Droppin' Science in the TAZ: Conference Guidance and Code of Ethics

Guidance for Session Chairs, Presenters, and Q&A*

Session Chairs

First of all, thanks to everyone who agreed to serve as a session chair!

Please be in touch with the presenters on your panel a week before the conference if possible (session chairs should have received all the presenters' contact info by email – contact ehhsn2024@gmail.com if you have not). Ask how your session's presenters would like to be introduced and check how their names or words in the paper's title should be pronounced if you're not sure. You may also wish to confirm which pronouns they use. Try to keep introductions very brief on the day– we recommend a **two-sentence version of their bio**, either extracted from the published abstract and bio book at https://globalcipher.org/home/cfp-droppin-science-conference/ or that you have requested from them in advance.

Please arrive **15 minutes before the session** you are chairing to meet with presenters and to help ensure that everything is working technically—check video, check audio, rearrange the room as necessary. There will be assistants on hand to help with technical or other issues – look for the assistants dressed in special blue conference shirts.

Where relevant, ask presenters to transfer their presentations onto the desktop or laptop computers in each presentation room via USB (or download). These PCs are already connected up to audio and video playback. Presentation is also possible via a connector to a presenter's own laptop, just make sure you have the correct connector and that you return system settings to their default position after presenting (if you've changed them). In any cases where presentation technology simply does not work, you may need to explain to a presenter that they will have to do what they can during their allotted presentation time.

This conference is generally organized into 30-minute blocks of time—20 minutes of presentation followed by 10 minutes of Q&A discussion. For ease and fairness, please ensure that your session starts on time, and that each presenter keeps strictly to the allocated time for their paper and for questions/discussion. Since most presentations have a 20-minute max duration, let your speaker know when they have 2 minutes left and when their 20 minutes is up. You might do this by holding up the appropriate number of fingers (or numbers on a piece of paper). Make sure that the speaker has noticed! It isn't possible to do this unobtrusively, so don't worry too much about trying to be subtle! Thank each presenter, and allow for applause, and do so again at the end of the 8-10 minute questions/discussion. At the end of the session itself, thank all the participants once again.

We would like the question-and-answer or discussion segments that normally follow each paper to be constructive in tone, and to engage a range of speakers. Think of a question to ask each speaker in case nothing is immediately forthcoming from the audience. Short questions such as, "Can you say more about [an example/topic/idea raised in the presentation]...?" can be effective in opening a discussion, particularly when a speaker appears to be nervous.

Intervene politely, if you need to, when one questioner is becoming too dominant or to encourage participation or questions from a range of people (see attached Code of Ethics). Presenters who are students, early-career researchers, or non-native speakers of English may all find the question part intimidating: try to be sensitive to the pressure they're potentially feeling. For instance, you may need to intervene if the question is becoming rambling, is just way too broad, or if a speaker appears to have misunderstood the question itself. It may be challenging to manage time actively during this part of the session, but the following presenters rely on you to do this. Use phrases like "we just have time for one more short question", or "we only have time for a short answer", if necessary. Remind participants that discussion can be continued person-to-person during the next break.

If a presenter misses their slot, leave that half-hour empty so that later presenters still give their papers at the expected times. This is because, people might be moving between sessions and will expect the presentation to start at the published time. Encourage people to continue the discussion, move to another panel for the 30-minutes, or take a break for coffee or fresh air. We want to keep everything on schedule for fairness and ease.

Presenters

Your presentation will be supported by a session chair who will have been in touch by email in advance of the conference (see above). The chair will introduce you briefly and coordinate the question-and-answer session. The assistants will be around to help with technology, as needed, as well as to undertake any other tasks related to successful use of the room.

Please arrive in your presentation room 15-20 minutes early to meet your chair and to test the slides and the technology. **Bring your slides on a USB stick** or ensure they are accessible from the web via a browser. It can be a good idea to download the presentation materials directly onto the PC in the lecture room, unless you're using your own laptop/tablet. This is especially the case when you have large video files. Smaller presentations will usually work fine directly from a USB drive.

If you have audio or video embedded in your presentation, include a back-up URL address (youtube, dropbox, google drive etc) on the same or very next slide, in case there is an issue playing the embedded files. (If you need to login to an online personal filestore, be sure to logout once your presentation session is complete.)

To run smoothly, the conference needs everyone to keep to their allotted timeslot. This timeslot includes any necessary set up and brief introductions as well as the presentation itself and the ensuing questions, discussion, and applause. Your chair will help by letting you

know when your time is almost over and again when you definitely need to stop. That said, you should "practice, perform, and time" your presentation yourself. Be aware that they will be trying to catch your eye at those moments and support them in their efforts to keep the session to time. Remember that you can continue the discussion with others during the breaks.

Online presenters

Online streaming links based on the room you are presenting in will be posted to the final conference program.

If you are presenting online, please join the call in the break that precedes your session to meet your chair and to test your camera, microphone, slides and recordings. If you are presenting audio/video as well as slides, you will need to **share your computer's sound** as well as sharing your screen.

In the question-and-answer session it may be difficult to hear questions from the back of the room—the inbuilt webcams may not pick up distant sounds well. Let your chair know if you cannot hear: they can repeat the question if necessary.

