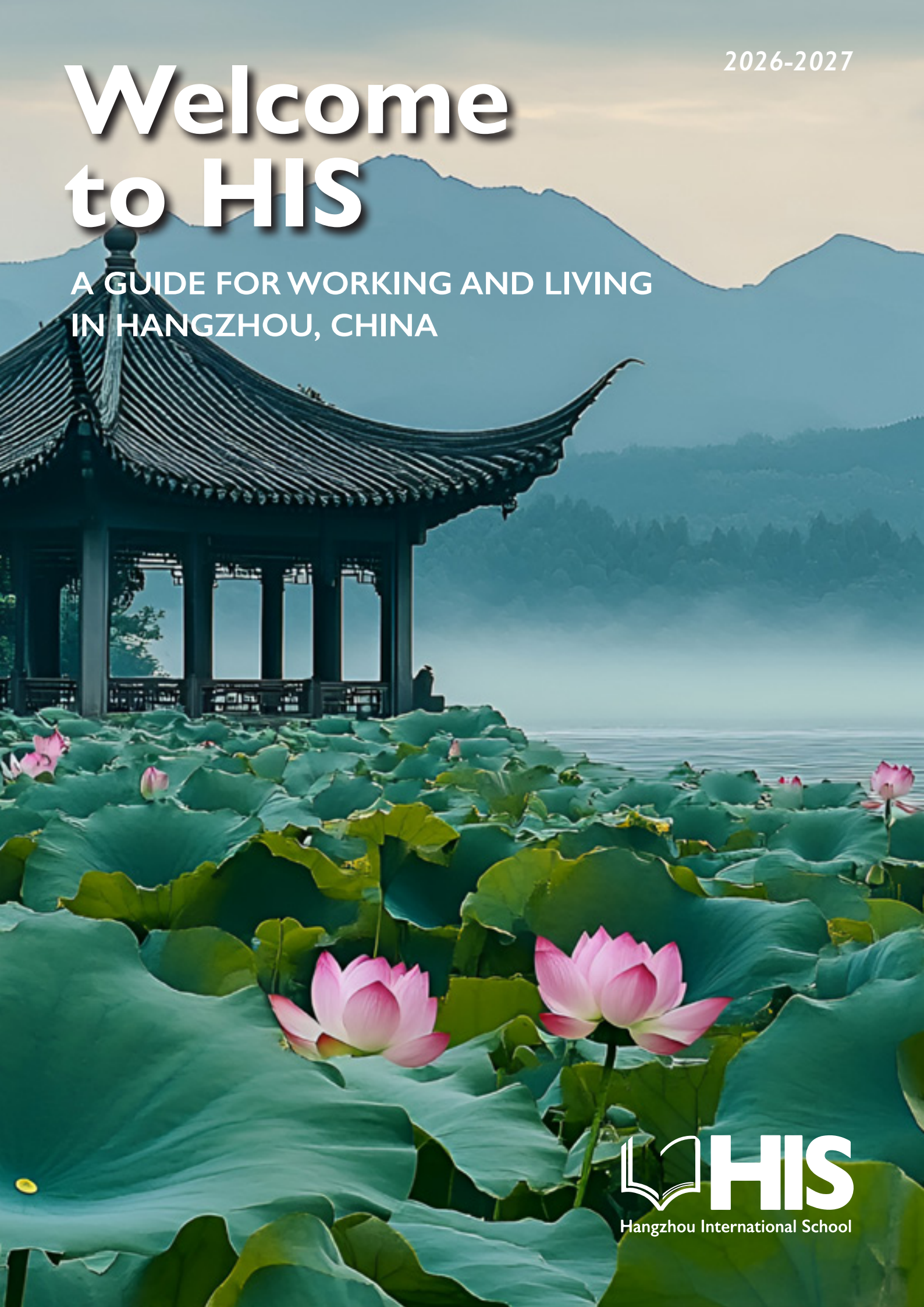
2026-2027

Welcome to HIS

A GUIDE FOR WORKING AND LIVING IN HANGZHOU, CHINA



HIS
Hangzhou International School

欢迎!

As you are preparing for your new adventure in China, here are a few bits of information that you can use to help you adjust. We have an array of thrilling events and activities planned for your first few weeks here.

We understand that you may have many questions, so this book aims to give you a head start in understanding how to prepare for your new role at Hangzhou International School. Please keep in mind there will be variations for local and overseas expat faculty, and national hires. We are excited to meet you in person and look forward to a great year to come!



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ECE BUILDING

We



ECE CLASSROOM



are

LOWER SCHOOL (LS) CLASSROOM



LS LIBRARY



SOCCER FIELD



DRAGON PAVILION



THEATER



UPPER SCHOOL (US) CLASSROOM



US GYMNASIUM

Calendar

Hangzhou International School
杭州国际学校

SEMESTER ONE

JULY				
M	T	W	TH	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

AUGUST				
M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

SEPTEMBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
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7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

OCTOBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
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19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

NOVEMBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
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16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

DECEMBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

School Calendar 2026-2027

IMPORTANT DATES:

SEMESTER ONE

AUGUST	5-7	New Faculty Inservice (no school for students)
	10-17	All Faculty Inservice (no school for students)
	18	New Family Orientation Day & Open House
	19	**First Day of Semester One**
SEPTEMBER	11	Professional Inservice (no school for students)
	25	Mid-Autumn Festival
	28-30	Fall Break
OCTOBER	1-2	National Day Holiday
	16	**Mid-Semester Progress Reports**
	20	Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences
	26	Professional Inservice (no school for students)
NOVEMBER	27	Professional Inservice (no school for students)
DECEMBER	18	**End of Semester One & Semester Reports**

