

Call for Papers: *Embrangled Science Diplomacy: a history of challenges and failures. Actors, dynamics, arenas, diplomatic objects since the 1960s*

Context and Rationale

Since the 1990s, the end of the Cold War, the European research for an autonomous strategic role, the rise of globalization, and hopes for effective multilateralism as a means of conflict resolution led many to believe that science could transcend geopolitical tensions. Science was seen as an independent sphere, capable of guiding solutions to global challenges—particularly climate change. It is in this context that science diplomacy was conceptualized. However, rather than being a novel idea, science Diplomacy represents a rediscovery of long-standing practices.

Over the past two decades, science diplomacy has been explicitly framed as both a field of practice and a domain of study, bridging scientific knowledge and diplomatic expertise. Initially, its primary objective was to foster cooperation and openness. Yet, as science and technology increasingly become instruments of power in international politics, competition and closure have emerged as alternative motivations. Science diplomacy now faces a dual role: it is both a tool for addressing global challenges and a means of navigating power dynamics.

The traditional definition of science diplomacy—promoting cooperation, protecting scientific potential, and balancing openness with strategic interests—has dominated the discourse. However, this narrative often overpromises, leaving little room for critical evaluation. Can a historical and interdisciplinary analysis, informed by practical insights, help mitigate this tendency?

Objective of the Volume

This volume aims to explore the evolution of science diplomacy through a focus on the interplay between diplomats and scientists as experts/advisors, and stakeholders. Rather than celebrating successes, we invite contributors to critically examine failures, confusion, and deceptions in science diplomacy since the 1960s. The goal is not to dismiss science diplomacy as ineffective, but to reflect on the conditions that shape its outcomes.

In a world marked by geopolitical crises and a resurgence of power politics, what can we learn from failures—often overlooked in favour of success stories? How can a nuanced understanding of what did *not* work inform future practices? By questioning the relativity and relevance of success and failure, we seek to initiate a necessary process of evaluation.

Submission Guidelines

We welcome proposals from scholars, practitioners, and witnesses of the recent past, particularly those adopting an interdisciplinary approach. Collaborations between authors from different disciplines and sectors are encouraged.

1. Proposal Submission

- **Content:** Proposals should include:
 - A **concise outline** of the paper and its key points.
 - An **indication** of how the proposal fits into the volume's theme, its originality, and its innovative aspects.
 - The **discipline or field** of research, methodology, state of the art, and sources/archives used.

- **Length:** Maximum of **5,000 characters (including spaces)**.
- **Format:** Proposals should be sent in **PDF or Word format**.
- **Email:** Submit proposals to both editors:
 - David Burigana: david.burigana@unipd.it
 - Léonard Laborie (CNRS): Leonard.LABORIE@cnrs.fr
- **Deadline: 8 March 2026**

2. Selection Process

- **Notification of acceptance:** Authors will be notified by **16 March 2026**.
- **Editorial guidelines :** Selected contributors will receive editorial guidelines and notes. The book is to be published within the sub-series “*Science Diplomacy: history and geopolitics*” of the collection “*Entangled History and Geopolitics of Science and Technology*”, with Padova University Press, directed by David Burigana SPGI (Department of Political Sciences, Law and International Studies, University of Padua, Italy) and Alessandro Paccagnella DEI (Department of Information Engineering, University of Padua, Italy).

3. Draft Submission

- Length: Approximately **25,000 characters (including spaces)**. Exceptions may be negotiated for co-authored texts.
- **Deadline: 15 June 2026**

4. Review and Corrections

- **Feedback:** Any comments and corrections from the editors will be communicated by **28 June 2026**.

5. Final Submission

- **Final paper:** Deadline for submission of the final version is **31 July 2026**.

6. Book Release

- October 2026, on the occasion of the second edition of the [International School on Science & Diplomacy](#) to be held at [Ettore Majorana Foundation and Centre for Scientific Culture](#) (Erice, Sicily), 4-10 October 2026.

For more details on the call <https://www.spacediplomacy.it/news/>

