European Educational Research Association

Minutes
Convenors' meeting at ECER 2009
Sunday Sept. (Part I)
and Sept. 30. 2009. (Part II)

PART I

Agenda

1. Welcome: Marit Honerød Hoveid led the meeting, supported by Sec. Gen Ian Grosvenor

2. Minutes: Ynge Nordkvelle

3. Items not on the agenda: a] a questionnaire from council member David Bridges was circulated b] NW 21 wanted one issue discussed under 11.

4. Discussion of the ECER 2009 organization:

- EERA office report: evaluation of the two step reviewing process. Angelika Wegscheider stated that a higher number of papers had been rejected this year, but more papers had been accepted than anytime before. Even if the two-step process had taken effect, it had not helped reduce the number of papers.

- Keeping ECER manageable: the administrators have a growing concern over the escalating complexity of the conference. The Council has adopted a "no mercy policy" on accepting late contributions, and that was supported by the meeting. More papers means more condensed presentation time. The meeting supported the idea that Networks need to fill all slots before they can claim more parallel sessions. Symposia should also be restricted to covering fewer consecutive sessions and fewer presentations in each symposium. More than 100 symposia this year made the planning complicated. It was agreed that Conftool develop a checklist to assure that symposia are set up correctly.

5. Report on network meeting in Berlin:

- ECER formats of presentations: Symposia and their difficulties were discussed and one of the outcomes of the Berlin seminar was to establish a on-line discussion forum for discussing presentation formats and related problems. Network leaders requested a summary document detailing problem with the symposia. See below.
- Reviewing grid: large networks struggle to streamline their sessions, and the secretariat suggested that a more detailed grid of subthemes which the Network deals with might make programme scheduling easier. Voices at in the meeting

EERA e.V. European Educational Research Association
Office Berlin
Freie Universität Berlin | Arnimallee 12 | 14195 Berlin
Tel: +49 (0)30 838 54978
Fax: +49 (0)30 838 55278
www.eera.eu | office@eera.eu

Steuernummer:
(Taxation Number)
27/640/57831

expressed the need for a more transparent review process. The above mentioned working group was asked to look into these issues.

6. EERA website:

   a. Reminder Network descriptors and reports: not all Networks succeed in making precise descriptors and they are urged to develop this, and to use the EERA template for this. http://www.eera-ecer.eu/networks/support-for-link-convenors-and-reviewers/
   b.

7. Network Funding:

   c. EERA has sufficient funding to help Networks achieve their goals. Detailed regulations for what EERA can help fund are available on the website

8. Development of EERA network structure:

   g. Some networks are thematically designed, some more discipline oriented.

9. Venue for ECER 2010:

   Next years conference will be held in Helsinki in late August

10. Network convenors' Seminar 2010:

   h. January in Helsinki or Berlin? 16 voted for seminar to be held in Helsinki in January, and 6 for Berlin in June.

PART II

This was a less formal meeting consisting of two items – information for Convenors and feedback on ECER 2009.

1. Marit Informed the Convenors about:

- Network Convenor seminar will take place in Helsinki Jan 21.- 22., 2010 Programme and invitation will be sent out. Network development and structure will be the main themes on the agenda.

- Reminded about funding possibilities for projects – important that the proposal shows how it will benefit developments of EERA.

- EERQI: questionnaires were distributed.

- Meeting with NW 19 (ICT) about their proposal. They will develop some basic communication platforms that all networks can use related to: mailing lists, member/convenor access to NW presentation, presentation of members on web, presentation of projects. Toonj Moi said some more about their thoughts and that this work will be coordinated with NW2 (Vetnet) and their proposed project for building a virtual communication platform. (NB: take a look at the podcasts from this years ECER at the EERA website).

- NETWORK REPORTS: Convenors to hand these in before November and to use the report template. Templates can be found on the website: http://www.eera-ecer.eu/networks/support-for-link-convenors-and-reviewers/

2. Reports from networks from this year's conference:

The overall report from all convenors' was that this year's conference had been a success, and only minor problems were reported. The overall impression was that there had been a lot of high quality papers.

Some of the comments more or less sorted:

- 4 papers in one session did not work well, Networks would not use this again, gave too little time for presentations, especially if presenter is not a native eng. speaker.
- Only symposium should allow more.
- It was asked if NW's could get a specification of how many sessions including parallels they have, based on available rooms, before final review is done and the programme set up.
- Suggestion to expand abstract to 800 words. Was not discussed.
- Problems with programme/registration dates. Resulting in changes in programme.
- Problems with last sessions – few attending in some NW - Sec. General, Ian, suggested to make this a symposium session for all NW – <u>general consent was given.</u>
- Group of researchers interested in Tacit Dimensions of Teaching and Learning had been allowed to nest within NW 27, one from their group has joined the convenors team and they plan to set up a symposium for next ECER.
- This is a possible way of incorporating new NW proposals in the future.
- Presenters not bringing hard copies of paper is still a problem
- Importance with of Convenor continuity stressed: Dora of NW4 is stepping down, Sip Jan is taking over.
- More diverse group of Europeans attending, one NW reported 15 different nations attending their business meeting.
- The need to work on network structure and presentation – Convenors were reminded to use descriptor on web and to develop sub themes.
- Presenters not turning up, still a problem. Ways of monitoring this?
- Can we use Conf tool to allocate papers in groups and set up programme - this is a difficult and time-consuming job.
- 8.30 early start, better to start at 09:00, enforce punctuality
- local support inside all sessions was excellent
- Develop format for presentation – to be followed up in Conv. Seminar?

