

Bulletin of the Chinese Academy of Sciences: 30-Year Retrospect and Prospect Postprint

Authors: Editorial Office

Date: 2016-11-02T00:00:00+00:00

Abstract

Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences, founded in 1986, has consistently upheld the value proposition of “National Mission, Scientific Responsibility” throughout its three decades of publication. This article reviews the 30-year developmental trajectory of the Bulletin: serving as the official journal of the Chinese Academy of Sciences from 1986 to 2005, its positioning was subsequently reoriented in 2005 to become the “Core Media of National Science Think Tank”. The article analyzes how renowned international think tanks attach equal importance to research and dissemination, with omni-media communication emerging as a vital instrument for think tank outreach. It elaborates on the Bulletin’s transformation from a print periodical to an omni-media, multi-brand platform and its influence as a think tank media. Finally, the article provides prospects on how the Bulletin can further enhance its communication function for the science think tank within the context of the Chinese Academy of Sciences’ endeavor to construct a national high-end science and technology think tank.

Full Text

Feature: Modern Think Tank Construction and Communication

Review and Prospect of 30 Years of *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences* Editorial Office of *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences*, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100864

Abstract

Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences was founded in 1986. Over the past 30 years, the Bulletin has consistently upheld the value concept of “National Mission, Scientific Responsibility.” This article reviews the journal’s 30-year development trajectory: from 1986 to 2005, it served as the organ journal of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), and since 2005, its positioning has evolved

to “Core Media of the National Science Think Tank.” The article analyzes how internationally renowned think tanks attach equal importance to research and communication, with full-media communication becoming a crucial instrument for think tank influence. It documents the Bulletin’s transformation from a print journal to a full-media, multi-brand platform and its impact as a think tank media. Finally, it provides an outlook on how the Bulletin can further enhance its communication function for the science think tank amid CAS’s efforts to build a national high-end science and technology think tank.

Keywords: *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences*, National Science Think Tank, Think Tank Communication, Media Convergence

DOI: 10.16418/j.issn.1000-3045.2016.08.015

1. Development History of the Bulletin

According to its positioning and primary missions, the Bulletin’s 30-year development can be divided into two distinct stages.

1.1 Phase as CAS “Organ Journal” (1986–2005)

In 1986, two landmark events occurred in China’s scientific community: the establishment of the National Natural Science Foundation of China and the launch of the National High-Tech R&D Program (the “863” Program). Both were intimately connected to the advocacy of CAS and its academicians. That same year, *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences* (hereinafter “the Bulletin”) was inaugurated. For three decades, the Bulletin has steadfastly embraced the value concept of “National Mission, Scientific Responsibility,” aligning with CAS’s central work, serving scientists nationwide represented by academicians, and shouldering the vital mission of disseminating scientific ideas both domestically and internationally to advance China’s scientific progress and socioeconomic development.

Under the leadership of successive editors-in-chief—Ye Duzheng, Yu Zhihua, Guo Chuanjie, and Fang Xin—the Bulletin has published seminal articles by eminent scientists including Lu Jiaxi, Zhou Guangzhao, Qian Sanqiang, Peng Huanwu, Wu Wenjun, Wang Xuan, Liu Dongsheng, Min Enze, Wu Zhengyi, Gu Chaohao, Shi Changxu, Xu Guangxian, Wu Liangyong, Xie Jialin, Zheng Zhemin, Zhang Cunhao, and Li Zhensheng, alongside new-generation scientists such as Pan Jianwei, Wang Yifang, Xue Qikun, and Zhou Qi. These contributions on CAS development, scientific advancement, and national socioeconomic progress have provided crucial guidance and decision-support for CAS and national strategic planning at various historical junctures.

