

# Conference checklist

Please read in conjunction with the FAQ document

## Preliminaries (before calls, invitations to plenaries, etc.)

### Issues to discuss/consult with the Executive Committee

- possible dates (check so as not to conflict with other SLA conferences)
- the organising structure
- the venue(s)
- the procedures for vetting abstracts
- possible plenary speakers (3 out of 4 should be European)
- type of programme envisaged (e.g., how many parallel sessions)
- the likely registration/conference fee (ballpark)
- accommodation possibilities
- access (by plane, train etc.)
- the social dimension of the conference
- publicity

### Budget issues

- The conference finances are essentially in the hands of the local organisers. However, membership fees are a concern for the EuroSLA executive committee. It is advised that you keep in close and regular touch with the EuroSLA treasurer about budget matters.
- In particular, consult with the EuroSLA executive committee about budgeting for Student Stipends, DSA and JESLA awards.
- It is imperative that the Eurosla treasurer receives the membership fees collected during the conference no later than 30 days after the conference.
- The EuroSLA Secretary must also receive an updated membership list from the local organisers DURING the conference. This membership list must contain: name, affiliation, electronic contact address.
- If you hire an agent locally to organise the conference, then it must be made clear in the contract that:
  - all conference documentation must be delivered no later than 30 days after the end of the conference;
  - membership fees must be transferred to EuroSLA, via the EuroSLA treasurer, no later than 30 days after the end of the conference;

- that membership lists must be made available to the EuroSLA Secretary during the conference.
- Start investigating and applying for additional funding as soon as possible (University funds, Brussels, etc); consider sponsors for material such as pens, writing pads, reusable cups/water bottles, etc.
- Specify already in early calls for papers the methods of payment—which kind of credit cards, bank transfer—who pay the bank fees, deadline for possible refunds, etc.

## Scientific aspects

Consult with the EuroSLA executive committee about:

- plenary speakers before invitations
- Topic of the Roundtable (if applicable)
- members of the scientific committee
- time schedules for review processes of abstracts, notification of acceptance, etc.
- review procedures – the vetting procedure is in the hands of the local organisers. In addition to the scientific committee, however, the members of the Executive committee are typically also part of the reviewing committee.
- Consider formats and channels for disseminating information about the conference and calls for papers: the conference and EuroSLA websites, social media, Linguist List, etc. Coordinate efforts by getting in touch with the EuroSLA website and social media officer.

## Student stipends

The EuroSLA association offers a number of stipends to support students attending the conference. These stipends are awarded competitively to students whose abstracts have been accepted (for either the doctoral workshop or the main conference) and who can demonstrate that they lack sufficient funding to attend without financial support. Each stipend is currently €300.

The organisers should budget (e.g. through income from conference fees) for at least five stipends. In recent years, some local organisers were in position to offer more stipends through locally available funds. The final number of stipends is agreed upon between the local organising committee (LOC) and the Executive Committee (EC).

The call for stipend applications should be announced alongside the call for papers.

Applications should contain:

- 1) Name, institution, and address of institution
- 2) Official confirmation of a PhD student status
- 3) Statement from supervisor or head of Department that the applicant's institution cannot (fully) cover the conference-related expenses.

The evaluation of the applications involves:

- (1) Checking that the applicants fulfill the main criteria for support (being a student, having a

presentation accepted, evidence showing that they had no or insufficient support from other parties); (2) Ranking applications based on the rating of the abstract.

The LOC is responsible for organising the stipend payments and notifying the EuroSLA Secretary of the recipients' names, emails and affiliations. Stipend winners are recognised at an official ceremony during the conference (either during the opening ceremony or the Annual General Meeting) and in the Programme Booklet. Their names will also be listed on the EuroSLA website.

## Local organisation

- Take advice from your University regarding the need for and details for conference insurance
- assign areas of responsibility and specific tasks to specific individuals or groups in the local organization early on: someone responsible for financial matters, a webmaster, someone in charge of all correspondence, someone in charge of rooms, technical facilities, someone in charge of the reception-help desk, etc.
- engage the committee members and students helping you right from the beginning; later on it takes too much time to introduce people to the tasks
- have regular meetings during the preparation year, and make sure updating on the web is regular (the webmaster's is a tough job as the conference approaches!)
- organise the conference website and a conference contact email early on (and people responsible for these)
- make sure that conference information (updated programme, etc.) is disseminated in a straightforward fashion leading up to the conference, preferably on the website.
- book venues/rooms and staff that comes with venues early
- contact hotels for pre-reservations very early
- contact publishers and local bookshops early; do try to convince as many publishers as possible to attend—the Eurosla audience tends to buy a lot of books if given a chance
- the social programme needs to be planned as early as possible, good places to eat, music, etc. may be booked a year in advance
- order the credit card terminal, and bank account long beforehand
- contact teachers and potentially interested participants at surrounding schools, institutions
- recruit students to work as student guides during the conference (staffing the reception, helping with uploading presentations in each room, etc.)
- contact the possible chairs of each session / time slot beforehand
- contact printers for estimates early (posters, programmes, etc.)
- Programme: As you draw up the conference programme, make sure to schedule meeting time for the Eurosla Executive Committee (allow 2 hours, typically on Wednesday after the Roundable), for the Distinguished Scholar Award ceremony, AGM (typically Friday after the last plenary of the day).

- Please create a programme booklet that lists all parallel talks side by side (in a single row) to help delegates easily see their options for each time slot.
- When inviting plenary speakers, please inform them of the Association's expectation that a state-of-the-art article based on their talk will be submitted for publication in JESLA (category: Keynote article).
- If organizing a Roundtable, please consider submitting a proposal to JESLA for a special issue (please consult with the JESLA editor).

## Practical things

### In order to keep correspondence tidy

- Consider setting up individual email folders (one correspondence folder per person) as well as folders organised by topic (e.g. submissions, rejections, lunch, publishers, hotels, etc). This will facilitate keeping track of things.
- archive your own outgoing correspondence too and file it in the appropriate folders
- inform the delegates about the hotel reservations and the deadlines, inform them about the necessity to check the website regularly
- backup all computer files!

### Closer to D-day

- organise the registration (sufficient number of people to avoid queues)
- organise the reception-help desk (staff, hours)
- Think about the services you will offer to delegates (e.g. internet access, copying facilities, bus timetable to the venue, taxi numbers, city map, directions, restaurant recommendations, local points of interest). Consider including this information in the programme booklet, along with the announcement of the DSA, JESLA, and Student Stipend winners; listing the members of the local organizing committee; acknowledging sponsors. A good example can be found in the Münster conference booklet (<https://tinyurl.com/y5f7964j>)
- Some delegates are happy with an online document, but others may appreciate a paper copy: consider offering this option at the point of registration.
- Create a book of abstracts accessible via the conference webpage
- Prepare name tags, lunch/dinner tickets, poster boards, official receipts and confirmation of participation for participants
- make sure there are technical back-up facilities, someone in each room to cater for emergencies (student guides)
- Consider designing a feedback form to allow participants to share their impressions and suggestions, helping to improve future conferences.