

Asia-Europe Public Diplomacy Training Initiative

1) Background

The Asia-Europe Public Diplomacy Training Initiative is a joint cooperation between the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the DiploFoundation, and the National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE) – University of Canterbury.

The Initiative aims at improving the relations between Asia and Europe by enhancing public diplomacy efforts among the members of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process. It provides a practical skills-oriented training with toolkits and training modules designed by expert public diplomacy practitioners and senior diplomats with the support of Asian and European diplomatic academies.

The programme comprises of three tutored online courses and three face-to-face workshops with the two online courses and two face-to-face workshops in Geneva and Kuala Lumpur being successfully implemented.

"This course confirmed to me that effective diplomacy includes public engagement, digital presence, long-term networked relationships and intercultural learning. All of which are essential constituents of the public diplomacy toolkit as well. By bringing together the latest research, competent practitioners and qualified tutors, this inspiring and professional bi-regional dialogue proved to me again that public diplomacy is an inevitable component of effective contemporary diplomatic practice. This is something that is increasingly in demand when trying to address today's challenges in multilateral governance."

*Mads Mateusz Jaszczolt Fritzboeger
The Danish Foreign Policy Society & The Royal Institute of International Affairs*

The course materials were developed based on the findings of ASEF's dual perceptions studies, "EU through the Eyes of Asia" and "Asia in the Eyes of Europe", which were conducted between 2008 and 2011. These studies offered insights into how the EU is perceived across Asia and vice versa from data collected in surveys among 18 different countries in Asia and Europe, including public opinion surveys with over 16,000 respondents, the analysis of over 9,000 news items and face-to-face interviews with over 450 influential figures in Asia and Europe. The studies revealed a limited public understanding of Asia in Europe and of Europe in Asia. The public diplomacy training curricula and toolkits incorporate this rich set of data and findings.

For more details about the programme and details of the online learning methodology, kindly visit the following websites :

- Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) <http://www.asef.org/projects/themes/governance/3160-asia-%20europe-public-diplomacy-training-initiative#3314-asia-europe-public-diplomacy-training-face-to-face>
- Diplo Foundation (Diplo) <http://www.diplomacy.edu/capacity/asia-europe>
- Online learning approach (Online) <http://www.diplomacy.edu/courses/learning>

2) Training Objectives

The training provides insights for diplomats and professionals into current perceptions. Through the training, participants will gain insights into the current perceptions of diplomacy efforts in Asia and Europe and how to incorporate public diplomacy skills into their daily work.

In particular, it will:

- Enable participants to deepen their knowledge of public perceptions of Asia and Europe, and how this affects their work
- Provide practical skills to formulate, develop and deliver effective public diplomacy campaigns through real-life examples and case studies

- Offer the opportunity to interact with counterparts from ASEM members and build networks
- Promote awareness of the different ASEM processes and bi-regional dynamics among diplomats

3) Contributors to the Development of the Course Materials

- Professional trainers and academics from Asian and European diplomatic academies
- Senior diplomats
- Researchers
- Media and communications specialists

4) Module Titles and Themes

Week 1: Introduction to public diplomacy

This module introduces participants to the theory of public diplomacy, its role in Asia-Europe relations, and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process. It looks in depth at the tools, methods and tasks needed for successful public diplomacy initiatives. The module will give participants a better understanding of current public diplomacy and to provide a strong knowledge base for the rest of the course.

Week 2: The changing face of Asia-Europe relations

This module looks at the changing realities in the context of Asia-Europe relations, and specifically at the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process. The module focuses on future trends and issues likely to shape relations between Asia and Europe.

Week 3: Images and perceptions in public diplomacy

This module introduces the Asia-Europe perceptions studies and key findings. The module continues elaboration of public diplomacy frameworks (techniques, tools, levels) and places them in the Asia-Europe context. The module equips participants with deeper comprehension on the use of perceptions-based research (public and opinion leader surveys, media analysis, etc.) and how such research can impact on producing better public diplomacy campaigns.

Week 4: How to work with media content

This module introduces a range of techniques to gather, analyse, categorise and contextualise information from news media in a systematic way. Participants will explore how to use information to inform the public diplomacy functions of an embassy and how to measure the impact of public diplomacy activities. Furthermore, they will have the opportunity to try out and adapt these techniques in a practical exercise.

Week 5: How to work with public opinion

This module introduces a range of techniques to gather, analyse, categorise and contextualise information from public opinion surveys, polls, barometers, indexes and other instruments in a systematic way. Participants will be able to make use of these techniques in their outreach efforts and as a means to measure the impact of existing public diplomacy efforts.

