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To the attention of PONT seminar and training participants:

Call for applications to TEPSA's Pre-Presidency Conference

In the spirit of the [PONT](#) (Professional Training on EU Affairs) project, which aims at providing a bridge connecting young researchers and EU practitioners, we are pleased to announce that we have launched a **call for applications to enable you to actively participate in TEPSA's Pre-Presidency Conference**.

If selected, you will be able to participate in the conference having your travel (up to 325€) and one night of accommodation covered and to **speak at an expert panel presenting your view on the most pressing challenges and priorities within a range of selected topics for the next Council Presidency**.

TEPSA's Pre-Presidency Conferences

The [Pre-Presidency Conferences](#) (PPCs) are [TEPSA's](#) flagship activity. They take place **twice a year** in the capital of the country holding the **Presidency of the Council of the EU** prior to the beginning of its mandate. The next TEPSA Pre-Presidency Conference will take place in **Tallinn, Estonia, on 15-16 June 2017**, and will be hosted by the [Estonian Foreign Policy Institute](#).

The main aim of TEPSA's Pre-Presidency Conferences is to bring together **academics and researchers from the broad TEPSA network, policy-makers, the media and civil society** in order to discuss the agenda and challenges of the upcoming Council Presidencies. TEPSA Pre-Presidency conferences represent a major platform for communication and exchange between policy-makers and academia.

Prior to the event, TEPSA researchers formulate **recommendations** to be presented to high-level officials of the government concerned in a plenary session. Moreover, the conferences actively involve civil society and media actors, who are able to interact with practitioners and academia. Finally, the insights gained during these conferences and seminars directly feed into **future research on the EU** and into **EU policy making**. Thanks to their genuinely European and transnational nature and to the involvement of civil society, TEPSA's Pre-Presidency conferences actively contribute to **shaping a European public sphere**.

The role of PONT participants in the PPC

The participation of PONT participants in TEPSA's Pre-Presidency Conferences serves to **deepen and widen the perspectives and the learning effect of the young researchers** involved in the Working



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Europe Seminars and the Career Skills Training. Participants of the Working Europe Seminars and the Career Skills Training are invited to participate in the TEPSA Pre-Presidency Conference with a threefold aim. Participation in the conference **broadens their network** to senior academics and policy-makers; it **confronts them with views on topical EU issues** as seen from different EU member states; and enables them **to practice the skills** acquired during the training.

The selected PONT participants will be invited to **hold a brief speech during one of the panels, presenting their view on upcoming challenges and recommend which should be the main priorities in the following six months.** The speech will have to tackle a policy issue falling under one of the following topics:

- I. Security and defence cooperation,
- II. Digital single market and competitiveness,
- III. The EU's Neighbourhood (esp. Eastern Partnership & Russia),
- IV. Brexit and the populist challenge.

Their written contribution will further be taken into consideration in the drafting of the TEPSA recommendations to the upcoming Council Presidency.

PONT participants will also be asked to **act as rapporteurs** for the panels, summarizing the main findings for the PPC report.

Application process

Two participants will be selected by a review committee.

To apply please send 1) your CV; 2) a 2-3 pages long policy paper dealing with any issue falling under one of the panel topics to pont@tepsa.eu by **Sunday 7 May 2017**.

Applicants will be informed of the decision of the review committee by 12 May 2017.

Travel and accommodation

The PPC will take place in Tallinn, Estonia, kicking off at 12.30 on Thursday 15 June and ending at 13.30 on Friday 16 June 2017.

One night accommodation will be provided by the hosting institution, whilst participants will have to arrange their travel themselves, with up to 325€ being reimbursed upon presentation of original travel documents.

For further details please contact anja.palm@tepsa.eu