

CERME12 Guidelines for TWG Leaders

The chief aims of ERME are to promote Communication, Cooperation and Collaboration in Research in Mathematics Education in Europe, in order to know more about research and research interests in different European countries, and to create opportunities for cooperation between researchers in collaborative projects. This conference is designed as a starting point in promoting these aims in a communicative spirit. Each Thematic Working Group (TWG) should aim to provide a good scientific debate with the purpose of deepening mutual knowledge about the problems and methods of research in the field.

Each TWG initially has 4 or 5 Co-Leaders (including the leader, and including as far as possible a young researcher), from different countries, with interest and expertise in the theme of the group. One of these Co-Leaders, the designated TWG Leader, oversees the work of the group, and is ultimately responsible for decisions and actions. This is made possible by working with a team of TWG Co-Leaders, who share the work of the group in various ways. A member of the International Programme Committee (IPC) is appointed for each TWG to act as *Liaison* between the IPC and the Co-Leaders of that TWG. He or she is available to assist or advise the Co-Leaders, especially before the conference.

The TWG Leaders' responsibilities are:

- (1) writing the [call for papers](#) for the TWG;
- (2) organising the review of submitted papers and poster proposals before the conference;
- (3) organising the conduct of the Thematic Working Group sessions at the conference itself;
- (4) organising the revision and collection of texts for the proceedings, and write an introduction for these texts;
- (5) ensuring all authors use the [correct CERME template](#).

Organising the Review of Submitted Papers and Poster Proposals

1. Initial submission, reviewing and final submission: overview and timeline

CERME12 uses ConfTool (link [here](#)). This on-line system will assist with the collation of papers and ensure a streamlined and efficient management of CERME papers and posters. The authors submit the initial version of their paper or poster on the website, indicating a TWG number. The TWG Leader will receive from ConfTool the propositions of papers and posters corresponding to his/her TWG. Then he/she will organise an internal review (see next section) in the TWG. The final version of the papers and posters will be directly submitted by the authors in ConfTool. The TWG Leader then checks whether the final versions of the papers and posters include the suggested (final) revisions and use the CERME12 template, so that they can be included in the conference programme on the [CERME12 ConfTool website](#).

An online submission system is an important tool, for a large conference like CERME. It requires for everybody to take very seriously all the deadlines. The deadlines for the papers and posters are outlined in two lists below:

A: Papers

- Initial submission by authors to ConfTool: **15th September 2021**.
- TWG Leaders can download all the propositions from ConfTool for their TWG: **16th September 2021**.
- TWG teams send papers to reviewers by **22nd September 2021**.
- The reviewers submit their reviews online using ConfTool by **21st October 2021**.
- TWG Leaders inform ConfTool of status of papers by **1st November 2021**.
- TWG Leaders send a bulk mail to the authors via ConfTool to inform them about the review results, status of their submission and revisions requested by **4th November 2021**. Please encourage any YRs to enter their paper for the [ERME Paper Award](#) (Deadline: 15th November 2021),
- The authors submit a revised version with a description of the changes made to ConfTool by **25th November 2021**.
- The TWG team takes the final decision and informs the authors by **6th December 2021**, and, if needed, discusses with them the final adjustments to the papers.
- The authors upload the final version of their paper to ConfTool by **13th December 2021**.
- The TWG Leader can check the submission list up to **15th December 2021**. After 15th December no further changes can be made.

Online programme available: **14th January 2022**.

B: Posters

- Initial submission by authors to ConfTool: **15th September 2021**.
- TWG Leaders can download all the propositions from ConfTool for their TWG: **16th September 2021**.
- The TWG Leader organizes the review process for the posters within the Co-Leader team.
- TWG Leaders inform ConfTool of status of posters by **1st November 2021**.
- TWG Leaders send a bulk mail to the authors via ConfTool to inform them about the review results, status of their submission and revisions requested by **12th November 2021**. Please encourage authors to enter their poster for the [ERME Poster Award](#) (Deadline: 25th November 2021).
- The authors submit a revised version with a description of the changes made to ConfTool by **25th November 2021**.
- The TWG team takes the final decision and informs the authors by **6th December 2021**, and, if needed, discusses with them the final adjustments to the poster proposals.
- The authors upload the final version of their two-page poster proposals via ConfTool by **13th December 2021**.

