

ICD – Institute for Cultural Diplomacy Europe Meets Russia



“Russia is Europe’s natural ally”ⁱ V. Putin

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Europe Meets Russia

A Forum for Young Leaders, Berlin 1st -9th November 2009

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William Hernád – Program Director

William was born in Paris and has lived in Hungary, France and Scotland. He graduated with a Bachelor and Master's degree in German Civilization and Literature with a special focus on Budapest and the portrayal of the city by German writers. He subsequently studied Business Management, specializing in Finance and Project Management

“Russia cannot be understood with the mind alone,
No ordinary yardstick can span her greatness
She stands alone, unique -
In Russia, one can only believe. »

F. Tyutchevⁱⁱ

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Introduction

Why take part in our seminar?

Build a sustainable international network



The participants of the forum will have the opportunity to build relationships with like-minded individuals from different cultural, academic, and professional backgrounds. This will create a network that will prove invaluable in the future and help the participants in their further academic studies and professional careers. Moreover, the speakers during the week-long program will include leading figures from the fields of academia, politics, business, civil society and the media.

The last EMR Forum, for instance, included:

- Prof. Weisskirchen, spokesman on foreign affairs for the SPD group;
- Mr. Molchanov, third secretary of the foreign policy department at the Russian embassy in Berlin;
- Mr. Von Meyer, Head of the OECD's Berlin center;
- Mr. Nikitin, Head of the Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Germany and a host of many other credible speakers.

Participants and speakers will have a chance to personally meet and interact during the week's various activities.

Following the completion of the week-long program, all participants will be given the opportunity to communicate with each other on the ICD Young Leaders Online Forum, thus making the network sustainable. Membership is restricted only to past participants, and the Online Forum therefore represents the ideal site for gathering support for initiatives from like-minded people across the globe.

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Discover Berlin...

"Berlin is rather a part of the world than a city" Jean Paul, 1800ⁱⁱⁱ



Berlin is, as Bowie described it, a «cultural extravaganza». Politicians, businessmen and artists live side by side; cultures from all over the world interact in their daily lives, and the defiant traces of socialism in the former East Berlin are just a short train journey from the dazzling skyscrapers of Potsdamer Platz. The city has a unique spirit, a spirit shaped by a complex and multi-faceted history. As the capital city of Europe's largest economy, home to several prestigious universities, and a city bubbling with diverse culture and art, Berlin has a lot to offer the participants.

The Forum will allow the participants to get beneath the surface of Berlin's civic, cultural and political scenes. As an established NGO, the ICD is able to offer access to expert speakers and historic locations, providing a truly unique experience of Europe's second largest city.

...On the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Wall.

In 1987 the American President Ronald Reagan stood in front of the Brandenburg Gate and famously demanded "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!". The Wall, however, remained standing until November 9, 1989, when it was famously torn down by its citizens; an image which captivated a world-wide audience. The Berlin Wall stood not only as a physical barrier, but also as a symbolic frontier between the Western and Eastern world. In November 2009 Anniversary celebrations are due to take place, including an open-air exhibition on Alexanderplatz, depicting the events of 1989/90 leading to the collapse. Also, under the banner "Sites of the New Berlin: 20 years of Change", government buildings, foreign embassies, and new city centers will become public *objets d'art* through special projects such as light installations, oversized façade art, and exhibitions. The celebration will pick on the date of the anniversary, on 9th November, with a grand public party at Brandenburg Gate.

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Learn about cultural diplomacy

What is Cultural Diplomacy?

There are numerous ways of understanding Cultural Diplomacy. Joseph S. Nye described it as “a prime example of ‘soft power’”, another being the ability to persuade through culture, value and ideas. As opposed to ‘hard power’, which conquers or coerces through military might.

Here at the ICD, we also understand Cultural Diplomacy as an exchange of cultural values and beliefs at all levels of society and by all actors. Hence, culture serves as a medium through which the understanding of each other’s values can take place. It facilitates exchanges and understanding. We think of those exchanges as contributions to global conflict resolution.

Why do we need cultural diplomacy?

Today, in the Globalization era, the world is shrinking, and the contact between people from different cultures is becoming ever-more frequent. The expansion of the World Wide Web makes it a lot easier to learn about different cultures than ever before. Furthermore, low-cost airlines allow people to travel more than before, thus helping them to meet new people and learn about new cultures. In such circumstances, cultural clashes are inevitable.

