

SEMPRE Guidelines for Conference Organisers

Any individual wishing to host a SEMPRE conference at a University or other institution should consider the following guidelines before submitting a request to the SEMPRE Conference Secretary.

These guidelines are provided to be of assistance to conference organisers for SEMPRE events in order to promote academic quality and organisational efficiency. They do not have the force of regulations and freedom will always be given to individual organisers to adapt to local and circumstantial conditions.

Based on the model proposed by the ICMPC in 1996, these guidelines were drafted in 2009 by the SEMPRE Conference Secretary in consultation with the SEMPRE committee.

1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- a) A single building is required with one or more differently sized rooms for presentations, workshops, poster displays and/or meetings. The rooms should have disabled access, good circulation space and comfortable seating.
- b) The conference should be held in a venue that is close to a range of accommodation, including hotels, B&Bs and student rooms. For two-day (or longer) conferences, accommodation may be included as part of the conference package.
- c) Refreshments and lunch should be provided as part of the conference package at the venue or arrangements should be made for delegates to use other on-site/nearby facilities.
- d) A well-run reception/office is important in the running of the conference and access to facilities such as fax, e-mail, internet, photocopying, etc. should be made available to delegates.
- e) All conference rooms should be supplied with audio-visual equipment, including: data projector, computer or laptop, OHP, hi-fi (video, tape, CD, DVD-player) and keyboard/piano (acoustic or MIDI). It is advisable to ensure that a technician is available in each conference room to assist delegates throughout the conference. For large rooms, a voice amplification system may be required.

2. ORGANISATION: PERSONNEL, TIMETABLING, PROGRAMME ISSUES

- a) Each SEMPRE Conference is to be run by a local organiser (LO) in consultation with the SEMPRE Conference Secretary (CS). The LO is responsible for the main organisation of the event, including the budget. The LO should ensure adequate secretarial and administrative support from the host institution. The CS forms a source of advice for the LO. In particular, the CS may offer advice on fee levels for the conference, and should be responsible for ensuring that any information from previous conferences (e.g. announcements, calls, budgets) is made available to the LO if necessary. The CS will also

provide a line of communication from the Society to the LO, and will ensure that the organiser is informed of relevant policies and procedures which might impact on the conference.

- b) SEMPRES normally runs two one-day conferences every year in Spring (March/April) and Autumn (October/November) with a biennial two-day conference in the Spring. Each conference should have a clear theme and may be linked to a student study-day or other event.
- c) Each conference should involve a range of sessions, including keynote addresses (maximum 2 per day), spoken paper presentations, poster displays, roundtable discussions, workshop and/or demonstration sessions, SEMPRES AGM (Spring conference only).
- d) The programme may include parallel sessions and, where possible, papers will be grouped thematically. Keynote speakers will normally be given 45-60 minutes while all other papers will normally run for 30 minutes (20 for presentation and 10 for discussion). There should be dedicated time within the programme for viewing posters (if applicable). The timetable must allow for suitable refreshment and lunch breaks.
- e) Each session must be chaired by an independent individual with relevant experience.
- f) One-day SEMPRES conferences normally run from 10.30 a.m. until 4.30 p.m. while two-day SEMPRES conferences may include longer days with an evening session and meal.
- g) Language. All conferences will be delivered in English.

3. CALL FOR PAPERS

- a) Call for papers. The local organiser (LO) and SEMPRES Conference Secretary (CS) should draft the conference announcement and call for papers approximately 12 months prior to the event. This should include:
 - i. Date and place
 - ii. Conference theme and blurb
 - iii. Deadline for electronic submission of abstracts (normally 2 to 3 months prior to a one-day conference, or 5 to 6 months prior to a two-day conference)
 - iv. Details of how to contact the organisers
 - v. SEMPRES logo
- b) The call should be circulated as widely as possible by the LO and CS. Suggested outlets are given below:
 - i. Electronic circulation via relevant mailing lists (LO/CS)
 - ii. Email to SEMPRES members (CS)
 - iii. Electronic posting on the SEMPRES website (CS)
 - iv. Electronic posting on other conference sites (e.g. RHUL Golden pages) (LO/CS)
 - v. A4 poster versions of the call may be distributed for display on Departmental noticeboards (LO/CS)
 - vi. A4 poster versions of the call may be sent to relevant conference organisers for insertion in delegate packs (CS)
 - vii. If possible, the call should appear in the journal *Psychology of Music and Research Studies in Music Education* (CS)

