

The Role of Greece in European Science Diplomacy: Building Connections, Shaping Futures

Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Akadimias 1, Athens 10671

11 June 2026, 9:30-16:30 (EEST)

Programme

ABSTRACT

This high-level symposium explores Greece's emerging role within the European science diplomacy landscape and aims to raise awareness of the strategic opportunities that science diplomacy offers for the country. While a cohesive science diplomacy community has yet to take shape in Greece, significant expertise exists, including among diaspora researchers who have built distinguished careers abroad. The event seeks to (re-)connect this distributed knowledge base with domestic stakeholders.

Bringing together representatives from government, academia, research institutions, and civil society, the symposium will provide a platform to examine the importance of science diplomacy for Greece and Greece's potential contributions to European science diplomacy. It will identify pathways for institutional engagement. Through a hybrid model that combines expert-driven policy discussions with public-facing dialogue, the initiative will strengthen cross-border networks, generate forward-looking policy insights, and foster mutual understanding between academic and policy communities.

Co-organised by: Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad and Public Diplomacy, General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI), European Commission, European Union Science Diplomacy Alliance

Supported by: Bioinnovation Greece (BiG)

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Agenda

- 09:30 **Welcome coffee and registration**
- 10:00 **Opening remarks**
Ioannis-Michail LOVERDOS, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Stavros KALAFATIS, Deputy Minister of Development, responsible for Research and Innovation
Maira MYROGIANNI, Secretary General for Greeks Abroad & Public Diplomacy
Dimitrios TERZIS, Secretary General for Research and Innovation, General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI)
Dr. Konstantinos KLEOVOULOU, Director for Research and Innovation, Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy, Representative for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union
Dr. Jan Marco MÜLLER, Team Leader, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission (*online*)
Dr. Stylianos HOURMOUZIDIS, Minister Plenipotentiary, Head of the Office of the 2027 Presidency of the Council of the European Union
- 10:30 **Keynote Speech 1: Introduction to science diplomacy and the role of the EU Science Diplomacy Alliance (15 minutes)**
Prof. Dr. Maria RENTETZI, Chair of Science, Technology and Gender Studies Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg and Chair of the EU Science Diplomacy Alliance
- 10:45 **Keynote Speech 2: Advancing Science Diplomacy Through Frontiers Research (15 minutes)**
Dr. Eleni ZIKA, Head of Sector for Scientific Impact and Feedback to Policy, European Research Council (ERC)
(10 min Q&A on Keynotes 1&2)
- 11:10 **Keynote Speech 3: Science meets Diplomacy: from ancient Greece to modern Europe (15 minutes)**
Prof. Dr. Christina KOULOURI, Rector of Panteion University, Athens
- 11:30 **Keynote Speech 4: Challenges for Greek science diplomacy today (15 minutes)**
Ambassador Teresa ANGELATOU, Secretary General of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs

11:45 **Panel 1: Science, Technology and Innovation: Driving development through extroversion and globalization (30 minutes)**

Introductory Remarks (5 minutes):

Stavros NICOLAOU, ASPEN PHARMACARE (*online*)

Prof Dr. Emmanuel TSESMELIS, Senior Physicist and Deputy Head of International Relations in CERN's Director-General Unit and a Visiting Professor in Particle and Accelerator Physics at the University of Oxford (*online*)

Moderation: **Andriana PARASKEVOPOULOU**, Journalist, News Anchor ERT

Dr. George KOTROTSIOS, Chairman Sectoral Scientific Council for S&T Diplomacy and the Greek Scientists Diaspora

Dr. Theodota LAGOURI, Senior Research Scientist at CERN & Yale University, ATLAS Experiment. Chair, MCAA Policy Working Group, SiDnet – Science in Diplomacy Network. STI Diplomacy, EU Science Diplomacy Alliance.