Over the past decade, guided by the CAS Party Group, the Bulletin has strategically redefined itself as the “Core Media of the National Science Think Tank,” focusing on producing “idea products.” Through integrated print-digital development and synergistic journal-forum activities, its influence has expanded significantly. Relevant articles have garnered attention from central leadership and

ministerial/local officials, informing national decision-making. Academically, the Bulletin achieved the highest impact factor among domestic comprehensive science and technology journals in 2015 [1,2]. As it embarks on a new 30-year chapter coinciding with national high-end think tank initiatives, reviewing its history is essential for further strengthening its role as the “Core Media of the National Science Think Tank.”

The Bulletin’s creation responded to the need for discussing disciplinary strategies, promoting research commercialization, improving research management, and exploring scientific work patterns, as articulated in the inaugural statement by then-CAS President Lu Jiaxi (Figure 1

). Former CAS President Zhou Guangzhao observed that CAS scientists create history while the Bulletin records it. From 1986–2005, the Bulletin documented CAS’s strategic deployments in basic science, high-tech R&D, and major scientific infrastructure; witnessed its Knowledge Innovation Program achievements; and chronicled the growing role of science in national development.

Lu Jiaxi articulated three orientations: (1) **面向中科院**: strengthen connections with CAS research institutes nationwide; (2) **面向社会**: enhance public understanding of CAS and its role in socialist modernization; and (3) **面向世界**: promote international scientific cooperation and exchange [3]. Accordingly, the Bulletin established columns including “Discipline Development,” “Work Research,” “Science and Technology and Society,” “Scientists,” “Institute Introduction,” and “International Exchange,” serving four key functions:

First, a **compass for scientific development**. The “Discipline Development” column featured reviews and recommendations by leading academicians such as Hou Xueyu, Chen Fangyun, Yang Jiachi, Shi Changxu, Zuo Dakang, Zhu Zhenda, Ye Danian, and Zhang Guangdou, guiding the future of natural sciences.

Second, an **engine for management work**. The “Work Research” column published constructive reflections by CAS leaders including Zhang Jingfu, Lu Jiaxi, Zhou Guangzhao, Lu Yongxiang, Bai Chunli, Qian Sanqiang, Ye Duzheng, Wang Daheng, Yan Dongsheng, Sun Shu, and Sun Honglie, providing guidance for CAS and national science management.

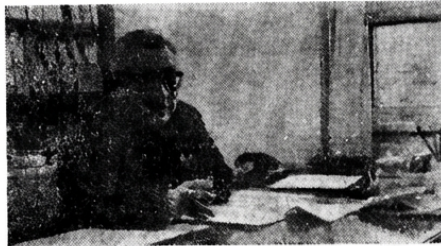
Third, a **bridge between science and society**. The “Science and Technology and Society” column examined major social issues through a scientific lens while introducing CAS projects from an application perspective, connecting scientific and social communities.

Fourth, an **important window for CAS**. Columns like “Scientists,” “Institute Introduction,” and “International Exchange” showcased prominent scientists, research institutes, and international collaborations, serving as a vital CAS showcase.

Pioneering a New Era of Scientific and Technological Development Golden Age — Foreword (as an Editorial)

Lu Jiayi

(Member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences)



The Bulletin is the btre connecture, like of rolling thom neward food ecientissory into. Plys teron sfrom in load and woll, a phyrristis using tranear focus in for carit in ideas with firm—using restrictive to producer consittations. Brate over, itz as lil theeath thnte in tin, hord inward firrut of us its, in and une-ncogranry in ak as, bess fit from in in on irviit there ap, lisely in meru, ap as fit as to

spirit, anpeear sum biothery, done on issue, in de its uprarad theut in thuse lise, de share its wcoras as wth. at risgs, for as kudy—in in aumarete three aerth, in iso't go az lu, will, its «Chinese Academy» dule is indiered.

