

# The entrepreneurial university in China: nonlinear paths

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## **Abstract:**

Is the entrepreneurial university mode that originally appeared in the US possible in China? Thirty-four universities in the ‘985 Project’ were studied in order to address this question. It is hypothesized that the necessary internal factors for a university to be entrepreneurial are: its research, technology transfer and entrepreneurship capabilities. External factors include: government support through policies and funding, venture capital and collaborations with firms. We concluded that it is possible to achieve an entrepreneurial mode in China, though different from that in the US. As a developing country, China starts from a university-run enterprise model, forming firms within the university. These generally operate in nonhigh-tech mode to gain experience and raise capital, as well as develop research capacity, and then upgrade to a high-tech entrepreneurship mode. A few elite universities will become entrepreneurial universities within 10–20 years.