Handout on Conference Organization (sequel 1)
(Florence March, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3)
This is a synthesis of all the aspects you should have in mind when you organize a conference, in scientific, logistical and practical terms.   The handout will be uploaded to the Share-point with all workshop materials after the workshop. The ESRs will have an opportunity to discuss it online with the author.

You should start planning a conference between 6 months in advance (if it is a study day) and 12 months in advance (for a two-day conference involving 15-20 speakers). If the conference is to welcome over 80-100 participants, it will be necessary to start planning it 2 years in advance.

The contents and the structure of the event must be organised simultaneously.

1. Choice of the topic

The topic of the conference is related to the research conducted by the organisers within their respective research centre(s). A conference is a way to explore collectively a subject you work on as a researcher or as a team, either in a programme that is just starting, or in progress, or coming to an end (in this case the conference will act both as a synthesis and a catalyst of new perspectives). The conference will identify you and your institution(s) as specialists of the topic.

Phrasing the topic:

The title of the conference must be precise, concise and clear. It must specify the period concerned, if relevant (for ex. "in the early modern period" or "16th-18th centuries"), and the geographical and cultural area(s), if relevant (for ex. "in Europe"). It may include a subtitle if necessary.

Ex of conference titles:
- What can Shakespeare do for us?/What can we do with Shakespeare?
- Captain Cook after 250 Years: Re-exploring the voyages of James Cook
- The Force of Commerce: Commerce, economy and trade dynamics in English-speaking worlds in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

2. Choosing dates and venue

The organisers should pick up a date that doesn't conflict with a bank holiday in the university where the conference will take place, nor – if possible – with another major scientific event in the city (in which case accommodation may turn out difficult to organise).

The venue should be the academic institution for which the organisers, or several of the organisers, or at least one of them, are/is working.

3. Setting up a scientific committee and an organising committee

The scientific committee will be in charge of:
- Writing and validating the call for papers
- Selecting the proposals
- Structuring the scientific programme
- Organising the publication of the proceedings, if relevant

The organising committee will be in charge of:
- The fundraising and budget
- The logistics: accommodation, catering, communication, booking rooms, technical and practical matters

The main organisers (between 2 and 4 researchers specialising in the topic proposed for the conference) will be on both committees.
The **scientific committee** may include between 6 and 10 members and should preferably be **international**.
The **organising committee** may include 4 to 6 members (to which number must be added the welcome team who will help during the conference). The organising committee will preferably be **local** (it is much easier to organise an event in an institution and on premises that are familiar).

SCIENTIFIC ORGANISATION

The scientific committee should establish a schedule of the different steps to be taken:
- Writing the call for papers (CFP)
- Circulating the CFP
- Deadline for submitting proposals
- Notifying the authors of the proposals of their acceptance or rejection
- Setting up the scientific programme
- In the aftermath of the conference: send to the participants precise instructions to transform their oral papers into texts to be published (formatting and style guide + deadline for submitting the written papers); schedule for reading and assessing the papers; deadline for submitting the papers according to the suggestions and remarks of the readers; writing of the general introduction; submission of the manuscript to the selected publishing house.

4. **Writing and circulating the call for papers**

The call for papers must define and problematise the topic, suggest a number of disciplinary or interdisciplinary approaches to deal with it, provide a conceptual framework and a bibliography.
It should specify:
- the dates and venue of the conference,
- the deadline for sending abstracts and bionotes,

-   the people to whom abstracts and bionotes should be sent, and their electronic addresses,
-   the length of both abstract and bionote,
-   the date when authors will be notified of the acceptance or rejection of their proposals (generally: within one month after the deadline for submission),
-   the composition of the scientific and organising committees,
-   the details about the publication of the proceedings, if relevant.