SEMESTER TWO

JANUARY	11	Professional Inservice (no school for students) & New Family Orientation Day
	12	**First Day of Semester Two**
FEBRUARY	5-12	Chinese New Year Holiday
MARCH	8	Professional Inservice (no school for students)
	26	**Mid-Semester Progress Reports**
APRIL	5-9	Qingming "Tomb Sweeping" Festival Holiday and Spring Break
MAY	3	Labor Day Holiday
	4	Professional Inservice (no school for students)
JUNE	1	Student-Led Conferences
	9	Duanwu "Dragon Boat" Festival Holiday
	24	**End of Semester Two & Semester Reports**
	25	Professional Inservice (no school for students)

SEMESTER TWO

JANUARY				
M	T	W	TH	F
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4	5	6	7	8
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18	19	20	21	22
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FEBRUARY				
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15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26

MARCH				
M	T	W	TH	F
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8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

APRIL				
M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

MAY				
M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

JUNE				
M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

New Family Orientation Day
Beginning/End of Semester
New Faculty Inservice (no school for students)
Legal Holidays (no school)
School Holidays (no school)
Professional Inservice (no school for students)
Conferences

Arrival

We request that you book your flight directly to Hangzhou, not nearby cities. Please refer to the information from the secretary regarding your arrival. Early arrivals are discouraged because we won't have staff on hand to welcome you or get you settled. Upon arrival for our expats, one of the HIS Leadership Team members will meet you at the airport to welcome you to your new home in Hangzhou.

IMPORTANT: We will need both your receipt and your boarding passes to complete your registration process soon after you arrive. Please hold onto them.

When you arrive, be prepared for the hot weather. If it is your first time visiting China, you may experience some culture shock upon arrival. This is natural, and to be expected. Embrace it and feel free to interact with new and existing colleagues to get through these changes. We are here to help!

The HIS team will help you with the following in the first few days upon arrival (expat hires only):

- Police check and registration at the local police station
- A comprehensive medical check (this includes ultrasound, ECG, and blood test)
- Setting you up with a Chinese bank account
- Setting you up with a Chinese SIM card and mobile phone plan
- Put you in touch with an agent who can organize internet setup at home





Weather

Hangzhou has a subtropical climate with long, hot, and humid summers and cool, dry winters.

SUMMER

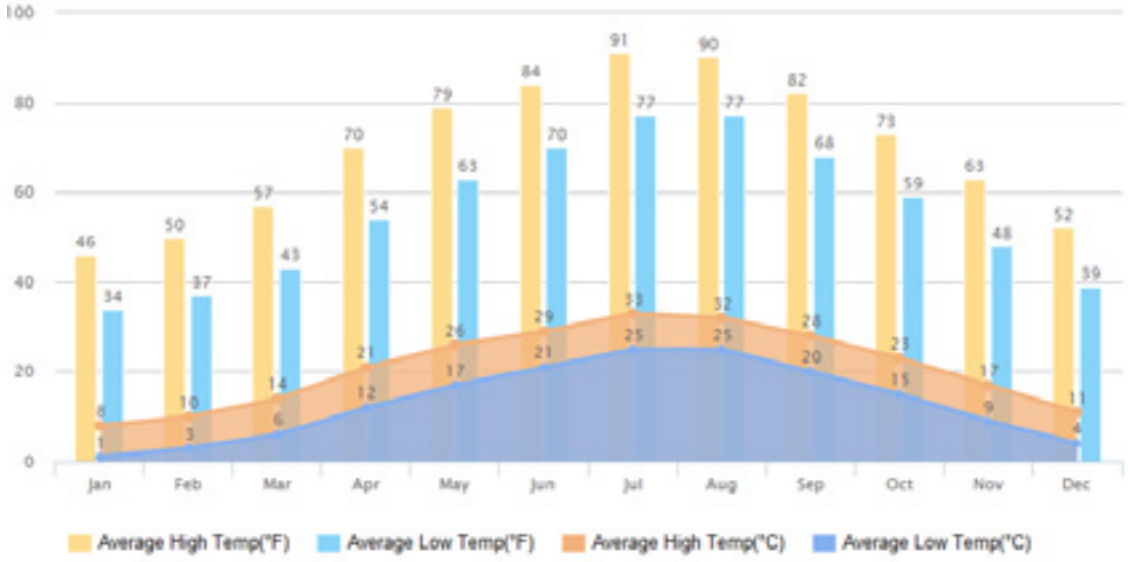
June, July, and August are the hottest months in Hangzhou. At this time of year, you can expect daily average highs of around 28-30°C, but temperatures can reach as high as the low 40s. Nights don't bring much relief with temperatures in the mid-20s, and the high humidity can be an uncomfortable experience for some visitors. June is one of the wettest months of the year, with rain for up to 14 days of the month. You will need to plan for an umbrella and waterproof clothing. Don't forget to bring sunscreen and insect repellent and be prepared for busy crowds around popular attractions. Rain or shine, people in China tend to use umbrellas not only for rain but to also shade themselves from the heat.

AUTUMN

Autumn is a beautiful time to visit Hangzhou with mild temperatures, especially in November when the autumn foliage changes color around the lake. During the 'Golden Week/ Mid-Autumn Festival' public holiday period in October, Hangzhou can be exceptionally busy, so many tourists prefer to avoid that week. In September and October, Hangzhou is occasionally affected by typhoons, bringing stormy winds and torrential rain, but November is a much drier and clearer month. September is still warm, with daily highs of around 28°C and overnight lows of 17°C but by the time November arrives, the temperature is beginning to drop. Nights in November can be a chilly 9°C with temperatures reaching around 15°C during the day.







WINTER

Winters in Hangzhou are chilly and windy, with occasional light snowfall. Daily temperatures range from 2-11°C and December/ January nights are close to freezing. The winters are long so come prepared with your thermals, gloves, beanies, and winter coats.

