

Berlin, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024

Candidacy for the position of Deputy Treasurer

I hereby declare my intention to run as a candidate for the position of Deputy Treasurer in the elections for the new CercleS Executive Committee to be held during the next meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee in September 2024.

My aim, should I be elected, is to contribute actively to the development of CercleS as a leading organisation in European Higher Education. I believe that, as members of the CercleS network, we are in a unique position to contribute to fostering good practices in Language Centres in Higher Education and to contribute for visibility of academic Language Education within Europe and beyond. In my perspective and taking into account the current challenges of AI and the importance of mutual understanding of culture and language for peaceful cooperation in challenging times underline the importance of this collaborative work.

Over the last twenty-two years I have been working in the framework of language education in Higher Education. As a member of the national German association of university Language Centres (AKS) and CercleS since 2006 I have been involved in the organisation of seminars and workshops on didactics and in the participation of national and international conferences.

As a former director of the Language Centre of the University of Applied Sciences in Darmstadt (2006-2011) and actual director of the Language Center of Freie Universität Berlin, I have been involved in the development and management of University Language Centres for nearly two decades. As a board member (2013-2022) and treasurer (2015-2019) of the European Language Council, I gained experience within the Framework of an European Association.

In the last years, I developed a close action within CercleS activities, being part of the working group on the effects on the Covid-19 pandemic and part of the editorial team of the CercleS policy paper 2022. Since 2009, I am member of the Wulkow group and member of the CercleS Language Policy focus group which produced the CercleS Language Policy position statement in 2011. Actually, I am part of the Wulkow organising committee.

From this vast international experience I learned that language teaching and learning on an academic level needs cooperation and mutual support. The experiences and exchanges with my colleagues both at a national and international level have been truly enriching. Joint academic activities - working groups, joint online courses and other collaborative activities within the Wulkow Group, CercleS, AKS and the ELC - convinced me that only cooperation and benchmarking leads to strengthening our common goals. I firmly believe that within the Executive Committee of CercleS, as an Association acting on an European level, we will have the possibility to give and gain visibility to these actions and to create an environment for continuous development.

As mentioned before, I am currently director of the Language Centre of Freie Universität Berlin. Concerning my academic background, I am a teacher of Romance Languages (Portuguese and French) which gives me special sensitivity to questions of the position of languages other than English. I hold a PhD in Portuguese Literature and Culture and I am a certified teacher for intercultural communication.

I would very much like to be able to put my experience to the service of CercleS as an active member of the Executive Committee, representing all its members and striving to contribute to the development of the association and to meet future challenges.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ruth Tobias', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dr. Ruth Tobias

*Director of the Language Centre of Freie Universität Berlin*