When validated by the scientific committee, the CFP can be circulated. The organisers may target academic networks, scholarly societies, social networks…

Ex of a CFP:

Call for papers: Shakespeare and Actors
Call for papers for the 2020 Société Française Shakespeare conference
Paris, Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe, 9-11 January 2020
URL: https://journals.openedition.org/shakespeare/4551

"All the world's a stage, / And all the men and women merely players" (2.7.139-40), says Jaques in *As You Like It*, suggesting that playing is inherent to life itself. Throughout their dramatic production, Shakespeare and his contemporaries were keen on showcasing the omnipresence of actors while also stressing the instability of their status. As a theatrical practitioner himself, Shakespeare wrote primarily for his company and his rhythmic language was specifically designed for being projected from a stage. It is thus hardly a surprise to find so many metadramatic and metatheatrical allusions on the early modern stage, from the mechanicals in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to the travelling actors in *Hamlet*, instances of *mise en abyme* of the theatrical world abound, emphasising the motif of *theatrum mundi*. Together, they call for a reflection on the uncertain boundaries between stage and life, and on the material conditions surrounding the acting profession.
Early modern playwrights seldom missed an opportunity to play on the uncertainty generated by boy actors performing female parts, given women were excluded from the professional stage until the Restoration. While sometimes joking on the male actors' cross-dressing, they also subtly rely on the permeability of gendered identities in the theatre to reconfigure desire. "Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness, / Wherein the pregnant enemy does much," young Viola cries out disguised as a page in *Twelfth Night*. If the disguise complicates identities and enmeshes the heroine in a love tangle, however, it also conjures up hitherto unknown feelings in her and helps enact what Stephen Greenblatt called "self-fashioning," namely the shaping of one's social and sexual identities.
Yet, dramatists did not always judge actors kindly, for their means of livelihood bore the mark of infamy, contrary to poets. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare emphasises the frailty of the "poor player, / Who struts and frets his hour upon the stage, / And then is heard no more" (5.5.24-26) and he reminds us of the ephemeral quality of performance. In *Hamlet*, he makes fun of those who overplay or strive to "bellow" their cues (3.2.2), and finds fault with clowns who improvise at the expense of the playtext. He portrays mediocre, imperfect actors overwhelmed by stage fright, who forget their lines and spoil the part, as in *Sonnet* 23. We know today that a Renaissance actor's ability to learn his lines was exceptional. Grammar school education particularly cultivated this skill in children from an early age by making them learn by heart whole segments from the classics. Acting styles were steeped in such rhetoric.

Speech acts and passions that were played out on stage were associated with a particular rhetorical form and style, providing a whole repertory of speech codes playwrights used and subverted.

While early modern playwrights nowhere claimed that the most competent actor is the one who best keeps his temper, as Diderot later would in France, some of their characters seem to be born actors in full control of the arts of manipulation and illusion. They are hypocrites in the everyday sense as well as the etymological sense of the term — from the Greek term, ὑποκριτής, *hupokritḗs*, which means "stage actor" or "one who recites".

In spite of the players' imperfections at which Shakespeare and his contemporaries delighted in poking fun, showing the play's seams, playwrights also defended those who brought their own worlds to the stage. Actors certainly needed their support at a time when Puritans were beginning to make themselves heard, threatening the profession. In *An Apology for Actors* (1612), Thomas Heywood praised the dignity of actors in response to the attacks of such critics as John Northbrooke or Stephen Gosson. An actor had to be multi-talented. He had to memorize, play, sing, dance, improvise, and adjust to the changing material conditions of the stage. Despite very limited rehearsal time, early modern actors were able to produce meaning almost instinctively, and a playwright's success ultimately depended on the players' ability to perform their plays. Even today, it is mostly up to actors to update the potentialities of the Shakespearean text and to make characters from the past our contemporaries. French actor Denis Podalydès claims that "Shakespeare is every actor's dream" ("Shakespeare Album," La Pléiade, Gallimard, 2016). Playing early modern parts allows actors today to reflect on their own acting style. The actor and his text were indeed front and center in the creative process, in the writing, directing and stage business of early modern companies, which constantly needed to adapt to the changing material conditions of the stage. Such practices may help today's theatrical practitioners explore the multiple possibilities that are offered to them as they move from page to stage, from collaborative writing to collaborative performance.