SPRING

March sees the start of spring in Hangzhou and the city gradually awakens from its long winter. It is considered the best time for visitors. Daily highs start at around 14°C in March but will have risen to 26°C by the end of May. Overnight, it can be chilly in early Spring with temperatures as low as 7°C, but by May the city is considerably warmer with overnight temperatures of around 17°C.





What to Pack

PERSONAL ITEMS

- Pack winter clothes, the temperature will drop below 0°C in winter.
- Parents of young children: while it's easy to find most items, be sure to bring at least one month's worth of your preferred brand of diapers, wipes, rash ointment, formula, baby medicine etc., to ease the stress of transition.
- Pack your preferred brands of toiletries. Some items such as antiperspirant deodorants, curly hair products, tampons, hair dyes are less readily available in local supermarkets.
- Preferred brands of over-the-counter medications for colds, headaches, or stomach bugs can make self-treatment easier when you don't feel well e.g. Tylenol/ Panadol, aspirin, cold/ flu tablets, diarrhea and nausea tablets. Asthma inhalers must be prescription in China, so bring them along too.
- If you have a prescription for medicine, check with your physician to obtain enough to get you through the first few months until you find a new doctor here in Hangzhou. Bring the prescription documents as you may be asked for proof.
- While it's easy to pick up digital cameras, laptops, and devices in China, prices are comparable and no cheaper than in the US/UK (due to import tax). As a rule, if you're only going to use the item in China, buying it in China ensures the proper electrical components. But if you will be using the item long term, even after you've left China, you're better off buying it before your move.
- Bring printed photos of your loved ones, family, pets, and hometown. Printing stations are rare in Hangzhou.
- Bring international adapters and check your voltage. Voltage in China is 220v and plugging a 110-volt appliance into a 220v plug can be an unpleasant and shocking experience!

LUGGAGE AND SHIPPING

Pack what you can. It's often best to pack as much as possible and pay the airline fee for additional suitcases when you come, as opposed to shipping items across to Hangzhou (slow and can be expensive).

HIS faculty (overseas hire expats only) are entitled to an extra baggage allowance. This is used for bringing in items you will need to start your new experience in Hangzhou. If you are only bringing items as extra baggage on flights, you may turn in your receipts upon arrival, but if you are also shipping other items later, you will want to wait and submit all your receipts at once.

We do not recommend using a shipping company as you won't be able to get your items through customs until your visa receives final clearance. This means that you may not receive your shipment for several months.

Please inform the HIS team how many suitcases or luggage items you will be bringing with you on the plane so that we can have a large enough vehicle to accommodate your needs.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

Please ensure you organize originals and copies of official documents such as birth certificates, immunization records, diplomas/ university degrees, marriage certificates, change of name documents and driver's license. Bring extra passport photos (headshots) as these often come in handy.

CLOTHING

HIS dress code is smart and professional. Women are expected to wear slacks or appropriate-length skirts with shirts or blouses (tank and spaghetti-strap tops are not acceptable). Men are expected to wear slacks, dress shoes, and button-down shirts or polo shirts with collars. Both genders should avoid jeans, flip-flops, tank tops, and casual T-shirts. Teachers should not wear jewelry, body art, ornaments, or clothing that detract from a calm, professional appearance.

Throughout the year, HIS hosts many community and fun faculty events including the Winter Gala, Halloween Spooktacular and more. While you will not be required to dress formally often, it is recommended men pack a suit and women should pack at least one formal dress. We do embrace a festive Christmas sweater, and remember to bring something to wear on International Day that symbolises your home country or region.

Please note Asian sizes tend to be smaller. Shoes above 8.5 US (40) for women, or 11 US (44) for men can be difficult to source. If high-quality shoes are important to you, bring your own.



Technology

ELECTRICITY

The voltage in China is 220v. Most buildings will have outlets that will fit several configurations of plugs and USB ports. Kitchen appliances (kettles, blenders, coffee makers), hairdryers, and electronics run on 220v in China so for ease, we recommend you purchase these after you arrive.

VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK

It is recommended you purchase and install Virtual Private Network software (such as Astrill) on your phone and computer before; arriving in China. Most sites such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, X, and Google are not accessible in China without a Virtual Private Network. Once it is installed you can turn it on and off as you please.

WIFI

You will need to purchase a WIFI router and internet plan as an additional expense. The HIS team will be available to support you in getting the internet set up in your apartment, as well as a TV box for movies and international TV channels. You will need to show your passport as ID. It typically takes about 2-3 days to get set up, so this should be a priority so you can have internet at home quickly. You will be able to access the internet at school anytime, so that will help with your transition.

MOBILE PHONES

Please check that your phone plan is unlocked before you come to China. The HIS team will assist you to purchase a phone plan and Chinese SIM card upon your arrival. Most faculty use China Unicom. You will need your passport as ID. To access your phone balance, either download the app or for China Unicom, simply text "YE" to 10010 and it will automatically text you back your account balance.



Helpful Apps

WECHAT - WeChat is the most popular form of communication in China for messaging, calling, transferring money, paying bills, sending photos, and generally everything else. You will use WeChat to join a variety of groups to keep up to speed on social and school-wide events.

We invite you to join the Hangzhou New Faculty WeChat Group to get to know each other and ask questions in advance of your move to China. In the first week, during orientation, we'll cover a variety of topics designed to get you ready to enjoy your adventure in China, so that it becomes home to you quickly. You'll be able to ask questions via the new-hire WeChat group as well.

Tip: In WeChat there is a handy translation function. Simply hit the cross icon in the top right corner, go to scan, then toggle over to translate! You can hover for translation or translate photos. This will make your life easier when shopping, ordering food from a menu, or getting around in China.

ALIPAY - This is primarily an app for paying or purchasing items, but allows you to top up phones, pay your utilities, add money to metro cards, transfer funds, order food (Eleme/ TakeOut), buy train tickets (Air & Rail), call taxis (Didi), and so much more. Alipay now has a handy translation function that will help you a lot in your transition to China!

