievements when applying for projects funded by CAST"; the China Computer Federation and the Chinese Association of Automation called for a boycott. NeurIPS apologized for a "miscommunication," updated the link, said its clarified policy "is consistent with that of ACM and IEEE," and said it welcomed "submissions from all compliant institutions and individuals." Full papers were due May 6, 2026. The conference meets Dec. 6–12 in Sydney and Dec. 9–13 in Atlanta and Paris.

SOURCES

Paper Copilot paper lists (nips2024.json, nips2025.json, nips2026.json); OpenReview, NeurIPS 2026; Paper Copilot venue overview; NeurIPS newsletter, Oct. 2026 (three sites and dates); CAST statement, March 27, 2026; Yicai, July 11, 2020 and shlab.org.cn (Shanghai AI Laboratory); Microsoft Research Asia, about us; NeurIPS, "Author Eligibility" notice; Xinhua, March 27, 2026; Global Times, March 28, 2026.