A chair in China for the University of Trento

The University of Trento has long been collaborating with Xidian University on Fast, the largest radio telescope in the world. Now, this international collaboration has become stronger as Paolo Rocca, professor at Disi, the Department of Information Engineering and Computer Science of UniTrento, has been invited to provide training and conduct research at the Chinese university. The Academic Senate has authorized professor Rocca to accept the post and to hold dual membership for three years.

Trento, 16th of December 2020 – The link between Trento and Xi’an, the City of the Terracotta Army (Bingmayong), has become stronger. The capital of Shaanxi province, in central China, is known for its university as well as for its archaeological sites. In fact, Xidian University is considered one of the best for electrical and electronic engineering globally. For over five years, the Eledia group of the Department of Information Engineering and Computer Science of UniTrento has been collaborating with the Chinese university on the largest radio telescope in the world, a futuristic structure made up of 4450 adjustable panels, with a 500-meter diameter. Fast - Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Telescope - was created to study gravitational waves and cosmic phenomena. Now the Italian-Chinese collaboration has grown to include a chair (Huashan Scholar Chair Professor) that has been assigned to Paolo Rocca, associate professor of the Disi Department of UniTrento. In concrete terms, professor Rocca, from now until the end of November 2023, will conduct training and research activities two months a year for Xidian University. Days ago, the Academic Senate has authorized professor Rocca to accept the post and to hold dual membership for three years. Professor Rocca will start with some seminars which, due to the pandemic, will be online for the time being.

The University of Xi'an is an excellence in the electro-mechanical sector, in automation and in the design of electronic devices, and is interested in collaborating with the University of Trento on new theories and methods for the analysis of tolerances and the robust synthesis of complex radiant systems that can ensure high reliability and precision. This knowledge is used in space research (from the Fast radio telescope to latest generation “membrane” antennas for CubeSats) as well as in the industrial process of additive manufacturing (with three-dimensional printers designed to create objects in composite materials).

For the Department of Information Engineering and Computer Science of UniTrento, the appointment of professor Rocca is a source of pride. On the one hand, because Xidian University is a global reference point for electrical and electronic engineering (according to the seventh annual edition of the "US News & World Report Best Global Universities", recently published, it ranks 15th in the world in this disciplinary sector). On the other, because the chair is the result of an already existing collaboration of the Eledia group at Disi with the team that designed the Fast radio telescope. In perspective, the assignment is also relevant for the entire University of Trento because it lays the foundations for a possible
expansion of teaching and learning opportunities within the Italian-Chinese collaboration at UniTrento.

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