

# Renewed confidence in innovation and moderation in US-China trade

- Constructive on Chinese equities, particularly in areas aligned with structural growth and policy priorities
- Expectations of continued policy support
- Barbell approach combining high end manufacturing and AI driven technology tied to self-reliance, with value and income opportunities

## Track record of Robeco Chinese A-share Equities (USD)

	Fund	Index	Excess return
Last month	3.21%	2.37%	0.84%
Year to date	16.15%	9.26%	6.89%
1 year	53.87%	38.43%	15.44%
3 year (ann.)	11.65%	12.23%	-0.58%
5 year (ann.)	-5.44%	-0.63%	-4.81%
Since inception	8.59%	5.48%	3.11%

**Past performance is no guarantee of future results. The value of your investments may fluctuate.**

Source: Robeco, MSCI. Portfolio: Robeco Chinese A-share Equities I-USD Share Class. Index: MSCI China A International Index. All figures in USD. Data end of May 2026. If the currency in which the past performance is displayed differs from the currency of the country in which you reside, then you should be aware that due to exchange rate fluctuations the performance shown may increase or decrease if converted into your local currency. Performance since inception is as of the first full month. Periods shorter than one year are not annualized. Returns gross of fees, based on gross asset value. Values and returns indicated here are before cost; the performance data does not take account of the commissions and costs incurred on the issue and redemption of units. These have a negative effect on the returns shown. Upon request information on other share classes can be provided. Inception: March 2017

## Last month's performance

Robeco Chinese A-share Equities outperformed in May.

At the sector level, Information Technology had a strong positive contribution, while Consumer Discretionary, Energy and Communication Services also contributed. Industrials, Materials and Utilities detracted.

At the stock level, the main contributors were Zhongji Innolight, Giga Device Semiconductor and Advanced Micro-Fabrication Equipment. The top detractors were L&K Engineering, Anhui Yingliu Electromechanical and Asia-Potash International Investment.

### PORTFOLIO MANAGER'S UPDATE MAY 2026

Marketing material for professional investors, not for onward distribution



**Jie Lu**  
Head of Investments China

China's NBS manufacturing PMI edged down to 50.0 in May from 50.3 in April, pointing to moderating growth momentum and an increasingly uneven recovery. While high-tech and equipment manufacturing continued to expand, traditional materials and consumer goods remained weak, reflecting still-subdued domestic demand. Elevated input costs linked to external energy shocks pushed up price indicators, and the persistent gap between input and output prices suggests ongoing margin pressure for midstream and downstream sectors. Delivery times lengthened and inventories rose, indicating precautionary stockpiling amid supply uncertainties.

In contrast, the non-manufacturing PMI returned to expansion, supported by resilient services activity, particularly around the Labor Day holiday. However, construction remained in contraction due to slower local government bond issuance and cautious project execution. We view the recent softness as a pause following strong fiscal front-loading in Q1, but if growth momentum continues to fade and the K-shaped recovery deepens, further targeted policy support – particularly to bolster domestic demand and construction activity – is likely.

The 14-15 May bilateral summit between President Trump and President Xi in Beijing signaled a clear shift in US-China relations, moving away from "strategic decoupling" toward a more transactional, condition-based stability. Although the meeting concluded without a joint statement, both leaders emphasized a shared goal of "constructive strategic stability," highlighting a pragmatic recalibration. Geopolitically, Taiwan is transitioning from an acute flashpoint to a carefully managed risk, as both nations prioritize calibrated signaling over public confrontation. Furthermore, China's positioning on Iran – specifically its opposition to nuclear proliferation and its commitment to keeping the Strait of Hormuz open – offers a stabilizing counterbalance, despite ongoing legal and sanctions-related frictions.

Economically, the relationship is evolving toward a more structured model of "managed trade", increasingly focused on high-tech sectors. Export controls are replacing broad tariffs as the main policy tool, often embedded in cross-domain negotiations linking technology, resources, and strategic interests. Encouraging progress in areas such as aviation, energy, and financial services suggests both sides remain committed to pragmatic engagement where interests align. While upcoming policy reviews and the November 2026 tariff and rare-earth truce expiry bear watching, the trajectory points toward more predictable competition. For markets, this implies structurally higher inflation but improved visibility and reduced near-term tail risks.

## Sector Allocation

Sector	Portfolio Weight	Index Weight	Relative Weight
Information Technology	29.7%	31.8%	-2.1%
Industrials	24.0%	15.3%	8.7%
Financials	16.2%	18.0%	-1.7%
Materials	14.0%	11.4%	2.7%
Consumer Staples	6.2%	6.8%	-0.6%
Health Care	3.7%	3.8%	-0.1%
Consumer Discretionary	3.0%	4.6%	-1.6%
Utilities	1.9%	3.5%	-1.6%
Energy	0.8%	3.1%	-2.3%
Communication Services	0.3%	1.3%	-1.1%
Real Estate	0.2%	0.5%	-0.3%

Source: Robeco, MSCI. Portfolio: Robeco Chinese A-share Equities. Index: MSCI China A International Index. Data end of May 2026. For illustrative purposes only. This is the current overview as of the date stated above and not a guarantee of future developments. It should not be assumed that any investments in sectors or regions identified were or will be profitable.

The portfolio had an overweight in Industrials and Materials. It held an underweight in Energy, Information Technology, Financials, Utilities, Consumer Discretionary, Communication Services, Consumer Staples, Real Estate and Health Care.

