

Seminar on “A Science Diplomacy Approach for Belgium?!”

FULLY BOOKED - no more registrations possible

Practical Details

Venue: Royal Library (Royal Sky Room), Boulevard de l'Empereur/Keizerlaan 4, Brussels

Date: 1 December 2016, 09:00-14:00

Organisers: Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (BELSPO), Department of Economy, Science & Innovation (EWI), Institute for European Studies (IES-VUB), Wallonia-Brussels International (WBI)



Context and Objectives

We live in a quickly evolving global landscape characterised by a digital knowledge society and faced with several global challenges, which can only be tackled through international cooperation. A collective and structured effort is needed, with a certain degree of urgency, to uphold the position of Belgium as a significant player on the global map, while taking into account our decentralised institutional landscape in which different entities can work by building on complementarities and by mutually reinforcing each other.

Science Diplomacy based on different types of interactions among the scientific community and the policy and decision-making world becomes increasingly a part of a broader contemporary public diplomacy (more hybrid, more multi-actor).

At the European level, Science Diplomacy has clearly become a high priority on the political agenda. The European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission's DG Research and Innovation are working towards the development of a common approach to this external dimension of science and innovation policies. In a recent note, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation Carlos Moedas declared that science diplomacy is becoming an increasingly important element of the EU's foreign policy and he committed to fostering the development of EU science diplomacy.(1)

Several Belgian entities have similar interests as well as questions with regard to the roles of different actors and way of investing in and framing of “Science (and innovation) Diplomacy”. Our common challenge is to define how to best link scientific and innovation cooperation with diplomacy and political influence in order to tackle global changes, to promote knowledge and our country and to improve our international relations and cooperation. All the players involved (autonomous actors from the R&D&I performing community, policy-makers and private sector) may benefit from exchanging experiences and best practices and aim to come to a common understanding and drawing up of a (joint) win-win strategic approach for the future.

The Seminar on “A Science Diplomacy approach for Belgium?!” will bring together experts and practitioners with an interest in science, innovation, international cooperation and diplomacy with a view to reflecting on current challenges and opportunities, comparing best Science Diplomacy practices and approaches around the world, and to defining a Science Diplomacy approach for Belgium.

The Seminar will focus on both the “Science for Diplomacy” and “Diplomacy for Science” dimensions. Next to science diplomacy, perspectives of culture diplomacy and economic diplomacy will also be addressed or bridged.

(1) Carlos Moedas, “Science Diplomacy in the European Union”, Science & Diplomacy (March 29, 2015).

Available at: www.sciencediplomacy.org/perspective/2016/science-diplomacy-in-european-union

Programme

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| 09:00-09:15 | Registration and Coffee |
| 09:15-09:25 | Welcome and Stocktaking of Belgian practice Johan Hanssens, Departement Economie, Wetenschap & Innovatie (EWI) |
| 09:25-09:45 | The EU Approach to Science Diplomacy Kostas Glinos, DG Research & Innovation, European Commission |
| 09:45-10:45 | Concept and best practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pierre-Bruno Ruffini, Université du Havre (FR) • Zehra Sayers, Sabanci University (TR) • Guillermo Orts-Gil, Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT)/Embassy of Spain in Germany (ES) |
| 10:45-11:00 | Coffee break |
| 11:00-11:15 | Presentation of Horizon 2020 Project on “European Leadership in Cultural, Science and Innovation Diplomacy” (EL-CSID) Luk Van Langenhove, Institute for European Studies (IES-VUB) |
| 11:15-12:50 | Panel discussion on a Science Diplomacy strategy for Belgium Moderator: Caterina Carta, Vesalius College & Institute for European Studies Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koen Verlaeckt, Internationaal Vlaanderen (IV) • Florence Balthasar, SwissCore • Véronique Halloin, Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique (FNRS) • Pascale Delcomminette, Walloon Trade and Investment Agency (AWEX), Wallonia-Brussels International (WBI) • Claire Tillekaerts, Flanders Investment & Trade Agency (FIT) • Ernesto Fernandez-Polcuch (UNESCO) • Marc Vinck (FPS Foreign Affairs DG Bilateral Affairs Office of Economic Interests) Issues to be addressed (stocktaking and looking forward exercise): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for a Science Diplomacy strategy for Belgium • How to reconcile perspectives of research and diplomacy? • Roles of different actors • Global / regional or bilateral approach? • Hindering factors • Success factors, best practices • Initiatives: who, what, ... ? |

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| 12:50-13:00 | Wrap-up and Concluding remarks Richard Higgott, Institute for European Studies (IES-VUB) |
| 13:00-14:00 | Closure and Invitation to networking lunch Frank Monteny, Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (BELSPO) |

Expected Outcome

The proposed reflection amongst the various governmental policy entities in Belgium will allow for a proactive attitude with regard to the development of a European strategy for Research, Innovation and Scientific Cooperation and will optimise the benefit gained from European policy.

In addition, this event can cater for a more solid ground for the (future) activities of all Belgian entities in the context of the European Research Area (ERA) Roadmap priority 6 (international cooperation beyond Europe) as well as for other activities initiated from the Strategic Forum on International S&T Cooperation (SFIC) for which a joint Belgian position often needed.

The organising committee intends to produce a summary of the best practices presented by the representatives of the European Commission, EU member states and third countries as well as the Belgian authorities. It will also propose a set of recommendations for the way forward in formulating a Science Diplomacy approach for Belgium.

Panel discussion: questions

 [questions_panel_discussion](#)



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