

ASU expands global impact in Central Asia through new Kazakhstan partnerships

ASU joins Kazakhstan government leaders at DC summit, partners with 2 universities in the region

By Samantha Talavera, ASU News
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Arizona State University is deepening its engagement in Central Asia through two new university partnerships in Kazakhstan, announced at this year's C5+1 Summit in Washington, D.C.

The [C5+1 diplomatic platform](#), convened by the United States presidential administration, brings together the U.S. and the five Central Asian nations — Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — to strengthen regional cooperation in areas such as economic growth, security, innovation and education.

This year's C5+1 Summit marked the first-time it was held in the White House, and the [first time](#) that presidents of all five Central Asian nations visited D.C. at the same time.

In advancement of the C5+1 platform's mission, ASU and [Cintana Education](#) leadership joined senior officials from the Republic of Kazakhstan to formally launch two new institutions in the ASU-Cintana Alliance: a new International Honors College at [Auezov University](#) and [InnoTech University](#), a greenfield institution.

The new partnerships build on ASU's long history of engagement in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, including:

Academic and language initiatives through ASU's [Melikian Center](#) and [Critical Languages Institute](#), which have supported Kazakh language and area studies programs for U.S. and international

students.

Collaborative projects in the country supported by U.S. federal agencies, including a 30-plus-year defense and border security [training initiative](#) between the U.S. Department of Defense and the Kazakh armed forces.

A growing numbers of Kazakh students who have chosen ASU for undergraduate and graduate study in Arizona.

Both Auezov University and InnoTech University were hand-selected for collaboration with ASU by Sayasat Nurbek, Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. With these additions, the ASU-Cintana Alliance now includes 34 partner universities serving more than 360,000 students around the world.

“Kazakhstan is emerging as a regional economic powerhouse rich in natural resources, a young, ambitious population, and a government that sees education, technological advancement and innovation as core to its future,” said [Julia Rosen](#), vice president of [Global Academic Initiatives](#) at Arizona State University. “These partnerships are designed to expand access to high-quality higher education while helping build the talent and ideas that will drive long-term prosperity in Central Asia. Kazakhstan has been a valued partner of ASU and Arizona for many years, and with these new initiatives, we are excited to build upon that relationship.”

Auezov University: Linking local talent to global opportunities

Founded in 1943, Auezov University is one of Kazakhstan’s largest public institutions, enrolling more than 17,000 students and offering 76 technical and humanities specialties. Located in Shymkent — the country’s third-largest city and a growing economic hub in the country’s southern region — the university plays a critical role in preparing the region’s workforce.

Under the new partnership, Auezov University will launch an international honors college powered by ASU, designed for highly motivated students seeking global learning experiences and international credentials from Kazakhstan and the United States.

To expand access, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Kazakhstan plans to award scholarships for up to 350 students annually at ASU.

InnoTech University: A new model for innovation in Kazakhstan

In a second major initiative, ASU is working with Cintana Education, Q Education Group and Kazakhstan’s Ministry of Science and Higher Education to establish InnoTech University, a brand-new private institution focused on technology, innovation and market-responsive programs.

Launched in downtown Almaty, Kazakhstan’s largest city and financial center, the university will ultimately relocate to Science City (Alatau), a [planned digital city](#) with its own governance and laws, that will serve as a central hub of technology, research, international transportation and

innovation connecting Europe, China and Central Asian countries under the "New Silk Road" initiative.

"InnoTech University is being designed from the ground up to connect learners, innovation and industry," said [Cagri Bagcioglu](#), regional CEO of Eastern Europe and Central Asia for Cintana Education. "With ASU's academic model and Kazakhstan's ambitious vision for Science City, we see enormous potential to create a new regional center for technology and talent."

2 unique Kazakh institutions powered by ASU

The new collaborations are distinctly different from a traditional university branch campus. Both Auezov University and InnoTech University will remain independently governed and fully part of the Kazakh higher education system, with all academic programs and curricula subject to approval by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

ASU's role will focus on:

- Curriculum design and academic innovation.

- Faculty development and training.

- English-language instruction and academic skills preparation.

- Nondegree and certificate courses.

- International experiences and student exchange opportunities.

- Dual-degree and pathway models that connect local study with global credentials.

- Facilitating and participating in research collaborations in the region.

"These partnerships with Auezov and InnoTech reflect ASU's commitment to co-developing the future of higher education with our partners around the work that share our dedication to advancing access to higher education," said Nancy Gonzales, executive vice president and university provost at Arizona State University.

"By working alongside Kazakhstan's universities and government leaders, we are creating new pathways for students to gain the knowledge and skills that fuel innovation and economic growth. This collaboration strengthens our shared goal of expanding educational opportunity and preparing the next generation of global leaders."

The first cohorts in the dual-degree pathways are expected to enroll by fall 2026 and will study in key sectors of Kazakhstan's economy, from engineering to digital technologies to entrepreneurship.

For ASU, the expanded work in Kazakhstan is part of a broader effort to redefine what it means to be a global research university — one that co-designs solutions with partners around the world rather than exporting a one-size-fits-all model.

“Our global partnerships are rooted in a simple idea: talent is universal, but opportunity is not,” Rosen said. “Together with Kazakhstan’s leaders and institutions, we are working to close that gap and deliver educational access, excellence and impact globally. We are proud to welcome Auezov University and InnoTech University to the ASU-Cintana Alliance network and look forward to continued transformation in the region through our collaboration.”

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



Arizona State University and Cintana Education leadership pose with Kazakhstan Ministry of Science and Higher Education at the C5+1 forum in Washington D.C. on Nov. 6. Courtesy photo

Gallery



Auezov University campus in Shymkent, Kazakhstan.



Q Education group, part of the founding team of InnoTech University in Kazakhstan, pose with leaders from ASU EdPlus and Global Academic Initiatives.



Rendering of Alatau City Kazakhstan, a strategically planned "smart city" and future home of InnoTech University connecting Europe, China and Central Asian countries under the "New Silk Road" initiative.