1.) About EERA, ECER and ERC

EERA, the European Educational Research Association, is a European-wide network of educational associations. The association, founded in 1994, boasts more than 40 regional and national associations from 35 different countries as members. EERA connects educational researchers from Portugal to Norway and from Iceland to Kazakhstan. EERA also enjoys worldwide partnerships with educational associations such as the World Education Research Association (WERA) and takes part in discussions within European networks on the development of programmes in support of research. One of EERA's aims is to support high quality educational research which acknowledges its own context but also recognises wider transnational contexts and reflects political and cultural differences.

EERA Members as of 2023

EERA organises the European Conference on Educational Research (ECER), one of the most important European conferences covering the broad field of educational research.
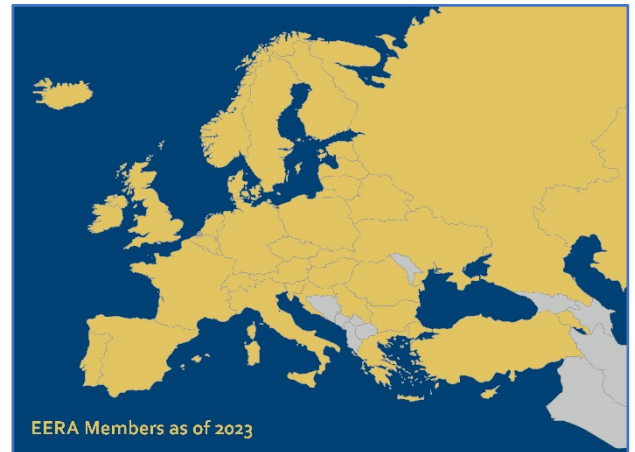
Conferences: ECER and ERC

ECER – European Conference on Educational Research - is probably the most well-know and visible EERA activity. The annual conference is preceded by the "Emerging Researchers' Conference" which is aimed at doctoral students and researchers at the beginning of their careers. Each ECER is a joint endeavour of EERA, a hosting university and an EERA member association. ECER and ERC have grown over the years to draw in recent years over 3000 participants from around 70 countries. Diversity and European/international exchange are the main foci of the conference.

The ECER programme includes Keynotes and a Keynote Panel that address the theme of the conference, EERA Sessions and Network Sessions, as well as a Moot organised by the European Educational Research Journal.

ECER is held in a new location each year – since 1995 it has taken place in more than 20 countries (https://eera-ecer.de/previous-ecers). Each conference has a theme that provides a framework for guest speakers, selected symposia as well as "Special Calls" of individual Networks. But every ECER accepts submissions from the broad field of educational research.

> **The ECER mission statement**
>
> The aim of the 'European Conference on Educational research' is to create an inclusive platform for initiating, reporting, discussing and promoting high quality educational research, that not only acknowledges its own context but also recognises wider, transnational contexts with their social, cultural and political similarities and differences. The conference is organised for emerging, as well as experienced, researchers and builds on and promotes free and open dialogue and critical discussion. It has a comprehensive approach to theory, methods, arguments, findings and research ethics.

Most of the conference programme is made up of double-blind peer-reviewed submissions from conference participants reviewed by EERA's 34 Networks (organised by discipline or research focus). Joint sessions

encourage interdisciplinary exchange and cooperation amongst Networks. Additionally, there are special "EERA Sessions" which serve as a platform for discussion and exchange on relevant, current topics. In addition to the participant submissions and the keynotes, EERA's Council and various Working Groups offer sessions on current topics such as research funding, the significance of the Social Sciences and Humanities in European programmes as well as on current strategic questions. Joint symposia with the World Educational Research Association (WERA) make it possible for European findings and challenges to be presented within a global perspective.

Each year guest speakers are invited to give a keynote on the theme of the current conference, these include researchers from the local research community and international researchers.

Since 2015 EERA aims to lower the environmental impact of the annual conferences. EERA Council has developed a list of suggested sustainability measures, covering catering (seasonal, regional, organic when possible etc), waste reduction, fair contracting, accessibility etc, according to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The local organisers are asked to realise as many of these suggestions as possible and to add other options if available.

ECER has, since 1995, been hosted by more than 20 EERA member countries from Portugal to Armenia and from Slovenia to Finland. EERA is interested in bringing ECER to countries where the conference has not been before and to research communities which are not always able to travel to central European conference venues. For an overview of previous ECER venues see the EERA website: https://eera-ecer.de/previous-ecers

2.) Interested in Hosting an ECER?

