IE expo Shanghai 2026: global participation and intelligent innovation drive industry progress

- **Strengthening core industry capabilities and market leadership**
- **Continued growth in international reach and overseas attendance**
- **Intelligent technologies emerging as a key driver in environmental management**

IE expo Shanghai 2026, held at the Shanghai New International Expo Center (SNIEC) from April 13 to 15, covered 170,000 square meters and brought together 1,987 exhibitors from 20 countries and regions, attracting 82,419 visitors from 119 countries and regions.

International attendance grew by more than 30% year-on-year for the second consecutive year, underlining the exhibition's expanding global reach and the industry's continued shift towards more integrated and technology-driven solutions.

Mr. Xia Zuyi, Vice President and Secretary-General of the Chinese Society for Environmental Sciences (CSES), said: "IE expo Shanghai 2026 provided a platform for technology exchange and business development. It reflects the shift from scale-driven growth to quality-focused development and from end-of-pipe treatment to integrated solutions across the value chain. The outcomes will support the next stage of ecological governance."

Mr. Collin Davis, Executive Director of the Capital Goods Fairs Division at Messe München, added: "Global challenges such as climate change, water scarcity and rising waste volumes require joint solutions. IE expo Shanghai brings together key stakeholders and facilitates international exchange. We are proud to provide a platform that supports collaboration across the environmental sector."

A global gathering: new momentum for international cooperation

The strong international participation was also reflected in the opening ceremony, which was attended by diplomatic representatives from countries including the Netherlands, Norway, Austria, Argentina, Singapore and Poland.

This international presence continued across the exhibition floor, where seven national pavilions—from Germany, the United States, Japan, South Korea, the Netherlands, Norway, and Poland—along with two regional pavilions from Taiwan China and Hong Kong China, presented technologies for the Chinese market.

Overall, visitors travelled from 119 countries and regions, including 35 invited international buyer delegations, with strong participation from Malaysia, Russia, Estonia, Indonesia,

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Singapore, the Philippines, Spain, India, Austria, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, South Africa, Uzbekistan, Ghana, Argentina, and beyond.

Mr. Zhang Wei, Chairman of Shandong Qunfeng Heavy Industry Technology Co., Ltd., said: "The exhibition remains a key platform for accessing both domestic and international markets. This year's strong international participation generated valuable business contacts and project opportunities."

To further support targeted exchange, the "Global Sourcing Lounge" hosted 27 matchmaking sessions and four market briefings, with delegations from Thailand, Argentina and the Netherlands providing market insights and partnership opportunities.

Mr. Angsutorn Wasusun, Executive Director of the BCG Economy Division at the Eastern Economic Corridor Office (EECO), Thailand, stated: "The Global Sourcing Lounge matchmaking event was a great opportunity for EECO to connect with Chinese environmental leaders. The experience will support future investment and cooperation in the EECO."

Full-chain synergy: driving high-quality industry transformation

IE expo Shanghai 2026 reflected ongoing structural changes in the environmental sector, with a clear shift towards integrated, cross-sector approaches across the value chain.

As Mr. Li Qilin, President of the China Environment Chamber of Commerce (CECC), noted, the industry is moving from isolated end-of-pipe solutions towards more integrated approaches across the value chain.

This was evident in the exhibition's scope, which ranged from water treatment, air pollution control and waste management to soil remediation, environmental monitoring and smart sanitation. Topics such as circular economy and carbon neutrality also gained further prominence. Established segments focused on improving efficiency, advancing digitalization and enabling resource recovery. At the same time, emerging areas gained visibility. The Tianjin Ziya Economic and Technological Development Zone, China's largest circular economy park, participated for the first time with companies presenting recycling solutions.

Forums on carbon capture and hydrogen-based processes attracted strong interest, highlighting the growing links between environmental technologies and the energy transition.

Ms. Qu, Exhibition Supervisor at ZERMA (Shanghai) Co., Ltd. (Germany) stated: "IE expo Shanghai features high professionalism, internationalization and complete industrial chain, helping us accurately connect with quality customers at home and abroad, enhance brand influence and achieve cooperation intentions."

