**FAQ**

**Q: What is the application procedure?**

**A:** The first question you need to ask yourself is if you want to participate in the general program or the program that focuses on climate change and low-carbon development.

If applying for the climate change & low-carbon development program please specify in the email subject. (“Focus Climate Change - Application for the EU-China NGO Twinning”).

There are two types of documents. One if you apply jointly with a Chinese/European partner organisation and one if you want to apply on your own.

After the deadline, all of the applications will be reviewed over a number of weeks. For joint applications, the main criteria are the compatibility of your organisations, the content and relevance of your application and work plan. In regard to single applications submitted, it will also depend on the compatibility of your organisation with the program objectives as well as the potential to successfully join up with another single application submitted by Chinese/European organisations.

After a meeting of the selection committee, we will inform you as soon as possible on the decision made.

**Q: What is the working language of the program?**

A: The participants are expected to work and communicate through English.

It is perfectly o.k. if the working language in the organization is not English, as long as some colleagues can speak English. The exchange fellow will probably be the main contact person for the participant from the other region. We aim to avoid situations in which the European or Chinese participant cannot communicate at all with the colleagues in the host organization.

**Q: When will it be certain if I can go?**

**Single Applications:**

If you would like to apply and do not yet have an exchange partner organization in the respective other region we can assist in finding a suitable twinning organization, based on our extensive database and the potential for compatibility between your organizations and work plans.   
For the search for a suitable partner organization we need a detailed description of your organization’s work and projects.

You will be provided with suggestions on potential partner organizations (either single applicants from the respective other region or based on our data base) and their contact details. You will be asked to contact the suggested organizations in your own capacity, ask them if they are interested in the exchange and work out the application and topic for exchange in cooperation with them. If/when you agree together on your cooperation you must notify the program coordinators. You will then be asked to hand in a joint application based on the content of your single applications and chosen working areas. Your refined application will be then considered by the selection committee.

**Joint Applications:** You will be notified within a short time frame after the application deadline and the meeting of the selection committee[[1]](#footnote-1).

**Q: How are the Visa applications arranged?**

**A:**

**European Participants:** You need to apply for your own Visa in the Visa centre of your home country. This is not always at the Chinese Embassy as they made a separate service for this.

Check this website for further details: http://www.visaforchina.org/

You will be given an invitation letter by our Chinese colleagues. This will make the process a lot shorter and easier. So we would advise you to wait with your Visa request until you get the invitation letter.

**Chinese Participants:**

You will need to apply for a Schengen Visa in the visa centre of the European country’s embassy you are going to.   
Exception: The UK, Ireland, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania are not part of the Schengen area and thus have separate requirements for visa applications.   
You will be given an invitation letter by your European partner organization, and if needed an additional letter confirming that you are participating in the exchange program. Please make yourself familiar with the respective country’s visa requirements, and consult with your European partner before scheduling a visa interview with the visa issuing institutions.

Should any questions occur regarding the invitation letter or visa application, please consult with the organizers.

**Q: Do I need to look for housing in advance of travelling?**

**A:** Your host organization should arrange the housing for you, or at a minimum, assist you in finding accommodation. However, participants need to ensure this and communicate regularly with their host organizations.

**Q: How are the finances organised?**

**A:** There is a general budget that you can use for your general expenses such as food, local transport and housing. Regardless of your length of travel, the daily living expense, including accommodation is €40 per day.   
There is a different budget for your insurance and visa and one for international and domestic travel. The costs of the joint workshops (including travel) are covered by the coordinating organisations in Europe and China.

**Q: Is there a budget for insurance?**

**A:** There is a budget for insurance so you don’t have to pay for it yourself but you are expected to organise your own insurance. Therefore, we recommend that you check with your employer which kind of insurance you already have and whether it is enough for your travel to China/Europe.

**Q: What do I need to do when the visiting exchange fellow comes to my organisation?**

**A:** There are a number of things you will need to do when your exchange person comes to your organisation.

First of all you are expected to arrange housing for your exchange person, just like they will do for you. Keep in mind that it must fit within the budget.

Participating organizations should also ensure that a desk, PC and telephone are available for use, and that there is human resource support for the colleague.

When making your application you need to produce a joint work plan. Take this opportunity to think in advance what you can do together with your exchange partner. The main objective of the program is to learn from each other. So we would encourage to do so as much as possible.

**Q: Will I need to provide any documentation of my work & experience while on exchange?**

**A:** Yes. Together with your partner you will be expected to do light documentation of what you are working on and identify key areas of convergence and divergence between European and Chinese policy processes and decision-making. The final product should be provided to the organizers within six weeks after the exchange finishes.The aim for this is to further identify how groups can increase collaboration based on what you have learned and gained during the exchange.

**Q: Is it possible for individuals to apply?**

A: Please note that we can NOT accept applications from individuals. The program is designed to establish or strengthen partnerships between organizations, so the fellows and the organization they are working for have to apply together. Also, the participating organization would have to receive a member of staff of the partner organization and provide an English-speaking working environment

**Please remember the following tips when making your application:**It is important to be as clear and comprehensive as possible in your application to ensure that the decisions can be made efficiently.

• compatibility of the Twinning organizations (does is make sense to pair the two organizations up, is there a future for long-term partnership/common projects between the two organizations),

• quality of the work plans (Are the visiting exchange fellow’s tasks reasonably designed, can the exchange fellow’s work contribute to the advancement of the host/his own organization’s work, are there networking/training events scheduled for her/him)

• experience and qualification (does the applicant have enough working experience/is he familiar with the thematic focuses of the organization)

• infrastructure (can the organizations provide a work space for the visiting participant for the period of exchange, can they integrate the visiting participant into their daily work).

language (is there someone at the organization who can communicate with the exchange fellow in English, does the participant know enough English to communicate at work in English.)

1. Please note, the decision process can take longer than expected depending on the number of applications and in the circumstance of unexpected changes among applicants. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)