

EUROMECH Colloquia

These notes are intended to indicate to potential Chairpersons the purpose and character of EUROMECH Colloquia, and to provide guidance for their conduct based on past experience.

The Purpose of EUROMECH Colloquia

The purpose of EUROMECH Colloquia is to provide opportunities for scientists from all parts of Europe to meet each other and to discuss their current research. Scientists and engineers in the small and medium-sized countries in Europe are in special need of mutual support and scientific exchanges, since none of these countries by themselves can cover all aspects of mechanics extensively. Europe is a compact geographic area, so that rapidly planned, inexpensive meetings are possible. By holding such meetings, we hope to improve scientific communication and thereby advance the development of mechanics.

Essential features of EUROMECH Colloquia are that they are specialized in content, small in size and informal in character. This type of scientific meeting has been found in practice to give good results and to meet a definite need.

Selection of Chairpersons for Colloquia

EUROMECH Colloquia are organized under the auspices of the EUROMECH Council, which has about ten members drawn from the various countries in Europe. The Chairperson of each Colloquium is appointed by the Council. Once appointed, the Chairperson is fully and legally responsible for the planning and running of his or her Colloquium, as well as for its financial sustainability. Two Co-Chairpersons in different countries are often appointed to organize a EUROMECH Colloquium, in order to ensure that different aspects of a topic are covered or different parts of Europe are well represented. In such cases one of the two Co-Chairpersons is responsible for the local arrangements, but both are responsible for the selection of participants and for the scientific programme. References to a single Chairperson in the remainder of this document may be understood to allow shared responsibility.

Character of a Colloquium

A EUROMECH Colloquium should normally extend over two to three days, according to need. It is usually desirable to divide the programme into several sessions which allow coherent discussion of

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particular aspects of the topic of the Colloquium. However, there must be no parallel sessions; this applies also to poster sessions. The objectives of EUROMECH Colloquia are furthered by arrangements which allow all participants to be accommodated in the same neighbourhood and within easy walking distance of the meeting room.

Participation in a Colloquium is at the invitation of the Chairperson. A number of participants between 40 and 60 should be envisaged, and the number from outside the host country should be at least half the total. Reasonable representation from all parts of Europe is important.

Preparation for a Colloquium

As soon as a EUROMECH Colloquium proposal has been accepted by the Council (normally at a meeting in April of the year preceding the Colloquium), the Chairperson should begin preparation.

The first step is to decide on the precise title, date and location of the Colloquium. This information should be sent within a month, together with the title, initials, family name, address, telephone number, fax number and email address of the Chairperson, to the Secretary General of EUROMECH. These details will be used for Colloquium publicity on the EUROMECH website, in scientific journals and in the EUROMECH Newsletter. The next step should be to prepare an announcement for the Colloquium, with a description of the intended scope and the topics to be discussed. This announcement should be about 100 words in length and should be sent as a Word or Text document by email to prospective participants, to anyone who could help to find participants, and to the Secretary General of EUROMECH. The Secretary General will use the announcement when scientists ask for information about a Colloquium, as well as for further publicity.

The Chairperson is asked to quote the number assigned to his or her Colloquium on all appropriate documents, correspondence, announcements etc. Documents should carry the EUROMECH logo at the top left corner and wherever possible, letters should use the official letterhead. Both the logo and letterhead can be downloaded from the EUROMECH website www.euomech.org in various electronic formats. The number of the Colloquium may also be added immediately after 'EUROMECH' (e.g. EUROMECH Colloquium 640).

The Chairperson will be expected to provide participants with essential information about the Colloquium venue, accommodation and travel.

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Selection of Participants

Colloquium organizers are required to be members of EUROMECH. As such, they have online access to the list of members of the society and they may readily check the membership status of prospective colloquium delegates.

Participation in a EUROMECH Colloquium is at the invitation of the Chairperson. The success of the meeting will depend critically on the quality and relevance of the participants chosen by the Chairperson. Provided that the topic of the Colloquium has been chosen carefully and made sufficiently narrow, the number of the scientists in Europe who would want to take part should not be unduly large.

Participants should be actively interested in the subject of the Colloquium, and should have made useful contributions to it. People who have the capacity to discuss problems in an illuminating way are especially welcome. Many of the active and productive workers may be rather young and not known internationally yet. A special effort should therefore be made to identify them. Considerations of prestige should be ignored when choosing participants, and formal representatives of organizations are not normally appropriate. There is no objection to the presence of a few research students from the host institution, but other 'observers' should not be included.

Identifying the best participants is the most important part of a chairperson's job, and also the most difficult. He or she should not be satisfied with a list of invitees until it contains reasonable representation from all parts of Europe. A Chairperson should feel free also to invite a few scientists from outside Europe who are likely to make especially valuable contributions to the meeting.

Participants should be asked to provide an abstract of the work they wish to report; the programme will eventually be made up on the basis of abstracts. The Chairperson will usually combine them all into a booklet for distribution to participants at the meeting. Speculative research and unfinished work may be presented, since an important objective of the meeting is to stimulate and assist current and adventurous research.

