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ANNEX VII

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of the Asia Pacific region for 2022 Part 1

Action Document for Public and Cultural Diplomacy in China

ANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plans in the sense of Article 23(2) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	Public and Cultural Diplomacy in China OPSYS number: ACT-60856/ JAD.981614 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (<u>NDICI-Global Europe</u>)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in the People's Republic of China
4. Programming document	Regional Multi-annual Indicative Programme Asia and the Pacific 2021 – 2027
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	<p>Priority Area 2: Pursuing EU Interests with Key Partners</p> <p>2.2.1 China</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 1 - Promote European values and interests in the bilateral relations with China, in line with the multi-faceted approach. • SO 2 – Engage China to deliver on global public goods (including on international commitments such as the Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change), to tackle global challenges, and to address its role as global actor and donor by promoting international norms and standards alignment with EU policies, and countering negative impact where necessary. <p>The action contributes in principle to all expected results but in particular to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ER 1.2: Increased frequency and/or more efficient preparation and follow-up of high-level dialogues and sector dialogues, and enhanced people-to-people ties (e.g. culture and education, and research) and facilitated coordination on reciprocal mobility, migration and people-to-people exchanges including on right-based migration management and civil society exchanges. • ER 2.4: Promote and defend rules-based multilateralism, including the UN Development System and other multilateral institutions.
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	

6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Priority Area 2 – Pursuing EU Interests with Key Partners Sectors: public and cultural diplomacy covering EU priority policy areas vis-à-vis China			
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG (1 only): 17 – Partnerships for the Goals Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: N/A			
8 a) DAC code(s)	99810 – Sectors not specified			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	61000 – Private sector in provider country 51000 – University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank			
9. Involvement of multilateral partners	No			
10. Target	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
11. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation @ digital connectivity digital governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	digital entrepreneurship		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital skills/literacy		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital services		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Connectivity @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	transport		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	people2people		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	energy		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
13. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14 02 01 31 - South and East Asia Total estimated cost: EUR 4 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 4 000 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
14. Type of financing	Direct management through procurement			

1.2 Summary of the Action

The relation with China is one of the EU's most important and complex one, raising both significant potential for cooperation and benefit in political and economic terms, as well as a multitude of challenges across political, economic and human rights spectrums. Public and cultural diplomacy constitute an important tool enabling the EU to engage meaningfully with selected audiences in China, stimulate cooperation and address challenges, thus supporting the implementation of EU foreign policy objectives. Sustained and effective engagement with target audiences in China increases mutual understanding, improves the perception regarding the EU, its policies, values and principles, and ultimately, nurtures trust and builds networks and alliances with like-minded societal partners.

The proposed action aims to support the European Union, represented by the EU Delegation in China, in its endeavour of shaping a favourable context for EU-China dialogues, setting the stage for intensified bilateral relations and advancing the EU's policy priorities in China, as discussed also in the context of the High level dialogue on "People-to-People" and the Higher Education Cooperation and Exchange Platform. The following fields of action are envisaged:

1. Reinforce the capacity of the EU Delegation to China to undertake constant and long-term engagement with selected audiences in China and develop partnerships and alliances with key stakeholders.
2. Improve the perception, attractiveness and likeability of the EU among target audiences in China, thus building trust and facilitating the establishment of constructive partnerships.
3. Foster the role of culture in external relations and engage with stakeholders of the cultural scene in China, thus increasing mutual understanding and promoting diversity, inclusiveness and intercultural tolerance.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

As the ‘EU Global Strategy on Security and Foreign Policy’¹ noted it already in 2016, we live today in a more connected, complex and contested world. The relationship with China is one of the EU’s most important and challenging at the same time. In line with the Joint Communication ‘EU-China: a Strategic Outlook’ of March 2019², and as reiterated in the ‘EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific’³, the EU pursues a multi-faceted approach towards China. Reflecting this complexity and based on a pragmatic and principled engagement, the EU must balance relations with China simultaneously as a negotiating partner for cooperation, economic competitor and systemic rival. The complexity of the EU’s relations with China has increased as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, which has decreased opportunities for contact, adding to the evolutions within the political landscape in 2021. This requires adjustment in the way the EU engages with Chinese counterparts, stakeholders and citizens.

