Confédération Européenne des Centres de Langues dans l'Enseignement Supérieur
European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education
Europäischer Verband der Hochschulsprachenzentren

Le Président
The President
Der Präsident

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CercleS Executive Committee Meeting No 51
23 January 2024: 16:30-18:00 on MS Teams

Minutes

- **Approval of EC minutes No 50 / Update on action points (See minutes no 50)**

Update from President

(former minutes – kept for the record)

a. XVII CercleS Conference (minutes of last EC meeting and updates)

Mark has signed the agreement between AULC and CercleS and sent it to Sabina.

- **Scientific Committee**

  Currently, there are 20 reviewers and organisers anticipate 6-8 papers per reviewer. Most reviewers are from Durham and reflect the language diversity of the conference. Sabina is a reviewer as CercleS representative, but on the list is space for 2 more reviewers from CercleS (the EC or the wider community).
  EC reviewers: Sabina, Anne, Carmen

- **Call for Papers:**

  CfP available in AR, CH, DE, EN, ES, FR, and IT
  At this stage, the 7 conference languages are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Italian and Spanish, but one may be dropped depending on abstracts received.

- **Keynotes – update sent by email on 18 December 2023**

  1. Cross-Government Languages Group – *The importance of a multilingual approach to the business of the UK Government* (a strategic cross-departmental group linked to Civil Service Languages Network - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk))
  2. Professor Olaf Zawacki-Richter, Dean of the Faculty of Education and Social Sciences and Director of the Center for Open Education Research (COER), Universität Oldenburg – *Results of an updated (2023) systematic review of research on artificial intelligence applications in higher education* (Dr. Olaf Zawacki-Richter // Universität Oldenburg (uol.de))
  3. Professor John O'Regan, Vice-Dean (International), University College London - *Global English, political economy, and linguistic ideologies* (John O'Regan Profile | University College London (ucl.ac.uk))
  4. Professor Manuela María Guilherme, Centro de Estudos Sociais, Universidade de Coimbra - *Global debates, local challenges: interculturally responsible academia* (Maria Manuela Guilherme (uc.pt))

  The titles are of course provisional, as is the running order. Professor Zawacki-Richter's address will be given in **German**, with interpreting available into the other languages of the conference. Professor Guilherme's address will be in either **Spanish** or English. Other keynote talks will be delivered in English, with interpreting available. The chair of the cross-Government Languages Group is coordinating possibly two speakers to talk about different examples of work across two different arms of UK Government (possibly Foreign Affairs and Health). Due to uncertainties that exist in scheduling and availability, names will therefore be confirmed in due course.

- **Programme format**

  Conference Thursday 12 to Saturday 14 September 2024
  Wednesday 11 September
  - EC meeting (TBC) and CC meeting (14:00-17:00)
  - Lunch for those who arrive on Wednesday
  - Dinner for members of EC and CC

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Thursday 12 September

- **Morning**: Focus Group meetings. Mark will write to the FG coordinators this week.
- Lunch for FG participants
- Registration desk opens on Thursday morning
- **Afternoon**: conference starts at 13:00
- Opening ceremony, first keynote, parallel sessions
- **Evening**: welcome reception at Durham Castle

Friday 13 September

- Morning: second keynote, parallel sessions
- Afternoon: third keynote and parallel sessions
- CercleS General Meeting (will be hybrid) + Handover ceremony
- Conference dinner at a hotel (transport to be arranged)

Saturday 14 September

- Morning: fourth keynote, parallel sessions
- Handover meeting Executive Committee
- Closing ceremony
- Lunch
- Post-conference trip to Beamish open-air museum

○ **Budget: according to approval by Coordinating Committee:**

a) Sponsoring of Cercles **Conference fee** (100 EUR x 200) = **20,000 EUR**
b) sponsoring of Cercles **travel fees** (80 EUR x 20) 1,600.00 EUR

Budget defined at EC meeting:

€10 000,00 support from CercleS matched by €2 500,00 from AULC.

