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 52
27 February 2024: 16:30-18:00 on MS Teams

Agenda

- **Approval of EC minutes No 51 / Update on action points (See minutes no 51)**

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.

First report my Mark Critchley: → *See file in folder "2024";"CerlceS 2024 Conerence"*

○ **Travel plans EC? Updates?**

→ 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

→ **Zaan** has confirmed with Mark reservation for 8 rooms at the Mariott.

(Update) Email from Conference organisers on 17 Feb:
The Events team at Durham was unfortunately only able to secure rooms at the Marriot hotel between the 11th-14th of September. As such, they have come up with an alternative option for the executive committee, who will need accommodation from the 10th – 15th of September. They have alternatively secured a corporate rate (£139.00 Bed and Breakfast) for bedrooms at Hotel Indigo for these dates. Hotel Indigo is a stone's throw from the Marriot, and also a lovely hotel: Home - Hotel Indigo Durham

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 15 March (as per Report No 1)*

b. Research: A review of research practice and culture in CercleS member institutions (Mark Critchley, Sabina Schaffner, Irmgard Wanner)
Report being finalized and first results to be presented at Leadership meetup in March or April
Presentation at CercleS Conference in Durham, publication in LLHE

c. Project application: CercleS Teacher Training Project "Boost your language teachings skills"
Marta Demchyshyn (UCU, Lviv, Ukraine); Julia Zabala Delgado (of Universitat politècnica de València, Spain), Barbara Sawicka (Poznan University of Technology, Poland), Tetiana Kibalnikova (Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic), Sabina Schaffner (University if Zurich, Switzerland / CercleS): Consultant regarding autonomous language learning: Anne Chateau (Université de Lorraine / CercleS)
→ *Application in this EC meeting folder*

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d. Meetups 2024:

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

Feedback on Meetup of 20 February , 17:00-18:00 CET (Future-proofing classroom-based language teaching)
There were 16 participants, a lot from UK.

Outlook:

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.

Outlook:
12 March
16 April
28 May

Special presentation for associate member (HUJI):
Anne has been doing an online presentation for Chaya's colleagues on the topic of autonomy/ autonomisation, its theoretical framework and with focus on a concrete example: There were approximately 25 people attending; It went very well. Everybody seemed very interested, there were many questions (Question-time lasted approximately 25 mns). The PowerPoint is in EC meeting file for your info...

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)
Chair: Mia; Host to be defined, Preparation:
An event for CercleS members interested in COIL (collaborative online international learning) to find partners for collaboration
→ *Call and invitation sent of the COIL webinar with the newsletter and separately to presenters (and participants) of the COIL webinar: any feedback / 1 registration so far…*

Thursday 25 April: AI webinar (16:00-17:30 CET)
A webinar on the topic of AI in language education in HE
Chair: Anne; Host to be defined (Tom not available), Preparation:

Call for presenters for CercleS webinar/workshop: AI language models in the classroom (January Newsletter 2024):
→ *Call sent with the newsletter: feedback?*
→ *Carmen to ask Prof. Cesare Zanca (Head of the University Language Centre Università degli Studi di Siena, Italy): feedback?*

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

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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 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.

Thursday 30 May: LLHE webinar 16:00-18:00 CET
In conversation with the authors whose articles were published in LLHE (Oct 2023)
Chair: Mia, Carmen; Host to be defined, Preparation:

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

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

Summary of main points

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.
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 i**n the meantime
mobilise the **Focus Groups** again and ask them for schedules. ➔ Feedback by FG of what has happened and what they are planning for the year = 4 FG answered the mail sent on Feb. 2nd, see details in EC meeting File.
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.
design the CercleS prize(s): target group, focus, promotion and assessment

a) A) **Focus on posters –award one poster with a CercleS prize.**
Criteria: Most original multilingual presentation.
Practicalities: define criteria and deadline, Double-check with Marc, prepare call (newsletter, Conference website)

b) **Other prize?** 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.
Criteria: Most original multilingual presentation.
Practicalities: define criteria and deadline, prepare call (newsletter, CC meeting)