TRANSLATION APPS & AI -
These are many apps and AI that are great for translation and will help you make conversation, read Chinese characters, and get around China.



DIDI - The most important transport app in China. Didi functions like Uber, and is in English and Chinese. You can access this app through WeChat Wallet, Alipay or as its own app. You may need to copy the name of your destination in Chinese characters to locate it. Didi must be connected to your bank account for payment so it won't be useful until your Alipay or WeChat payment gateways are set up.

METROMAN - An app that will help you navigate the Hangzhou metro system.

DIANPING - Helps in locating exciting activities or locations in China, functions similarly to Yelp.

BON APP - Bon App is a useful platform for international people in China. Use it to discover restaurants, bars, schools, day spas and local hot spots, with honest reviews written by active community members.

AIR MATTERS - This air quality app tracks the AQI in our area, Binjiang, Hangzhou. It measures the index of PM 2.5,10, and other particulates. The colder months of the year are when pollution levels will be at their worst.

APPLE MAPS - Apple Maps works better in China than Google Maps. It provides directions for transit, bus routes, and bike paths. You may need to copy across the name of your destination in Chinese characters to locate it.

AMAP - A navigation app for getting around that is particularly useful for Andriod users. It is in English and Chinese, with a user-friendly interface.

BAIDU MAPS - This app is a good alternative to Apple Maps and provides good bus routes and locations. It is primarily in Chinese.



Transport

Once you arrive in Hangzhou and get settled in, there will be plenty of time to explore and familiarize yourself with your new surroundings. HIS will provide expat faculty with a transportation allowance that can be used on the Hangzhou metro card, so you'll have easy access to all ways to explore your new home.

Common modes of transport:

- Metro or Bus
- Electric scooter
- Didi (Taxi)
- Car
- Bicycle
- Walking / hiking

HANGZHOU BY METRO

The HIS campus is located about a 10-minute car ride from the Xianghu stop on Line 1. You will be given a public transportation card to use on the metro or bus and the school will organize at least one metro ride during the orientation week to familiarize you with the system. In many cases, the metro is faster than taking a Didi because traffic in Hangzhou can get congested in the afternoons and evenings, especially when it rains.

HANGZHOU BY DIDI

While the metro is significantly cheaper, hailing a Didi will take you directly door-to-door to your location. Didi's are plentiful in Hangzhou, and you are unlikely to wait more than 10 minutes for your ride! Rush hour can be quite congested on the roads so plan accordingly.

HANGZHOU BY BUS

Once you get used to Hangzhou, you might want to try a bus or two. There are plenty of buses, but you'll have to get acquainted with their routes as you go. Use Apple Maps Transit or Baidu Maps to find bus routes.

HANGZHOU BY CAR

If you have a foreign driver's license you can apply for a temporary Chinese license. These need to be renewed annually. Should you wish to apply for a permanent driver's license you will need to sit a written test. Most people choose to lease a car, though you can also purchase your own car.







HANGZHOU BY BICYCLE

Bicycle is a popular form of transportation in Hangzhou. There are bike lanes and specific traffic rules for riding a bike. We would recommend a bike with luggage racks and baskets to make it easy for transportation of goods and groceries. You can purchase bikes ranging in quality from a one speed pedal bike to top end racing bikes or mountain bikes. There are quite a few mountain biking trails in Hangzhou so there will be plenty of opportunities to ride.

HANGZHOU BY E-SCOOTER

Many people like to purchase electric scooters to enable them to get around town quickly and smoothly. You can typically get an electric scooter for around 3250 RMB ($500 USD). You need to charge it about every 50 km or so, but that decreases over time, so depending on the distance you ride it, you will need to charge a few times a week. These will need to be registered with the government, but that's an easy process and there will be staff at the school who can assist. Helmets are mandatory. The school provides a location at the side parking lot that has access to electricity, so it is convenient to ride your electric scooter to work and plug it in! Electric scooters are silent when they come up behind you, so be careful that you keep your eyes open (even on the sidewalks!)



WALKING & HIKING

There are plenty of areas that you will enjoy wandering. During orientation, we will try to take you to a few of these places early on but leave you to find others on your own.

- Nine Creeks (九溪烟树)
- Meiling Road (梅灵路) to Lingyin Temple and Meijiawu Village (梅家坞)
- Qixia Hill (栖霞岭)
- Qiantang River Paths
- West Lake and Leifeng Pagoda
- Baochu Pagoda
- Hefeng Pedestrian Street