Question & Answer Period

Please join the discussion! A good question can genuinely help a presenter analyse their subject and link their ideas to those of others, whether in person or in the literature or culture. **Indeed, this is the reason we cipher up… to learn from one another. To show and prove!** Your question can certainly have a critical angle to it, and it might share some (appropriately focused) experience or concern of your own. But it is still a genuine question, not a rhetorical performance or a commentary that is ultimately not constructive. Unless you're the session chair, there is normally no need for you to spend valuable discussion time thanking the speaker fulsomely for their contribution. Phrase your question as directly as you can. A good question is not a mini-presentation of your own, unless you're a formally identified discussant for the panel or roundtable in question. Other listeners may react poorly, and the session chair may ask you to stop, even if what you're saying is in itself accurate and valuable.

It can be hard to think of a great question and express it well all in one moment— it may help to write the key parts of it down first. Speakers may struggle with complex, multi-part questions in a conference setting when they'd cope well them in another setting. They may not hear you well due to background noise or be nervous about questions in general. They may have imperfect hearing or not be a native speaker of English. To avoid causing stress in scenarios like these, keep your question on one main point, rather than squishing all your concerns together. You can still raise your hand again later for a second turn—or better in a one-to-one conversation after the session. If they are presenting online, it may also help if you come up closer to the webcam mic on the podium.

DROPPIN' SCIENCE CODE OF ETHICS**

The DROPPIN' SCIENCE: Hip Hop Ciphering and Deciphering conference—the seventh annual meeting of the European Hiphop Studies Network—is committed to **providing a space for real dialogue and fellowship in a harassment-free environment for everyone**, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, nationality, economic background, religion, political affiliation, or belief. We do not tolerate harassment of participants in any form and this includes online harassment as well.

The ERC CIPHER Team—hosts of this year's meeting—are aiming to build a cooperative and empathic environment inspired by the anarchist **concept of the Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ)**. We are especially inspired by the manner in which it is used to promote collectivism and creativity by the Zapatista movement in Mexico – in which **collaboration, respect, creativity, and out-of-the-ordinary participation** is encouraged from all participants (speakers, attendees, volunteers, and visitors). According to Hakim Bey, the TAZ concept was born from the international net of piracy that 18th-century corsairs established with their outlaw way of highly localized living. Rather than establishing a new society with broad and abstract rules, these pirates had small communities in which other deeply contextualized rules and social organizations were made possible through temporary meetings.

Although we are not overtly aligned with any form of piracy *per se*, we understand that creating other possibilities in a dehumanizing and alienating society such as the one we are living in – marked by wars and innumerable forms of inequality and oppression – is substantial and urgent. As Zapatista leader Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos put it, **we are trying "to build a world in which many worlds fit"** (Muñoz, 2008). Such a thought is analogous to Achille Mbembe's concept of "pluriversality" which is **"a process of knowledge production that is open to epistemic diversity"** (2015).

As such, more than behaving simply "adequately," we expect you to show empathy and a genuine desire to listen, respect, and support others. In this conference, we intend to follow hip hop principles of *peace, unity, love, and having fun*; we intend to *show and prove*; and, ultimately, we intend to *Build* (Katz, 2019).

We expect you to be aware of your positionality regarding race, gender, sexuality, nationality, economic background, religion, disability and any other aspect that might affect your individuality (and resultant power asymmetries) in relation to others. If you perceive any form of marginalization or oppression occurring in our conference you are encouraged to report it to any of the CIPHER Team members any time.

Finally, we are based in Cork, a place known as the "Rebel City" of Ireland – in both the sense of its anti-colonial legacies and its welcoming ethos – which we want to tie directly to our

conference's code of ethics. Just like the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) is located in Chiapas by the Southeast of Mexico, Cork is a Rebel City located in the South of Ireland. In this conference, we are going South in the sense that we are aiming to decolonize the dominance of Global North perspectives in academia and beyond. Without overstating the case, we hope you'll experience how Éire (Ireland) in general and Cork in particular are uniquely and proudly anticolonial activist spaces in Europe. While certainly not perfect, we hope you'll find the city warm and authentic, and we invite you to experience this history and its present reality as you explore the city!

In terms of enforcement of these ethics, we need to add that participants violating the above rules implicitly or explicitly may be sanctioned or expelled from the conference at the discretion of the CIPHER Team, the EHHSN, and the conference body at large--and where relevant, in accordance with the relevant policies of the host institution. This commitment to a harassment-free environment also extends to online platforms where CIPHER and the EHHSN have a presence, including mailing lists and social media platforms.

Harassment is any improper conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence to another person: this includes offensive verbal comments related to gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, nationality, economic background, religion, political affiliation, or belief. It also includes intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, online harassment (through social media or other forms), and unwelcome sexual attention. Participants asked to stop any harassing behaviour are expected to comply immediately. If a participant engages in harassing behaviour, event organisers may take any action they deem appropriate, including warning the offender or asking them to leave.

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have other concerns, please contact a member of our team or a designated assistant (in Blue Conference T-Shirt), who will be happy to intervene, arrange for an escort, engage authorities (as necessary and appropriate), or otherwise endeavour to help participants feel safe for the duration of the event.

Social media is too often a site for confrontation, rather than nuanced discussion or thoughtful academic debate and this is an issue that the CIPHER team would like to address in this code of ethics also. The committee request that online platforms are used to communicate information of interest to the membership and not as a site for political debate or personal attack. Should a member inadvertently email or post anything that causes upset to other members they must cease the conversation as soon as this is indicated to them. Improper posts or emails should be reported to the chair as soon as possible at EHHSN2024@gmail.com. This email will be monitored during normal office working hours.

In cases of serious misconduct the committee will suspend the member from the European HipHop Network Studies with immediate effect.

**NB: Drafted by Dr. Gustavo Souza Marques (aka Gusmão)