

ORGANISING CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES - PRACTICAL GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICES



Tiina Heino, National Library of Health Sciences - Terkko, Helsinki, Finland
Ann Liljegren, Kliniska centralbiblioteket, Sahlgrenska Universitetssjukhuset Gothenburg, Sweden
Tuulevi Ovaska, Kuopio University Hospital Medical Library, Kuopio, Finland

GENERAL

Continuing education courses (CEC) are usually organized before an EAHIL conference or workshop in the beginning of the week. They are meant for all kinds of conference participants from beginners to experts: the topics should range from database training sessions to managerial issues and from practical PC class courses on e.g. new tools to brainstorming type workshops. There are usually both half-day and all-day CECs. CEC teachers are often, but not necessarily, EAHIL members who are experts on their fields. Other teachers and experts may very well be recruited.

CHECKLIST

Costs & incomes

Teachers:

- Contract with the teachers
- Orientating the teachers
- Letter to the teachers:
- Ask time of arrival
- Ask power points in advance (for handouts)
- Ask if special devices needed
- Tell how to get to the CEC-course
- Tell how many participants on their courses
- Tell starting time, coffee time, ending time, and information about lunch possibilities

Transportation

Work schedules:

- Who will be taking care of each CEC (teacher, premises) & who will sit at the reception for guidance to the participants?

Making signposts:

- Doors: teacher, topic, time
- Schedule + map of premises + lunch places

Coffee arrangements:

- Coffee/tea/water/cup/napkin orders
- Coffee breaks 20 minutes (+10 min for coming and going)

Copy handouts:

Usernames and passwords for participants (PC classes)

- IT-personnel have to be notified. Has to be double checked!
- Phone number to call if IT-problems!

Certificates for the participants

Feedback forms

Prepare to answer all kinds of questions: about the conference, bus timetables, tourist information etc. Have city maps available.

Consider giving conference bags to CEC-participants already at the CEC desk.

BUDGETING

The principle is that the costs of CEC have to be covered by CEC income. CECs have their own budget, separate from conference/workshop budget. Before starting to contact teachers, figure out how much can be paid.

Some basic rules for the compensation:

When the teacher is:

an EAHIL-member:

- cover at least something, e.g. 2 nights' accommodation + part of the travelling costs.

a non EAHIL-member:

- negotiate a reasonable price.

from a company teaching a subject desired by organizers:

- cover at least something, e.g. 2 nights' accommodation + visibility for the company

from a company teaching their own databases:

- visibility for the company

DO'S AND DONT'S

You cannot start too early. It takes time to plan, to discuss and decide the subjects, to find and contact the possible teachers. Choose an easy tool (e.g. a wiki) for distributing the information among the CEC working group. Things tend to change and the information must always be up-to-date.

Cooperation within the CEC working group should be easy and not cause any additional stress. The number of members of the group should be 3-4. They can be from different countries as modern tools overcome distances. All members of the working group should have enough time allocated for the CEC planning and tasks.

Share tasks according to working group members' abilities:

- Who's good in budgeting?
- Who has networks and can ask around for teachers?
- Who has local contact and can organize rooms, IT stuff, coffees...?
- Who's ready to maintain the information in the wiki?

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Have the same rules, practices and arrangements for all teachers and all courses - unless there's a special reason for an exception.

Have all the courses in the same building or at least very near. The ideal would perhaps be the same venue as the conference but that's not often possible.

Cooperate closely with both IPC and LOC. It would be good if one member of the CEC working group is also a member of the LOC (or could at least attend the LOC meetings), and keep closely in touch with the chair or the secretary of the IPC.