Public and cultural diplomacy as a tool supports the implementation of EU foreign policy objectives by strengthening the EU’s ability to engage meaningfully with selected audiences in partner countries (e.g. students/academics, multipliers/influencers, civil society and cultural operators/artists). Promoting long-term engagement with selected audiences in China has the capacity to increase mutual understanding, improve the perception about the EU and its policies, values and principles and ultimately, nurture trust, build like-minded partnerships and foster networks and alliances for future cooperation.

Building trust and fostering partnerships need a long-term perspective to see tangible results and therefore require long-term investment. The approach on how to engage Chinese audiences, how to localise and maintain consistency and pass messages successfully has been initiated and developed by FPI under the previous two actions on *EU Policy and Outreach Partnership in China (EUPOP China)*⁴ as well as under similar actions such as the *EU & China Think-Tank Exchanges* and public diplomacy activities under other PI funded projects. The proposed action will thus provide continuity to past and ongoing targeted diplomacy efforts, ensure the consistency and repetition of messages and nurture the partnerships and networks already established. It will seek synergies and complementarity with the relevant activities under the Erasmus+ programme. Consequently, the proposed action offers the opportunity to build upon and consolidate the results already yielded, further increase their impact, and expand the scope of successful public diplomacy and outreach efforts by working with targeted local partners based on localised messages.

Moreover, in line with the Joint Communication ‘Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations’⁵, the EU seeks to advance cultural cooperation with partner countries. Promoting diversity through culture constitutes a foundational element within the EU’s role on the global scene. Cooperation with China in the field of culture performed by the EU in close cooperation and coordination with its Member States is an important vehicle of fostering mutual understanding. This has been highlighted in a recent perception survey conducted by the present EUPOP China project, which found that people and culture constitute important impact drivers for Chinese perceptions of the EU, thus, an opportunity to improve perceptions about the EU overall.

Finally, the proposed action serves as an important instrument to implement the Delegation’s strategic approach for public diplomacy and strategic communication in the spirit of the whole-of-delegation approach, under the steer of the Head of Delegation. As such, they will be closely coordinated with the activities of the Political, Press & Information Section as well as with potential EU strategic communication programmes and with other public diplomacy and outreach activities of INTPA and of various line DGs.

¹ See p.7 [EU Global Strategy on Security and Foreign Policy](#)

² See p.1 [Joint Communication ‘EU-China: a Strategic Outlook’](#)

³ See p.4 [EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific](#)

⁴ Ongoing PI/2019/410-461 EU Policy and Outreach Partnership in China (01/12/2021-31/10/2022) and closed PI/2016/379-892

EU Policy and Outreach Partnership in China (09/01/2017-08/07/2019)

⁵ [Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations](#)

2.2 Problem Analysis

Over the past two years, there has been a considerable shift in the overall geopolitical environment between the EU and China. China presents itself with increased political assertiveness on the international scene, while at the same time state control and censorship reduce the space available to the EU to conduct public diplomacy activities.

However, given both parties' weight in the global economy and international relations system, as well as the raising number of common global challenges, maintaining cooperation between the EU and China continues to be of significant importance.

Across the Chinese society, understanding, awareness and recognition regarding what the EU is and what role it plays on the global stage continues being very limited and imprecise. A recently conducted update of the study "Analysis of the perception of the EU and EU's policies abroad"⁶ confirmed that the EU image in China has considerably deteriorated compared to the initial baseline published in 2016.⁷ In a challenging and sensitive context for international public engagement, a deteriorating perception of the EU amongst the Chinese audiences, and in particular amongst target audiences such as youth, students, opinion-leaders and multipliers, is undoubtedly not conducive to an advancement in bilateral relations.