## Top ten holdings

Company	Portfolio Weight
Contemporary Amperex Technology Co., Limited Class A	6.2%
Zhongji Innolight Co., Ltd. Class A	4.9%
Kweichow Moutai Co., Ltd. Class A	3.7%
China Construction Bank Corporation Class A	3.6%
China Merchants Bank Co., Ltd. Class A	3.5%
Cambricon Technologies Corp. Ltd. Class A	3.5%
Advanced Micro-Fabrication Equipment Inc. China Class A	3.2%
Luxshare Precision Industry Co. Ltd. Class A	3.0%
Ping An Insurance (Group) Company of China, Ltd. Class A	2.7%
WuXi AppTec Co., Ltd. Class A	2.3%

Source: Robeco, MSCI. Portfolio: Robeco Chinese A-share Equities. Index: MSCI China A International Index. Data end of May 2026. The companies shown are for illustrative purposes only in order to demonstrate the investment strategy on the date stated. The companies are not necessarily held by a strategy/fund. No inference can be made on the future development of the company. This is not a buy, sell, or hold recommendation.

Contemporary Amperex Technology, a leading battery manufacturer and technology innovator, remained our largest holding during the month, followed by Zhongji Innolight, a key optical module producer. Kweichow Moutai, China's premier liquor brand, declined to third place. China Construction Bank, one of the country's major state-owned lenders, remained fourth, while China Merchants Bank slipped to fifth. Cambricon, a leading GPU designer, newly entered the top ten and rose to sixth following strong performance during the month. Advanced Micro-Fabrication Equipment, a prominent semiconductor equipment manufacturer, advanced to seventh, and Luxshare joined the top ten in eighth position. Ping An Insurance declined to ninth, while Wuxi AppTec, a leading global CDMO provider, moved down to tenth.

### Investment Themes

In building the new China, the country's leaders are focusing on structural reforms and quality rather than quantity of growth. We therefore believe the best investment themes in China are those tilted to structural growth and reforms. Our focus lies on the following four key themes in the portfolio: 1) Smart consumption, 2) Technology & Innovation, 3) Structural Reform, and 4) Industrial Upgrade.

1	Smart Consumption		Value for money National brands Healthy lifestyles
2	Technology & Innovation		AI & IoT Digital China Self sufficiency
3	Structural Reform		Anti-Involution Financial reform Carbon neutrality
4	Industrial Upgrade		EV/autonomous driving Robotics Going Global

### Outlook

China enters 2026 following a strong equity market rally in 2025, driven by renewed confidence in innovation and a moderation in US-China trade tensions. Policymakers are now prioritizing stability, execution quality, and longer-term economic rebalancing rather than aggressive reflation. Against this backdrop, the equity market is transitioning from a valuation-led recovery to a more earnings driven phase.

China's National People's Congress (NPC) has set a 2026 GDP growth target of 4.5–5%, signaling a preference for incremental easing and calibrated support rather than large-scale stimulus. While fiscal and monetary tools remain available, they are being deployed more selectively, with greater emphasis on addressing domestic frictions such as overcapacity, weak pricing power, and inefficient competition, while advancing priorities including anti involution, market unification, and innovation led upgrading.

Fiscal policy is expected to remain supportive, with a budget deficit around 4% of GDP, front-loaded issuance, and flexibility for modest mid year adjustments if growth weakens. Public investment – particularly in infrastructure, urban renewal, energy transition, and strategic upgrading – continues to anchor activity, alongside tighter oversight of subsidies aimed at improving efficiency and policy effectiveness. Monetary policy should remain moderately accommodative, with small rate or reserve requirement cuts and ample liquidity. The focus has shifted toward stabilizing prices – seeking “less deflation” rather than reflation – through targeted credit support for technology, innovation, SMEs, and domestic demand linked sectors rather than broad based easing.

Although the Iran conflict has heightened global energy risks, China appears relatively well positioned to withstand a potential oil shock. Strategic crude inventories, estimated to cover around three months of imports, offer a meaningful near-term buffer, while a diversified energy mix led by renewables reduces dependence on imported oil for power generation. Additional support from domestic coal capacity, diversified import channels, and strong policy coordination further enhances the country's energy security and flexibility.

Exports have held up reasonably well, and US-China trade relations have shown signs of pragmatic stabilization. China has demonstrated meaningful bargaining leverage, while US policy priorities are increasingly centered on domestic affordability rather than escalation abroad. Together, these dynamics reduce the likelihood of a renewed tariff shock, removing a key tail risk for 2026 and allowing policymakers to remain focused on domestic objectives. Domestically, growth drivers continue to evolve. While property remains a drag on sentiment, it no longer appears to pose a systemic risk, with policy focused on floor management rather than large scale rescue. Growth momentum is increasingly driven by digital services, advanced manufacturing, and technology led upgrading, supported by investment in infrastructure, energy, and AI related industries. Consumption remains a policy priority, though progress is incremental: near term efforts focus on refining existing programs, with more ambitious measures likely introduced gradually if growth or inflation underperform. Over time, strengthening the social safety net remains essential to sustaining consumption

AI stands out as a durable structural theme. China is building a cost efficient, near full stack AI ecosystem, leveraging scale, engineering execution, and optimization on less advanced hardware to accelerate adoption and commercialization across industries.

With market valuations now around historical averages, earnings will be the key determinant of equity performance in 2026. After last year's multiple expansion, returns are likely to be more selective amid continued sector divergence.

Overall, we remain constructive on Chinese equities, particularly in areas aligned with structural growth and policy priorities. Our preferred barbell strategy combines exposure to high end manufacturing and AI driven technology tied to self reliance, with value and income opportunities in high dividend stocks and beneficiaries of anti involution policies – especially upstream industries with resilient demand. While macro challenges persist, China's emphasis on disciplined policy support, innovation, and structural upgrading provides a solid foundation for selective, long term investment opportunities in 2026 and beyond.

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