EERA e.V. European Educational Research Association
Office Berlin
Freie Universität Berlin | Arnimallee 12 | 14195 Berlin
Tel: +49 (0)30 838 54978
Fax: +49 (0)30 838 55278
www.eera.eu | office@eera.eu

Steuernummer:
(Taxation Number)
27/640/57831

ANNEX - ECER 2009 - Symposia and their difficulties

During the first convenors meeting in ECER 2009 convenors asked for more information on the difficulties which are raised by the current way of processing symposia. The problems are linked to a rather unstructured symposium submission form which asks for a lot of re-processing by the EERA office. The raising number of symposia puts a lot of pressure on the EERA Office as papers within a Symposium need to be transferred into single papers.

This needs to be done to
a.) check correctly for time clashes and to
b.) allow a detailed confirmation of presentation for the authors.

How does the EERA Office hand in the papers within a Symposium?

Check if one of the authors linked to the paper is already registered as User.

- a.) he/she is: paper can be handed in directly. When the office is lucky, all co-authors to a symp-paper were listed completely with their details (email, affiliation) if not - we need to get in touch and ask for full details before the paper can be processed.

- b.) if no authors is listed as user in the system: the Office either needs to ask the authors to enrol and re-check if authors are in as Users. Or the office creates a user account for one of the authors and hands in the paper – this is quicker, but might lead to the effect that the author (although he was informed that there is a User account for him) later creates an additional account under a second email address. The system takes him as two different users and will not display time clashes. Office needs to check for double users and re-process them.

Check if abstract is not too long
- sometimes abstracts are too long to be processed. Office needs to get in touch with the authors and ask for shorter versions.

Later, while processing the programme drafts:
Chairs and discussants are currently filled in by the submitters in a free text field, colliding name and email addresses. The office cannot automatically extract the email addresses in order to remind Chairs/Discussants that they must be listed as Users in the system in order to assign them formally as a C hair to a session in the programme planning tool.

New Submission Form is needed
All this is might seem to be tiny problems at first view, but this is very time consuming – Office processed more than 400 papers in roughly 100 symposia for ECER 2009! It is also quite easy to make mistakes during these processes, as they are hardly to be assisted by our technical systems and as communication with a lot of people is linked to it.

At the moment all abstracts for the papers within a symposium are listed within one field of the original submission, because no upper limit for papers within a symposium submission was clearly defined. This allows submitters a lot of formal freedom, which makes processing symposia

very difficult and does not contribute to academic quality: e.g. listing all authors at one place and the office needs to search for the details in the submission, not giving all details for all authors, listing more than 4 authors per paper in a symposium and the office needs to ask who should be deleted from the list, etc.
On the other hands there are symposia with no abstracts of papers within at all ….

The very free and unstructured option to fill in the text for abstracts for all symposia also has the effect that due to broken format options (paragraphs may "collide") it is difficult to see where one paper starts and the other ends. So there is the danger that a paper is not processed. Even if authors have been repeatedly asked to control the entries, the office did, some mistakes where only spotted shortly before the conference.

On the other hand it seems also to be difficult for Convenors to see easily how many papers are linked to one symposium submissions. Sometimes a 8 paper Symposium was placed in one session.

In order to avoid this, the submission form for Symposia needs to be streamlined.

The new submission form should:

* only allow 4/5 papers per symposium submission
* clearly ask how many papers are linked to this submission
* clearly ask how many countries are linked to the symposium
* ask whether the symposium will have a second part (each part will be reviewed separately and needs to follow the 3 countries per symposium – guideline)
* ask submitters to fill in all details of authors completely before they can safe the submission
* ask submitters to fill in details for chair and discussant in a way that allows to contact these persons easier

For this the office needs confirmation on what should be the maximum standard size of a one slot symposium. The actual guidelines say 3 -5 papers, but it was never enforced.
The office also needs confirmation how many authors should be listed to each paper within a symposium (max 4 authors, max 2 of them presenting ?)
And a final confirmation: 200 words per abstract of a paper within a symposium – is this fine?

Office hopes that a clearer defined and structured submission form will help the processing of papers within a symposium and will also be a step towards a way of handling them that does not ask re-editing by the EERA office.
A more structured submission form will also help programme planning as one symposium submission will always cover one slot; if there are more than five papers, submitters need to hand in a second submission.
It should also help reviewing, as one important criterion is directly asked for: number of countries contributing to the symposium.