Indeed, our actual way of communicating is not flawless. It generates cultural exchanges, but also provides grounds for conflicts and misunderstanding. It is the latter that we strive to solve. We aim at the resolution of conflicts by means of peaceful cooperation, making sure that both sides learn to understand each other, thus leading to a long-term peaceful coexistence.

Cultural Diplomacy is the key to addressing these problems; by creating a constructive dialogue between governments and representatives, it optimizes the inter-cultural relations on an international level. This approach is also supported and complemented by initiatives that raise inter-cultural awareness and understanding at all levels, which help to build support at the grass roots level of society. Cultural diplomacy is an increasingly important tool in today’s environment.



“In order to understand each other and create a tight relationship it is possible to differ from each other, but it must be sure that there is enough common ties and ideas to share.”

R. Schuman *For Europe*, 1950^{vi}

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The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy

The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD) was founded in 1999 in New York. Today located in Berlin, Germany, the ICD aims at meeting the growing demand for cultural diplomacy in an international environment. The institution mainly focuses on research and promotion. The research seeks to enhance the global understanding of cultural diplomacy, the range and diversity of cultural diplomacy initiatives being conducted today, and developments in the field. Moreover, the ICD strives to highlight initiatives in the area of cultural diplomacy throughout its online media service - Cultural Diplomacy News.

Besides research, the ICD has been active in launching bilateral and multilateral programs which help spread the idea of cultural diplomacy in several ways. Firstly, these programs mean to teach the participants about the very essence of cultural diplomacy - especially young leaders and students. Secondly, it aims to establish a true understanding of cultural diplomacy through active participation in debates, seminars and lectures. Finally, the ICD's goal is to support the participants in further realisation of cultural diplomacy skills and to generate far reaching effects on participants and their surrounding communities.



^{vii}Mark Donfried, founder and director of the ICD

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European - Russian Relations Why does it matter?

The specific of today's Europe is the resurgence of diverse "frozen conflicts": from Maghreb, through Cyprus, Balkans, to the post-Soviet countries. Conflicts based on ethnic, religious and territorial differences are frequent and hard to resolve. Trying to find its place, the EU has to take responsibility for what is happening on the continent, in all kinds of areas: political, military, economic, social and cultural. In order to achieve this, it's of paramount importance that the EU seeks to establish and maintain a positive relationship with its neighbouring countries in the East. One of the major examples being Russia, which, do indeed matter.

"Ever since the continents starting interacting politically, some five hundred years ago, Eurasia has been a center of world power."
Zbigniew Brzezinski *The Grand Chessboard*, 1997



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Mutual influences.

The European influence on Russia can be felt in many spheres, particularly in academia and culture. European history is a compulsory subject in Russian schools. Moreover, students usually take up one or more European languages, predominantly English, French or German; European literature is studied in literature classes. European classical and contemporary authors are also among the country's favorites. European influence is not only restricted to language and literature, however, but can also be traced to art and architecture. While designing Saint Petersburg, Peter the Great foresaw his grand plans as being an intended "gateway to Europe". Furthermore, European countries are popular among Russian tourists. In the same way, Russian culture has an undeniable influence on Eastern Europe.

Mutual Politics.

Relations between the two entities have, at times, become strained; however conflicts between the two are a thing of the past. The recent events in Kosovo and Georgia, which have required the use of military force abroad, the importance of territorial sovereignty, and the right to self-determination have shown that old disputes are far from settled. Moreover, the gas disputes of 2008 have shown Europe's dependency on Russian sources, yet its continued reluctance to take part in Russia's internal disputes or conflicts with the transit countries (Ukraine). Furthermore, the level of democracy in the Russian Federation, as perceived by Europe, proves an equally important concern. However, in light of global warming and scarce energy resources, the leaders have no choice but to look forward together and engage in mutual politics.

Culture and Education

Cooperation in the spheres of Culture and Education between Russia and Europe are continuously developing. Russian Universities are now more actively involved in European and International programs and Russian and European students have increasingly more possibilities to learn about each other's cultures. These programs, however, experience setbacks with financing and proper management on both sides.

Some commentators have claimed that those student programs suffer from "passive isolationism" emerging between Russia and Europe, whereby the younger generations of each side have less interest in learning about the cultural values and heritage of the other. With travel throughout Europe increasingly affordable, and the European university system generally supportive of intra-Europe exchanges, there is less motivation for students and the younger generation to grapple with a comparatively expensive and time-consuming Visa application process. Thus, the issue of cultural and student exchanges is two-sided, and both of the problems need to be handled if one is to be solved.