ECER is a collaborative project of the Local Organising Committee (LOC) and EERA. LOC is usually based in a university and supported by one or more EERA member associations. There is a strong recommendation that LOC cooperates with professional conference agencies, at least for ensuring and booking hotel capacity. The contract for hosting an ECER is between EERA and the hosting university. EERA will pay a per head fee for each registered paying ECER delegate plus a lunch compensation for delegates registered for ERC.

The Local Organising Committee will work in close cooperation with the EERA Office and take responsibility for everything that needs to be done at the Conference venue while reviewing and programme planning will be done by the EERA Networks. EERA Office will be responsible for marketing, participant communication, registrations and payments and guide LOC through the ECER deadlines and preparation process.

LOC and EERA Council will jointly decide on the conference theme and the keynote speakers.

If you are interested in hosting an ECER please consider the following checklist…

ECER Checklist	
1. Our university has an interest in supporting the networking of European and international researchers	
2. Our university can build a team with experience in organising conferences	
3. We are in contact with and have the support of the national EERA member association	
4. Our university can provide the necessary space for ECER:	
70-80 rooms in parallel (min. 25 persons capacity) and 4 lecture halls for a min of 500 persons each (the larger, the better)	
all rooms equipped with a computer and a projector, preferably also with audio system (microphone, speakers)	
an exhibition area for approx. 15 publishers	
a poster exhibition space for about 80 posters	
a central area for check-in and help desks	
The university is generally accessible (for wheelchairs, hearing loops in large halls, microphones and loudspeakers in majority of rooms, accessible toilets)	
These spaces are available for one week either end of August or not later than mid-September	
5. We have seen the budget grid and know that the budget will be in EURO	
6. We feel confident that we can develop a budget taking into account that EERA's contribution is usually about 130 € per participant, including any occurring sales taxes (VAT).	
7. There is enough hotel capacity in the area to host up to 3500 people in the vicinity of the conference venue.	

3.) Tasks of LOC and EERA – how we share the work

As described above, ECER is a joint project of the Local Organising Committee (LOC) and EERA. The Local Organising Committee will be responsible for everything that needs to be done at the Conference venue while reviewing and programme planning will be done by the EERA Networks, supported by EERA Office.

EERA Office will be responsible for the Call for Proposals, marketing, participant communication, registrations/payments and for guiding LOC through the ECER deadlines and preparation process. LOC and EERA Council will jointly decide on the conference theme and the keynote speakers.

ECER lasts for 3.5 days and is preceded by and partly overlaps with the 2-day Emerging Researchers' Conference (ERC). The conference dates are usually between the end of August and mid-September. A time conflict with any other major conference needs to be avoided whenever possible.

The number of delegates is 300-400 for the ERC and around 2,500-3,000 for ECER. ECER has about 900 conference sessions, hosts a poster exhibition, a publishers' exhibition which welcomes about 10 –
15 publishers each year plus 3 - 4 EERA member associations organise a meet and greet.

ECER takes place within a university, although other conference sites may be considered in exceptional cases, if the budget stays within limits.

Merging ECER with the annual conference of a national association can create problems and is not a preferred option.

Preparing ECER includes a.) Academic tasks, b.) Establishing a budget, c.) Communication with participants including registration and payments, d.) Reviewing and programme planning, and e.) On-site organisation.

Communication throughout the planning and preparation processes is key. EERA Office and LOC will work closely together and maintain regular contact through online meetings. Contact between LOC and EERA Council is maintained via participation in the Council meetings (March and August/September of the year prior of the planned ECER and 1-2 times two years before) Also, LOC is strongly encouraged to participate in ECERs the years before their ECER.

Tasks between LOC, EERA Council, Link Convenors, the Emerging Researchers' Group (ERG) and EERA Office are shared as follows:

A) Academic Tasks, Framing the Content of the Conference

a1. Conference Theme and Keynote Speakers
Theme and Keynote Speakers for ECER and ERC are suggested to Council by the "Scientific Committee" which includes: a member of the LOC, the EERA President, the EERA Secretary General, EERA Networks' Representative on Council, the ERG representative and the EERJ Representative on Council. The EERA President initiates the process.