Prof. Dr. Nektarios TAVERNARAKIS, Professor of Molecular Systems Biology at the Medical School of the University of Crete, Research Director at the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas, President of the European Molecular Biology Conference (EMBC)

Dr. Nikolaos THOMAIDIS, Professor of Analytical Chemistry at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
(10 min Q&A)

12:30 **Nikos PAPAIOANNOU**, Deputy Minister for Higher Education

12:35 **Lunch Break**

13:25 **Harry THEOHARIS**, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

13:30 **Panel 2: Mapping Greece's Position: Actors, Assets, and Gaps (Panel Discussion) (30 Minutes)**

This panel addresses the question of where structures and activities related to science diplomacy already exist in Greece, even if they are not always identified or labelled as such: What capacities already exist in Greece? How is SD institutionally anchored (universities, ministries, academies)? Where are institutional gaps? Which fields of research are already strong SD links for Greece (Science Diplomacy and Health Sciences, Bioinnovation, Environmental, Climate and Maritime Studies, Ocean Science, Archaeology, Cultural Heritage & Digital Humanities)

Moderation: **Litsa PANAYOTOPOULOS**, Board member and President, Education, Innovation & Entrepreneurship Committee, American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, Senior Advisor, Purdue University, Vice President, Special Sectoral Scientific Council on “Regional Development and Technology”, Axis “Region and Scientific Diaspora”, Ministry of Development

Prof. Spyridon KINTZIOS, Rector, Agricultural University of Athens

Ioanna MICHALOPOULOU LL.M., Vice President Board of Directors, BioInnovation Greece

Dr. Grigoris NIKOLAOU, Researcher and Lecturer at the University of West Attica

Dr. Eleni EPISKOPOU, Anaesthesiologist at Metropolitan Hospital, Interventional Pain Specialist

(15 min Q&A)

14:15

Panel 3: Training and Capacity Building (30 minutes)

How can Greece enhance training and capacity building through skills development, career pathways, and mechanisms that integrate expertise across sectors and career stages?

Introductory presentation: Science Diplomacy Capacity Building: Mainstreaming and Dedicated Approaches?

Dr. Angela LIBERATORE, Science Diplomacy fellow at the European University Institute (*online*)

Moderation: **Dr. Aspasia DESTOUNI**, PI NESTOR, NEOLIFE, 3rd Dep. of Obstetrics and Gynecology AUTH

Dimitris BOUFIDIS, Bioengineering PhD candidate at the University of Pennsylvania, Science Diplomacy Chair of the Penn Science Policy and Diplomacy Group, Co-founder of the ‘Greeks in Science Diplomacy’ Network

Dr. Zoe COURNIA, Director of Research, Biomedical Research Foundation, Academy of Athens

Dr. Kalliopi KALAITZI, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Physician, Scientific Director of the first Lifestyle Medicine Clinic in Greece at the Athens Euroclinic and an Academic Fellow at the 2nd Postgraduate Medical Center of the Athens Medical School at the Attica Hospital

Spyros ZOLOTAS, Vice President of RINA for South Europe

(15 min Q&A)

15:00 Coffee Break (20 minutes)

15:30 Panel 4: Strengthening Greece's Role in EU Science Diplomacy (30 minutes):

This panel takes a forward-looking and strategic perspective on how Greece can strengthen its role within the European and global science diplomacy landscape. It will explore key levers for enhancing Greece's visibility, influence, and engagement, including institutional cooperation, policy alignment, and international partnerships. Important elements could be: How to better connect national actors—such as universities, research organisations, policymakers, and the Greek scientific diaspora—with European and global science diplomacy processes? How can specific sectors and fields of research play a stronger role in fostering that role?

Moderation: **Maritina GRELLONI**, Director of Strategic Partnerships & Operations at Athens LifeTech Park

Dr. Eleftheria FTAKLAKI, Advisor to Special Secretary for Strategic Foresight, Presidency of the Greek Government

Ambassador Catherine KOIKA, Director General for Public Diplomacy, Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Dr. Elisabeth LIPIATOU, Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Communication Networks, Content and Technology, European Commission

Dr. Vivi STAVROU, former Executive Secretary of the Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science of the International Science Council

(15 min Q&A)

16:15 Concluding Remarks and next steps, incl. Outlook to the Third European Science Diplomacy Conference 2027

Maira MYROGIANNI, Secretary General for Greeks Abroad & Public Diplomacy in the Opening Remarks

Dr. Jan Marco MÜLLER, Team Leader, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission (*online*)

16:30 End of meeting