Design of the Scientific Programme

It is usually desirable to divide the programme into several successive sessions which allow coherent discussion of particular aspects of the topic of the Colloquium. In many cases introductory or review lectures are valuable, and the Chairperson may wish to ask well-qualified

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people to give them. Ample time should be left in the programme for breaks and for unprepared discussions. A Chairperson may wish to include one or two poster sessions. Some time should be set aside near the end of the Colloquium for a final discussion when some of the new developments reported at the meeting may be taken up and ideas for further lines of research considered. This final discussion might be initiated by a small panel of speakers. A possible further item for consideration is whether there is a need for another Colloquium on the same or a related topic after two or three years.

Typescripts of papers presented at a Colloquium are not requested, and a volume of proceedings is not normally published. The Chairperson or one of his colleagues may think it worthwhile to prepare a report on the scientific developments discussed at a Colloquium and submit it (within a month or two, to avoid loss of topical interest) for publication in an appropriate journal. Sometimes, papers from a EUROMECH Colloquium have been published in a special issue of a journal after a normal reviewing procedure.

Running a Colloquium

The Chairperson may decide to take the chair himself throughout the Colloquium, or may ask a few experienced participants to act as chairpersons for the different sessions. The Chairperson, possibly working with a scientific committee, should remain in control of the Colloquium and, if desirable, adapt the programme in the light of the discussion and papers given up to that point. More than anyone else, the Chairperson will influence the way in which the discussion is conducted and the 'atmosphere' of the Colloquium. The discussion in an ideal Colloquium should be lively, informal and penetrating. Any timetable which is specified in the programme needs not be adhered to rigidly, since it may be assumed that all participants are attending all sessions, and if spontaneous discussion is becoming interesting it should be allowed to continue.

Finance

The cost of holding a EUROMECH Colloquium should be kept low; only in this way can a suitable number of Colloquia be held each year. The host institution can apply for a EUROMECH grant of € 2000. The payment will be made in two instalments: € 1000 is transferred first and the remaining € 1000 will be transferred once the organizers have sent their Colloquium report and the list of newly registered EUROMECH members. The cost of organizing the meeting has to be covered by the host institution. Participants are generally expected to cover their own travel and subsistence expenses, but the Council is

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always grateful for any support that a chairperson is able to obtain from local, national or other sources.

Additional financial support may be sought from the European Science Foundation, via their exploratory workshop program (<http://www.esf.org/activities/exploratory-workshops.html>).

Sometimes, Chairpersons have been able to obtain grants from bodies in their own countries to meet the cost of receptions and entertainment of participants.

The EUROMECH Council cannot be held responsible for any financial deficit resulting from running the Colloquium.

Website

Setting up a dedicated website for each colloquium is the easiest way to handle and circulate the information attached to such an event (venue, program, registration etc...). As a service to EUROMECH Colloquium organizers and in order to provide all colloquia with a common graphical identity, a template for websites has been designed by a professional web company. Its use is mandatory for all colloquia. More information can be obtained from the EUROMECH Management Advisor Dr. Sara Guttilla (info@euromech.org).

Registration

The Chairperson should inform all participants that EUROMECH membership is expected in order to register at the Colloquium. Non-members who wish to participate become members for 2 years automatically when they register for the Colloquium. Subsequently, they will be invited to renew their membership. The EUROMECH registration form will be added to the website upon request to the EUROMECH Management Advisor (info@euromech.org).

The full registration fee should include the annual subscription (€30) for each participant who is not a member of EUROMECH prior to registration. This is additional to the amount which the Chairperson charges in order to cover local costs, and is to be paid by the Chairperson to the EUROMECH Treasurer after the Colloquium. Two categories of registration fee should be indicated as follows: (I) the full registration fee and (II) the discounted registration fee (€30 less) for individual and joint members of EUROMECH. All members of EUROMECH should identify themselves as such when registering, in order to attract the discount of €30.

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After a Colloquium

A few important tasks remain to be carried out by the Chairperson for the Secretary General and the Treasurer respectively, **within one month** of the end of the Colloquium:

1. A scientific report on the Colloquium should be prepared for the EUROMECH Council using the dedicated page on the website template. The emphasis should be more on science than social arrangements. The scientific part of this report will be published in the yearly EUROMECH Newsletter and posted on the EUROMECH website. The report should include information on the scientific developments discussed at the Colloquium, the numbers of participants from different countries, the financial arrangements and any opinions or suggestions for the future. A complete set of the documents prepared for the Colloquium participants should be sent (please send it as a Word document by email) to the **Secretary General**.
2. A list of all participants, indicating members and non-members, together with a statement of the total of EUROMECH components of the registration fee (€30 per person) collected from non-members and the non-member registration forms, should be provided to the **Treasurer**. This list is generated automatically by the registration form provided by the EUROMECH Management Advisor and attached to the EC website.
3. Once the scientific report is approved, the difference between the second instalment and the membership fees collected from new EUROMECH members by the Colloquium will be transferred to the EC account (you do not have to take any action for this).

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