For posters, only the two-page descriptions are included in the online programme.

2. Managing the internal reviewing process for the papers

**** Some authors may have had feedback via the [Early Bird Submission Process](#). TWG Leaders will receive a copy of this feedback. Please ensure that reviewers are aware of this feedback. ****

The purpose of the CERME review process is to promote communication and collaboration through engaging participants in an in-depth analysis of a portion of TWG papers, as well as to assure the scientific quality of the accepted papers.

Papers will be submitted by the authors through the CERME12 submission website before **15th September 2021**. The TWG Leader will be able to download the papers and posters for his/her TWG by close of business on **16th September 2021**, and will also be able to see a table on ConfTool showing the corresponding author(s) for each paper, with their email address, the title of their paper, and the keywords.

If the TWG team consider that a paper or poster submission is more appropriate to another TWG, they should contact their IPC liaison and the IPC Chair in the first instance.

The team of TWG Co-Leaders then proceeds as follows.

1. The TWG Leader then distributes the papers more-or-less evenly between the Co-Leaders (including him/herself), as far as possible according to common topics or methods, although this will usually be only approximate. If the number of papers received exceeds 24, the TWG Leader (in consultation with the IPC Liaison for the group) will co-opt additional Co-Leaders from among those who submitted papers, so that no Co-Leader has responsibility for more than 6 papers. In consultation with the IPC Liaison and TWG Leaders they will decide on a 'split' whereby the TWG will effectively work as two separate subgroups. ***Notice that TWGs are cancelled if they receive less than 12 papers.***
2. Each paper will be assigned to two TWG participants for review, the responsible TWG Leader making clear what they have to do in the review and the deadline **21st October 2021** for return of reviews. These reviews are 'open' on both sides, i.e. both reviewer and author know each other by name. Situations where there is a close relationship between the author and the reviewer should be avoided. For example, a student's paper should not be assigned to be reviewed by their supervisor or vice versa. Also inexperienced researchers should be included in the review process. However, it is not advisable to assign more than one novice reviewer to any single paper. ***No author should have more than two papers to review.*** This distribution of papers for review can be achieved in smaller TWGs by collaboration between Co-Leaders. In bigger TWGs, each Co-Leader may independently distribute their

share of the papers among 'their' authors. In either case, the TWG Leader oversees the process.

3. Each TWG Co-Leader prepares a constructive review feedback to each of the papers assigned to them, as follows:
 - i. They read the papers and form their own opinion about them.
 - ii. On receipt of the reviews, they make a decision about each paper for presentation at the conference regarding:
 - ACCEPT for presentation without further modification
 - ACCEPT for presentation subject to modification as detailed below
 - REJECT but resubmit the paper as a poster
 - REJECT
4. In difficult cases, they can consult with the TWG Leader or another Co-Leader of their TWG.
5. TWG Co-Leaders' decisions about the acceptance of papers are shared with the other TWG Co-Leaders and the TWG Leader. The TWG Leader must approve the final decision of accepting or not accepting for presentation and insert it in ConfTool by **1st November 2021**.
6. The decision regarding presentation is communicated via ConfTool to the corresponding author by **4th November 2021**.

It is imperative that TWG Leaders do NOT inform the authors directly of the status of their papers – this is to ensure that all papers are submitted through the on-line channel. Should a TWG Leader correspond at this point with an Author who has not submitted their paper through the correct channel, there is a real risk that this paper will not end up being included in the conference programme. This official communication on the status of each paper MUST come from ConfTool.

In an embedded communication to authors on **4th November 2021** in ConfTool, the relevant Co-Leader sends (a) the two reviews of the paper, as well as his/her own reviewer comments if they have something significant to add; (b) a short summary (about 150 words) of the reasons for the decision, including **a very clear statement** of what modifications must be done before the paper is accepted for discussion at the conference. [Please note that “see the reviews” will not be enough – see below for an example of a summary to accompany reviews].

