

InsSciDE Open Conference, FAU Erlangen¹

24-26 November 2021

Science Diplomacy as an Intercultural Encounter

Open Conference Concept Note

InsSciDE's second Open Conference brings intercultural encounters and academic training in science diplomacy into the spotlight.

A highly interdisciplinary group of scholars in the humanities and social sciences will interact with science diplomacy practitioners and stakeholders to analyze **science diplomacy** as an **intercultural encounter**, and **explore how this understanding could enrich academic and practitioners' training in science diplomacy.**

Not only national, regional or ethnic cultures but also a diversity of technoscientific, diplomatic, engineering, business and other compound cultures may come together in science diplomacy settings. Science diplomacy refers not only to scientists' territorial crossings, but also to other kinds of intercultural encounters structured by functional, disciplinary or professional identities. For example, profound differences in worldview and life practice may be found among the actors addressing contemporary global challenges, such as when indigenous peoples are enrolled in climate change negotiations bringing alternative views on science. "Technical multilingualism" is highlighted² as a key competence in negotiating multilateral solutions to global crises.

To create a rich description and deep analysis, science diplomacy case studies must acknowledge the multiple dynamics of the intercultural encounter, the tacit or overt tensions, effects and compromises. Science diplomacy training too should acknowledge this encounter, and the educational endeavor may be framed as an exercise in intercultural communication.

[Register for the event](#) to stay informed about attending in person or virtually and the evolving program, as well as to submit a proposal to the call for contributions.

Background Reflection

The links between interculturality and science diplomacy have indeed a long history. Already in 1944 the American anthropologist Margaret Mead established the Institute for Intercultural Studies to advance "knowledge of the various peoples and nations of the world, with special attention to those peoples and those aspects of their life which are likely to affect intercultural and international relations." This initiative eventually led to the formation of the discipline of intercultural communication in the US. The Foreign Service Institute of the US Department of States adopted this approach when applied anthropologist Edward Hall undertook to teach American diplomats how to understand foreign cultures....

¹ Friedrich–Alexander University Erlangen–Nürnberg. The location is Erlangen, Germany, in an important industrial region with strong academic history. Twenty kilometers north of Nuremberg, Erlangen may be reached by taxi or train from the Nuremberg airport, or by train (approx 2.5-3 hours) from the Munich or the Frankfurt airport stations.

² M. Gual Soler, in [GESDA 2021 Science Breakthrough Radar](#).

InsSciDE's open conference will bring together researchers and practitioners to address:

- how understanding science diplomacy as an intercultural activity enriches - or challenges - both theoretical underpinnings and practical activities in the field
- how education, training and support can leverage the conception of the role of science diplomats as bridging different cultures.

Format & Registration

Face-to-face event in Erlangen, Germany, with select sessions streamed online.

Members of the world wide InsSciDE and science diplomacy community are warmly invited to attend the event in person or join us in select online sessions: two hybrid plenary panels and the final session of the conference consisting of a poster exhibition or flash presentations (see next section to submit a contribution!).

There is no conference fee; in-person attendees cover their own costs for travel and stay.

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Call for Contributions

Would you like to exhibit a poster or short presentation? Read the full conference concept note and develop a brief proposal for a contribution (about 100 words) around the interculturality theme.

Submit your contribution at the bottom of the [registration form](#). One of the event organizers will be in touch through email to discuss the proposal further.

Program Overview

The InsSciDE Open Conference is planned as a face-to-face event in Erlangen, Germany, incorporating also some hybrid plenary or parallel sessions.

- Arrivals 24 November. Evening hybrid panel event. Networking reception.
- Full day 25 November. Break-out workshops with practitioners, innovators and historians. Plenary presentations and debate, including a hybrid panel session.
- Short day 26 November. Workshops and conclusions. Virtual poster/flash presentation session envisioned in early afternoon.