4. EARLY ARRANGEMENTS

- a) Budget: the local organiser (LO) must work out and manage the budget according to local costs, including: room/venue hire, technical support, refreshments/lunch (evening meal if applicable), travel/accommodation for keynote speaker(s), any other costs (e.g. accommodation for two-day conferences, if included). The LO should establish the conference registration fee accordingly (normally with reductions for SEMPRES members and students). Normally, one-day conference fees are about £10 (plus £5 lunch) for SEMPRES members; two-day conference fees are normally £80 upwards (day rates and member rates should be given). A booking form is normally released along with the conference programme as soon as possible after the deadline for abstracts.
- b) Venue Booking: the LO is responsible for booking the conference room(s) and any required support staff (e.g. technicians, caterers) for the event.
- c) Programme Committee: the LO and CS should establish a Programme Committee (normally comprising the CS, LO, one colleague from the local institution and one other external member, plus any additional members as required) and agree a timetable for planning the event. All submissions should be made anonymous and circulated to the committee shortly after the abstract deadline. Each member of the committee should grade the material on a 5-point scale (A = excellent; B = good; C = adequate; D = poor; E = unacceptable). Acceptance should be offered to all A or B graded papers. C papers may be accepted if there are spaces within the programme. D papers may be accepted at the discretion of the committee. Any paper receiving E grading from all members of the committee should be rejected. The same grading should be applied to all proposals.
- d) Submission and Notification of Proposals: the LO (or assistant) should confirm receipt of proposals from individuals and indicate the date in which they will be notified of an outcome. All individuals who have submitted proposals should be notified of the outcome as soon as possible after the deadline for abstracts. Individuals should confirm acceptance as soon as possible so that the LO can finalise the conference programme. Individuals should also confirm audio-visual requirements at the time of acceptance.
- e) Programme and Booking Announcement: when the conference programme is finalised, the LO should release it along with the booking form for people to register. The CS can assist in publicising the information via the SEMPRES website and emailing SEMPRES members.
- f) SEMPRES Conference Awards: the LO should make a recommendation to the SEMPRES Trustees of individuals with accepted papers who should be considered for a conference award. Delegates are responsible for providing relevant information to the LO. The HICKMAN award should be presented at the International

two-day conference for the best postgraduate submission (see SEMPRES website for award details).

- g) Session Chairs: the LO (in consultation with the programme committee) should contact experienced individuals who may be willing to chair conference sessions.
- h) Book Displays: the LO should contact publishers or individuals who may wish to have a book display at the event (normally for two-day conference), e.g. SAGE, Rosemary Dooley, OUP, CUP, Ashgate.

5. FINAL ARRANGEMENTS

- a) Final Reminder. An electronic reminder about the event (posted via websites, member lists etc.) should be made at least 1 month prior to the conference by the LO and/or CS, and should include as much information as possible about the conference programme and booking. Delegates should be provided with relevant website links for local information (e.g. about travel, accommodation).
- b) Planning for the Day. The LO should ensure that adequate support is put in place for the running of the event. This should include the following:
 - i. Confirm conference assistants (e.g. graduate students) to cover duties such as registration and monitoring rooms (to ensure refreshments for speakers etc.)
 - ii. Prepare material for delegate packs (final programme, abstracts, list of delegates, information sheet if required)
 - iii. Set up poster display stands (if applicable)
 - iv. Check signposting (ensure the venue is well signposted)
 - v. Check refreshments/lunch arrangements
 - vi. Prepare registration receipts for all delegates who have booked
 - vii. Prepare delegate packs (to include conference programme, book of abstracts, list of delegates, conference evaluation questionnaires, fliers about forthcoming SEMPRES events, SEMPRES free membership forms, any other information)
 - viii. Prepare delegate badges
 - ix. Conference freebies: CS will arrange for conference freebies to be given out on behalf of SAGE (e.g. notepads, pens)
 - x. Confirm postgraduate student to review the conference

6. AFTER THE CONFERENCE

- a) A review of the conference should be posted on the SEMPRES website (via the CS)
- b) Abstracts and copies of conference papers may be posted on the SEMPRES website