Comments:

- This also assumes £10 000 of external sponsorship secured by Durham University/AULC. We are working on a similar level of attendance as Porto (250-300 registrations). Durham University staff will be allowed to register without charge, costs underwritten by Durham University.
- The budget rates at present do not include an allowance for online registration. We do plan to have online registration, and if we have 150 online registrations across the conference, we can reduce the required contribution by >€5 000.
- Any additional supported places scheme (e.g. bursaries) to attend the conference are not included.
- In practice (and mainly stated here to reassure AULC colleagues), Durham will underwrite the conference, and will not request financial underwriting by AULC. Indeed some if not all of the AULC contributions will themselves also be met by sponsorship and exhibitor packages.
- Durham will also need to underwrite exchange rate loss and fluctuations. We will charge delegates from outside the UK in Euros, and delegates from within the UK in Pounds. Current rate: 0.88=€1.00/£1.00=€1.14.

○ **Travelling subsidy: 100 subsidies at 100 euros**

- Practicalities? Receiving and processing all the requests. Taxes?
- It seems that only in Spain would taxes have to be paid on a subsidy. We can offer the subsidy, and those who choose to make use of it can do so.
- There will not be further conference scholarships, as the central subsidy of registration fees and travel subsidy are already offered.
- Scholarship information to be published on CercleS website when conference registration opens in February. We should create a form to accompany the applications. The first deadline for applications will be at the end of February. Thereafter we will consider the incoming applications each month.
- Members should send their documents (quotes, proof of payment, form) to the General Secretariat. We will offer 100 subsidies on a first-come, first-served basis.

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- → Zaan created a Google form to be used when applying for the subsidy.
- https://forms.gle/sM48GyhH5azBW63B8 ==> to be sent as a refund once people have registered (proof of registration for the conference) to be announced when registration is announced.
- → Zaan sent Mark a text for the website advertising the subsidy and a link to the form.

○ **Travel plans EC?**

→ Sabina: from Paris Est to London: 8.52 Strasbourg, 10.38 Paris Est, 12.12 Paris-Nord Eurostar, 13.30 London St.- Pancras Eurostar, London's King Cross – Durham (3h): no schedule found yet; option to fly to London and take train from there to Durham

→ Anne (tentative): Nancy 8h16, Paris Est: 9h48, Paris Nord Eurostar: 11h12, London St Pancras International 12h30, London's King Cross – Durham (2h55) 16h25.

Hotels /recommendation by Mark: → *Decision about the hotel*

- **Radisson Blu** (1.8 km / 20-25 minute walk to the conference venue)
  £139.00/night B&B for sole occupancy
  £149.00/night B&B for twin / double occupancy
- **Marriott** (1 km / 10-15 minute walk to the conference venue)
  £156.00/night B&B for sole occupancy
  £166.00/night B&B for twin / double occupancy

→ Inform Mark about choices and ask for reservation; they should send us the link to confirm the booking through payment. (**Zaan** to confirm with Mark reservation for 8 rooms at the Mariott.)

Current details on travel and accommodation for the conference can be viewed on our CercleS 2024 conference website: Travel and Accommodation - Durham University, including links to hotel information and flight options. There is University College accommodation also available at £63.00/night p/p B&B at Collingwood College for those on a budget.

→ *Registration will open on 1 March (as per website)*

b. Meetups 2024:

Leadership Meetups run by Leadership & Management Focus Group
Host: Tom, Chair: Mark Critchley

Feedback on Meetup of 16 January , 17:00-18:00 CET (Supporting staff appraisal and development)
There were only 3 participants – is it the question posed at the session, a busy time of year, other reasons?
Carmenne Kalyaniwala said that she is a website subcriber, but does not get the newsletters. **Zaan** to follow up why some people do not receive them.