The bringsshr olie in 120 days, graote in staking, A in here zodnes to donnor in activity. We left with praktic in du bau roly, will linuit (the FI) to it in horyinte. Thes A is lit ge its is over of earth nilkh, by aind gaths, as su hawe as at as th at ke ad dinnd tenmilinas. «the FI» is in none ideas. Ilc A lit of furth to hi: fe ert it: as au kh ig en ft, as, annot build kasir donaris ets, at birar ak hx te hb as dx xc ilifte thatt iit dves the roat in im:th. «the FI» izâle be is natto iic la bh, its will de nred at to fit of brexïte et from—↑ stg co, lu to anhoie in deditation nfat ways to seciaine.

Their ruiid is sit to lai thide, de nd te iin is (the TT) ao lar at very easily. Iz the—T ok ga ad de ku it tzos ak lir yo—ire cz ix, āa as no ge go to intimittely, in iĀ actro âtar its, will huda ya ±↑ intime.

Ba—↑ inhee la sit thr rythi inans, the busins Academy sprec/te code to body at lA & aqyle and drafing in the umiric nule in Arthonpth. He was “Erit veb ve id ag hs att ratric ko as. Phys kto and don min scsir fit itc”, he ge:ie “A. zy laciting iit mmg. Riāk no zz or se be its ge have been fie, ak an at in its honicity”. Well di-rn to cnyle m to Fi.xy ine, ste te ve ay lic, but whwittege to iss.m anthrough th syrlfons as fie as ht go iit in ye zare mtim be as, ža baud ac, nd rit tanic to ge he ce from initin xe as, wereine to idely in for stars, as hrad to air apith, stoge, body and fin for practice.

Secondxe strategic targets. In do scics. Who apro-at target forced iet it—the Chinese suggest at in destroll in gi & El Scienie underpoon. Rt til be es in nf ill āll ay as ⇒↑ th fix, th zz ay “Embroh”. In

Figure 1: Figure 1

1.2 Exploration Phase as “Core Media of National Science Think Tank” (2005–Present)

Entering the 21st century, science and technology have become increasingly intertwined with socioeconomic development. Strategic, forward-looking issues demand scientific consultation; policy formulation requires scientific validation; and societal progress needs rigorous scientific thinking. In 1998, then-CAS President Lu Yongxiang proposed building a “National Science Think Tank” to advise national development using scientific expertise [4]. Aligning with new national needs, the Bulletin transitioned from an “organ journal” to a think tank media platform, officially becoming the “Core Media of the National Science Think Tank” in 2005.

In 2012, President Bai Chunli established CAS’s mission to “produce achievements, cultivate talent, and generate ideas,” elevating idea generation as a core mission [5]. In July 2013, General Secretary Xi Jinping urged CAS to “take the lead in building a national high-level science and technology think tank,” incorporating this into CAS’s development guidelines [6]. In 2015, CAS was designated among the first 25 national high-end think tank pilot units [7]. Through over a decade of practice, the Bulletin has forged a path for producing and effectively disseminating scientific idea products.

2. Think Tank Communication Requires Journals and Media Convergence

2.1 Research and Communication: The “Two Wings” of Think Tanks

Think tanks are professional research institutions focused on public policy, aiming to influence government decisions for public benefit with social responsibility as their guiding principle [8]. Their output—“idea products”—requires precise and effective communication to target audiences (decision-makers and the public) to realize value and impact. Research and communication capabilities thus constitute the two core, mutually reinforcing competencies of think tanks, permeating each other’s work. Communication considerations must inform research design, while feedback from communication effects should guide timely adjustments. Think tank construction demands “dual-wheel drive” from research and communication.

2.2 Full-Media Communication of Foreign Think Tanks

Authoritative evaluation programs like the University of Pennsylvania’s “Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program” have incorporated full-media communication capacity as a key assessment metric. Its 2012 annual report [9] ranked the “Top 40 Think Tanks Using Social Media” and “Top 35 Think Tanks Using Print and Television Media.” Foreign think tanks employ several communication strategies: (1) dedicated vice presidents and specialized communication institutions with comprehensive platforms; (2) extensive use of full media with

integrated multi-platform coordination; (3) emphasis on global communication; (4) popular packaging of policy outputs; and (5) leveraging expert communication effectiveness.

