



China in Europe Research Network (CHERN) - CA 18215

China's Engagement in European Research, Innovation and Higher Education (CHERN WG4)

Basics

Host Organization: Max Planck Institute for the History of Science

Host Organizations's representative: Dr. Andrea Střelcová

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The tentative length of the STSM: 3-4 weeks

Call's description and objectives

China has become an important global player in science, technology and innovation (STI). It is the world's biggest producer of scientific articles (Tollefson 2018) and the second-biggest research and development (R&D) spender (OECD, 2020). Furthermore, STI is situated at the centre of the national development strategies, incl. the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025), indicating that China wants to become a world leader in STI and a world-class higher education provider.

China's ongoing internationalization of higher education and engagement in global research have been important elements of the country's impressive rise as a science powerhouse. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic and deteriorated geopolitical relationship, China's main source of cooperation partnerships is the USA (Suttmeier, 2014, Lee and Haupt 2020), but engagement with other countries and regions, such as Europe, has also grown (Cai, 2019).

China's involvement in European STI (both at the EU and the Member States level) has flourished through various forms, such as:

- Individual Chinese scientists' networking and co-publishing with their European counterparts,
- Chinese organizations' involvement in Europe's research projects, funded by both EU member states' and EU's Framework Programmes (China is the second biggest source of international participation in FP8, Horizon 2020, after the USA),
- Chinese organizations' penetrating European higher education landscape, e.g. Fudan University's plan to open a campus in Budapest, Hungary (Xinhua 2021),
- China's establishment of joint research centers with European research organisations as well as industry (e.g. Huawei R&D center in Munich, Germany).

China's presence in Europe has been highly visible in the media, such as through the critical debate around Confucius institutes, China's efforts in suppressing academic freedom and supporting "pro-China" academic narratives. Yet, China's growing presence in European research as a phenomenon remains largely under researched in its complexity. The existing information remains scattered due to lack of academic literature, statistical information or available policy briefs. The information is dispersed among individual member states with the overall landscape systematically unmapped. To tackle this existing knowledge gap, this STSM is aimed at developing collaborative efforts between the host and the visiting researcher, with an end goal of a thorough map of China's involvement in EU's higher education, research and innovation.

The STSM will add new, nuanced and critically needed information to the ongoing debate regarding China's engagement in European academia. The goal of the project is to do a scoping study to map the field and prepare the ground for a more in-depth work, that would aim at providing an overview of China's involvement in Europe's higher education and STI, both qualitative and quantitative: Its variety of forms, patterns, its nuances, how and why they are emerging, and what China's strategies and priorities are when approaching different EU member states as well as the EU itself.

Objectives: The collaborative project will lead to a proposal with a goal of uncovering the state of play of Chinese involvement in European research, innovation and higher education *in Europe* – main actors, channels, priorities, challenges, funding. The host, who is a junior researcher as well as a practitioner and expert in the field, is currently carrying out her PhD project regarding Europe-China research *in China*, therefore, this STSM project would be a "mirror" research that would, in the long run, jointly generate a deeper two-way understanding of both China in Europe, and Europe in China. The project will map possible data sources, identify suitable methods and an analytical framework under which a future study would be developed. The result will be a policy brief and, a proposal for future work, with the end goal of a thorough analysis, at the individual, organizational, national and EU levels.

Call's specific requirements

In addition to COST rules (see section "Who is eligible to be an STSM Applicant" in the [STSM BASIC FACTS](#)), the candidate should have:

- Familiarity with China's S&T and higher education architecture,
- Knowledge of research policy,
- Basic methodological toolbox, knowledge of qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches and willingness to explore new pathways for an "immobile" research under the current conditions of ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Results

- Draft proposal for a joint research project
- Short policy brief on China's presence in EU's higher education research and innovation
- Requirements by COST Organization or CHERN Action (for details see section »How does it work?« in the [STSM BASIC FACTS](#)).

Practical details

All applicants must carefully read the [STSM instructions](#) on the CHERN website before applying.

Pandemic restrictions would mean that initial meetings and activities would be done remotely. As restrictions lift, we hope that a visit to Host institution at Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin In Summer or early Autumn 2021 might be possible. The exact dates and timing shall be determined together with the selected applicant.

Deadlines

Deadline for applications to be submitted: **June 5, 2021**

Notification of application outcome: June 20, 2021

Period of STSM: 3 - 4 weeks in Summer or September 2021 (the exact timing will be determined together with the host institution)

Submitting the reports: **within 30 days from the end date**

Accepting/ rejecting the reports: **within 2 weeks** after submission of the report

Execution of the payment of the grant: **within 4 weeks** after submission of the report.

More information

For more information please contact STSM Coordinator Martina Bofulin (martina.bofulin@zrc-sazu.si).