



# Science and tech museum closes for major renovations



A child interacts with a robot dog at the museum. — Jiang Xiaowei

The late US philanthropist Kenneth E. Behring paid a visit to the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum in 2014. He has donated nearly 1,000 animal specimens to the museum and its sister institution, the Shanghai Natural History Museum. — Wang Rongjiang



## Li Qian and Ke Jiayun

Shanghai's futuristic museum will undergo its most extensive renovations. The Shanghai Science and Technology Museum, known for its striking architecture and exhibits, closed on April 1 and will reopen in 2025.

The museum has been open for two decades and urgently needs repairs. After news emerged of its closure, many people, young and old, visited the museum to reminisce with friends and family.

On March 25, in particular, the number of visitors exceeded 10,000, setting a new high in recent days.

Huang Li went into a trance as she took her 3-year-old son to the museum and reminisced about her own visit nearly 20 years ago with her classmates and teachers.

"Time flies by. Nearly two decades have passed in the blink of an eye," she told Thepaper.cn, adding that it was at this

museum that she first learned about robots.

But it was "Blow One's Top," an interactive installation, that allowed people to touch a glass ball to have hairs stand up to 200,000 volts of static electricity.

"It was fun," Huang recalled. She expected it to be another boring science class, but it turned out to be a fantastic adventure.

"I'd never been to a museum with so many novel and interactive experiences before."

Many visitors, like her, were born after the late 1980s, and the museum had become a "childhood magical world" or even a "place of enlightenment" to plant scientific seeds in their minds.

One of them is Dr Zhu Jiamin, a well-known expert in advanced materials.

Zhu said the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum was the best science venue in China, with exhibits such as "Blow One's Top," "Cycling in Air," and animal specimens

from Africa.

When he was younger, Zhu, a robot fan and maker, regularly attended robot or science contests held at the museum. He would always find something new and conduct his own research after returning home.

"The museum's scientific enlightenment is what made me who I am today," he told shobserver.com. He often took his son to the museum.

The establishment of the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum contributed to the early 1990s reform and opening-up of the Pudong New Area.

The first pile was laid on December 18, 1998, at the site at the east end of Century Avenue, which was then a rural backwater of the city. However, it made a spectacular debut in 2001.

The museum hosted the 9th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting on October 21, 2001. It officially opened to the public two months later.