8. The modified/revised papers (if required) are submitted via ConfTool by the authors to the TWG Co-Leader in charge together with a letter, in which the changes are clearly indicated, before **25th November 2021**. Upon receipt the relevant Co-Leader assesses whether or not the required modifications have been made. Together with the TWG Leader, the Co-Leader then decides whether or not the paper is now accepted for presentation or (where

appropriate) as a poster, and informs the corresponding author without delay, before **6th December 2021**.

9. TWG Co-Leaders then send a list of final decisions for their papers to the TWG Leader. The TWG Leader then sends a composite decision list for all paper proposals to (a) all the Co-Leaders of their TWG, and (b) the Chair and the Co-Chair of the IPC.
10. It is also recommended that the TWG Co-Leaders share the 'other' review(s) of each paper, as well as their own summary and decision, with the two reviewers of that paper. This is an excellent learning opportunity for all reviewers.
11. The authors upload the final version of their paper to ConfTool before **13th December 2021**.
12. The TWG Leader can check that the list of the final version of papers on the submission website is correct, and confirm to ConfTool before **15th December 2021**. Please note that all authors will be informed via ConfTool of the inclusion of their papers in the conference programme by 17th December 2021.
13. The papers and posters will be available online at the latest on **14th January 2022**. The TWG Leader should remind the participants that members of a group are expected to read the provided papers before the conference in readiness for working in the TWG.
14. TWG Co-Leaders may choose to encourage their group members to phrase questions, comments or suggestions regarding the papers they read, and to send them directly to the authors prior to the conference. This commenting should be voluntary, and need not involve the Co-Leaders.

Example of a summary to accompany paper reviews

Corresponding Author: *Alice Hulot*

Title: *The experience of the pre-service secondary mathematics teacher of school-based mentoring*

Thank you for your proposal of a paper for CERME12 TWG84. The paper has been read by two other paper proposers and one TWG84 Co-Leader (John Mulberry). The two reviews are attached with this summary overview by the Co-Leader in charge. In the light of these reviews, I am writing to inform you that the TWG84 team has decided to

ACCEPT your paper for presentation subject to the modifications detailed below

[Overview of the remarks]

Your paper is very well-written, interesting and relevant to the group theme. The theoretical framework and related literature are clearly outlined. You offer some original insights into the experience of these pre-service secondary mathematics teachers and related proposals for practice and for further research. Nevertheless, the two reviews offer some suggestions which you should

consider for pre-conference revision. In particular, the review of von Neumann makes several points to be considered under Methodology (which needs more detail) and Statement and Discussion (do not lose sight of the mathematics).

[Recommendations for the revisions]

In the light of this overview and the two reviews – which we strongly recommend that you consider as a guide through the revision of your paper – we expect that a revision addresses the following:

(a) to address the specifics of mathematics (and mathematics didactics) more thoroughly in the paper and

(b) to expand and foreground the implications for teacher education, which you touch on in the Discussion at the end of the paper. Also, please format the paper in accordance with the instructions given in the First Announcement. You do not appear to have used the CERME template. You must use this template or your paper will not be accepted.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR REVISED PAPER [OR NEW SUBMISSION FOR A POSTER PRESENTATION] VIA THE ConfTool SUBMISSION SYSTEM before 25th November 2021.

You will be informed of the final decision before **6th December 2021**, and will have to upload the final version on the submission website before **13th December 2021**.

Thank you,

John

[On behalf of the TWG84 team]

3. Managing the internal reviewing process for the posters

1. The TWG Leader distributes the 2 pages poster proposals more-or-less evenly between the Co-Leaders (including him/herself).
2. The Co-Leader in charge reviews the posters proposal – see the Review Guidelines. In particular, the review clearly indicates the status of the poster proposal:
 - ACCEPT for presentation without further modification
 - ACCEPT for presentation subject to modification as detailed below
 - REJECT

In difficult cases, they can consult with the TWG Leader or another Co-Leader of their TWG.

3. The review is sent to the TWG Leader (deadline: **21st October 2021**).
4. TWG Leaders insert in ConfTool of status of posters by **1st November 2021**.
5. The decision regarding presentation is communicated via ConfTool to the corresponding author by **12th November 2021**.