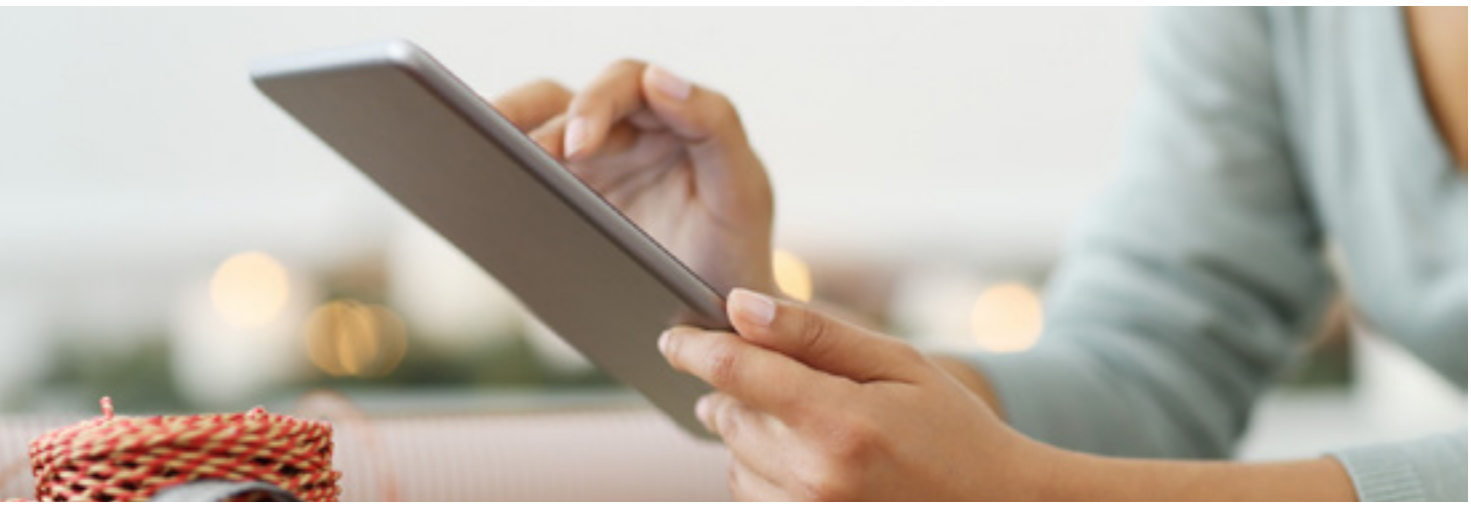

NINE CREEKS


QIANTANG RIVER


MEIJIAWU VILLAGE

Online Shopping

Online shopping makes life very easy in China. Home delivery is a great option for busy people, and you don't need to tip. This is an affordable and positive benefit of living in China!



TAOBAO - Offers everything ever made in China. Expect cheap prices and cheap merchandise, but it's great if you don't want to have to go out and bargain. It also comes equipped with a photo-search option that can recognize nearly everything and makes searching much easier. Once you set up your Alipay, you'll be able to order, purchase, pay, and top-up just about anything you need in China.



BAOPALS - A great alternative to TaoBao but in English. This is a fantastic app to start learning how to shop online in China for newcomers.

JING DONG (JD) - Offers a seamless online shopping experience for customers around the globe, providing authentic products from more trusted manufacturers and designers in a timely and reliable fashion.

IKEA - Ikea is a great and familiar place to go when you first arrive to help you furnish your new home in Hangzhou.

Food Delivery & Groceries

ONLINE ONLY

MEI TUAN - This convenient app delivers food and other items directly to your doorstep. It is all in Chinese, and you will need to get your translator ready or get help the first time to set up your home and delivery address.

ELEME - A service through the Alipay app that conveniently delivers food and other items, such as medicine, directly to your doorstep. You'll see it called 'takeout' and you can also use it to run errands.

EPERMARKET - A great app for international varieties of food, fresh or packaged meats, seafood, organic options, canned goods, etc. It is in English and delivers directly to your doorstep.

SUPERMARKETS

LIHUA, WU MART, AND CENTURY MART

You will see these local supermarket chains around.

COSTCO - Great for bulk buying, has good options for wine and cheese. You will need a membership. If you already have one, your membership card from home will be honored. Delivery available.

SAMS CLUB - Great in-store service and app for bulk buying groceries and fresh products. Delivery available on the same day, very convenient and can even deliver within the hour.

OLE - A high-end supermarket with a large variety of imported goods including appliances, meat, cheese, frozen goods and fresh produce.

HEMA (FRESHIPPO) SUPERMARKET - Groceries from all over the world.







Fitness & Gym Facilities

HIS provides a Wellness Stipend for all faculty to apply toward gym memberships, bicycles, or other exercise equipment that lead to healthy life choices.

On campus, there is a Fitness Center and swimming pool (The Wave) that faculty can use at designated times. The school Fitness Centre has free weights, treadmills and ellipticals, and other exercise equipment. Furthermore, HIS faculty have formed many group classes including walking, running and biking groups, ultimate frisbee, basketball, yoga classes, dance classes, and other leisure activities.

Decathlon is a sporting goods store that stocks a nice variety of reasonably priced athletic gear and equipment and purchases here can be redeemed on your Wellness benefit.



FACULTY GYM



THE WAVE SWIMMING POOL

Health Care

Emergency numbers:

110 - Police
119 - Fire Department
120 - Ambulance



There are several nearby hospitals, dentists and clinics, some of these will have a dedicated international section:

International Clinic of General Practice
6/F, Central Building
The Second Affiliated Hospital
Zhejiang University School of Medicine
(Binjiang Campus)
浙大二院滨江院区中心楼6楼
国际全科医学门诊部

Contact Us 联系电话
0571 – 5611 0640

The Children's Hospital Zhejiang University School of Medicine
No. 3333 Binsheng Road, Binjiang District, Hangzhou City 杭州市滨江区滨盛路3333号

Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital
3 East Qingchun Road 浙江杭州庆春东路3号

American Sino OB-GYN & Pediatrics Hospital
No. 558, Zhongshan Road Middle, Shangcheng District, Hangzhou 杭州市中山山中路558号

Anchor Health Clinic
No.12 Lingyin Rd,Westlake district, Hangzhou 浙江省 杭州市 西西湖区 灵隐路12号浙江医院外宾诊疗 中心心

Ivy Dental Clinic Booth
4-102, Xiaoxiang Yuan, Chunjiang Huayue, Fei- yunjiang Rd. (Close to Zhijiang Rd.) 飞飞云江路春江花月月潇湘苑商铺

Great Dental Clinic
45 East Jiefang Road A1 building 16F Hangzhou CBD 杭州市钱江新城解放东路45号高德置地A1幢16楼大谷口腔

Accommodation

HIS provides 1 to 4 room bedroom apartments on or off campus for all overseas hires, depending on family size. Our on-campus accommodation is called Mountain View Residence (MVR).

