



version June 10, 2021



LoI - Letter of Intent

Agreement to collaborate on a European Union Science Diplomacy Alliance

Background

The organisations mentioned in Annex 1 come together as an alliance with the main aim to support, research and teach **European Union Science, Technology and Innovation Diplomacy**.

The nucleus of this network is based on partner organisations of three projects exploring the topic, funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Framework programme:

1. EL-CSID – European Leadership in Cultural, Science and Innovation Diplomacy (grant n° 693799, 2016 – 2019)
2. InsSciDE – Inventing a shared Science Diplomacy for Europe (grant n° 770523, 2017 – 2022)
3. S4D4C – Using science for/in diplomacy for addressing global challenges (grant n° 770342, 2018 – 2021)

The projects and their respective research consortia focused on different aspects of science diplomacy and building bridges between the world of scientists and that of diplomats, with the goal of understanding and facilitating how global challenges can be addressed together and in a more efficient way. Based on their results, with the idea to structure and broaden the European networks emerging from the project activities, several parties commit themselves to further nurture the community of research and practice and build a sustainable partnership.

The EU Science Diplomacy Alliance will facilitate interactions and dialogue, training, institutional capacity building and coordination of grant-seeking or use of joint funding, if available. The Alliance is a hub for cooperative activities and voluntary coordination, and



version June 10, 2021

relies upon the participating membership community and networks to highlight and select different areas and innovative activities to be pursued. It is hoped that a great variety of societal challenges may be addressed over time.

Objectives and planned activities

Generally, we aim to encourage project collaboration in variable geometry with the partners of the Alliance and use of the network as a reference, launching pilot projects to address global challenges connecting its partners to thriving innovation ecosystems worldwide; in particular developing, maintaining, and organising joint research projects, capacity building and training activities (such as open online courses, summer schools, trainings, etc.) as follows:

- **Supporting information exchange** and awareness raising (e.g. through updates on the page www.science-diplomacy.eu and social media) to promote the relevance of Science Diplomacy activities throughout Europe and worldwide, in particular the collaboration between scientists (of all disciplines), diplomats, policy makers and other professionals addressing global challenges as well as multi-stakeholder approaches to finding solutions to major societal challenges;
- **Training, education and institutional capacity building** through formal and informal education programmes for scientists, diplomats, science diplomats, policy makers, and other relevant actors to strengthen science and diplomacy literacy on EU and Member States level, reinforcing competences and knowledge in science diplomacy theory and practice in the EU and globally;
- **Promoting and creating knowledge exchange and interaction interfaces** such as dialogue between stakeholders, workshops and conferences, policy papers and think pieces, scientific articles and scholarly exchange, fellowship and funding programmes, STI diplomacy awards for outstanding contributions, funding for science diplomacy pilot projects and research studies etc.
- **Connecting and nurturing a science, technology and innovation diplomacy community** in Europe and beyond, promoting science diplomacy networks (offline and online) and providing possibilities for their exchange, cooperation and active engagement of partners with the SDGs;
- **Keeping track of European Union Science Diplomacy activities**, advising on trends and opportunities, monitoring and accompanying policy shaping processes at national, European and international level;
- **Advising science diplomacy stakeholders** (tailor-made advice for ministries, European and international organisations, funding agencies, universities and the private sector etc.) depending on their needs, resources and available instruments and strengthening the national and multinational SD approaches.

Joint activities are acknowledged as voluntary and the cooperation does not replace, limit or constrain ongoing expert activities undertaken by any of the parties in their own institutional context.



version June 10, 2021

Processes and governance

The agreement does not establish a legal partnership, joint venture, agency, exclusive arrangement or other similar relationship, it is merely an “Agreement to collaborate on a European Union Alliance for Science Diplomacy” formalising an **intent to cooperate** via the network.

For **communication** purposes, each member party can use the “EU Science Diplomacy Alliance” logo but not the logos of the respective other partners unless otherwise agreed.

The **self-commitments** are non-binding, the institutions seek to mobilise their own resources and aim to support each other in the achievement of the objectives. The parties confirm that they have the expertise and other appropriate capacities to contribute to the activities stipulated. If a party provides a financial contribution, any funds will be used only in accordance with that party’s financial rules and regulations.

The EU Science Diplomacy Alliance is a network committed to **non-profit activities** (i.e. partners identify respectively the appropriate open source licenses of their work; outputs of the Alliance are public goods, ideally licensed CC-BY¹).

Coordination meetings will be convened (virtually) twice a year [e.g. initially proposed in June and December] to exchange information, revisit the agreement and the planned activities and check/renew self-commitments. All members are invited to these meetings. The responsibility to convene and organise these meetings lies with the **rotating acting chair**². The convening and chairing institution acts as a primary contact (via contact@science-diplomacy.eu) for the 6-month period of its role as a chair with an intention to extend this period to one year after the initial rotations. The “**trio of chairs**” is composed of the immediate past, acting and immediate future chair who cooperate in the overall organisation. A workplan is drawn up with at least one dedicated activity every 6 months besides the coordination meeting. In the cases where **exchange of data** is necessary, the Alliance is committed to manage all exchanges in GDPR compliance (see Annex 2).

Organisations who want to **join the network** and commit activities to support the above mentioned objectives are invited to contact the acting chair through the communication directed to the general contact address, and provide information about their organisation (must be a legal entity), their motivation, a contact person and a list of self-commitments.

¹ <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

² As outlined in Annex 1.



version June 10, 2021

Applications will be reviewed at each coordination meeting (i.e. twice per year). Existing members may raise objections; in absence of any objections, new members will be initially accepted for a limited period of 6 months and reconfirmed at the next meeting as well as listed on www.science-diplomacy.eu.

The Alliance aims to make **decisions** unanimously and settle any disputes by mutual understanding. In case of conflict, the trio of chairs will explore how to deal with the issue and eventually external mediation may be sought. No legal actions are possible based on this agreement. The acting chair nonetheless has the power to object to the use of the EU SD logo if out of line with the measures of this agreement, and to protect it. Any party can at any point **withdraw** by informing the other parties. If an organisation is absent, not excused and not responsive for two meetings in a row, its self-commitments will be deleted from the agreement. If no organisation is interested to act as a chair, the Alliance **ceases to exist**; the last dedicated chair communicates this to the other parties at the end of its mandate. Preliminarily, an end to this Alliance is set for the end of 2025, open for renewal to discuss a more formalised structure or different forms of cooperation.

For legal entities that are based or mainly active outside of the EU, an affiliation as “**Global Networking Partner**” is foreseen. Membership is governed by the same rules and obligations applying to EU-based legal entities - except for the possibility to chair the EU Science Diplomacy Alliance, which is not possible for Global Networking Partners.

A board of “**Advisory Partners**” is foreseen, open for European and international institutions. Advisory Partners provide and receive information, policy advice and guidance in order to ensure alignment of activities with mutual priorities. Membership is upon invitation only.

Resources

Each organisation will be responsible to assess its internal available resources (both human and financial) to devote to the Alliance and to commit to the planned activities accordingly.

The basic operating costs of the Alliance will be covered by voluntary contributions as available.
