

# *The Multiple Roles of State-Owned Enterprises in China's Innovation System: A Case Study of High-Speed Railways\**

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## *Abstract*

After experiencing rounds of massive reform, state-owned enterprises (SOEs) are still key players in the Chinese economy. While outsiders have observed the remarkable innovation achievements in sectors that SOEs dominated, little is known about the role of SOEs in China's national innovation system. In this article, we follow an evolutionary approach and employ the Theory of Innovative Enterprise to investigate the changes in the role of SOEs in China's national innovation system, using a case study on high-speed railways to explain how the industrial decentralization reforms have restructured the ties of SOEs to government, research institutions, and suppliers, and the conditions for them to be innovative enterprises.

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