All apartments will be provided with basic furnishings, including beds, a dining room table and chairs, seating for a living room area, air conditioners/heating units, storage, a refrigerator, cook top, and a water heater. Not all apartments are equipped with an oven. Mattresses in China can be on the firmer side. Tap water is not drinkable, however there are plenty of places to source bottled water for your home. You are responsible for organizing your own cable TV, wifi, router, VPN, or other such services.



MOUNTAIN VIEW RESIDENCE (MVR)


BEDROOM


KITCHEN


DINING AREA

Ayis & Household Help

In Hangzhou, it is easy and affordable to hire help for your household. Many teachers and faculty hire an 'ayi' (translation: aunty) to help with the cleaning, laundry, shopping, cook, daily chores and babysitting children.

SALARY - Families with children might choose to hire an ayi on a monthly basis as opposed to hours. Typically, you will expect to pay 40-70 RMB per hour. Your ayi is unlikely to speak English, so it is best you negotiate days, times, and expectations directly with the ayi using WeChat.

NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED - a typical school apartment can take up to 4 hours per week; however, families may choose to add on hours depending on services needed.

LUNAR NEW YEAR BONUS - it is tradition to pay a Lunar New Year bonus payment of the full month payment before the holiday.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS / HOLIDAY BREAKS - negotiate directly with your ayi to understand whether she will come on national holidays or extended periods while you are not at home.

CLEANING DUTIES - You must communicate your expectations and level of 'clean'. What is required? Cleaning kitchen, bathroom, making beds, washing laundry, hanging clothes to dry, ironing, cooking, etc.

COOKING - Some ayi's are willing to cook Chinese food but may not feel comfortable making 'western' dishes. Make your preferences for food known early, especially regarding expectations, allergies/ intolerances, and spice tolerance.

天鹅到家 **SWAN HOME**
This app will help you get started with cleaning services such as an ayi,



Traveling with Pets

Bringing a pet to China can be costly and time-consuming. If your pet will be joining you, remember that you will be living in an apartment, and probably traveling for several months over the course of the year.

Check out the China pet quarantine requirements or try to book flights with a pet transportation company to help decrease the stress of traveling with a pet. Some airlines allow pets to travel in the plane with you, but others will require the pet to be in a kennel in the cargo hold. Depending on your pet type and size, season, airline, ticket level, and originating location, the rules may be different.

PET BOARDING

While an ayi might be able to watch your pet for some of the time, there are a few trusted places and people we recommend, such as Missy Brown, for pet boarding. You can reach out to her via WeChat or contact other parents or faculty with pets for recommendations for boarding your beloved pets while you are away on holiday.

Advice from an HIS faculty cat owner:

Finding an airline that will take an animal and does not fly into Beijing or Shanghai can be a challenge. Some airplanes do not have climate controlled areas in the cargo hold and might not transport animals during certain times in the summer, due to the heat. Check schedules for different days, as one day may have a type of airplane that can take a pet, but another day a different type of plane that cannot. I used Asiana, but EVA also flies into Hangzhou. I got a large 30-50 pound animal kennel, as the airlines did not charge more! Ask what the airline will and will not allow and what you must have in the kennel, in terms of size and weight!

From the US: you will need to get a form from APHIS for your veterinarian to fill out 10 days before you leave; send it to the USDA and get it back to take it with you to China. Let your veterinarian with enough advance warning so they can contact APHIS with any questions.

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/by-country/pettravel-china



Culture Shock

One of the most stressful aspects of moving to another country is facing a completely new culture. Regardless of how prepared you might be, the change of culture and environment is something that affects everyone. The experience of culture shock, especially for first-time expats, is quite normal.

'Culture shock' also includes the stress of being separated from the important people in life–family, friends and colleagues that we would normally talk to at times of uncertainty. Some people don't talk about it at all because they feel they should adapt instead of feeling uncertainty or anxiety.

The truth is that every traveler feels this way to a certain extent, but for first timers, it is particularly acute. The good news is that everyone adapts after a while. It can be hard at times, but it is truly such a valuable life experience that no one would ever regret going through. Here are the five most common phases of adjustment to a new culture and environment:

Phase 1 – HONEYMOON

During this period, expatriates are usually excited to be in the new country and are fascinated by its sights. In the beginning, everything is so new and exciting.

Phase 2 – CULTURE SHOCK

After a while, the initial phase ends and expats must face the barriers in performance of their jobs or in everyday life. It can become even worse if they have brought their families with them and realize that their loved ones are stressed and confused by the new circumstances. Due to such difficulties, expats may feel culture shock symptoms such as confusion, anger and frustration.

Phase 3 – GRADUAL ADJUSTMENT

In this phase, expats begin to adjust to their new situation and slowly regain their self-confidence. Through relationships they build with other expats and locals, they begin to integrate into society. This is the phase in which foreigners adapt to local culture, with much less anxiety.

Phase 4 – BASIC COMPETENCE

As relationships build up, it becomes easier for an expat to develop functional proficiency in a foreign environment.

Phase 5 – MASTERY

Reaching this phase takes time and patience as, before getting close to people, we need to accept and appreciate their different ≠culture, habits and language. Culture shock is normal, and the feeling of confusion, disappointment and stress will dissipate. What each expat can do to make the transition easier is to prepare by reading about the host county, its people, rules, habits, taboos and business practices.



As a member of Safe Passage Across Networks (SPAN) schools, HIS members have worked through a book study of Douglas Ota's book, Safe Passage. It provides information for students, teachers, and community members and their roles in arriving, staying, and leaving international communities. "Moving is one of life's greatest challenges. Firmly grounded in psychological theory and cutting-edge neuroscience, Safe Passage maps the challenges and charts a course for individuals, schools, and accrediting bodies to navigate them. Although primarily focusing on international schools, the hopeful message within this book reaches into any school, university, or organization where human beings come and go." We encourage you to read this book and begin the transition process before you join us in China.