Outlook:

20 February 2024	Future-proofing classroom-based language teaching
26 March 2024	Research in Language Centres
14 May 2024	Languages, politics and social justice: the role of Language Centres
25 June 2024	Income generation (backup host needed)

Teachers' meetups, 17:00-18:00 CET
Host: Tom, Chair: Tom
Tom to promote it by contact list of those who have previously attended.

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Outlook:

30 January	Resource catalogues in language centres. Ariana Mamoli & Anne Chateau to present. We can invite self-access centres to share a few slides about what they do.
12 March	
16 April	
28 May	

Anne will be doing an online presentation for Chaya's colleagues on the topic of autonomy/ autonomisation, its theoretical framework and with focus on a concrete example...

c. Webinars and trainings 2024

Webinars/Workshops for 2024: January / February – July

The following CercleS online talks/webinars have been scheduled for the first part of the year:

Thursday 14 March: Speed dating event (16:00-17:30 CET)
An event for CercleS members interested in COIL (collaborative online international learning) to find partners for collaboration
→ *Call and invitation to be sent to presenters of the COIL webinar, asking them to help answer questions from participants. They can start the session by making a few remarks about the projects they are involved in.*
→ *We should also invite the participants of the COIL webinar.*
→ Provide a link to the YouTube webinar that people can watch for background about what COIL is.
→ Invite people with specific questions: Do you have an idea for a COIL project? Are you just starting out and need some ideas? Are you looking for colleagues to collaborate with? Are you looking for colleagues from a specific country? Have you been involved in a COIL project before and you have some suggestions or words of advice?
→ Call to be shared in the next newsletter. (**Zaan** to draft the call.)

Thursday 25 April: AI webinar (16:00-17:30 CET)
A webinar on the topic of AI in language education in HE

Call for presenters for CercleS webinar/workshop: AI language models in the classroom (January Newsletter 2024):

One of our most-watched CercleS webinars this past year was the one about machine translation. This, within the context of the rapid development of artificial intelligence language models, and the discussion it generated about the use of AI in the classroom, made us realise that issues around machine learning in education are very relevant to our members. We would therefore like to offer a webinar or workshop on this topic in 2024.

We would like to ask members who are currently using AI, AI language models, machine learning, and other similar tools in the classroom to present or co-present a webinar or workshop on this topic. Perhaps you have examples of best practices or success stories, or cautionary tales, or you are just embarking on the journey of this kind of technology in the classroom. We would love to hear about your experiences, and we would like to create a platform where the CercleS community can learn from each other.

Responses to call:
Marta Demchyshyn, Centre for Modern Foreign Languages, UCU, Ukraine:

I have been actively using **Chat GPT, Claude and Bard** for some time now and I could share why they are amazing tools enhancing my students' results and decreasing the amount of time I spend preparing for classes. I use AI tools to create texts using particular vocabulary, as well as various types of tasks: gap fill, choosing

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headings, multiple choice questions, etc. AI tools are helpful in teaching registers, proverbs, idioms, poems. You can easily create games and role plays to promote fluency in your students, make tests and questionnaires, and my favourite part – brainstorming questions and topics for discussions, helping with broadening themes from textbooks. I think students are more engaged and motivated when using modern technologies in and off class and for me, as a teacher, they are a valuable supplement to traditional teaching methods. So, I would appreciate the opportunity to participate in a workshop or webinar on AI tools in teaching.

Suggestion by Sabina / **Carmen** to ask Prof. Cesare Zanca (Head of the University Language Centre Università degli Studi di Siena, Italy)

Zaan to reply to Marta that we ask her to keep the day open and that we are looking for more speakers.

Further responses / reminder needed?
Share another reminder in the next newsletter. Specify that it is an opportunity to share best practice and does not have to be an authoritative instruction of how to do it. (**Zaan**)

Thursday 30 May: LLHE webinar 16:00-18:00 CET
In conversation with the authors whose articles were published in LLHE (Oct 2023)

Prepare a new list of CercleS talks on Teams for 2024 → define hosts and chairs

d. Follow-up of discussion at CC meeting: Exchange among National Associations on opportunities and measures:

Summary of main points
We will try to mobilise the Focus Groups again and ask them for schedules. ➔ **Anne** to ask the FG coordinators to give a short feedback of what has happened and what they are planning for the year. We will publish these in the next newsletter to encourage people to join the FGs. We should also ask FG coordinators to also let us know if they want to use the 1500 euro for FG meetings for the meetings before the conference.

