

Subject: Candidacy for the Position of CercleS President

Dear Members of the CercleS Community,

with this letter I am formally declaring my candidacy for the position of President in the upcoming 2024 elections for the new CercleS Executive Committee, scheduled to take place on 11 September 2024 at Durham University. I have dedicated my career to language centres and I would like to have the opportunity to contribute to the future development of CercleS.

As a professional, I believe in hard work and in co-operation, in learning from my peers and in trusting the professionals I work with. My passion is language testing and assessment, and the reason for this reflects my work ethics, so allow me to elaborate. Language assessment entails creating instruments that are precise and equitable. It is particularly challenging due to its multidisciplinary nature, encompassing psychology, language teaching and learning, philosophy and psychometrics. But you cannot create a language test individually, and so, you need mediation skills, flexibility and open-mindedness to talk to all stakeholders (institutions, test developers, students, teachers and examiners). The process is long, sometimes discouragingly long, and you need an appreciation for accuracy, as well as passion and perseverance if you want a final product that can have a positive washback in education.

I think my professional career reflects my beliefs and principles and what I could offer CercleS. My university is a technical university, which has influenced my way of looking at languages in a multidisciplinary way. I have worked in ACLES for many years, as part of the Accreditation Commission, and in the last years, as General Secretary. In CercleS, I have been part of NULTE and was part of the team responsible for the drafting of its Memorandum of co-operation. I have taken part in an ECML project, developing materials to disseminate the CEFR Companion Volume in higher education and vocational training. I have participated in international scientific committees, run seminars where I worked with colleagues from different countries and presented in numerous international conferences. I am involved in various associations and was co-founder of GIELE, a Spanish organisation dedicated to language testing in Spain that was created to foster links between the different testing organisations in the country and has now become a focal point for language testing professionals.

I am very enthusiastic about the possibility of joining CercleS Executive Committee, and about having the opportunity to contribute to its success, so thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia Zabala". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'J' and a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Julia Zabala