Update from Vice-President:

- LLHE news: Carmen and Gill are working on 14.1.2024. The date for submission of the whole manuscript is very close. 8 papers have been sent to production already and the DG typesetter is working on them. 7 more are in

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the pipeline for final editing. Unfortunately, we had to slow down since these remaining papers (like others that we received) are weaker in terms of language accuracy and academic style. More careful proofreading was needed on our side, and we also had to send the papers back to the authors for a second time. However, we are planning to complete the manuscript by mid-March. This means that the first LLHE Issue for this year should be safely online in May. Topics will include: The impact of ChatGPT on academic writing; Verbal engagement strategies in Iranian Teachers' Talk; Japanese EFL undergraduate students' use of the epistemic modal verbs in academic writing; Harmonious learning: songs in English for ESP; Sustainable language learning and ePortfolio application; Teaching note-taking in EMI; Components of word knowledge that EFL learners learn; An investigation into the relationship between attitudinal and non-attitudinal variables and the utilization of digital technology in the EFL Vietnamese context.

- Sabina asked Mark to invite Kasia to attend the Conference in Durham: Kasia accepted.
- Katarzyna to attend: Carmen will check with her (and Mark) when an editorial meeting could take place. Carmen contacted Katarzyna asking for the date on which she would be arriving in Durham. As soon as she answers, Carmen will let Mark know and check if he can confirm the date and the venue.
- Gillian Mansfield to take part in the Durham Conference? Farewell for her as co-editor, gift

Update from Secretary General / assistant:

a. Membership management:

Total: 402 → **378** members (from NAs); **22** Associate Members; **3** Honorary members.
Website subscribers: 832 all incl. admin (27.02.2024).

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.

Deadline of updates on memberships from national associations to be used for calculation of votes during EC Elections:

De Gruyter fees based on membership(?):
301-400 members: 35 Euro
401-500 members: 30 Euro

Registration / Account management:

Scholarships (apart from subsidies for CercleS 2024 Conference)
Decided:
UCU, subsidy of Euro 500 for travel costs for Jaén workshop for both Kseniya Borodin (Wroclaw) and Andriyana Baran (Kansas, USA)

Pending:
Create scholarship form for national associations
In the next (March) newsletter, we will announce that we support conferences that support and promote the professionalisation of colleagues.

Next newsletter:
- Date:
- Content:

b. Timeline Elections to CercleS Executive Committee 2024:

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- 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
- Checking nominations with Election Officer: Anne and Sabina: after 3 May (tbd)
- 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 price for training and accommodation is €300 per person. The programme is focused on AI.
Updates regarding speakers? Final workshop: Joe Hopkins Barcelona
Attendance of EC members? We could have an EC meeting in Nancy, and then stay until Tuesday for the opening.

Mid-January: deadline for submissions for contributors
End January: confirm contributors and finalise the programme
Mid-February: open registration via Google forms
As of 27th February: 14 applications
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 already 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 meetings
Online via Teams
Schedule
19 March 16:30-18:00:
23 April 16:30-18:00 (Tom possibly 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.

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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 ==> This has been done, the rooms are booked
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.

b. Conference organised by CASALC SK and the Technical University in Zvolen: 17 and 18 Octobr 2024: **TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOCUSING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOFT SKILLS AND COMMUNICATION IN ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL CONTEXTS**

→ *(preliminary) invitation in EC meeting folder*
Pete Gergel is asking if he could organise conference under the auspices of CercleS (Technical University in Zvolen is a member of CercleS). He is also looking for a plenary speaker (preferably on the central theme of the conference: soft skills) and asked Sabina if she was interested or if she knows someone who deals with soft skills? The plenary lectures will take place either in presence or online.

Sabina told him that she can't commit herself as plenary speaker and that we only organise the international conferences, which take place every two years, under the auspices of CercleS. However, we can promote the conference via our website.

Does anyone want to do the keynote? Any suggestions of names for Peter?

c. 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

→