On the other hand, experiences from engaging with target audiences under the present and past *EUPOP China* projects indicate that both curiosity and interest in EU issues as well as the willingness to cooperate with the EU or through third parties/multipliers on EU relevant topics remain prevalent. To this end, it is proves valuable for the EU to continue investing in the use of all available channels or tools for conducting public diplomacy in China.

The above mentioned perception study has highlighted that people and culture constitute high impact drivers for Chinese people's perception of the EU. Therefore, addressing this area through appropriate actions offers an opportunity to improve overall perceptions regarding the EU. Cultural operators, including local ones as well as the EU Member States, and in particular the European Union Institutes of Culture active in China, bear the greatest potential to act as promoters and multipliers of values such as diversity, tolerance and mutuality. Therefore, cooperation and engagement with target audiences through traditional channels, while at the same time exploring new niches and innovative means has the potential to contribute effectively to EU-China relations.

In addition, the positive experience from the ongoing *EU & China Think-Tank Exchanges* project clearly shows that creating and supporting a dialogue among think-tanks and academia on both sides, enables the debate on critical or sensitive issues to continue at Track 2 level. Another positive example is the 'Dictionary of Cultural Misunderstandings', a pilot project supported under the *EU-China Partnership Facility*, which gathers a group of high level European and Chinese intellectuals who share the awareness that cultural misunderstandings impede mutual comprehension and positive interactions between the EU and China at all levels.

In order to support the EU's interests and priorities vis-à-vis China, it is of critical importance to stay engaged in the narrative discourse with and within China and to continue building partnerships with Chinese target audiences across all themes of bilateral relations. It is vital to engage on a long-term basis with key audiences in order to cultivate broadly the themes and topics where both sides' interests converge, for example sustainability or climate action, but also on topics where both sides' positions diverge. Such engagement needs to improve the perception about the EU as important and legitimate political actor serving to foster a sound high-level partnership in an international rule-based manner. Public and cultural diplomacy actions tailored to the local perceptions and areas of interest of the Chinese audiences remain, thus, an essential foreign policy tool for the EU.

Identification of main stakeholders:

Exchanging, sharing and networking with selected key audiences in China, in particular those that contribute shaping our present and future political, economic and people-to-people partnership, will lead to better understanding and to building and nurturing partnerships. This in return would lead to improve the foundational perception of the European Union in China, increase knowledge about and support for EU policies, principles and values and enhance the understanding of the importance of the relationship between the EU and China among key stakeholders.

The proposed actions will therefore continue engaging the target audiences and stakeholders that have been already engaged in previous and ongoing public diplomacy actions. It will solidify and further expand the created

⁶ The update of the perception has not yet been published. The preliminary final results have been consulted as source.

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/fpi/stories/analysis-perception-eu-and-eus-policies-abroad_en

networks. This includes on the one hand individuals, and on the other hand institutional entities from the public and private sectors.

To this end, selected key target audiences to be addressed through this action include mainly:

- Youth, students, researchers and alumni
- Universities, academia and think-tanks
- Opinion-leaders, influencers and multipliers
- Cultural organisations and operators, in particular the European Union Institutes of Culture

Besides the above mentioned key audiences that form the main target group to be addressed through the action, there is a wider range of audiences of importance to the EU - China relationship. Such wider audiences include, for instance, national and local authorities, political counterparts, the diplomatic corps in China, private sector organisations, business community and civil society stakeholders. Whilst they are not the main target of the proposed action, they may be involved in selected activities, where appropriate or are secondarily associated with / benefitting from the action.

The approach of the action includes joining-up public and cultural diplomacy initiatives across the various European Commission DGs and the EEAS, other EU institutions and EU Member States and their embassies, consulates and cultural institutes in China, ensuring no duplication of activities and in complementarity to any possible strategic communication actions managed by DG INTPA. In this respect, the Delegation China will share relevant and strategic information on the implementation of the action with concerned EU actors, and in particular with the EEAS-INTPA-FPI-NEAR Coordination Mechanism, established in HQ to endorse at macro-level the strategic communication and public diplomacy plans developed by the Delegations..