How can we approach it?

The EU and Russia's Relationship: Case studies

1. Cultural Cooperation on the institutional level

The field of cultural cooperation between Russia and the EU is relatively new. However, cultural relations are gaining importance with regard to relations between the two entities altogether. The main objectives of this type of cooperation include promotion of creativity, intensification of inter-cultural dialogues and knowledge of cultural heritage or history.

The EU has launched several programs directed at the establishment of closer cultural ties between the EU and Russia. As a part of the EU-Russia Cooperation Program, an Institution Building Partnership Program (IBPP) was established in 2001. This program supports the intercultural dialogue by sponsoring various cultural events, and promoting innovative and creative projects between Russian and European cultural organizations. It also provides support to civil society organizations in Russia and contributes to the work of the NGOs. Projects that take part in the IBPP are chosen annually via an open call from proposals. The chosen projects have to be in line with the priorities set by the program. These priorities are determined on an annual basis and pursue a goal of prioritizing the most important issues. Since its establishment, over 160 projects have been launched with a budget of over 35 million EUR. In 2008 alone, a total of 2 million EUR was spent on joint EU-Russian cultural projects. These projects will take place in 2009-2010. Amongst these projects are the cultural exchanges, art exhibitions and theater.

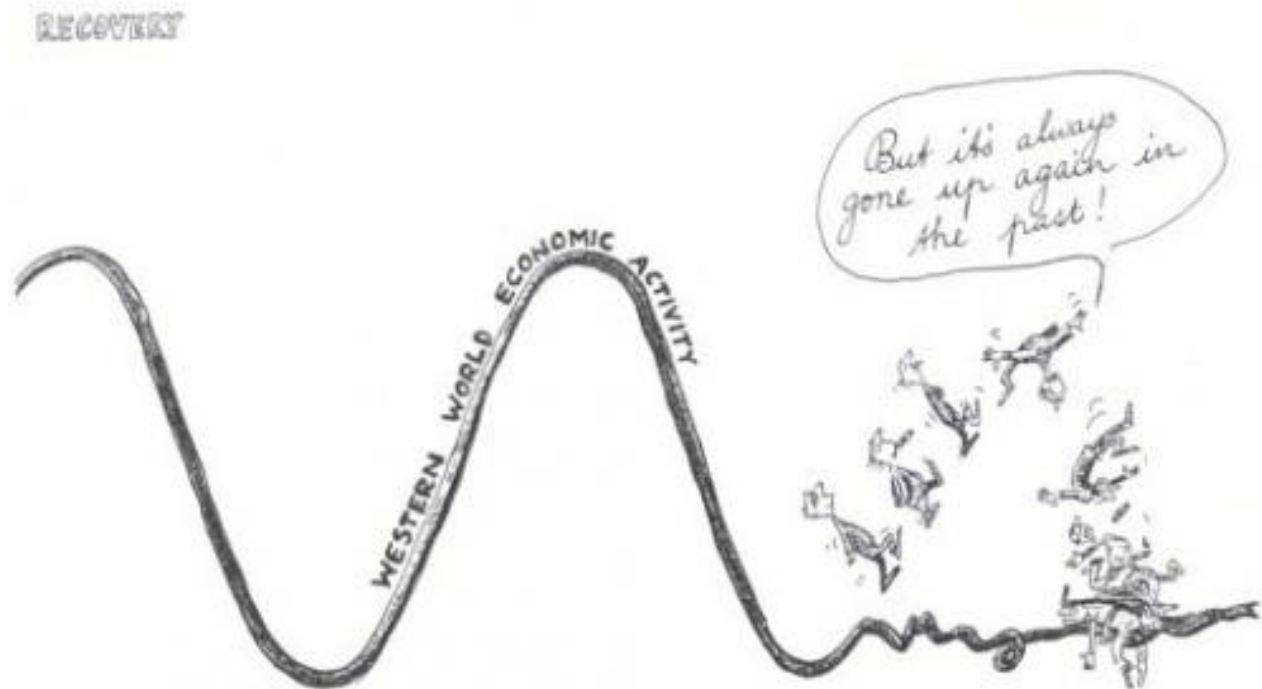
What is more, EU - Russia Joint Working Group on Cultural Cooperation and an EU - Russia Permanent Partnership Council on Culture were established in 2007 to support the essential role of cultural practitioners and civil society. The main goals of this program are: the raising of awareness and lobbying of the authorities on burning issues; to create a public oversight of decision-making and policy-planning concerning various questions; and to establish links between state and non-state actors and civil society organizations from the EU and Russia. Finally, it strives to create networks between like-minded organizations with the purpose of increasing lobbying capacity.