This conference aims to bring together early modern scholars, theatre historians, actors, directors and filmmakers to discuss the ways in which early modern drama still enriches our understanding of the actor's profession and place today in a world which sometimes seems to be nothing but a stage.

Possible topics may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- The actors' professionalisation in early modern drama
- Amateur practices in the early modern period and today
- The material conditions and organisation of theatrical companies
- The actors' apprenticeship
- The versatility of the actors who performed in public, private, court, and itinerant theatrical forms
- The praise and condemnation of histrionic arts
- Protection and patronage circuits
- The place of the comedy actor in society
- The rhetorical practices of actors on stage
- Declamation, voice and gestures
- The *mise en abyme* of performance and actor figures in early modern plays
- Histrions and jesters in early modern plays
- Duplicitous and hypocritical characters in early modern plays
- Great Shakespearean actors, from the 16th century to the present day
- The experience of acting an early modern part

5. Setting up the scientific programme

The organisers decide whether they invite (a) keynote speaker(s), knowing that it means having a budget to pay for his/her travel and accommodation.

They select the proposals that strictly deal with the topic of the conference, being careful that the selection mirrors a variety of approaches and includes speakers ranging from PhD candidates to senior researchers.

They notify the authors that their proposals have been accepted or rejected, and ask prospective contributors to confirm their participation in the conference.

Structuring the programme of the conference:
- group proposals according to their focus or approach, so as to build sessions of 3 or 4 papers that may resonate, cross-fertilise ideas and foster a collective discussion. If the conference intends to promote an interdisciplinary dialogue, it will be relevant to mix disciplinary approaches within a session. A specific title may be attributed to each session, so as to make clear what the papers within the session have in common.
- Chairs must be asked for each session. They may be part of the organising and scientific committees, speakers in other sessions of the conference, members of the research centre / academic institution organising the conference… Chairs are responsible for the timing of each paper and of the Q&A so as to respect the schedule, and they are in

charge of opening the floor to all participants. They may also ask the very first question(s) to launch the discussion.
- When planning the slots, keep in mind that the first slot will be devoted to the opening of the conference by officials and the organisers, and that the last day of the conference must end earlier to allow the participants to travel back home (when possible).
- The organisers may choose to allow time for questions after each paper or to keep all questions for the end of each session.
- Coffee breaks must be planned in the morning and in the afternoon, in between two sessions. Do not make them too short, as they have several purposes: allow informal discussion between the participants to continue the Q&A sessions, offer networking opportunities, create moments of conviviality that are essential to building a positive and constructive atmosphere. Eventually, they may be adjusted so as to catch up with the schedule if necessary (thus a 30 minute break may be shortened to 20 minutes).

In their closing speech at the end of the conference, the organisers may mention their intention to publish the proceedings of the conference or a selection of the papers delivered during the conference, if relevant.

Ex of a programme:

The Force of Commerce:
Commerce, economy and trade dynamics in English-speaking worlds
in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Conference programme

Friday 17 January 2020 - Morning

8h45-9h15 : Welcome coffee and opening of the conference by Anne Page (Chair of the Société d'Etudes Anglo-Américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles), Laurent Jaffro (director of PHARE) and André Lapidus (chair of ESHET – The European Society for the History of Economic Thought)

9h15-10h30 Session 1 | *Taming Trade: Literary and educational echoes of the new economy /* **Apprivoiser le commerce : Echos littéraires et éducatifs de la nouvelle économie** - Chair: Sophie Vasset (Université de Paris)
    9h15-9h35 Anne-Marie Miller-Blaise (Sorbonne-Nouvelle, Paris 3): « 'Places of Show': The Early Modern Exchange and the Economy of Wonder: Ben Jonson's *Entertainment at Britain's Burse* »
    9h35-9h55 Marie-Laure Massei-Chamayou and Claire Pignol (Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne): « La légitimation des dispositions économiques dans le roman anglais de la fin du 18e siècle »
    9h55-10h15 Alexandra Sippel (Université Jean-Jaurès, Toulouse): « Jane Marcet's *Conversations on Political Economy* (1816): how to teach foreign trade to women? »
    10h15-10h30 Discussion