Basic Mandarin

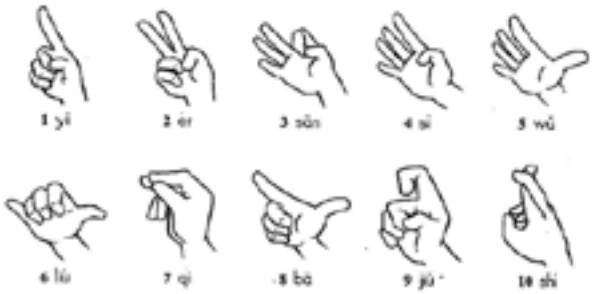
LEARNING CHINESE

There are many companies who offer Mandarin lessons. Taking some Chinese lessons will help you adjust for a more enjoyable experience in Hangzhou. We recommend the company, Chinese Surfing.



GREETINGS

English	Chinese Characters	Pinyin Pronunciation
Hello	你好	nǐhǎo
Good-bye	再见	zàijiàn
Thank you	谢谢	xiè xiè
No thanks	不用了，谢谢 没有谢谢	bú yòng le, xièxiè méi yǒu xiè xiè
You are welcome	不客气	bú kèqi
Yes	是的	shì de
No	不是	bú shì
Excuse Me	对不起	duì bu qǐ
I don't understand	我听不懂	wǒ tīng bù dǒng
I	我	wǒ
you	你	nǐ
he, she	他，她	tā, tā
I already have	我有	wǒ yǒu
I don't have	我没有	wǒ méi yǒu
Do you have a wifi password?	Wifi密码是什么?	Wifi mì mǎ shì shen me



QUESTIONS AND DIRECTIONS

English	Chinese Characters	Pinyin Pronunciation
Where is the bathroom?	厕所在哪里?	cèsuǒ zài nàli?
Hi Driver, I want to go to...	你好师傅, 我要去……	nǐhǎo shīfu, wǒ yào qù...
go straight ahead	一直走	yìzhízǒu
turn right	右拐	yòu guǎi
turn left	左拐	zuǒ guǎi
stop here	这里停	zhè lǐ tíng
slow down	慢一点	màn yīdiǎn
can / can't (is it possible or ok?)	可以／不可以	kě yǐ bù kě yǐ
Do you have / not have?	有没有?	yǒu / méi yǒu
want / don't want?	要／不要	yào / bù yào
like / don't like?	喜欢／不喜欢	xǐ huan/bù xǐ huan
Bill please	买单	mǎi dān
May I have a bottle of...?	麻烦给我 一瓶	má fan gěi wǒ yī píng
water	水	shuǐ
beer	啤酒	píjiǔ
I want it cold / hot	冰的／热的	bīng de / rè de

NUMBERS

English	Chinese Characters	Pinyin Pronunciation
0	零	líng
1	一	yī
2	二	èr
3	三	sān
4	四	sì
5	5	wǔ
6	六	liù
7	七	qī
8	八	bā
9	九	jiǔ
10	十	shí
11	十一	shí yī
20	二十	èr shí
21	二十一	èr shí yī
100	一百	yī bǎi
1000	一千	yī qiān

Food & Drink



HIS is situated across the river from the Hangzhou CBD and West Lake district, but with the metro lines, it's easy to explore by metro or Didi. While it's always best to support your local eatery, here are a few popular chains and restaurants to begin your culinary adventure.
Search BonApp for English recommendations.

CAFÉS & COFFEE SHOPS

- Starbucks Coffee
- Luckin Coffee
- Blue Mountain Cafe
- Me Too Cafe
- Baker & Spice Bakery
- Tim Horton's
- Chagee
- Hey Tea

RESTAURANTS

- Angelo's – Western food with pizza, pasta, and drink specials. Good for viewing sports events.
- Cams Burgers – located within Xianghu Lake
- Blue Frog – Great burgers, pasta, drinks, and western menu
- Alimentari – Italian and other western food with great pizza
- Pita's & Tika's – Indian food
- Saffron – Indian food
- Hangzhou Wolfgang's Steakhouse – Restaurant in Kerry Centre
- Slims – Western restaurant in Paradise Walk
- Souq – Upscale Lebanese food

VEGETARIAN FOOD

- Green Eats- Yijia Su
- Qing Chunli
- VeggieBoil

WESTERN

- McDonald's
- KFC
- Burger King

- Shake Shack
- Pizza Hut
- Papa John's Pizza
- Dominos
- Popeyes
- Subway
- Dairy Queen

CHINESE FOOD

Chinese food options are plentiful, particularly in food malls and around subway/ metro entrances. We recommend you try hot pot, dumplings, soup noodles, and bubble tea.

- Din Tai Fung (located in MixC Mall)
- Green Tea
- Grandma's Home
- Jin Sha at Four Seasons Hotel Hangzhou at West Lake is a Michelin Star restaurant

PUBS, BARS & CLUBS

- Mid-town Brewery - pub restaurant with live music
- Wade's Bar & Grill - pub with live music and occasional latin dancing and sports TV events
- Shares Bar - pub with live music, sports TV, and occasional trivia nights
- East River Brewing (Dong He)
- Way2 Good Cha Jazz Club
- No. 18 Beers Pub
- Sky Bar at Hyatt Hotel
- MASA
- In Love KTV (Karaoke Bar)
- Homey 88

Download the BonApp app or use the WeChat mini-app for up-to-date listings.









Shopping Malls

POWERLONG MALL (BINJIANG)

This is the closest mall to our school (about 5 km). It has many well known shops including H&M, Muji, Sephora, Uniqlo and Decathlon. It also has a variety of restaurants, a movie theater, KTV, and a bowling alley and games venue.

STAR AVENUE MALL

This was the first and largest mall in Binjiang and has a beautiful view of the river. It has a variety of restaurants and shops, and is also home to a cool bookstore. Bus 107 goes here.