Participation of women and youth organisations will be particularly fostered, where possible.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The **Overall Objective (Impact)** of this action is to contribute to building a more favourable context for EU-China dialogues, intensifying bilateral relations and advancement of the EU's policy priorities in China, by means of nurturing mutual trust and establishing networks, alliances and partnerships with target audiences and key stakeholders in China.

The **Specific Objectives (Outcomes)** of this Action are:

1. Enhance the knowledge and understanding, perception, attractiveness and likeability of the EU among target audiences in China.
2. Mobilise and engage target audiences, key stakeholders and like-minded partners on a constant and long-term basis.

The **Outputs** to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are

1.1 contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1)

- Knowledge about the EU, and its policies, principles and values among key target audiences is increased and their virtue is understood.
- Culture is used as an effective vehicle to promote EU policies, principles and values.
- The EU is recognised as a credible reference point and solid partner for China in multiple areas of common interest and as an indispensable dialogue counterpart in areas of divergent positions.
- An EU-favourable attitude and EU-like-mindedness amongst target audiences is nurtured.

2.1 contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1)

- Open and regular channels to interact with key target audiences are set up and in broad use.
- Interest among the target audiences to learn and engage regularly with the EU is fostered.
- Platforms for discussions, exchanges, debates and structured dialogues involving both specialised and wider target audiences in China are activated and maintained.

3.2 Indicative Activities

All activities should contribute to the achievement of the outputs targeting the selected audiences. On the one hand, the proposed activities shall offer the tools for long-term engagement with target audiences (contribution to the nurturing of networks and partnerships) and on the other hand, they will create a favourable attitude (hence improving EU perception and likeability). The following non-exhaustive and non-exclusive list of indicative activities shall be further enriched by innovative and new types of public and cultural diplomacy activities that could be identified in the course of implementation of the action.

1. Interactive engagement (online and offline) with target audiences through organising debates, competitions, events, lectures, master-classes, webinars, networking and sharing opportunities, cultural and innovative digital activities and others
2. Facilitation of discussion/debate opportunities among targeted Chinese audiences, in particular academia and think-tanks, young emerging leaders and prominent experts on pertinent topics of common concern
3. Nurturing cooperation with media, influencers and key opinion-leaders, including network and alliance building and joint production of audio-visual content that could be used for the engagement with target audiences
4. Partnering with EU Member States for mutual promotion and delivering joint activities boosting an EU-wide joined-up public diplomacy approach in China and demonstrating the EU's cultural diversity.

5. Engagement with stakeholders of the cultural sector in China to promote and organise joint cultural activities and events, including among others cultural flagship events, exhibitions, networking activities, curatorship, creative studio for innovative art creations.
6. Cooperation with selected civil society organisations and initiatives on specific activities and events
7. Provision of strategic support and advice to the EU Delegation to strengthen the capabilities of effectively conducting public and cultural diplomacy activities via studies, mappings, trainings, working meetings and others.

3.3 Mainstreaming

For the proposed action, different cross-cuttings issues have been identified, regarding global challenges, EU principles and values, fundamental rights, multilateralism, and the rule of law. Enhancing knowledge and understanding of the European Union and promoting the EU principles and values in China through long-term engagement with selected target audiences rest at the core of the public and cultural diplomacy activities of this action. This includes in particular gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, fundamental values, inclusivity, diversity, tolerance and a rule-based multilateral order. Highlighting the joint pursuit in addressing global challenges such as environmental protection and climate change are also included in the thematic scope of the action.

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

This cross-cutting issue is not applicable for the proposed action.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality is an important and deliberate objective, but not the principal reason for undertaking the programme. On the one hand it will promote the participation of women in public and cultural diplomacy activities and events to ensure equal opportunity is provided to women stakeholders. On the other hand, the project will promote EU gender policies and enhance understanding of the importance of gender policies, gender equality objectives and women and girls empowerment among selected target audiences.