10h30-11h   Coffee break

11h-12h40   Session 2 | *Going global / Première mondialisation* - Chair: Cyril Selzner (Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne)
     11h-11h20   Marco Sioli (Université de Milan): « Opening the Commerce with China and the Era of Clippers: The Journals of Samuel Shaw, First American Consul at Canton in 1786 »
     11h20-11h40 Kamila Benayada (Université d'Orléans): « Trade and Diplomacy: the US and the Barbary States in the late 18th c. »
     11h40-12h   Yasmeena Rajapakse (Independent scholar): « The social and political dynamics of trade in Ceylon in the 17th century: Focusing on the French presence in Trincomalee »
     12h-12h20   Benoît Walraevens (Université de Caen-Normandie) : « Adam Smith et *l'Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* de l'abbé Raynal »
     12h20-12h40 Discussion

12h40-14h30 Lunch

<p align="center">**Friday 17 January 2020 – Afternoon**</p>

14h30-15h30 Plenary: Simon Middleton (College of William and Mary): « Embracing and Escaping Marx: The 'new history of capitalism' and the force of commerce in early modern America and the English-speaking world » - Chair: Elodie Peyrol-Kleiber (Poitiers)

15h30-16h00 Coffee break

16h-18h45   Annual General Meeting of the SEAA 17-18

18h45 Cocktail of the SEAA 17-18 (room and terrace on the 6th floor)

<p align="center">**SATURDAY 18 JANUARY 2020 - Morning**</p>

9h00-10h40   Session 3 | *Questioning the new commercial society / La nouvelle société commerciale en question* – Chair : Président : John Baker (Panthéon Sorbonne)
     9h00-9h20   Marion Leclair (Université d'Artois): « La force occultante du commerce : commerce contre industrie dans le discours radical du dernier XVIIIe siècle »
     9h20-9h40   Pierre Gervais (Sorbonne-Nouvelle, Paris 3): « Capitalisme ou société marchande ? Quelques réflexions théoriques et pratiques sur le fonctionnement économique à l''Âge du Commerce' »
     9h40-10h   Luc Borot (Université Paul-Valéry, Montpellier 3): « Commerce et mobilité sociale : une dynamique cachée de la pensée économique de James Harrington »
     10h-10h20   Allan Potofsky (Université de Paris): « Paris, the political economy of public safety in the city center, and the Great Fire of London »
     10h20-10h40 Discussion

10h40-11h   Coffee break

11h-12h30   *Roundtable on « Commerce: Trade and Sociability »* (in partnership with the GIS Sociabilités) - Chair: Valérie Capdeville (Université Paris 13)
Participants: Perry Gauci (Lincoln College, Oxford University), Laurent Jaffro (Paris 1), Alain Kerhervé (Université de Bretagne Occidentale), Arnaud Orain (Paris 8)

SATURDAY 18 JANUARY 2020 - AFTERNOON

12h30 Book Club Brunch | chaired by Ladan Niayesh (Université de Paris)
Meeting with Meredith Carroll, commissioning editor, Manchester University Press, Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Studies (international series of the SEAA 17-18).
Lunch

14h15-15h50 Session 4 | *The Way of Trade in the British Atlantic / L'art de Commercer dans l'espace atlantique britannique* - Chair: Bertrand Van Ruymbeke (Paris 8)
   14h15-14h35 Andy Cabot et Marie-Jeanne Rossignol (Université de Paris): « The Slave Trade Act of 1794 in the United States: Peace in a Time of War? »
   14h35-14h55 Emma Hart (Saint Andrews): « The Force of Custom in the British Atlantic Marketplace »
   14h55-15h15 Agnès Delahaye (Lyon 2 Louis-Lumière): « Investissement et modernité dans la Nouvelle-Angleterre coloniale »
   15h15-15h30 Discussion