The significance of cultural cooperation between the EU and Russia cannot be underestimated. It not only brings benefit to its participants in terms of learning about each other's culture, but also in terms of better understanding each others' values. Moreover, these programs create and expand a platform for discussion between the authorities and the NGOs - something that is very important in fostering support for the civil society. Furthermore, funds directed at the establishment of networks and activities aimed at the exchange of information, benefit not only the participants, but also indirectly support the idea of a strong Russian civil society. All of these activities positively affect the status of the relationship between EU and Russia and prevent the emergence of conflicts in cultural and other spheres of cooperation.

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2. The role of the financial crisis in the relations between Europe and Russia



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For the past several months the main newspapers and news networks have been tracking the global financial crisis, which has impacted upon economies worldwide. Undoubtedly, the crisis has created more losers than winners. So far, the EU could be dubbed a relative “winner”, as its economy has not been hit as severely as, for example, its American counterpart. Conversely, the Russian economy has certainly suffered from the financial slump, especially due to a fall in the price of oil. While it is possible to only consider the disadvantages that result from this crisis, it is much more beneficial for us to take a look at the opportunities that it creates.

One of the potential benefits that Russia and EU can gain from the current situation is an impetus for deeper and more thorough cooperation. This concerns not only the field of economics and finance, but also politics, security and energy. However, there is a lot of adjustments and new institutions needed in order for such cooperation to take place on a higher level.

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A Russia-EU Summit took place in May 2009 in the Russian city of Khabarovsk, where leaders of the EU met with the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. One of the most important issues discussed during the summit was the current state of the world economy, as well as the actions that both entities can undertake to improve the current state of affairs. Both sides agreed that certainly there is a need for cooperation in combating the consequences of the crisis. Moreover, it was generally agreed that there is a need for the establishment of a new international financial system, a new and improved Bretton Woods.

In light of the crisis, world leaders have been made even more aware of the greater interdependency between nations. In terms of Russian-EU relations, Russia is the EU's third largest trading partner, especially with regard to oil and gas supplies this interdependence is especially prominent. The EU is the largest market for Russian exports, and therefore, the response of each entity to the financial crisis will inevitably have an effect not only on the country itself, but also on its trading partners. It is essential to find a common path to deal with the crisis and its aftermath. It is only through cooperation, not isolation, that Russia and the EU can establish solid grounds for further development of business ties.

Thus, the financial crisis creates an opportunity for the Russian government to reorganize and modernize its economy and create a new set of institutions and infrastructure for faster financial transaction. As such, while the financial slump has certainly had a harmful effect on the economies of many countries, in the same breath it has also led to an evaluation of the way the economies are conducted and how they can be improved upon.





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3. Petersburg Dialogue - the vast potential for a deeper cooperation on multiple levels

On a national level, there exists a variety of bilateral initiatives which aim to increase the frequency and intensity of discussions between members of the EU on one side and Russia on the other. One of such initiatives is the Petersburg Dialogue, which was organized under the supervision of Vladimir Putin and Gerhard Schröder in 2001.

The Petersburg Dialogue is an open forum which aims to deepen the bilateral relations between Germany and Russia, improve cooperation on different levels, contribute to the political and cultural development of both countries, and attempt to create a new role for Russia in the EU. Its primary aim is to stimulate the cultural exchange between the German and Russian civil societies. Despite its political origin, the program carries a function of a cultural catalyst and primarily targets culture as its sphere of influence rather than politics. This Dialogue is an open panel for discussion of a variety of issues, including political, social, cultural, educational, health, economic and many others. The participants of the program are the political and cultural elites from Germany and Russia. They include spokesmen from different spheres such as science, economics, education, mass media, politics and culture. Organizers of the Dialogue also invite young ambitious leaders from both countries to join the meetings to have their say and to share the ideas which they feel to be the most pertinent.

