

Fuxing Island Becomes a Future-Focused Innovation Hub



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Fuxing Island is rapidly evolving into a "Global Makers Island" and a future-oriented hub for innovation in Shanghai. As AI reshapes the way we work and create, this small island is generating fresh momentum for the city's high-quality digital economy through institutional innovation and entrepreneur-friendly support.

Weekly Maker Boot Camps and Nearly 100 OPC Companies Turn Fuxing Island into a Launchpad for Entrepreneurs

OPC, short for One Person Company, is a new model of entrepreneurship in which a single individual, equipped with a computer and a suite of AI tools, can take an idea all the way from concept to market. Fueled by the rapid rise of artificial intelligence, this lean yet highly innovative model is expanding at remarkable speed.

Fuxing Island has recently welcomed a new wave of entrepreneurs unlike any before. Nearly 100 OPC founders working in fields such as AI-powered short dramas, intelligent agents and casual games have officially moved into the island's Xinghuo Community. Blending a century-old industrial landscape with today's AI technologies, the island is quickly becoming a launchpad where one-person startups can turn ambitious ideas into reality.

In March this year, the Fuxing Island OPC Community and the Huoshan Workshop AI Industrial Park were launched on the same day. At the same time, Yangpu introduced a package of policies to support the development of the OPC community, providing entrepreneurs with around-the-clock, high-quality support services.

"Who you build with matters more than where you build." Zhang

Tianwei, Director of the Yangpu District Development and Reform Commission, said Yangpu is focusing on fast-growing sectors such as AI-generated short dramas, intelligent agents and casual games. To support entrepreneurs, the district has introduced 10 targeted measures built around three priorities: investing in talent, empowering innovation with technology, and integrating services around real business needs. These include talent apartments with monthly rents of less than RMB 1,000 per person; an OPC community offering weekly networking events and monthly competitions; shared access to AI toolkits, industry-specific AI agents and token services; and a dedicated OPC service portal on the city's online government platform, providing free tax filing and book-keeping services.

"After our initial testing, someone with no background in directing or screenwriting has successfully completed the entire production process for a short drama using a full AI-powered workflow," the general manager of Shanghai Hummingbird Film Technology Co., Ltd. told reporters. "The production has already passed review and is now available online." In his view, a strong business environment depends on supportive policies. By helping community members handle financial, tax and legal matters, the OPC community removes many of the practical burdens that entrepreneurs face. "The addition of Volcano Engine also gives us confidence that its platform and traffic will create more collaboration opportunities for startups."

Since March, Fuxing Island has hosted weekly maker boot camps, with participation continuing to grow. Across its three focus sectors, the program has attracted more than 2,000 prospective entrepreneurs. Nearly 100 OPC companies have now established an offline

presence on the island, creating a two-tier ecosystem that combines a core on-site community with an expanding online network.

Beyond its robust policy support, a welcoming and supportive startup ecosystem is also rapidly taking shape. Every week, the "super individual" boot camp at Fuxing Guangshe draws professionals from a wide range of fields, including AIGC designers, film and television directors and economics PhDs. Promising projects receive incubation guidance and connections to potential investors, helping turn early concepts into market-ready products.

"On Fuxing Island, the sharp reduction in workspace and computing costs has given us the freedom to create without holding back," said Zhou Yi, a former advertising director. His AI-generated short drama War of the Gods recently attracted more than 10 million views and won an international AI film award.

"Yangpu will build a comprehensive, multi-level system for nurturing makers, backed by an all-round support framework centered on investing in talent, empowering innovation with technology and integrating services around real business needs," a Yangpu District official said. The district will also work with Volcano Engine to open up access to core resources, including large language models, end-to-end AI tools and intelligent agents for short-form animated dramas and casual games. Supporting measures will include reduced workspace costs, computing subsidies, industry networking and startup mentoring. By bringing large models, AI tools and developer ecosystems directly to makers, the initiative will significantly lower the cost of experimentation for one-person startups.

Yangpu will continue to strengthen Fuxing Island's profile as a "Global Makers Island," bringing together digital creativity and arti-

cial intelligence resources and positioning the island as China's leading destination for OPC entrepreneurs. As AI reshapes the way goods and services are produced, this small island is generating a steady stream of new momentum for the high-quality development of Shanghai's digital economy through institutional innovation and thoughtful, people-centered support.

Fuxing Island Will Continue to Push the Limits of Robot Adaptability, with More Than 100 Robots Living There as "Silicon-Based Islanders"

In the "Music CityWalk" setting, robots can adapt easily to complex terrain such as lawns and pathways, maintain smooth and stable performance over long-distance routes, and slow down or give way when they encounter pedestrians or children, demonstrating an understanding of how people move through open urban spaces. In the "Urban River Patrol" setting, river-patrol robots use upgraded environmental recognition algorithms and voice-linked systems to accurately identify safety hazards such as fallen barriers or missing facilities. They can simultaneously capture images, determine locations, transmit data in real time and trigger alerts, completing a fully automated inspection loop.

Covering 1.3 square kilometres, Fuxing Island serves as a full-scale testing ground for the Shanghai Key Laboratory of Quantum City Spatial Intelligence. Not long ago, robots developed by 32 maker teams from across China were released from the laboratory into the real world as part of the 2026 Shanghai Fuxing Island Embodied Intelligence Real-World Experimentation, Training and Testing Platform Spring Camp. After two weeks of training, the participating robots showed measurable improvements in their overall capabilities.

Zhong Junhao, Secretary-General of the Shanghai Artificial Intelligence Industry Association, said that optimisation and validation had now been completed in four scenarios. Looking ahead, Fuxing Island will continue to push the boundaries of robot adaptability in real-world environments.

Yet in this uncharted territory,

where there are no established standards and no precedents to follow, every tentative step from zero to one, and every new problem it exposes, is bound to be more valuable than the answer itself: battery life drops sharply under intense sunlight, damp conditions during the rainy season increase the risk of short circuits, and insufficient bandwidth can interrupt tasks.

"Will urban infrastructure be able to support the large-scale deployment of robots in future scenarios?" Zhong Junhao cautioned that, as embodied intelligence develops rapidly, supporting infrastructure across the industry must be put on the agenda. Industry experts have suggested establishing a system similar to the automotive sector's 4S dealerships, providing services such as repairs, charging and battery-swapping facilities, and routine maintenance. Such infrastructure will be essential if robots are to operate in real-world environments on a meaningful scale.

The ultimate goal is to move beyond isolated skills towards general-purpose capabilities, which will require continued exploration of the limits of embodied intelligence. Robots must be able to generalise across environments, transfer skills between tasks and continue learning over time. The first four scenarios tested on Fuxing Island—Music CityWalk, market shopping assistance, coffee delivery and urban river patrol—are all based on highly repeatable, general-purpose tasks that can be replicated, scaled and deployed in practice. The island will next explore new applications, including replacing humans in hazardous environments such as simulated earthquake rubble and fire scenes. An autumn training camp is expected to introduce practical exercises such as fire and rescue operations, testing whether robots can maintain the full chain of perception, judgement and action in extreme conditions involving dense smoke, high temperatures and numerous obstacles.

Under current plans, by the end of this year Fuxing Island will feature more than a dozen settings in which robots and residents work, live and enjoy leisure activities together. More than 100 robots will inhabit the island as its "silicon-based residents." (Parts of this article draw on reporting by Jiefang Daily. Some images are file photos.)