15h30-15h50 Coffee break

15h50-17h30 Session 5 | *Trade and Economic Thought in the Scottish Enlightenment / Commerce et pensée économique dans les Lumières écossaises* – Chair : Jean Dellemotte (Panthéon Sorbonne)
   15h50-16h10 Daniel Diatkine (Université d'Evry / Paris-Saclay): « Quesnay/Smith : Les dangers du commerce impérial »
   16h10-16h30 Canpu Chen (Université Paris 8): « Always in Preparation for War: Hume on Commerce »
   16h30-16h50 Laurent Le Maux (Université de Bretagne Occidentale): « Monnaie et balance du commerce selon Richard Cantillon et David Hume »

16h50-17h15 Discussion

End of the conference at 17h15

LOGISTICS

6. Budget

The previsional budget should be realistic and list in two facing columns the revenue and expenses.

The **expenses** should include:
- The catering (coffee breaks, conference dinner, and possibly the lunches)
- The communication budget: the printing of posters and programmes
- If there is a keynote speaker: travel + accommodation

The **revenue** should include:
- A registration fee: the organisers must decide whether the registration fee will include the cost of the lunches or not;
- Funds granted by the organisers' institution(s): research centre(s), department(s);
- Subsidies and support granted by sponsors and partner institutions. These may take different forms: providing wine for the lunches, catering for a lunch, inviting the conference members to a cultural event or granting them reduced tickets, providing goodies…
  To ask for funds and subsidies, the organisers should prepare a file with the CFP, previsional programme and budget.

7. Booking rooms

As soon as the dates and venue of the conference are chosen, the organisers must book (a) room(s) fitting the event and number of participants. They must make sure that the room(s) is/are equipped with a complete audiovisual system.

One to two months before the conference, they should book equipment (at their research centre or at the department), if relevant, and ensure that an audiovisual technician will be available during the event.

It may be useful to ask the participants to send their Powerpoints and/or videos in advance so as to test them before the conference.

8. Accommodation

Send the participants a list of hotels (websites) close to the venue of the conference with a range of prices (see if prices can be negotiated with some of them).

Book the rooms for the keynote speakers that are invited, if relevant.

9. Catering

Conference dinner:
For the sake of conviviality, the speakers, chairs and organisers should be invited at a conference dinner. The dinner is preferably to be organized in the middle of the conference (end of the first day if the conference lasts for two days), and a specific budget should be allotted to cover the costs of the event.

The guests will be asked well in advance:
- to confirm their presence at the conference dinner (to avoid paying for extra meals)

- to specify special diets, food allergies and intolerances. These will have to be taken into consideration when choosing the menu(s) in collaboration with the restaurant staff well before the dinner.

Coffee breaks:
Arrangements should be made well in advance with:
- A private caterer (being aware that this is the most expensive option)
- The catering services of the hosting institution/university
- The welcome committee (this is the cheapest option, but it also more demanding in terms of staff and organization). The welcome committee is expected to do the shopping the day before the conference (tea, coffee, milk and sugar, paper cups and napkins, stirrers made from recycled wood, biscuits, fresh and dried fruit…) and will possibly need to restock supplies of milk and fresh fruit during the conference.

Lunches
Again, there are several options:
- A buffet on the premises of the conference (in an adjacent room or courtyard, depending on the season), provided either by a private caterer or the catering services of the hosting university.
  The participants should be asked well in advance if they intend to participate in the conference lunch(es) – as they may have personal arrangements – and if they have special diets and food allergies and intolerances.
  According to the budget, the organisers must decide whether the participants are to pay for the lunch(es) or not.
- A lunch at the university cafeteria. Same suggestions as above.