As mentioned above, this program carries a cultural message, yet its coordinators include some of the most prominent political leaders from both countries - the ex-president of the USSR Michail S. Gorbachev and ex-prime minister of the GDR Lothar de Maizière. Other members of the committee include the most prominent members of political and cultural spheres, among them – Michail B. Piotrovsky, Valery A. Gergiev, Klaus Mangold, and Martin Hoffmann. Given the portfolio of the organizers of the Dialogue, its significance cannot be underestimated. The funding of the program is coordinated by the ministries of Foreign Affairs of both countries and various funds who support the idea of closer cooperation between the two countries.

The Petersburg Dialogue is an annual event which takes place both in Germany and Russia. Leaders of both countries are usually present for the discussions. The Forum itself consists of eight working groups and one plenary discussion group. At the Dialogue that took place in 2007 in Germany, several issues concerning the significance of Russia on the EU agenda were discussed. The Petersburg Dialogue does not solely focus on the German-Russian bilateral relations, but also attempts to shed more light on the challenges in the EU-Russian cooperation.

In relation to cultural diplomacy, the Petersburg Dialogue carries a great value, because it represents an organization which does not only concern itself with the political problems, but also with the problems of civil society and tries to change the perception each country holds of the other, which in fact is often biased. In light of the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, it is especially important to realize how these relations have changed and to understand that there is no longer a war between the East and the West, but that currently there is need for serious and genuine understanding and cooperation from both sides.

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“Europe meets Russia, a forum for young leaders” EMR November 2009 – Themes and structure

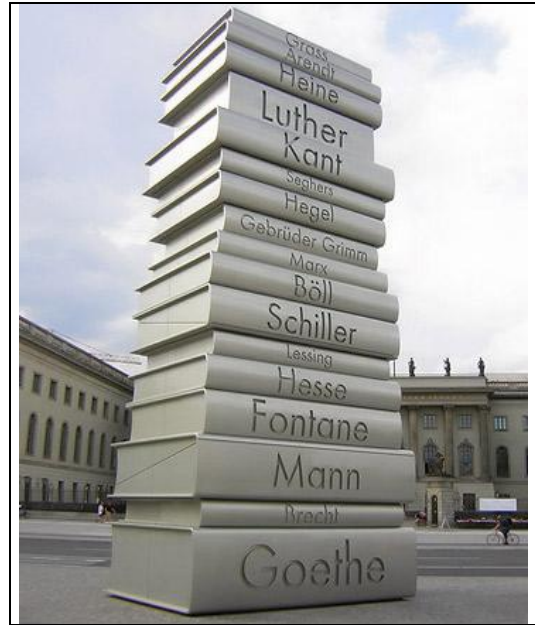


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Program Overview

Europe Meets Russia: a Forum for Young Leaders wishes to explore the cultural side of the existing problems between the two entities and examine what has already been done and what improvements have been achieved. Believing that Cultural Diplomacy is one of the tools which can solve and prevent not only cultural, but also political and military conflicts, and that it can help to lay down a solid foundation for further relations between Europe and Russia, the EMR Forum seeks to apply the notion of Cultural Diplomacy in the context of the Russian-European relations, because it can create sustainable intercultural relations within Europe based on dialogue, understanding and trust.



The EMR Forum intends to bring together young, ambitious and active people from Europe, Russia and all over the world in order to...

- ✓ ...make them understand the very essence of Cultural Diplomacy and its significance,
- ✓ ...enable them to exchange experience and ideas, and gain something new,
- ✓ ...receive incentives to improve the current state of affairs.

The EMR forum takes place several times a year. The November edition commemorates the twentieth anniversary of the Berlin Wall. Twenty years ago the bi-polar world trembled down and paved the way to a new multi-polar world. Therefore, we wish to highlight the importance of this day by dedicating the EMR forum to the anniversary. All of the Forum activities will be related to the change after the fall of the Wall and the need for cooperation between Russia and the EU for mutual development of both entities.

In the context of the overarching topic of the Forum, we aim to explore the current problems in relations between Europe and Russia, and also focus on some particular examples - such as Germany. Within the framework of cultural diplomacy some of the following topics will be discussed at the EMR - the relations between Russia and Europe and challenges regarding contemporary relations between both entities. Special attention will be paid to the tools that are used by both entities to deal with the financial crisis; cooperation in the field of art and education and other related issues. Furthermore, participants will be given the opportunity to participate in several workshops, which are designed to enhance the understanding of cultural diplomacy in the context of Russian-European relations.