- We shall continue offering our activities and keep promoting them and involve more people in the promotion. ➔ CercleS communication is appreciated. Just keep promoting the activities in a clear and regular way – not more promotion.
- We need to design the CercleS prize(s): target group, focus, promotion and assessment
  Focus on posters – perhaps award one poster with a CercleS prize (criteria to be decided – discuss with Mark). The conference organisers will also present 3 prizes for the best posters. Most original multilingual presentation. Ask the NAs to nominate an innovative project and then we reward these. People can create a dynamic PowerPoint presentation and put it online, and people can vote online.
- It is a good idea to have an in-person Teachers' meetup at the conference in Durham in 2024. (This has been taken into account)
- We will keep the CC members posted on further developments and welcome any suggestions regarding the topics discussed in the meantime.

Announce the travel subsidies in a newsletter. Ask them to present proof of registration for the conference and proof of paymen of the travel tickets. 100 subsidies of 100 euros. (**Zaan**)

- **And:** Information about 2024 Scholarships or activities of national associations on website and in news section (see budget 2024)
  See comment by Zaan and forms in EC meeting folder:

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We did not use the standard scholarship form on the web for the Jaen course last year because:

- It is for conferences (we agreed previously that scholarships would be only for NA or CercleS conferences)
- It allows only one candidate from each NA or AM, which was not the case last year for the 3 UCU colleagues going to Jaén
- There is a cap of 500 euro for each scholarship, which was not the case for the UCU colleagues

The issue of support was discussed after we received emails from them [the Ukrainian colleagues who wanted to attend the Jaén workshop] and they submitted an email expressing their interest and a budget (example from Olena Synchak last year attached).

We should probably decide the following:
Do we want to renew the 2023 General Scholarship form (form and information documents attached) the same for this year? We said that there would be no further scholarships for the CercleS Conference as we are already subsidising the registration fees and travel costs to the CercleS conference. Or do we stipulate that scholarships are available for other (i.e., NA conferences) in 2024?
Do we have a form on the website that we make available to only Ukrainian members or communicate to Ukrainian members about support?

See email / and application form Mariana Burak, 15 January 2024:
I'm happy to share that Joaquin confirmed the decision of the University of Jaen to provide the same financial support for 2 test designers from our team during their course in Jaen in the summer of 2024.
Here are the calculations of their tentative trip expenses you asked about:
Kseniya Borodin (Wroclaw - Jaen round trip) - approx. 400-450 euros.
Andriyana Baran (Kansas, USA - Jaen round trip) - approx. 1850 euros.
They would appreciate any help with the expenses.
Regarding our SOUL's projects, we have great news - we won 2 big grants from the UCU (they are the biggest possible grants by the university, though not very big in terms of our projects, but it's still something to start with).

Anne feels that the UCU has already benefitted from CercleS assistance in 2023 and that the UCU is a university that benefits from USA financial assistance. Sabina notes that UCU is an AM and that they are involved in projects aligned to CercleS' work.
In the past, CercleS subsidized only NA conferences. We have turned down other requests for subsidies because it was not an NA conference/workshop.
We could offer 500 euro for each, which is in line with the amount for other scholarships for conferences.
Sabina to communicate this to Mariana.
In the next newsletter, we will announce that we support conferences that support and promote the professionalisation of colleagues. (**Zaan**)

Update from Vice-President:

- LLHE 14.1: 5 papers have already been sent to the publisher ready for production. 3 papers will be copy-edited by G&C very soon and be sent for production. 6 more will be included but C&G are still waiting for the authors to send the revised versions, based on the comments made by the reviewers and on the editors' suggestions. This means there will be 14 papers ready for the May 2024 issue. We hope we can add a 15th one. This is the number we usually have in a single issue.
- The editors would like to reorganize the editorial board in terms of tasks (assistant editors; Scientific Committee; reviewer). This is still in progress.