The Conference theme is usually broad and is designed to provide a framework for keynote speakers and other invited guests. The theme will also provide a guideline for Networks e.g. in preparing symposia. The theme must relate to a European perspective. See the timeline and the General Regulations for more details.
Usually there is at least one Keynote speaker from the country/region where the ECER is organised.

a2. EERA Sessions
As part of the ECER programme, LOC is invited to organise one or two EERA sessions which present the national educational system and/or discuss national policies/issues on educational research.
EERA Sessions are sessions that are of interest to a broad group of participants and are initiated by LOC, Council, EERJ or Network convenors often in cooperation between two of these groups.
EERA Sessions run parallel to the Network Sessions and there will be no more than one EERA Session per time slot. EERA Sessions are handed in to EERA Office after a Call has been issued in December before the conference. An evaluation committee will review the suggestions. More details on EERA Sessions and the preparation and decision process linked to them can be found in the general regulations.

a3. ERG
LOC usually supports ERC by providing mentors/chairpersons for ERC sessions and developing ideas for an Interactive Session. LOC also supports the organisation of a lunch with local academics by identifying colleagues to participate. In addition, LOC arranges an Interactive Session for the Emerging Researchers' Conference in close cooperations with the Link Convenor of the Emerging Researchers' Group.

B.) Establishing the budget

The conference budget and the per-head payment from EERA to LOC are negotiated on the basis of the completed budget planning grid (see annex). The budget has to be set up in Euro and take into account that EERA will usually contribute approx. 130 Euro per paying participant (incl. potentially occurring VAT). The budget is a prerequisite for the conference contract.

C.) Reviewing and Programme Planning

The academic part of **reviewing and establishing the programme** for ECER and the Emerging Researchers' Conference is done by the EERA Networks and organised through the EERA Office. This includes the room allocation. The group of Link Convenors of EERA Networks forms the "Programme Committee" of the conference.

D.) Marketing, Participants Communication, ECER Fees and Registration

EERA Office issues the Call for Proposals, guides authors through the submission process and ensures that information about the conference is widely spread. All communication with submitters and participants is taken care of by EERA Office. This includes participants' registration and payment for the conference. **ECER fees are set by the EERA council.** The participant fees vary as there are reductions for members of an EERA Member Association, for those currently registered as post-graduate students, for people residing in a low GDP country (a list of low GDP countries is published each year on the conference website) and for all who register within the "early bird registration" time period.

E.) On-Site Organisation

While it is not possible to list all duties in detail, the **Local Organising Committee** will be responsible for everything that needs to be done at the conference venue. Please check the attached timeline to see when specific work packages are due. LOC needs to provide spaces for participant check-in, publishers' and poster exhibition, session rooms (approximately 75 rooms in different sizes plus at least four big lecture halls (minimum of 500 seats each) for keynotes and invited events). LOC needs to provide technical equipment (LCD projectors, microphones and computers in all rooms) plus technical support and free Wi-Fi for all delegates. LOC also organises the catering for coffee breaks, the receptions and social events. As EERA tries to lower the environmental impact of the conference, we also request that local organisers support this by arranging paper recycling, avoiding plastics, and preferring local and organic producers wherever appropriate. See the draft contract and its annex for more details.

Another crucial part of the work of the LOC is developing **clear signposting** for ECER delegates. All buildings used for the conference need to be identified easily. Signposts in the building directing delegates to rooms must have a corporate design, including the logos of the organising parties.

LOC should also ensure that there are **lunch options** available on the campus and if necessary, negotiate opening hours with on campus coffee shops/canteens.
LOC also needs to provide information on how and where to **book hotels** plus a hotel booking platform. A range of hotel rooms, therefore, needs to be reserved for ECER delegates at an early stage. Usually this is outsourced to a booking company or the city tourism office. If available, student accommodation is a preferred option for low budget accommodation.

As EERA adopts a more sustainable policy, LOC is asked to refrain for producing a conference flyer but prepare a video instead. Also, LOC should present themselves within the exhibition in the conference the year before (e.g. a stand and posters). LOC is also asked to prepare content to be included on the conference website (managed by EERA Office), such as maps of the venue, travel guidance etc.

Roadmap to ECER - Major steps in preparation

When?	What?	How?	Who?
Ideally 4 years before the planned event (until September)	Decision on proposal for hosting an ECER	To prepare the proposal, please be in touch with EERA Office and and the national EERA member association.	Future LOC
Ideally March 3 years before	Approval of future venue/LOC	Council Meeting	EERA Council
From March until ideally Sept.	Budget negotiations	Email and online meetings	LOC and EERA executives
Ideally Sept. 3 years before	Signed contract		LOC representative and EERA President and Treasurer
Ideally March 2 years before the ECER	Establishing working group (LOC/Council Members) on the theme and the keynote speakers	LOC suggests one member	EERA Council
Ideally Sept 2 years before ECER	Decision on Theme	Council meeting	EERA Council (based on working group discussion)
March **1 year before** the ECER	Decision on Keynotes	Council meeting	EERA Council (based on working group discussion)
ECER **1 year before** the ECER	Leaflet (PDF)/ or preferred Video and posters	Announcement on the conference the year before	LOC
ECER **1 year before** the ECER	Arrange a welcome desk /tourist info desk at that year's venue	Meet and Greet potential participants	LOC
ECER **1 year before** the ECER	First information on website, including dates, venue, theme and keynotes		LOC to provide information and photos, EERA Office to set up website
November 1 year before the conference	Travel information including bike rental options (going green for the website)	Text provided by LOC for inclusion in EERA website.	LOC
Latest January in the conference year	List of reserved conference rooms with room details to be handed over to EERA Office	Excel sheet including names, floor, size, equipment etc.	LOC
Latest January in the conference year	Hotel and booking information platform	Provided by LOC to be tested and included in website by EERA Office	LOC
February in the conference year	Submission of EERA Sessions	Through EERA Office after general call for EERA Sessions	LOC