Human Rights

Respect for human rights, including women's rights, is a fundamental value of the European Union. Through public and cultural diplomacy activities, the proposed action will directly or indirectly promote EU fundamental values including non-discrimination, women's rights and freedom of expression. The approach will be guided by the principle of "leaving no one behind", equality and non-discrimination on any grounds.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. This implies that the action does not have a focus on disability, at main or significant objective level. However as the action promotes inclusiveness, diversity and tolerance as key EU values, people affected by disability will indirectly benefit from the action and will not be discriminated on any grounds.

Democracy

There is no foreseen impact on elements related to democracy or rule of law as such. However, as the action will promote the principles of an international rule-based order and multilateralism, the subject of democracy is being mainstreamed in the action.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

This cross-cutting issue is not applicable for the proposed action.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Addressing challenges of global concern including protecting the environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change and building resilience of communities may become a theme for engagement with target audiences. In particular following the COVID-19 pandemic, resilience, green and sustainable recovery as demonstrated by the EU model would be a relevant crosscutting issue and thematic focus for the public diplomacy activities.

Other considerations if relevant

N/A

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Despite a recent series of challenges in EU-China relations, the Chinese authorities at different levels have shown commitment to a number of key common priorities and areas of mutual interests. The key assumption that drives this action is that the bilateral relationship will not face a complete breakdown and that China will continue to engage with the EU. This, in turn, will render EU public and cultural diplomacy actions still possible and capable of contributing to shaping a conducive environment for improved relations. It is further assumed that despite the declining EU perception in China in general, there is still a considerable part of the target audiences whose receptiveness and interest for interacting with the EU remains stable or is increasing.

The most prominent risks and corresponding mitigating measures are the following:

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
External environment	Further decline in the bilateral relations between the EU and China	M	H	Continuous assessment of the political situation and continuous engagement with key partners and individuals. Flexible project management structures allowing for adaptation of activities to changing external circumstances.
External environment	More aggressive narratives in Chinese media and hardening attitudes against foreigners jeopardize the EU perception in China and efforts to improve understanding of EU views, values and messages among Chinese audiences	H	H	All messaging towards target audiences need to be clear, consistent, coherent and coordinated across the spectrum of EU policies and through the implementation of the project and associated activities
External environment	Increasing constraints to mobility domestically and across borders in China do pose serious difficulties to the organisation of visits and offline events	H	M	Continuous monitoring of the situation and exploit possibilities for online or hybrid engagement as much as possible
Planning and systems	The action has to operate in a climate of state control and/or censorship	H	H	Continuous assessment of the situation and re-evaluation of channels for public and cultural diplomacy
People and the organisation	EU messages do not resonate with targeted audiences and audiences don't will not identify with the EU's engagement efforts	L	M	Increased wide-spread and timely promotion of the activities. Identify interest of audiences. Match of the content of activities and the messages to be passed towards the actual interests of the audiences
People and the organisation	Low performance of contractor resulting in time-consuming coordination and trouble-shooting efforts by the EU Delegation	L	M	Appropriate choice of implementation mode, close monitoring and proactive steering by the project manager

Lessons Learnt:

Lessons learned for the action stem from a process evaluation on public diplomacy under the Partnership Instrument from 2018/2019. The following recommendations of the evaluation will be considered for the proposed action:

1. Develop a collective understanding of public diplomacy objectives: make sure that there are clear public diplomacy objectives that are understood by EUDs and all contractors at country/region level. This should mean collectively setting, agreeing and communicating long-term public diplomacy objectives.

→ The proposed action is basing its objectives on a whole-of-delegation public diplomacy and strategic communication approach.

2. Secure necessary resources to deliver and promote collaboration: to promote public diplomacy as an approach and provide the conditions for success: ensure the necessary resources are available to deliver public diplomacy (including high level senior buy in), and promote and encourage cooperation between FPI and P&I staff wherever possible.

