

New Perspectives to Cultural Diplomacy in Cold War Europe (Turku, 6–7 Jun 24)

University of Turku, Finland, Jun 6–07, 2024

Deadline: Apr 2, 2024

Maija Koskinen

Past the Divide and Beyond: New Perspectives to Cultural Diplomacy in Cold War Europe.

Cultural diplomacy during the Cold War years is a field of research that has attracted increasing attention in the last two decades. Recent research has indicated that culture, defined in this context as art and language as well as perceptions and worldviews, played a central role in the broader Cold War struggle. In addition to military and economic power, the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, and the social systems they represented, competed for cultural hegemony. What was characteristic of the entire Cold War era was how strongly the superpowers aimed to influence not only their citizens but also people throughout the world through cultural and informational methods.

The two-day workshop Past the Divide and Beyond: New Perspectives to Cultural Diplomacy in Cold War Europe, held on 6–7 June 2024, at the University of Turku, Finland warmly welcomes historians and scholars from other related fields to examine the manifold connections between culture and politics during the Cold War. The workshop aims to approach these connections through the following questions:

- How were various cultural fields (for instance, music, visual art, film, theatre, literature, media, and language teaching) harnessed into political use?
- What kind of messages were conveyed through culture and what methods were used to do this?
- What kind of networks were formed between cultural actors, politicians, and representatives of governmental organisations?

We are also interested in hearing about new methodological approaches/initiatives for studying the connections between culture and politics.

The workshop focuses mostly on cultural diplomacy in Europe during the Cold War. Still, we also wish to encourage scholars to explore how culture is used for political purposes in today's world and assess the long-term impacts of structures and conceptions formed in the Cold War era.

We call for papers examining and exploring various aspects of cultural diplomacy in Cold War Europe. The papers can range from individual case studies to methodological considerations.

The deadline for submitting an abstract (max. 250 words) is 2 April 2024, and notification of acceptance will be sent on 15 April 2024. Proposals for papers of 20 minutes duration + a short

CV should be submitted to: marek.fields@utu.fi and maiya.k.koskinen@utu.fi

The accepted papers will be circulated among the participants before the workshop.

Confirmed keynote speakers:

Rósa Magnúsdóttir, Professor, University of Iceland

Kristian Handberg, Assistant Professor, University of Copenhagen

The workshop is organized by The Mission Finland – Cold War Cultural Diplomacy at the Crossroads of East and West project sponsored by the Research Council of Finland and the University of Turku. <https://missionfinland.utu.fi/en/>

Reference:

CFP: New Perspectives to Cultural Diplomacy in Cold War Europe (Turku, 6-7 Jun 24). In: Arthist.net, Feb 23, 2024 (accessed Sep 17, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/41305>>.