Week 6: How to use digital tools and social media

Diplomatic activities are increasingly supported by Internet tools. Diplomats rely on the Internet to find information, communicate with colleagues via email, and negotiate draft texts in electronic formats; diplomats are also increasingly using new social networking platforms. This module focuses on the opportunities and challenges Internet tools offer for diplomatic activities and introduces various e-diplomacy tools with a special focus on social media. Participants will experiment with using social media to shape public opinion. They will also look at how to measure the impact of social media campaigns.

Week 7: How to interact with stakeholders (advocacy)

This module focuses on how to identify, map and engage with key decision-, policy- and opinion-makers and shapers from media, civil society, private sector, academia, and government. Participants will learn how to select, approach and engage in a dialogue with relevant stakeholders to communicate their positions, and to influence and build networks for information gathering and future initiatives.

Week 8: How to manage public affairs

Diplomats need to interact regularly with the general public to maintain a positive presence in the international debate even in times of crisis and to shape opinions. Drawing on experience from recent successful public affairs ventures, participants will learn how to plan, organise and manage public events ranging from business forums to academic exchanges, sports, cultural, and tourism campaigns. They will acquire skills and techniques to deal with advertising agencies, consultancies and public relations firms.

5) Target Groups

- Young diplomats in Asia or Europe Departments in ASEM Ministries of Foreign Affairs
- Diplomats posted at embassies in ASEM countries who are dealing with public diplomacy
- Representatives from government-related agencies (culture, tourism, trade and investment, etc.)

6) Profile of Candidates

- MA degree or equivalent or BA degree with at least 3 years of diplomatic working experience
- Currently working in an Asian-European context
- High proficiency in English
- Interested in communications and public diplomacy

7) Nomination Process

- Submission of nominations by ASEM Ministries of Foreign Affairs to the organisers (including name, position and email address)
- In parallel, completion of an online registration form by the candidate, together with a CV and motivation statement of 250 words. The registration form is available at the following link: <http://learn.diplomacy.edu/registration/register.php?idProgramme=148>
- Deadline of submissions: Friday, 24 April 2015.
- Selected participants will be notified before 30 April 2015.

8) Timeline

The training is delivered to a group of max. 25 participants:

- 8-week online learning course
Dates: 4 May – 16 July 2015

The Call for nominations for the 3rd face-to-face training will follow in a few weeks.

9) Costs

The cost of participation in the training is covered entirely by the organisers.

10) Funding

The project is funded by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). ASEF's contribution is with the support of the European Union.

11) Contact

Mr Andrej SKRINJARIC, Project Manager, DiploFoundation;
E: andrejs@diplomacy.edu; T: +381 64 2425 287

Ms Grace FOO, Project Manager, Political & Economic Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF);
E: grace.foo@asef.org; T: +65 6874 9708

About the Partners

 <p>ASIA-EUROPE FOUNDATION</p>	<p>The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe.</p> <p>ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across the thematic areas of culture, education, sustainable development, economy, governance and public health.</p> <p>ASEF is a not-for-profit intergovernmental organisation located in Singapore. Founded in 1997, it is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).</p> <p>Together with about 700 partner organisations ASEF has run more than 600 projects, mainly conferences, seminars and workshops. Over 17,000 Asians and Europeans have actively participated in its activities and it has reached much wider audiences through its networks, web-portals, publications, exhibitions and lectures.</p> <p>For more information, please visit www.asef.org</p>
 <p>DIPLO www.diplomacy.edu</p>	<p>DiploFoundation (Diplo) is an independent non-profit organisation established in 2002 by the governments of Switzerland and Malta. In 2009, DiploFoundation featured in the World e-Democracy Forum's list of 'Top 10 who are changing the world of Internet and Politics' and in 2013 among the Top 100 global NGOs in <i>Global Journal's</i> selection based on criteria such as impact, innovation, and sustainability. Diplo has received wide recognition for its work, including consultative status with the United Nations. Diplo's activities include training officials including diplomats and others involved in international relations; providing specialised and effective academic programs for professional diplomats; strengthening participation of non-state actors; providing capacity development programmes and using and developing tools for e-participation in global governance. http://www.diplomacy.edu</p>
 <p>NCRE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON EUROPE</p>	<p>In 2000, the forerunner to the National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE) - the Centre for Research on Europe - was founded at Canterbury, New Zealand. In 2002 a grant from the European Commission was awarded and at this time the Centre became the NCRE. It remains the only EU-dedicated tertiary level centre in New Zealand. Since then, the NCRE has developed significantly in both academic and outreach activities, involving a variety of roles and mechanisms. It has also established an effective form of collaboration with four other New Zealand universities (Auckland, Victoria, Otago and Lincoln) and one Australian university (Melbourne) during this time. Above all, the NCRE has begun the essential process of encouraging and promoting a new generation of New Zealand graduates who have a high level of expertise and interest in the European Union (EU). www.europe.canterbury.ac.nz</p>



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