March- June in the conference Year	Provide information packages for participants (maps, lunch options, accessibility, sustainability)	Distribution depending on Apps and Software used by EERA Office	LOC+ EERA Office
Latest April in the year of conference	List of useful apps in the hosting city, e.g. public transport, culture, bike rental etc.		LOC
Latest June / July in the year of the conference	Develop layout for Badges and conference signage	In cooperation with EERA Office	LOC

4.) How to submit a proposal

A proposal to host an EERA Conference should as a standard include the following information:

1. **Name and legal status of the responsible organising body / university/school/faculty**.
   Please also explain how your institution can contribute to ECER: What makes it a good place for hosting ECER? Please provide evidence for earlier successful experience in (Conference) organisation.

2. **Details on the experience of the University in organising big events**
   Name of conference:
   Year of conference:
   Length of conference:
   Number of sessions:
   Organising body/team:
   Number of delegates - national / international:

3. **Who will lead the organisation of the conference – as academic Head of LOC and as administrative contact for EERA Office?**
   Please also list additional colleagues and their affiliation for the Organising Committee. The LOC team should include contacts for technical questions (WLAN, PCs, etc.) and should nominate a colleague to be a contact person for the ERG Conference.

4. **Location of the conference and short description of the facilities**
   - Number of rooms in different sizes; general setup/equipment of rooms, comfort, possibility of concentration of sessions.
   - Are there enough general areas and can they be used? (for check-in, publishers, networking, meet and greet, posters, etc). What will be the places for social events?
   - If the Conference has to take place in more than one building, please highlight the distance between them.
   - Please note that the conference also includes a book exhibition with some 15 - 20 publishers and a poster exhibition (approx. 80-100 posters) which need to be located in a central area during ECER.
   - Who will act as IT Support?
   - Will you work with professional conference organisers?
   - Is there Eduroam?
   - How will you provide WIFI throughout the conference?
   - Describe the campus: how accessible is it? Is there a cafeteria or food outlets?

5. **A note on the accommodation** that can be used for the Main and Emerging Researchers' Conference plus the range of prices (at current prices). As the Emerging Researchers' Conference expects about 200-300 young researchers, sufficient accommodation at low cost needs to be provided. Inform how hotel booking will be arranged; this **cannot be processed** via the EERA Office and needs to be handled by the LOC (e.g. via a booking agency)

- How many beds in /which categories/prices are available in town?
- What is the distance to radius around the venue?
- Will there be a booking partner?
- If there were large conferences before who supported the organisers with bookings?
- Will there be options to block rooms? How many?
- What are the connections and schedules to the conference venue?
- Is there student accommodation that can be used by participants?

6. **Initial travel information and visa regulations:** A note on access from other parts of Europe; note on access from next airport(s) to city centre/campus, information on **who would need visa** in order to access the hosting country, note on access to the Conference venue/university campus and on public transport in the host city.

7. **Financial impact for EERA and for participants**
For participants: what is the average price for a cappuccino + croissant, a "business" lunch in a near to university restaurant, a public transport ticket.

8. **Proposed dates for the conference or options**
(N.B.: not in parallel with other major conferences in the field).

9. **Are there other supporters who contribute to the conference?**

10. **Please include a letter of support** from the national EERA member association
(see Council website)

11. **Proposal to be sent to EERA Office.**
Feel free to be in touch for information.

5.) How EERA will evaluate incoming proposals

In addition to the details given in the proposal to host an ECER, EERA will also consider the following when evaluating a bid. Final decisions are made by the EERA Council.
1. Collaboration with national association/s
2. Relevance of engagement with regional educational research community (impact)
3. Contribution to balance between regions of Europe, high/low cost, new/old member associations
4. Financial impact for EERA
5. Other relevant details (political situation, etc.)