→ The proposed action will be under the steer of the Head of Delegation. The activities will be closely coordinated with the activities of the Political, Press & Information Section as well as with possible EU strategic communication programmes and with other public diplomacy and outreach activities of INTPA and of the various line DGs.

3. Increase variety in the modality mix: the diversity in the modality mix is needed but even more flexibility would be beneficial. Based on the collective understanding of public diplomacy objectives, and an assessment of how these are being pursued, consider increasing the flexibility of the current modality mix. For example, consider whether EUPOP can be broken down into different a menu of sub-elements including strategy elements / research into public diplomacy or resonance of messages (akin to a public diplomacy support facility), communications support for public diplomacy objectives, engagement activities with target groups.

→ The proposed action will incorporate a strategic mix of modalities to deliver the public diplomacy objectives.

Further key lessons drawn from the experience of the previous and on-going Partnership Instrument actions supporting public diplomacy, in particular two EUPOP in China actions⁸, have been considered and fully applied in the formulation of this action:

1. Ensure the manageability of the actions and adequate measurement of results thanks to a streamlined whole-of-delegation programming process
2. Clearly identify target audiences for the action and their information interest and needs
3. Ensure that the programming of public and cultural diplomacy actions reflect strategic prioritisation from the EU's external action policies.
4. Ensure that implemented action focusses on issues that resonate among local target audiences

A Global Thematic Evaluation of Public and Cultural Diplomacy covering all past and ongoing public and cultural diplomacy actions funded under the Partnership Instrument is currently under way. Lessons learned and recommendation from that evaluation, which will reflect findings from the various EUPOP projects and in particular from its predecessor projects in China, will be taken into account for the implementation of the action. The results of this evaluation should be used to establish clear baselines and targets for key performance indicators for this action.

⁸ Ongoing PI/2019/410-461 EU Policy and Outreach Partnership in China (01/12/20219-31/10/2022) and closed PI/2016/379-892 EU Policy and Outreach Partnership in China (09/01/2017-08/07/2019)

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is aiming to underpin core EU interests and values in the EU-China relationship. Its relevance is based on the fact that the relation with China is one of the EU's most important and complex ones, with significant potential for benefit in political and economic terms. However, over the past years – in particular, the past two years – there has been a considerable shift in the overall geopolitical environment between the EU and China leading to a multitude of challenges. Through the action, the EU wants to use public and cultural diplomacy as tools to create a more favourable environment for political engagement and thus support the implementation of the EU foreign policy objectives and the advancement of the EU's policy priorities in China. This can be achieved by building trust and establishing constructive partnerships with the target audiences, i.e. key stakeholders, which are considered having a direct or indirect importance for the EU's relation with China. The proposed action will implement a range of activities in the field of public and cultural diplomacy seeking to engage these target audiences in a long-term perspective, taking due account of cross-cutting issues, in particular, related to gender. Assuming that despite a declining EU perception in China in general, there is still a considerable part of the target audiences whose receptiveness and interest for interacting with the EU remains stable or is increasing, the action will achieve **the following outputs**: *on the one hand*, through the action it will be ensured that knowledge about the EU and its policies, principles and values, among key target audiences is increased and their significance is understood; that culture is used as an effective vehicle to promote EU policies, principles and values; that the EU is recognised as a credible reference point and solid partner for China in multiple areas of common interest and as an indispensable dialogue counterpart, including in areas where EU and China positions diverge ; and that an EU-favourable attitude and EU-like-mindedness amongst target audiences is nurtured. *On the other hand*, through the activities, the action will facilitate that open and regular channels to interact with the key target audiences are set up and in broad use; that interest among the target audiences to learn and engage regularly with the EU is fostered; and that platforms for discussions, exchanges, debates and structured dialogues involving both specialised and wider target audiences in China are activated and maintained. If the outputs are delivered, and assuming that EU public and cultural diplomacy actions are indeed possible and capable of contributing to shaping a conducive environment for improved relations, the knowledge and understanding, perception, attractiveness and likeability of the EU among target audiences in China will be enhanced (**outcome 1**) and the target audiences, key stakeholders and like-minded partners can be engaged on a constant and long-term basis (**outcome 2**). If these outcomes can be achieved and under the assumption that despite the existing challenges China will continue to engage with the EU, the action will have achieved its overall objective to contribute to building a more favourable context for EU-China dialogues, to intensify bilateral relations and advance the EU's policy priorities in China.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

