

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

For the *EU-China Observer* Issue #4.16

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN EU-CHINA RELATIONS

Submission deadline: 10 November 2016

The **Baillet Latour Chair of European Union-China Relations** and the **EU-China Research Centre** at the **College of Europe** (Bruges) are calling for contributions to the fourth issue of the *EU-China Observer* of 2016. The issue will focus on **Public Diplomacy in EU-China Relations**.

Public diplomacy, which refers to the initiatives put in place by an international actor in order to exert influence on how other actors view it, has developed to include an ever-broader range of tools over the past decades. China, as an emerging great power, has been greatly stepping up its public diplomacy, seeking to improve its image so as to defend its policies and to allay other countries' concerns about the peaceful nature of its rise. As for the EU, its multiple and potentially conflicting levels of actorness make the development of a structured public diplomacy policy very complex, although there are signs of growing focus on the need to bolster the link between foreign and cultural policy.

Given how China and the EU are both global players, and are therefore 'destined' to meet to address global challenges that require global solutions (from global economic governance to terrorism and climate change), it is of paramount importance that their strategic partnership be based on solid foundations of knowledge and understanding on all fronts- not just on the 'hard' issues of security and economics. In this light, better public diplomacy could help at least partially overcome the 'strategic dissonance' that still hampers EU-China relations. Indeed, the partnership has been marred by a trust deficit on both sides, which has increased after the economic crisis. Negative perceptions of China in Europe are on the rise, while the Chinese are voicing their dissatisfaction with what they see as the EU's inability to be a consistently coherent interlocutor.

The creation in 2012 of People-to-People (P2P) dialogue, added a much-needed channel for communication and exchanges between peoples from both sides. Moreover, since 2012, more and more specialised dialogues have been emerging. For instance, the first EU-China Ministerial Meeting on Education will take place in Ningbo in October 2016, thereby stressing the growing importance of dialogues as non-binding, de-politicised platforms to discuss a wide range of topics.

In light of the above, the forthcoming issue of the *EU-China Observer* would like to delve into the role and relevance of public diplomacy in current EU-China relations. In particular, it would like to shed light on both existing but under-the-radar initiatives and on opportunities for better cooperation in areas that have remained untapped.

Contributions for the next issue of the *EU-China Observer* may cover – but are not limited to – the following topics:

- Challenges and opportunities for public diplomacy in EU-China relations;
- A comparative analysis of European and Chinese public diplomacy
- The role of new tools (e.g. digital) in public diplomacy, and how they could benefit EU-China relations;
- EU-China cultural diplomacy;
- The role of trust in EU-China relations;

Please send your contributions to EUCO@coleurope.eu by 10 November **2016**. For any questions related to the *EU-China Observer*, please do not hesitate to contact us via the e-mail address mentioned above.

Previous issues, and further information are available here: <http://www.coleurope.eu/euco>