

Science Diplomacy Global Conference

29 | 20
May | 26

Fondation Universitaire, Brussels

Science diplomacy is increasingly recognised as an essential tool for addressing global challenges. From climate change and health security to the responsible governance of emerging technologies, science provides common ground for international cooperation even in times of political tension. At the same time, crises and conflicts remind us of the fragility of global collaboration and the urgent need to strengthen the science–policy–society interface.

Universities play a unique role in this landscape. They are hubs of knowledge production, education, and international engagement, training the next generation of scientists and diplomats. European University Alliances such as EUTOPIA demonstrate how academic networks can act as laboratories of science diplomacy, connecting institutions across borders, building trust, and promoting openness, excellence, and inclusion.

The EUTOPIA Global Conference on Science Diplomacy will bring together academics, policymakers, diplomats, scientists, and students to reflect on the future trajectories of science diplomacy. Particular emphasis will be placed on engaging other European University Alliances, with the aim of developing a shared understanding of how alliances can operate as science diplomacy actors. To support this objective, the organisers will prepare a discussion paper, circulated in advance of the conference, proposing a common approach to science diplomacy that can be taken up collectively by alliances.

Prior to the conference, EUTOPIA will issue a call for its researchers whose scientific work

has had, or has the potential to have, a diplomatic impact, inviting them to engage directly in the conference. This will bring into focus the often-overlooked fourth dimension of science diplomacy — diplomacy in science — where scientists act as ambassadors of global science. Because this dimension frequently operates implicitly, the conference seeks to make it more visible, explicit, and strategically understood.

Through keynote interventions and thematic panels, the conference will explore three interlinked dimensions:

Multilateralism – What next ? How science diplomacy functions in times of crisis, from climate change to armed conflict, and in a context of increasing strain on the multilateral system.

Evidence-Based Science Diplomacy. How rigorous scientific research informs diplomatic decision-making on climate change, pandemics, biodiversity loss, and emerging technologies.

Models of implementation. How to develop curricula and capacity-building programmes for future science diplomats, drawing on institutional experience and EUTOPIA's approach to implementing science diplomacy.

By convening these perspectives, the conference will showcase EUTOPIA's commitment to science diplomacy and contribute concrete ideas and partnerships to strengthen Europe's role in shaping global cooperation through science.

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08:30 – 09:00

Registration & Welcome Coffee

09:00 – 09:30

Opening Keynote Speeches

09:30 – 11:00

Panel 1 – Multilateralism - What next?

- ▶ After multilateralism, where next?
- ▶ How science diplomacy balances cooperation, competition, and security.
- ▶ Reflections from diplomats, scientists, civil society.

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:45

Panel 2 – Evidence-Based Science Diplomacy

- ▶ How research informs decision-making.
- ▶ Alumni networks and student mobility as “informal diplomats.”
- ▶ Universities engaging with international organisations and governments.

12:45 – 14:00 Break and lunch

14:00 – 15:30

Panel 3 – Models of Implementation

- ▶ How to integrate science diplomacy into higher education
- ▶ European University Alliances as science diplomacy laboratories.
- ▶ Innovative teaching models and cross-disciplinary approaches.
- ▶ Perspectives from students, academics, and capacity-building organisations.

15:30 – 16:30

Closing Remarks and Statement Signature

- ▶ Panels conclusions.
- ▶ Bruxelles Statement on European Universities Alliances role in Science Diplomacy

16:00 – 17:30

Networking reception with buffet