Results	Results chain (a): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (a): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To contribute to building a more favourable context for EU-China dialogues, intensifying bilateral relations and advancement of the EU's policy priorities in China, by means of nurturing mutual trust and establishing networks, alliances and partnerships with target audiences and key stakeholders in China.	1. IMP 1 – Number of approaches and/or practices beneficial to the achievement of EU interests, values and standards which have been taken up in third countries 2. IMP5 – Number of articles on the EU in the partner country	1 – 0 2 – 0	1 – 1 2 – 300	1 – Political dialogues outcome statements, relevant reports 2 – Media monitoring	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	To have enhanced the knowledge and understanding, perception, attractiveness and likeability of the EU among target audiences in China.	1.1. OC14 – Percentage of participants targeted by outreach and advocacy events who acknowledge a positive change in their perception of the EU and/or international policies and standards 1.2. OC 16 – Number of articles published in print and/or digital media about an event	1.1 – 0 1.2 – 0	1.1 – 50% 1.2 – 200	1.1 – Surveys, perception studies 1.2 – Media monitoring	Bilateral relationship between the EU and China will not face a complete breakdown and China will continue to engage with the EU
Outcome 2	To have mobilised and engaged target audiences, key stakeholders and like-minded partners on a constant and long-term basis	2.1. OC15 – Percentage of participants targeted by outreach and advocacy events who acknowledge having engaged further on the topic on their own initiative as a result of their exposure to an event	2.1 – 0	2.1 – 50%	2.1 – Surveys, studies, event registration records	EU public and cultural diplomacy action are possible and capable of contributing to shaping a conducive environment for improved relations
Output 1	1.1 Knowledge about the EU, and its policies, principles and	1.1.1. OP5 – Percentage of participants in the events who	1.1.1 – 0	1.1.1 – 70%		Receptiveness and interest for interacting

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (@): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
related to Outcome 1	values among key target audiences is increased and their virtue is understood.	report having benefited from the events organised/supported	1.1.2 – 0 1.1.3 – 0	1.1.2 – 300 1.1.3 – 150 million	1.1.1 – Surveys, event registration records	with the EU among target audiences remains stable or is increasing
Output 2 related to Outcome 1	1.2 Culture is used as an effective vehicle to promote EU policies, principles and values	1.1.2. OP8 – Number of communication products developed			1.1.2 – Records on deliverables 1.1.3 – Online and social media monitoring	
Output 3 related to Outcome 1	1.3 The EU is recognised as a credible reference point and solid partner for China in multiple areas of common interest and as an indispensable dialogue counterpart in areas of divergent positions.	1.1.3. OP12 – Level of engagement online and on social media				
Output 4 related to Outcome 1	1.4 An EU-favourable attitude and EU-like-mindedness amongst target audiences is nurtured.					
Output 1 related to Outcome 2	2.1 Open and regular channels to interact with key target audiences are set up and in broad use	2.1.1. OP1 – Number of events organised or supported	2.1.1 – 0	2.1.1 – 40	2.1.1 – Event records	Receptiveness and interest for interacting with the EU among target audiences remains stable or is increasing
Output 2 related to Outcome 2	2.2 Interest among the target audiences to learn and engage regularly with the EU is fostered	2.1.2. OP2 – Number of participants in the events organised/supported	2.1.2 – 0	2.1.2 – 6000	2.1.2 – Participant records and registrations	
Output 3 related to Outcome 2	2.3 Platforms for discussions, exchanges, debates and structured dialogues involving both specialised and wider target audiences in China are activated and maintained.	2.1.3. OP8 – Number of knowledge based products developed	2.1.3 – 0	2.1.3 – 3	2.1.3 – Records on deliverables	

Remarks:

Baseline for all indicators set to 0 as it is a new action and a not a continuation or topping up of the ongoing public diplomacy project.