- It is imperative that TWG Leaders do **not** inform the authors directly of the status of their posters – this is to ensure that all posters are submitted through the on-line channel. Should a TWG Leader correspond at this point with an Author who has not submitted their poster through the correct channel, there is a real risk that this poster will not end up being included in the conference programme. This official communication on the status of each poster **must** come from ConfTool.
6. The authors submit a revised version with a description of the changes made to ConfTool by **25th November 2021**.
 7. TWG Co-Leaders' decisions about the acceptance of posters are shared with the other TWG Co-Leaders and the TWG Leader.
 8. The TWG Leader must approve the final decision of accepting or not accepting for presentation and send this decision to the poster author(s) by **6th December 2021**.
 9. The authors upload a final version of their two-page proposal by **13th December 2021**.

The posters are not included in the proceedings, only the two-page descriptions.

The Conduct of the Thematic Working Group Sessions at the CERME Conference

1. Organising a programme of work for the CERME Conference

The TWG work lies at the heart of a CERME meeting. It is a major responsibility of the TWG Leaders and their Co-Leaders to organise the group work in a way that encourages and supports good scientific debate. In order to promote meaningful communication and interaction in the TWG, extended formal presentations are not permitted. With this same aim, TWGs with more than 24 submitted papers are to be split in two subgroups (possibly with joint sessions).

Even with fewer than 24 papers, group activities must be designed carefully in order to ensure that everyone feels heard and included, and to provide opportunities for collaboration. Try to avoid organising sessions in a way that highlights some papers and ignores others. Make sure that every author feels that their (accepted) paper has been considered and discussed in depth, in their presence, by at least some participants in the TWG. Do not overlook 'affective' as well as scientific aspects of participation: try to ensure that every participant in the TWG feels that they belong in the group.

Some formats for organising the sessions that have proved to be effective are described here:

1. Discussing single papers or small groups of papers. A possible structure could be:
 - i. Allow an author, or a small group of authors, 5 minutes each to recall the main ideas in their paper. Proceed to plenary discussion based on the papers, supported for example by short small-group activities and other ways of structuring participation.
 - ii. These 5 minute recall sessions by authors can be replaced or complemented by short reactions to one or more papers. These reactions can be prepared by one of the reviewers or one of the TWG Co-Leaders, but can also be attributed to other authors,

- to increase the number of different persons who made a deep reading of the paper. The follow-up discussion could then be organised as a panel.
- iii. In order to give individual papers more time, subgroups can be organised around common key ideas in 2 or 3 papers, being discussed intensively only in these subgroups, which could report back briefly to the whole group (perhaps providing slides or posters for the reports).
2. Working on deepening understanding of selected aspects of the papers. Possible approaches include:
 - i. Before the conference, identify some key ideas or themes, asking each participant to prepare just one slide on each idea/theme to express their view on the issue. Collect and organise the slides in advance: this gives less fluent English speakers more time to express their ideas.
 - ii. Discuss some of the data from one paper with the theoretical lenses of others in order to gain a better understanding of mutual perspectives.
 - iii. Develop a collective meta-analysis on selected topics or themes, drawing out what can be said about a topic/theme by drawing on the findings of several papers.
 3. Going beyond the content of the presented papers in at least one session. For example:
 - i. Try to identify/specify collectively some key ideas or further questions that could be the focus of further research.
 - ii. Develop ideas for research designs to be implemented in different countries.

2. Facilitating deep and inclusive discussion during the conference

The TWG Leaders and Co-Leaders have responsibility for maintaining good scientific quality in the group sessions. They are also responsible for ensuring that every participant is, and feels, included and able to contribute. Most critical feedback after CERME Conferences relates to dissatisfaction with one or both of these factors, and sometimes where it appears that the TWG Leaders and Co-Leaders have not been successful in keeping them in balance. In the past, successful TWG Leaders and Co-Leaders have adopted a variety of strategies in order to achieve democratic and stimulating discussions during the Thematic Working Group sessions. These strategies include:

- Informing participants in advance on their plan for the organisation of the group work, thus allowing participants to prepare themselves accordingly.
- Creating a welcoming and open atmosphere in which everybody feels free to participate actively. This could include direct and explicit attention to building community and trust in the TWG e.g. by making time for introductions, or by including an 'ice breaking' activity.
- Setting out at the outset some 'ground rules' for presentation, discussion and debate in the TWG.
- Ensuring that discussion is not dominated by a few participants. This is a very common problem, and sometimes confident individuals with strong opinions have to be restrained by the Chair for the session.