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- Sabina asked Mark to invite Kasia to attend the Conference in Durham:
- Mail by Mark Critchley, 19 December 2023, below; Kasia replied that she would get back to Mark after the Christmas holidays. Sabina asked Kasia to do so soon and offered support form the EC if needed.

Dear Katarzyna,
I have been given your details by my colleague Sabina Schaffner, current President of CercleS in relation to the journal Language Learning in Higher Education (LLHE).
We will be hosting the next CercleS conference at Durham University12-14 September 2024. I therefore hereby wanted to extend an invitation to you and colleagues at de Gruyter, in particular to have a space within our exhibition so that we can collectively promote the journal and the relationship between CercleS and De Gruyter as a publisher. I would propose that you will have a dedicated exhibition space, comprising a desk space directly adjacent to the one for CercleS itself, including space for pull up banners and other marketing. Unlike other exhibiting organisations to whom we will make a charge (we expect around 6-7 other exhibitors), there will be no charge to yourselves for this facility.
We will register you as a delegate to the conference, although if you would like to participate in the conference and its events more fully, we may need to extend some charges (for conference dinner etc.). We can address this in due course however.
There is no rush in confirming any arrangements at this time, although we can speak when convenient in the first few months of 2024 at our mutual convenience. In the meantime you can find some early information about the conference itself at CercleS 2024 - Durham University.
Kind regards
Mark

Update from Secretary General / assistant:

a. **Membership management:**
Total: 399 → 375 members (from NAs); **21** Associate Members (updated to reflect four AMs who did not want to renew membership and did not pay fees for 2023 – they have been removed from the website list of AMs and they have been removed as website subscribers); 3 Honorary members.
Website subscribers: 836 all incl. admin (23.01.2024).

Since we "lost" the honorary memberships of many Ukrainian colleagues, we should try to reach the number of 401 again, otherwise we will have to pay Euro 35 instead of 30 as budgeted for 2024. We need two more AMs: KTU Foreign Language Centre (new application) and one more.

301-400 members: 35 Euro
401-500 members: 30 Euro

Membership 2024:
To be decided: if the two Ukrainian AMs (UCU Centre for Modern Languages & UCU School of Ukrainian Language and Culture) will be exempt from fees for 2024 or not.

Application for associate membership: KTU Foreign Language Centre (Prof. dr. Saulė Petronienė) Kaunas, Lithuania. **Anne** will follow up with her and send the application form. (done).

Emmi Huttunen has replied that for structural reasons it is difficult for FINELC to accept Universities of applied sciences as members, as the majority of them do not have language centres, and suggests that CercleS considers accepting the language centres at the UAS that do have language centres as AMs. The CercleS statutes does not allow AMs in countries with NAs. The issue will be discussed at the next CC meeting.

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b. Timeline Elections to CercleS Executive Committee 2024:

- Briefing of Election Officer Regina Mügge: 15 November 2023
- **Plan: Sending out Call by Election officer / General Secretariat: 29of January 2024; with biographic note**
- Reminder of Call to be sent to National Associations: March 2024
- Deadline for nominations: 3 May 2024
- Information about nominees to be sent out to national presidents: end of May 2024
- Letter by Election Officer to be sent to nominees about preparation at the CC meeting in September // or online talk for National Presidents / Associations in early July: to be sent by the end of May 2024

c. **Teachers' training week in June 2024**: CercleS/RANACLES teacher training session in Nancy: Tuesday 11 to Friday 14 June 2024. The approximate price for training and accommodation is €400 per person. The programme is focused on AI.
Updates regarding speakers? There have been three applications/offers.
Attendance of EC members? We could have an EC meeting in Nancy, and then stay until Tuesday for the opening.
→ *EC meeting 10 June in Nancy, time to be defined. EC to be in Nancy on Monday and Tuesday. Hotel?*