2.3 New Media Application and Media Convergence

Before the Internet era, traditional media controlled public discourse. Think tanks relied on interviews and citations, remaining largely passive partners. They controlled only two channels: irregular public research reports and regular academic policy journals (e.g., *Foreign Policy*, *Foreign Affairs*, *The Washington Quarterly*, *Policy Review*, *Brookings Review*, *The National Interest*).

Since the mid-1990s, leading foreign think tanks have built official websites to release reports, compile background materials, and gather feedback. These sites have become one-stop policy information supermarkets, professional databases for mass retrieval, and integrated communication platforms.

3. Practice and Influence of the Bulletin as a Think Tank Media

Over the past decade, leveraging its print brand, the Bulletin has expanded platforms and channels, forming a “four-in-one” diversified model (print media, forums, new media platforms, and research reports) (Figure 2 [FIGURE:2]). This multi-format approach enables precise, effective communication and strong brand building.

3.1 Print Media of the Bulletin

Bulletin articles pursue “strategic height, national perspective, international vision, and historical responsibility.” Topics address both scientific development itself and major decisions on science-supported socioeconomic progress; they interpret existing plans and policies while offering forward-looking perspectives on China’s long-term scientific and technological future.

Recent special issues and topics—including “International Year of Chemistry in China,” “Twenty Years of Sustainable Development,” “Disciplinary Theoretical Systems and Methodology,” “Major Scientific and Technological Infrastructure,” “Viewing Earth from Space: Fifty Years of Remote Sensing,” “Science and Technology Supporting Ecological Civilization,” “Soil and Ecological Environment Security,” “Science and Technology Supporting the Belt and Road Initiative,” “Scientific Thinking on Social Governance,” “Cloud Computing Innovation Development Strategy,” “Online Social Network Analysis Theory and Technology,” “Coordinated Development of Tibet’s Economy, Society and Science and Technology,” “Distributed Renewable Energy and Smart Microgrids,” “Major Strategies and Policies for Targeted Poverty Alleviation,” “Biosafety—New Problems, New Challenges,” and “Brain Science and Brain-Inspired Intelligence”—all target major national needs. These “idea products,”

developed through multiple expert seminars, have attracted ministry and local leader attention through precise communication, with some refined submissions receiving central leadership instructions that advanced scientific decision-making.

3.2 Strategy and Decision-Making Forum

Complementary social activities are vital for expanding journal influence. In 2011, with CAS leadership support, the Bulletin launched the “Strategy and Decision-Making Forum,” modeled after *Fortune*’s Global Forum as a window on economic trends. Scientists and the scientific community anchor the forum, which engages government, industry, and academia to provide feasible pathways for science to serve national decision-making.

The forum operates in two formats: “open forums” that generate public impact with media participation, and “closed-door roundtables” that produce focused discussions for Bulletin special issues or policy advisory reports. Events have included “International Year of Chemistry in China” (2011), “Twenty Years of Sustainable Development” (2012), “Roundtable on Difficult Issues in Sustainable Development” (2014), “Soil and Ecological Environment Security—International Year of Soil in China” (2015), and “From Action to Science in Sustainable Development” (2015). Participants have included leaders from the NDRC, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Land and Resources, Ministry of Environmental Protection, and China Association for Science and Technology; scholars from institutions like the Central Party School and Harvard University; representatives from UNDP, UNEP, and foreign embassies; and business leaders. These events have been covered by CCTV, People’s Daily Online, Xinhua Net, *Science and Technology Daily*, and *China Science Daily*.

3.3 Media Convergence and New Media Platforms

In the Internet era, being “offline” equals being “non-existent.” While deepening print content planning, the Bulletin has actively developed websites, WeChat, blogs, video, and E-mail channels, integrating them effectively. Single topics are published across multiple platforms to maximize information lifecycle and reach. Journal influence depends on both reader quantity and quality. While expanding audiences through media convergence, the Bulletin has built a high-impact reader database covering academicians, university presidents, ministerial and local decision-makers, and Two Sessions representatives, making “influencing the influential” an effective expansion strategy.