PARADISE WALK

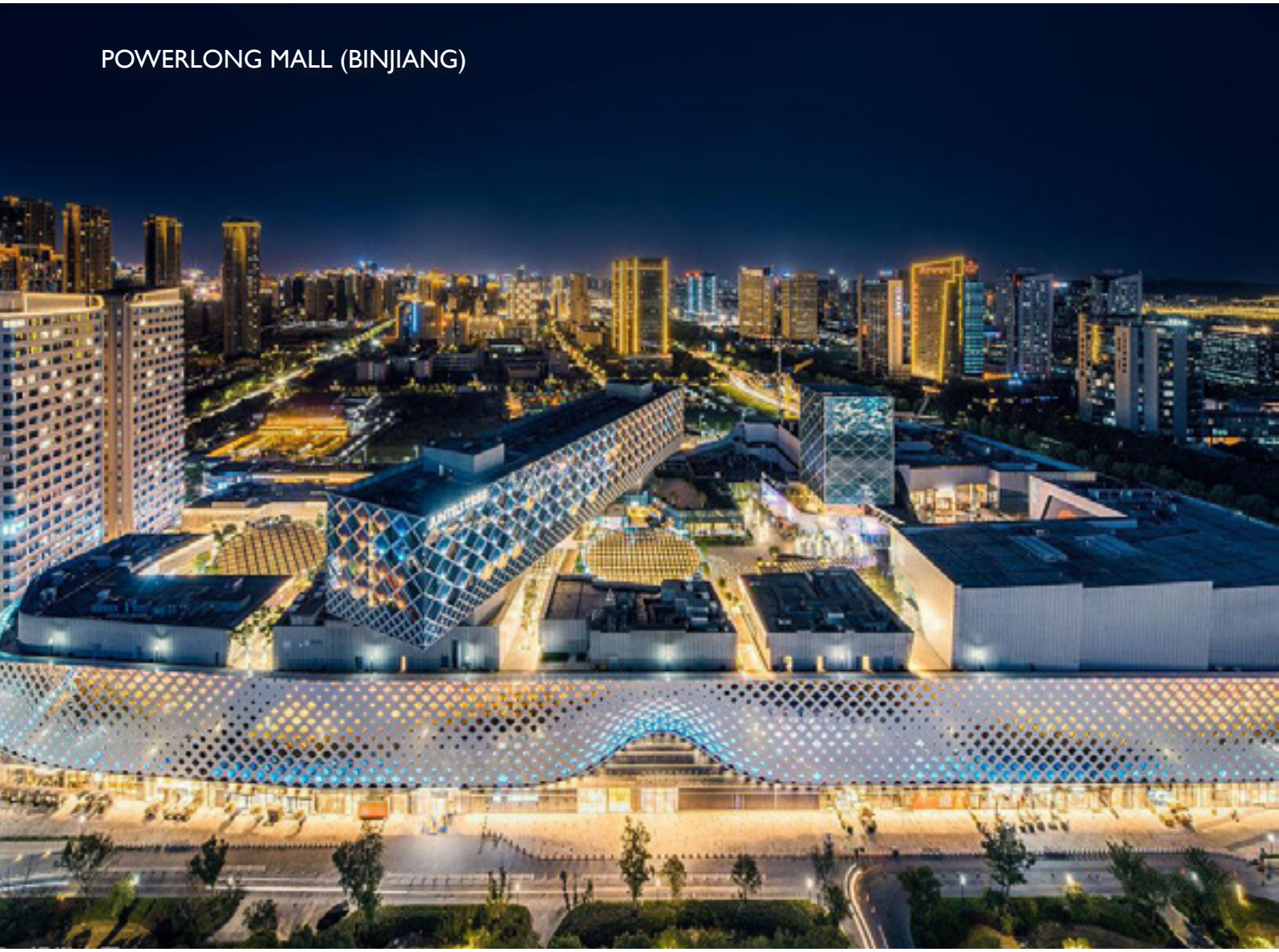
A shopping mall with a lot of stores such as Uniqlo and Zara Home.

MIXC MALL

A sprawling complex with high-end fashion stores, nice restaurants, movie theatre, Ole (grocery store), and a nearby Apple store.

KERRY CENTRE - Home to fashion stores, nice restaurants and hotels, the Kerry Centre has music, food, art, and entertainment as its focus. Located in the center of town, across the river, metro Line 1 will take you directly there.

POWERLONG MALL (BINJIANG)



Parent Community

PAFA
Parents and Friends Association
HIS-Hangzhou

PAFA (Parents and Friends Association) at Hangzhou International School is committed to promoting parent and community involvement. The PAFA group coordinates programs, events, and fundraising activities outside of the school curriculum. Our inclusive approach fosters diversity, ensuring that all parents and families feel welcomed and valued.

Through close collaboration with school leadership, including administrators, teachers, and staff, we work together to cultivate a positive and productive school culture. Together, we aim to create a united parent community where every member is actively engaged in shaping their child's educational journey and building a stronger HIS community.

Examples of PAFA-organized events:

- PAFA Luncheons
- International Day Booths
- PAFA Kitchen
- PAFA Fitness
- PAFA Book Club
- School decorations for festivities
- Family picnics, hikes, day trips by class
- Teacher Appreciation Day


PAFA LUNCH


PAFA BOOK CLUB


PAFA FITNESS


PAFA KITCHEN


HIS
cheer




PAFA
Parents and Friends Association
HIS-Hangzhou





Once a Dragon, Always a Dragon!

HIS
Hangzhou International School

25 YEARS OF COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY 2002 – 2027

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For further inquiries, please contact the Admissions Department
admissions@hisdragons.org.cn

Founded in 2002, Hangzhou International School was the first international school in Hangzhou and remains the only non-profit, WASC accredited, IB World School in Zhejiang province.