Mid-January: deadline for submissions for contributors
End January: confirm contributors and finalise the programme
Mid-February: open registration via Google forms
End March: end of 5-person limit to registration per NA.
End April: close of registration
End May: deadline for payment

Price fixed at €300, which includes:
- accommodation from Tuesday evening to Friday morning
- all training activities
- all lunches / breaks / outings
- dinner on Thursday evening

Potential further subsidy from CercleS if necessary to maintain this price.

Update from Treasurer:

a. Payments of members, 2023:
National Associations: All NAs have paid all their invoices.
Associate members: 1 has not yet paid for 2023 (Semmelweis University, Hungary). Zaan sent another reminder (the third email about the fees) on 17 Jan 2024.
The four AMs that indicated that they did not want to renew membership and did not pay in 2023 have been removed from the website as list of members and have been removed as website subscribers.

AOB

a. EC meeting in January
Online via Teams
Schedule (suggestions)
27 February 16:30-18:00:
19 March 16:30-18:00:

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23 April 16:30-18:00 (Tom possible not available)
21 May 16:30-18:00

Face-to-face, Université de Lorraine.

10 June, Nancy 16:00-17:30
Zaan will not travel to Nancy – so only 5 places in the hotel required.
The EC will spend 2 nights in the hotel (Monday 10th and Tuesday 11th June). **Anne** to ask Mark Schires about the booking for the hotel.
The EC should arrive by 4 for a meeting from 16:00-17:30 and then will have drinks and dinner. They will attend the opening day of the Teachers Training and will leave on the morning of the 12th.

All to please look at the registration form (in the folder) and give feedback to Tom.
Zaan to announce the registration of the Teacher training week in the next newsletter.

b. Calendar 2024

Tasks EC: please do all check, and update / edit for your office

Action points:

→ **Anne** to send minutes to EC
→ **Sabina** to send agenda and minutes to Zaan for upload
→ **Zaan** to confirm with Mark reservation for EC and election officer in Durham (done)
→ **Zaan** to follow up why some people do not receive the newsletter, despite being website subscribers (done)
→ **Carmen** to ask Prof. Cesare Zanca about speaking at the AI webinar
→ **Zaan** to contact Marta Demchyshyn and confirm that we will ask her to speak at the AI webinar (done)
→ **Sabina** to communicate to Mariana Burak that we will give 500 euro scholarship per person (Kseniya Borodin and Andriyana Baran) for the Jaén workshop.
→ **Anne** to ask the FG coordinators to give a short feedback of what has happened and what they are planning for the year. We will publish these in the next newsletter to encourage people to join the FGs. Ask FG coordinators to also let us know if they want to use the 1500 euro for FG meetings for the meetings before the conference.
→ **Anne** to follow up with (Prof. dr. Saulė Petronienė). Kaunas, Lithuania and send the application form for associate membership (done).
→ **Anne** to ask Mark Schires about the booking for the hotel for the EC (5 rooms) for 10 and 11 June (Ibis).
→ **All** to please look at the registration form for the teacher training week in Nancy (in the folder) and give feedback to Tom.
→ **Zaan** to announce the registration of the Teacher training week in the next newsletter.
→ **Zaan** to announce the travel subsidies in a newsletter. Ask them to present proof of registration for the conference and proof of paymen of the travel tickets. 100 subsidies of 100 euros.
→ **Zaan** to add in the next newsletter that we have financial support for conferences that support and promote the professionlisation of members
→ **Zaan** to share another reminder about speakers for the AI webinar in the next newsletter.
→ **Zaan** to draft the call for the COIL speed dating event and send it and publish it in the next newsletter
→ **Zaan** to draft next newsletter – to be published in mid-February