- Including and involving those participants who did not submit a paper to the TWG, or whose papers were not accepted for presentation
- Being aware of language issues, and reminding participants of the importance of speaking slowly and articulating clearly
- Preventing native English speakers from dominating the discussion
- Encouraging non-native speakers to participate, organising support to overcome language obstacles
- Making sure that spoken contributions can be heard by everyone by considering the layout of the room, acoustics etc.
- Promoting high-quality work by judicious input when the discussion appears to be superficial or weak in content
- Seeking and drawing attention to connections between papers
- Inviting group participants to discuss and contribute to the final session reporting the work of the TWG.

In conclusion: the working sessions of the Thematic Working Groups need to be planned and managed by the TWG Leaders and Co-Leaders. A good balance of scientific quality and democratic inclusion is unlikely to occur by chance, and is more likely to be achieved when the Leaders and Co-Leaders and all participants consciously work to achieve it. At CERME12, the TWGs will be allocated around 13 hours each.

3. Final reporting on the work of the TWG

The TWG Leader and Co-Leaders are responsible for conducting two final report sessions (the same session is repeated twice) on the last day of the conference. The purpose of these sessions is to provide the opportunity to conference participants, who attended other TWGs, to be informed about the work of TWG, its ongoing discussions, etc. It is advisable that the TWG Leader and Co-Leaders as part of the report also give a brief presentation of the TWG and its subfield of mathematics education research, taking into account that the listeners at the report session may not be familiar with this work. However, to include also the listeners who may have previously attended this TWG at former conferences, the report should also highlight new questions identified as part of the work of the TWG, new research trends and directions, etc. It may also be a good idea to briefly mention an exemplary paper and/or poster as part of the report, or to provide some statistics concerning the themes/questions addressed by the accepted papers/posters in the TWG.

The reports provided in these sessions may come to form the basis for the introduction to the papers and posters of the TWG, which is to be written by the TWG Leader and Co-Leaders for the conference proceedings.

Organising the revision and collection of texts for the proceedings

Upon completion of the conference, the IPC and LOC Chairs will provide the TWG Leaders with a detailed plan for the further work of preparing the conference proceedings.

TWG Leaders and Co-Leaders are responsible for organising the revision of the papers and two-page poster descriptions accepted for the conference proceedings as well as for writing an introduction to the papers and posters, possibly also including aspects of the work conducted in the TWG, for the proceedings.

Two kinds of introductions are possible: short introductions (4 pages), presenting the papers and posters, the work done in the TWG, and some perspectives; or long introductions (8 pages). The long introductions are reviewed as papers by members of the IPC. They are not only longer presentations of the work done in the TWG, but must offer insights on the theme of the TWG and permit to deepen the reflection on the contribution of the CERME12 TWG to this theme.

**** It is very important that TWG Leaders ensure that all papers and poster descriptions use the CERME template which is available [here](#). ****

The TWG Leader's work in relation to the proceedings involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Organize a **final round of revision** of the papers and posters in need for this prior to final acceptance for the proceedings.
- For all the papers and posters accepted for publication in the proceedings, **check that these follow the guidelines: use of template and, in particular a correct reference list in which there is strict adherence to APA guidelines.**
- Send all the accepted papers in a **single folder** (archive, dropbox or googledocs, but please do not use several folders).
- Send a **list** (excel file) **with the authors and titles** of all the papers and posters accepted for publications accompanying the single folder mentioned above.
- When the **proofs** are sent, **make sure** that all papers and posters of your TWG are included, and check to see if everything looks the way it should.