Targets are indicative only. They have been set based on experience with the present EUPOP in China action, but will be reviewed and if necessary adapted when drafting the terms of reference.

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with China.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 84 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision, which includes a period of 18 months for procurement, an indicative 48 months of action implementation and 18 months until the FDI.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Procurement)

All objectives will be implemented through procurement.

4.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.2	
Procurement (direct management) – total envelope under section 4.2.1	4 000 000
Total	4 000 000

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

Specific expertise will be mobilised in the specific thematic areas subject of this action. The EU Delegation China will constantly monitor and ensure the effectiveness and quality of the different technical and policy outputs requested and, if necessary, support the implementing partner to establish institutional interactions with the Chinese authorities.

A dedicated steering committee will be established to act as advisory and reporting mechanism in order to provide the strategic and policy guidance needed to ensure the action's smooth project implementation and

alignment with the Delegation's strategic approach to public diplomacy. The steering committee should meet at least twice a year and will review the priority work streams to be addressed by the action.

The steering committee will review and endorse work plans, monitor project outputs and achievements and not least provide advice on how to address obstacles and challenges identified during implementation. The steering committee, whose composition will be further detailed, will comprise the relevant sections of the Delegation representing the EEAS (Political, Press and Information Section), FPI, DG INTPA and other relevant Commission services. Participation of EU HQs may be encouraged through virtual platforms.

The steering of the action will be further embedded in the mechanisms established by the Delegation China governing the whole-of-delegation approach to public diplomacy and strategic communication under the lead of the Head of Delegation. This will ensure coordination between the various public diplomacy, strategic communication and visibility activities of the EU Delegation as well as alignment of the activities with the political priorities of the EU in China. In this respect, the Delegation China will share relevant and strategic information on the implementation of the action with concerned EU actors, and in particular with the EEAS-INTPA-FPI-NEAR Coordination Mechanism, established in HQ to endorse at macro-level the strategic communication and public diplomacy plans developed by the Delegations.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the European Commission may participate in any governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

4.7 Pre-conditions [Only for project modality]

N/A

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the Logframe matrix.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

The implementing partners are responsible for day-to-day monitoring and reporting based on the agreed indicators in the logframe. Indicators shall be disaggregated at least by per gender of participants, type of events and sector of participants. Adjustments to the agreed indicators will be subject to a discussion and approval by the contracting authority. The contracting authority will also be responsible for the approval of reports (interim, final etc.).

All monitoring, evaluation and reporting shall assess how the action is taking into account the gender dimension, and, where applicable, the implementation of the human rights-based approach working principles (applying all human rights for all; meaningful and inclusive participation and access to decision-making; non-discrimination and equality; accountability and rule of law for all; and transparency and access to information supported by disaggregated data).

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance and nature of the action, a mid-term and/or final and/or ex-post evaluation(s) may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

A mid-term evaluation may be carried out for problem solving in order to improve the current action, and for learning purposes, in particular with respect to the approach to EU public and cultural diplomacy to inform the planning of future EU interventions.

A final or ex-post evaluation may be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that the EU public and cultural diplomacy strategy and approach needs to be constantly re-examined along the lines of an oscillating political relationship with the partner country.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 30 days in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

It will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

An Intervention (also generally called project/programme) is the operational entity associated to a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the operational follow-up by the Commission of its external development operations. As such, Interventions constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

Primary Interventions are those contracts or groups of contracts bearing reportable results and respecting the following business rule: ‘a given contract can only contribute to one primary intervention and not more than one’. An individual contract that does not produce direct reportable results and cannot be logically grouped with other result reportable contracts is considered a ‘support entities’. The addition of all primary interventions and support entities is equivalent to the full development portfolio of the Institution.

The present Action identifies as:

Action level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action