In March 2015, “Building Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area” was officially written for the first time in the Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road. Later, it was proposed in The Guiding Opinions on Deepening the Cooperation within the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region, which was issued by the State Council, “to join hands with Hong Kong and Macao to jointly build a Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area with a world-class city cluster”. The national “13th Five-Year Plan” also proposed to “support Hong Kong and Macao to play important roles in the cooperation of the pan-PRD region, promoting the construction of a Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area and a major cooperation platform across the region”.

In March last year, Premier Li Keqiang of the State Council stated in his government work report that “we should promote in-depth cooperation among the Mainland, Hong Kong and Macao, study and formulate the city cluster development plan of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Bay Area, and give full play to the unique advantages of Hong Kong and Macao to enhance China’s status and competence for economic development and opening up”. On July 1 in the same year, under the witness of President Xi Jinping, the Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the Bay Area was jointly signed in Hong Kong by the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Chief Executive of the Macao Special Administrative Region, the Director of the National Development and Reform Commission, and the Governor of Guangdong Province. According to the Agreement, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao will, with the support of central authorities, improve the innovative cooperation mechanism, promote mutual benefits and win-win cooperation, and jointly build the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area into a more dynamic economic zone, a quality living circle suitable for business, and a demonstration zone of the in-depth cooperation among the Mainland and Hong Kong and Macao, creating a world-class Bay Area and a world-class city cluster.

The development of the Bay Area is in need of the support of talents, and higher education has therefore become an integral part in the process. There are many high-level universities in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao with various complementary types of higher education resources. In recent years, the three places have continuously deepened cooperation and exchanges in the field of higher education. In addition to strengthening cooperation in running schools, scientific research, and people-to-people exchanges, alliances such as the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao University Alliance, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Guangdong, Hong Kong & Macao Universities, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau University Library Alliance and other cooperative institutions have been established, giving full play to the advantages of the three places for common development.