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Intelligent empowerment: redefining environmental solutions

Digital and intelligent technologies played a central role at IE expo Shanghai 2026. AI, IoT and data-driven applications were increasingly integrated in environmental systems, enabling more efficient monitoring, control and maintenance.

Ms. Sun Sicong, Marketing Supervisor at Hach Water Quality Analysis Instruments (Shanghai) Co., Ltd. (U.S.A.) said: "We presented new solutions for water monitoring across municipal and industrial applications. Targeted pre-event promotion supported strong engagement on site."

Mr. Cui Song, R&D Director at Hongguan Environmental Technology Co., Ltd., stated: "The exhibition brings together key decision-makers from municipalities and industry. It is an effective platform for customer engagement. This year, we introduced our autonomous sanitation vehicle."

A multi-dimensional platform: fostering a comprehensive exchange ecosystem

In addition to the exhibition, IE expo Shanghai 2026 also served as a platform for knowledge exchange, thought leadership and industry dialogue: the IE expo China Environmental Technology Conference 2026 featured 32 sub-forums with more than 300 speakers from industry, research and academia.

Key topics included water infrastructure, zero-waste initiatives, AI applications in environmental protection and the integration of low-carbon and new energy technologies.

Mr. Zheng Xiaozhu, Business Manager at CRRC Environmental Technology Co., Ltd., said: "The exhibition is a leading platform in China. The conference program provides valuable opportunities for technical exchange." Additionally, the expo featured a range of specialized formats, including the Environmental Innovation Show, the Smart Sanitation Demonstration Zone, the Launching Platform and targeted matchmaking sessions, complemented by networking formats such as the Eco-CEO Gathering, the IE expo Awards and University Challenge China.

Looking ahead

IE expo Chengdu 2026 will take place from September 16–18, 2026, at the Western China International Expo City. IE expo Shanghai will return to the Shanghai New International Expo Center (SNIEC) from April 20–22, 2027.

For further information please visit https://www.ie-expo.com/

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About IE expo Shanghai

IE expo Shanghai —presented by IFAT— is Asia's Leading Trade Fair for Environmental Technology: Solutions for Water, Waste, Air and Soil. The organizer of the event is Messe Muenchen Zhongmao Co., Ltd.—a joint venture by Messe München Shanghai Co. Ltd. and Shanghai ZM International Exhibition Co. Ltd. Spanning 170,000 square meters of exhibitions space, IE expo Shanghai 2026 attracted 1,987 exhibitors from 20 countries and 82,419 visitors from 119 countries and regions. The next event will take place from April 20 to 22, 2027 at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC).

IFAT worldwide

In addition to IFAT Munich as the world's leading trade fair, IFAT now comprises eleven trade fairs around the globe, forming the world's largest network for environmental technologies. The IFAT network includes IE expo Shanghai, IE expo Chengdu, IE expo Guangzhou, and IE expo Shenzhen, as well as IFAT Africa in Johannesburg, IFAT Eurasia in Istanbul, IFAT India in Mumbai, IFAT Delhi in New Delhi, IFAT Brasil in São Paulo, and the Singapore International Water Week (in cooperation with IFAT). Since 2026, IFAT Saudi Arabia in Riyadh has joined the portfolio. Together, the events of the IFAT network act as a driving force advancing the global transformation toward sustainable technologies.

Messe München

As one of the world's leading trade fair organizers, Messe München presents the world of tomorrow at around 90 trade fairs worldwide. These include twelve of the world's leading trade fairs such as bauma, BAU, IFAT and electronica. Messe München's portfolio comprises trade fairs for capital and consumer goods, as well as for new technologies. Together with its 1,300 employees in the group and associated companies, it organizes trade fairs in China, India, Brazil, South Africa, Türkiye, Singapore, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Thailand and the USA. With an international network of affiliated companies and foreign representatives, Messe München is active worldwide. Each year, more than 150 events attract around 50,000 exhibitors and around three million visitors in Germany and abroad. This makes Messe München an important economic engine that generates billions in purchasing power.

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