

Draft Work Program n°8

July 2025 – June 2026

Chaired by CEI (Central European Initiative) with support from DISPES (Department of Political and Social Sciences of the University of Trieste)

Co-Chairs: Alessandro Lombardo, Silvia Sattolo, Simone Arnaldi

Guiding theme: Helping shape a shared vision for science diplomacy across Europe

The first half of 2025 has seen significant developments in the field of science diplomacy. The publication of the report “Science Diplomacy in an Era of Disruption” by the Royal Society and AAAS, alongside UNESCO’s Global Ministerial Dialogue on Science Diplomacy, has added momentum to the debate on the challenges and opportunities of science diplomacy in a fragmented geopolitical landscape.

In parallel, the release of the expert report “A European Framework for Science Diplomacy” and the inclusion of a dedicated call (“Fostering the consolidation of European science diplomacy”) in the 2025 Horizon Europe Work Programme, underscore that the coming months will be crucial for the consolidation of science diplomacy in Europe.

In this evolving context, the EU Science Diplomacy Alliance (EUSDA) is called upon to actively support and accompany this process, helping shape a shared vision for science diplomacy across the many actors operating at the crossroads of scientific cooperation and international affairs. To this end, the Alliance’s 2025–2026 Work Program will focus on strengthening both its external visibility and internal procedures, while continuing to engage the diplomatic community in continuity with the previous chairmanship held by AVRIST.

Priority 1 - Enhancing the visibility and outreach of the Alliance

The main scope will be to attract new Members and Global Networking Partners in the Alliance, including from Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, a strategic area encompassing EU widening and candidate countries, thus enhancing the visibility and outreach of the Alliance, while supporting the development of the European Framework for Science Diplomacy. To this aim, three set of actions will be carried out, namely:

A) *Underpinning the consolidation of the European Framework for Science Diplomacy*

What? Support to the consolidation and future implementation of the European Framework for Science Diplomacy in line with the above-mentioned expert report

Who? Co-chairs + Alliance members

When? July 2025 – June 2026

B) *Participation in international events and exploration of synergies with projects on science diplomacy*

What? Support to events and activities organised or promoted in the context of EUSDA Task Forces/Thematic Entry Points; promotion of the Alliance in upcoming international events; exploration of synergies with projects on science diplomacy (e.g., Horizon Europe, COST, etc.)

Who? Co-chairs + any other volunteer with a vested interest (e.g., proposers of Thematic Entry Points)

When? July 2025 – June 2026

C) Support to the development of a Journal on Science Diplomacy

- What?** Support to the previous chairs and members in their efforts and dedication to pursue the goal of a European Science Diplomacy Journal
- Who?** Co-chairs + previous EUSDA chairmanships + any other volunteer
- When?** July 2025 – June 2026

Priority 2 - Giving the Alliance institutional stability through consolidated internal practices

The action undertaken by previous chairs to give institutional stability and visibility to the Alliance will be continued. The objective is to provide the Alliance with a more stable structure, if not a legal capacity for easier access to financing. Moreover, with the number of Members now exceeding forty, it is necessary to agree on more formalized/standard governance practices and procedures.

- What?** Advance on the project to make the Alliance a legal entity; revise and update internal governance practice and procedures (functioning, accession of new Members and Global Networking Partners, etc.)
- Who?** Co-chairs + Task Force on Legal Entity + any other volunteer with a vested interest
- When?** July 2025 – June 2026

Priority 3 - Strengthening the involvement of the diplomatic community in science diplomacy through networking and capacity building

In continuity with the previous chairmanship held by AVRIST, building capacities and engaging the diplomatic community in the debate on science diplomacy will remain high in the agenda. In this regard, two main activities will be carried out, namely:

A) Advanced training course "Challenges and perspectives of science diplomacy in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe"

- What?** A four-days capacity building action that will take place in Trieste and Gorizia (Italy), organised by the Co-chairs and the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, in cooperation with the Alliance. Beneficiaries are diplomats, scientists, civil servants and other stakeholders affiliated to organisations based in the Member States of the CEI
- Who?** Co-chairs + several speakers from EUSDA
- When?** 25-28 November 2025

B) Exploring the nexus between science diplomacy and EU accession

- What?** A one-day conference or workshop (virtual or in-person) exploring how science diplomacy can support the EU accession trajectories of countries in the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe
- Who?** Co-chairs + any other volunteer with a vested interest
- When?** Spring 2026