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Young Volunteers Bring Ningbo's "Cloudside" Village Into Global Spotlight



The "Cloudside" youth volunteer team.

On a late autumn morning in Dayan Town, Fenghua, the mist still clings to the rooftops as a group of young people shoulder their camera gear and make their way along the stone paved lanes of Xifan Village. In front of the lens, Wang Hanhan, born in the late 1990s and educated abroad, speaks fluent French while introducing the ancient tree at the village entrance. As she talks, the camera slowly opens onto a tapestry of dark tiled roofs, whitewashed walls, and rolling hills brushed with autumn colors.

深秋的奉化大堰镇，晨雾还未散尽，一群年轻人已经扛着摄影器材穿行在西畈村的青石板路上。“95后”留学生王韩含用流利的法语对着镜头介绍村口那棵古树，镜头里逐渐铺展开黛瓦白墙与漫山秋色交融的画面。

This is a typical weekend morning for the "Cloudside" youth volunteer team, and one small scene from their ongoing mission to share the stories of China's countryside with the world.

这是“云边青年”团队寻常的一个周末清晨，也是他们向世界讲述中国乡村故事的一幕场景。

The project began in 2019. The spark came after Wang uploaded a video on YouTube showcasing the landscape of her hometown. When she saw comments doubting its authenticity—"This doesn't look like China"—she decided it was time to use her camera to challenge stereotypes.

这个始于2019年的项目初衷是，王韩含在YouTube上发布了一条展示家乡风景的视频，当她看到评论区里“这不像中国”的质疑时，萌生了用真实镜头打破偏见的念头。

"People still imagined rural China as muddy roads and shabby houses," Wang recalls. Dayan Town, however, has natural beauty

and cultural depth that could rival many European villages—yet it remained almost invisible on the global stage.

“当时，许多人仍以为中国的乡村是泥泞小路和破旧平房。”王韩含表示，大堰镇拥有着不输欧洲小镇的自然风光与人文底蕴，却在国际视野中近乎“隐形”。

In response, she launched a call for "Spend a Day in My Hometown" videos, which quickly drew the participation of overseas students and domestic media professionals.

于是，她发起了“来我家乡玩一天”视频征集活动，迅速吸引了海外留学生和国内媒体人加入。

As the project's influence grew, a group of these young creators formally established the Cloudside Youth Volunteer Service Team in Fenghua District.

随着活动影响力不断扩大，一群海外留学生和国内媒体人汇聚在一起，正式成立了奉化区云边青年志愿者服务队。

Since then, this team—made up mainly of people under 35—has been systematically blending stories of rural revitalization with international volunteerism, forging a new grassroots pathway for people-to-people diplomacy.

于是，这支以35周岁以下青年为主力的团队，开始系统化地将中国乡村振兴故事与国际志愿服务相结合，探索出一条民间外交的新路径。

They document the mountains, rivers, villages, and scenes of life through their lenses, publishing original content in English, French, Korean, and other languages on platforms such as YouTube and TikTok:

团队用镜头记录家乡的“一山、一水、一村、一景”，以英、

法、韩等多语言在YouTube、TikTok等平台发布原创内容——

"Young Creators Interpret the Countryside" features rural entrepreneurs who share stories of new industries taking shape in the villages.

“乡创青年看乡村”由扎根乡村的创业者分享新业态故事；

"Interaction Through Narrative" uses cinematic storytelling to capture the beauty of 218 rural locations. Notably, a drone video by local youth Zhou Yuquan received a repost and praise from Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning.

“交互叙事看乡村”用镜头语言展现218个乡村美景，值得一提的是，奉化小伙周昱全的一条航拍视频获外交部发言人毛宁点赞转发；

"Old Places, New Looks" invites 15 international friends who once visited rural China to return and share, via livestreams, how those places have transformed.

“旧貌新颜看乡村”邀请15位曾探访中国乡村的国际友人故地重游，通过海外直播分享变迁感受；

"Media Perspectives on the Countryside" compiles 82 positive stories on rural China produced by international news outlets, including Reuters and Agence France-Presse.

“媒体视角看乡村”则整合了路透社、法新社等外媒的82个正能量中国乡村视频，用“他者”视角讲述中国故事。

Last year, the film "Moments We Shared" brought this small town tucked between mountains and sea to audiences across the world. Riding the wave, the team launched the "China's Cloudside Town" campaign across domestic and international social media. The videos amassed more than 100 million views and were later picked up

by China Central Television.

去年，随着电影《云边有个小卖部》的热映，这个藏于山海之间的小镇走进了亿万海内外观众的视野。团队趁势在海内外新媒体推出“中国云边镇”系列话题，视频点击量破亿，获央视网跟踪报道。

Six years of persistence has brought tangible change. Dayan Town's annual visitor numbers have jumped from 80,000 before the project to 300,000 today, and local homestays have seen occupancy rates rise by 40%. More importantly, volunteers now come from more than 20 countries and regions, and the team's overseas video views have surpassed 320 million. Increasingly, foreign viewers are becoming international communication volunteers themselves.

六年的坚持，让变化真实可感：大堰镇的年均游客量从项目启动前的8万人次增至30万人次，民宿入住率提升40%。更重要的是，团队的志愿者来自20多个国家和地区，海外视频点播超3.2亿人次，越来越多的外国友人从粉丝转变为国际传播志愿者。

"Strong youth make a strong country; thriving villages make a thriving nation." The words stand on the wall of the "Cloudside" studio. And today, this young team is finding its own way to make sure the world sees this little village in Zhejiang. It is quietly helping Dayan Town find its place on the global map.

“青年强则国强，乡村兴则国兴。”这是写在云边青年工作室墙面上的一句话。如今，这群年轻人正用自己独特的方式，让世界看到中国浙江的这个小乡村，让大堰镇悄悄地在世界“出圈”。