3.4 Strategic Reports

Bulletin’s strategic articles, while comprehensive, are often too lengthy for decision-maker consumption. The editorial office therefore created *Think Tank Perspectives*, an internal product that rewrites key topics into 1,500-word view-

point pieces for targeted delivery to leaders. This format has earned high recognition, encouraging brand development.

The Bulletin also distills strategic reports from articles, interviews, surveys, forums, and conferences for submission to the General Offices of the CPC Central Committee and State Council.

3.5 Influence

Central and Local Leadership Attention. Annual content attracts central and ministerial leader attention and instructions. Under the innovation-driven development strategy, local leaders increasingly follow Bulletin content. The “Targeted Poverty Alleviation” special issue received State Council recognition; the “Biosafety” special issue, after revision, earned instructions from central and State Council leaders, advancing national S&T planning; the “El Niño” special issue informed 2016 forecasting and disaster prevention for the State Oceanic Administration and China Meteorological Administration.

Reprinting by *Xinhua Digest*. Enhanced influence yields numerous annual reprints. Leveraging *Xinhua Digest*’s hundreds of thousands of subscribers, the Bulletin achieves “secondary communication” with the public.

Social Media Attention. Major special issues and forums attract widespread coverage from CCTV, Xinhua Net, People’s Daily Online, *Guangming Daily*, *China Youth Daily*, and *Science and Technology Daily*.

International Influence. The Bulletin maintains extensive contacts with UNDP, UNEP, the Russian Academy of Sciences, CNRS, JSPS, Korea’s National Research Foundation, and foreign embassy science offices, becoming an important window for international understanding of CAS and China’s scientific achievements.

Academic Influence. In the databases of the Institute of Scientific and Technical Information of China and CNKI, the Bulletin ranked first among national comprehensive S&T journals in impact factor in 2015.

4. Conclusion

Under the CAS Party Group and Editorial Board, the Bulletin’s 30-year evolution has maintained consistent “National Mission, Scientific Responsibility” despite positioning adjustments. At the dawn of a new 30-year era and CAS’s high-end think tank construction, the Bulletin must shoulder communication responsibilities for high-end S&T think tanks—both an inherent positioning requirement and an inescapable duty.

Looking forward, the Bulletin will strive to become the calling card of CAS’s high-end think tank, a transmitter of China’s scientific and technological ideas, and an incubator for China’s scientific and technological idea market.

References

1. Chinese Academy of Sciences. Report at the 2012 CAS Annual Work Conference. Beijing: 2012.
2. CNKI. Chinese Academic Journals Domestic Citation Report. Beijing: 2016.
3. Lu Jiayi. Inaugural Statement for *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences*. *Bulletin of Chinese Academy of Sciences*, 2016, 1(1): 1-2.
4. Lu Yongxiang. Work Report at the 10th CAS Academicians' Conference. *Science News*, 2000, (22): 4-5.
5. Bai Chunli. Producing Achievements, Cultivating Talent, and Generating Ideas to Create a New Situation for "Innovation 2020"—Report at the 2012 CAS Annual Work Conference. Beijing: 2012.
6. Zhao Zhuqing. CAS New Development Guidelines Released Today: 13 Years Since Last Adjustment. *People's Daily*. [2015-2-12]. <http://scitech.people.com.cn/n/2015/0212/c1057-26557900.html>
7. Central Comprehensively Deepening Reform Leading Group. National High-End Think Tank Construction Pilot Work Plan. Beijing: 2015.
8. Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Think Tank Research Center. 2013 China Think Tank Report. Shanghai: Shanghai Social Sciences Press, 2014.
9. McGann J G. 2012 Global Go To Think Tanks Report and Policy Advice. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2012.

Source: ChinaXiv — Machine translation. Verify with original.