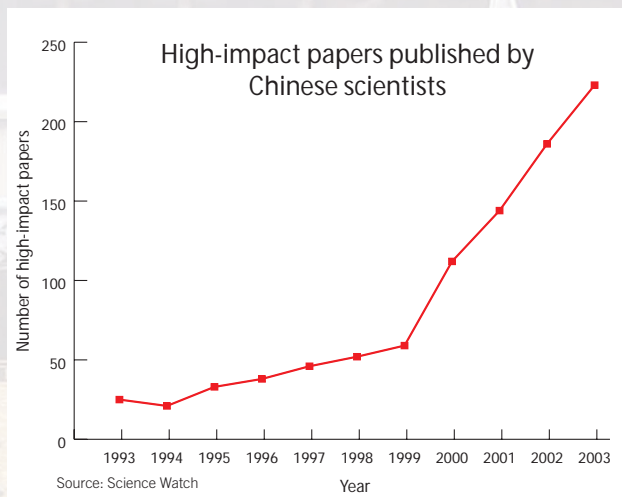


China is fast becoming a global leader in every arena—including in science. In February, the Chinese government announced an ambitious scheme to boost the country's commitment to science. The government plans to increase its annual investment in research and development to 900 billion yuan (US\$112 billion) by 2020, a massive increase over the current numbers (see box below). But can China's scientific structure sustain this growth? In the following pages, we look at a few key trends—and people—in China that could make a difference.

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Agostina Mandavilli



“The way of thinking of Chinese scientists is different from Western scientists. In Chinese culture, details are not so important.”
GuanXia Gao, Institute of Biophysics, Beijing

“I used to think that I wanted to go to the US for a postdoc. But recently I ask myself if it's necessary.”
Xuwo Ji, Beijing University student



Budget for research and development

(in millions of dollars)

95,140 US allocation for 2003

100,756 US allocation for 2004

5.9 Percent increase



12,103 China's allocation for 2003

13,589 China's allocation for 2004

16 Percent increase



Source: US National Science Foundation, Chinese government



World Health Organization