10. Cultural event

Depending on the duration and the organisation of the conference, a cultural event in relation to the subject may be proposed to the participants (exhibition, performance, film…) on the premises of the conference or in a non-academic institution.

11. Communication

Several members of the organising committee can be specifically in charge of communicating about the conference:
- Setting up a website (with the CFP, programme, practical information such as how accessing the venue, etc.);
- Making a trailer of the conference as an appetiser!
- Finding a visual that will be displayed on all communication documents;
- Designing the programme and poster of the conference;
- Making sure that the logos of all the institutions and partners involved in the organization of the conference are displayed on the communication documents;
- Circulating the CFP, and then the programme, on professional, academic and non-academic (if relevant) mailing lists and websites;

- Negotiating goodies with the hosting institution and partners (notebooks, pens, tote bags, folders, drinking bottles with their logos);
- Signposting the event on campus and in the building to facilitate the participants's access to the room(s) of the conference. Make sure lavatories are signposted too.

Communication within the hosting institution:
- Make sure the security services and the technical services are informed of the event;
- Make sure that the officials that are expected to open the conference are asked to do so well in advance;

Communication with the partners (academic or non-academic):
- To get them to sponsor the conference
- To ask them for their logo if they support the conference
- To ask them for goodies with their logos

Communication with the participants in the conference:
- Notify them of the acceptance or rejection of their proposals;
- Send them a first message to specify the budgetary conditions: transportation and accommodation will not be covered by the conference, but you can provide them with a list of hotels close to the conference venue and with which special prices may have been negotiated; the conference dinner, coffee breaks and possibly the lunch(es) will be offered to them;
- Send them a registration document asking them:
  - for personal information (postal address, phone number)
  - on which days of the conference they intend to be present
  - whether they intend to share the conference lunch(es) and the conference dinner
  - for specific diets and food allergies and intolerances, if relevant
- Send the abstracts and bionotes to the chairs who are to introduce the speakers during the conference;
- Send a message with practical information about accessing the hotels and conference venue from the airport, train station(s), or by car; join in attachment a map locating the venue (using a screen shot from Google maps for instance).

12. Protocol

Officials must be asked to open the conference well in advance. So as to facilitate their work, the organisers should provide them with information about the programme and the subject of the conference, as well as partners of the conference and the staff of the hosting university involved in the organization (who will thus be thanked officially respectively for their support and hard work).

13. Welcome committee

It is very helpful to constitute a welcome committee that will be active during the whole conference, from the registration to the departure of the participants. The members of the welcome committee:
- welcome the participants on their arrival, register them or confirm their registration, give them a badge, a programme, documents of communication (on the hosting university, academic department and research centre),
- provide them with a map of the city and information about the city (transports, cultural events, sight-seeing and monuments) that can be of interest for them, and with goodies (if relevant). All the items may be gathered in a tote bag or a folder.
- Direct them to the conference room(s), lavatories, etc. and facilitate their orientation in the building / on the campus,
- answer their questions about the organization,
- are in charge of the coffee breaks

Before the conference:
- Establish a schedule of the tasks for each member of the welcome committee
- Make sure that the members of the welcome committee will be easily identifiable by the participants in the conference (T-shirt, armband…)
- Make a list of contacts and phone numbers of the members of the welcome committee, organisers, audio-visual technicians… that will be given the members of the welcome committee to help them be reactive in case of a problem.

Registration:
- Locate the registration point in the entrance hall of the building or a place easy to access
- Use a table and possibly a kakemono so as to signal the registration point of the conference
- Organise the folders by classical order for more convenience

Before every session of the conference:
- Check that the room(s) is/are open
- Check that the audiovisual equipment is operating, preferably with the assistance of an audiovisual technician

14. After the conference

In the aftermath of the conference, don't forget to send a few electronic messages to thank the participants, institutional partners, officials, members of the organization and scientific committees and of the welcome committee, and all the people involved in the organization (administrative staff, audiovisual technicians…).
Remind the participants of the different steps to be taken for the publication and provide them with a schedule, if relevant.