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The Forum structure

The EMR Forum is designed in a way to bring an insight into the problems of Cultural Diplomacy and examples of its application through theoretical and practical means. The Forum consists of lectures, discussions, seminars and workshops. Thus we are hoping to give a multidimensional understanding of problems and its possible solutions. The speakers who participate in the Forum come from a wide range of backgrounds – they are politicians, journalists, academics, artists etc. We stress the importance of active participation and encourage our participants to take active part in discussions, raise questions and express their opinions.

Seminars

A range of seminars will be held during the week that will inform the participants about a particular element of cultural diplomacy and how it manifests itself in the Russian-European bilateral relationship. Speakers at the seminars will include leading figures from the business, political, academic, diplomatic, nongovernmental, sport, art and media sectors.

Workshops

Workshops are a necessary accompaniment to seminars for three reasons. Firstly, they offer the participants the opportunity to take part in structured discussions on the subjects they have learned about in the seminars. Secondly, they allow the Young Leaders to learn from each other; each Young Leader will have an experience and perspective that is unique to them. Finally, the group discussions in these workshops help the Young Leaders to learn about their respective backgrounds, develop personal networks, and plan potential leadership initiatives to take place after the Forum.

Podium Discussions

The week-long Forum will include high profile podium discussions, where a speaker, or panel of speakers, will discuss a relevant topic in front of a larger audience (including the Young Leaders). The purpose of these events is not only to give the participants more exposure to expert speakers, but also to raise awareness for the program in general, giving other stakeholders the opportunity to learn more about the Forum, and allowing the Young Leaders to expand their networks.

The Locations

The locations for the forum will include the German parliament, the German Foreign Office and the Berlin Town Hall. The Forum will also include a number of historical and cultural excursions that will allow participants the chance to discover more about Berlin. Guided tours to focal points of inter-cultural dialogue will be complemented by behind-the-scenes visits to institutions, group dinners, and ICD-organized parties, taking the participants to the heart of Berlin's musical, artistic, and cultural scenes.



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Who is it for?

Europe Meets Russia (EMR) not only invites students and young leaders from Europe and Russia, but also from the rest of the world. We aim to create a truly international and diverse group of participants. We believe that diversity of opinions contributes to more interesting, fruitful and challenging discussions. We do, however, require our participants to have genuine interest and some knowledge of the issues.

In order to apply for the EMR Forum, you have to submit your application through the website. All of the applications will be reviewed by the selection committee. Once you have been accepted, we will ask you to pay the participation fee of 195 Euro. This fee includes admission to all the lectures, seminars and workshops planned for the Forum. However, it does not include transportation, accommodation or meals. Please note, that unless you paid the participation fee, we cannot guarantee you a spot at the Forum. If you have any questions concerning the forum, please contact us via e-mail: emr@culturaldiplomacy.org

Gain on your CV

Upon completion of the week-long program, all forum participants will be awarded with an official ICD certificate detailing the activities of the week and attended conferences. This certificate is official and professionally recognised by all the members of the ICD advisory board, which include academic staff from Colombia university, Georgetown university, Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt Universität as well as other ICD partners. It proves a valuable compliment to any CV.

Take Leadership Initiatives

A group of ambitious young leaders can have a significant positive impact on intercultural relations between the cultural groups involved. The Young Leaders are therefore asked to develop their own leadership initiatives to contribute to improving inter-cultural relations and understanding. To facilitate this, the ICD will provide an information dossier containing the necessary materials and support for participants to develop and execute these initiatives. This dossier includes a framework on how to develop a concept for an initiative, contact and win the support of potential stakeholders, obtain financial support, develop a successful marketing strategy, and partner with governments and local officials.

Participants will have the opportunity to present their initiatives to a wider audience at the ICD's annual International Symposium on Cultural Diplomacy, featuring alumni from other ICD Forums and events.

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Publish case studies

Participants will have the opportunity to contribute an article to the forthcoming ICD publication “Case Studies in Cultural Diplomacy”, scheduled for publication in 2009. Articles can be based on personal experience, and/or an issue relevant to the participant’s home country. The publication will allow academics and practitioners to evaluate previous examples of cultural diplomacy and establish good practice guidelines.



The Forum is much more than week-long program. It is a unique opportunity to become part of a sustainable network of individuals with common interests and to use knowledge and ideas gained from experts to establish future initiatives that will have a meaningful impact on intercultural relations.

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