Google invests in Chinese artificial intelligence firm

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Google has taken a stake in a Chinese artificial intelligence startup which is aiming to develop smart wearable technologies, the companies said Tuesday.

The amount on investment in Mobvoi was not disclosed.

But the companies said that the firm, created by a former Google researcher, has now raised $75 million in equity financing.

Google will lead the latest round and hold a minority stake, according to the statement. The move comes five years after Google's highly contentious exit from its Chinese operations over censorship.

"Mobvoi is very excited to welcome Google as an investor as both companies share a long-term view on technologies and are dedicated to deliver an uncompromising user experience through emerging technologies," said Mobvoi founder Zhifei Li.

The new funding is aimed at helping develop "a new generation of wearable experiences and explore consumer-oriented products for the in-vehicle environment" as well as exploring robotics technologies.

"Mobvoi has developed some very unique speech and natural language processing technologies," said Don Harrison, vice president of corporate development at Google Inc.

"We were impressed by their innovative approach and the early traction that they've seen, which is why we're pleased to support them with this investment."

The two firms announced an agreement earlier this year to bring the Google Android Wear operating system to China.

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