Cloud Coordinator Guidelines

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What are Clouds?

EAPRIL attracts educational professionals with wide-ranging interests. Our members work at different levels, from kindergarten through to higher education, in professional settings, and in different fields including, amongst others, teacher education, business, medicine, languages, and training. They hold a variety of roles ranging from practitioner to researcher, administrator, policy maker and educational consultant. In order to support and encourage communication within the EAPRIL community, the Clouds were launched in 2012 at the Annual EAPRIL Conference in Jyväskylä, Finland. The Clouds are now an integral part of EAPRIL and help members integrate within the EAPRIL association both during and in between the Annual Conferences.

EAPRIL Clouds are thematic groups focusing on specific fields of interest. They aim to help EAPRIL members and conference participants network, collaborate and exchange around shared interests. The Clouds currently supported by EAPRIL represent a wide variety of topics relating to education and learning.

The choice of nomenclature was purposeful. As with the clouds found in nature, the EAPRIL Clouds are able to take various forms and shapes and may alter from one year to the next. In line with a desire of inclusivity, Clouds may choose between being more formal, cumulous-like, Research Clouds or wispier cirrus-like Networking Clouds.

Research Clouds are a way for like-minded colleagues and peers to explore specific domains and to connect, not only at conferences but also in-between conferences (e.g. for writing projects together, organising symposia, visiting each other's institutions, working on a joint publication, preparing workshops or online webinars, etc.).

Networking Clouds are entities that allow for exchange, discussion and even confrontation of ideas between community members, primarily at the EAPRIL Annual Conferences. No involvement in research and or other annual activities is expected.

Role of Cloud Coordinators

EAPRIL values the input of all Cloud Coordinators, not only with regard to their role in the Cloud, but also with regard to their ideas related to the Association and its activities. The role of a Cloud Coordinator will depend on the type of Cloud and is detailed below.

A maximum of two official Coordinators are appointed to each Cloud. Continuity is very important, so we encourage Cloud Coordinators to commit themselves to at least two years of coordination and to try to look for replacement Coordinators in good time. This will allow a smooth transition for new Cloud Coordinators. It is advantageous to have Coordinators from different countries, so that each Cloud can be represented by different nationalities and benefit from the resulting intercultural exchange.

Research Cloud Coordinators:
- They are members of EAPRIL.

- They are official registered members of the EAPRIL General Assembly. The General Assembly serves as a decision-making forum for voting, posing inquiries, and determining the financial and governance facets of EAPRIL. Cloud Coordinator attendance at the General Assembly is expected and necessary, as a quorum must be reached to approve decisions for the association.

- They take a leadership role in the development of their Research Cloud and serve as a liaison between the members involved in the Cloud, the larger EAPRIL community and the EAPRIL Executive Board.

- They organise a Research Cloud Spotlight Session during the Annual EAPRIL Conference. This session, exempt from the regular review procedure, is to bring Cloud members up to date on Cloud activities that have taken place during the year and to promote what the Cloud has been doing during the year in terms of, research, activities, collaborations, etc.

- They provide to the EAPRIL Board no later than **December 15th of the year**:
  - an auto evaluation of the current year's activities;
  - the Cloud objectives for the following calendar year;
  - confirmation of their desire to remain a Research Cloud or a request for a change of status to a Networking Cloud.

- They set up initiatives for their Research Clouds during the year (e.g. webinars or seminars, conference activities, workshops, publications, special issues, online activities, etc…). They are given the autonomy to select activities that answer to their members and that are consistent with the mission, values, and strategy of EAPRIL.

Network Cloud Coordinators:
- o They are members of EAPRIL.

- o They take a leadership role in the development of their Network Cloud and serve as a liaison between the members involved in the Cloud, the larger EAPRIL community and the EAPRIL Executive Board.

- o They organise a Network Cloud Session during the Annual EAPRIL Conference. This session is to allow Cloud members to discuss the theme that has brought them together, to share experiences, exchange about problems encountered and benefit from an intercultural dimension to the discussion.

- o They provide to the EAPRIL Board by December 15th of the year:

  - o confirmation of their desire to remain a Networking Cloud or;

  - o a request for a change of status to a Research Cloud along with the Cloud objectives for the following year.

General Data Protection Regulation

The European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), in vigour as of May 25th, 2018, in all member states, is to harmonize data privacy laws across Europe. EAPRIL is committed to ensuring full GDPR compliant treatment of all personal data of its users and members. As the EAPRIL Clouds fall under the legal entity of EAPRIL, it's important that every Cloud meets the GDPR requirements. Therefore, a representative for each Cloud is required to sign an agreement with the EAPRIL office, in which they agree to take the current privacy regulations into account.

Benefits of Cloud Involvement

Benefits for Cloud Coordinators

The EAPRIL Executive Board acknowledges the effort and contributions of the Cloud Coordinators in various ways. Both Research and Network Cloud Coordinators are invited to exchange ideas and opinions about their role and responsibilities with the EAPRIL Executive Board, and with each other, during a joint Research & Network Cloud Coordinators' meeting held at the time of the Annual EAPRIL Conference. This also, indirectly, gives a voice to the Cloud members.

Furthermore, all Cloud Coordinators:

- have the opportunity to grow and shape a network of professionals around a specific topic.
- benefit from an online Cloud Coordinators' event organized by EAPRIL between conferences.
- are consulted in all formal decisions related to the Cloud structure of EAPRIL.
- are free to organise other sessions subject to the regular review process, from presentations to workshops, related to Cloud-specific themes or not.
- may suggest reviewers for submissions that are related to their Cloud.
- are invited to contribute to the review process.
- can contribute to the EAPRIL Blog upon request.

More specific Cloud-type benefits are:

Research Clouds

- Cloud Coordinators and Cloud-related activities will be acknowledged and promoted in official EAPRIL communications, i.e. newsletters, blogs, website, social media, etc.
- Cloud accomplishments and activities will be showcased at the annual EAPRIL conference.
- Cloud Coordinators, up to a maximum of two per Cloud, are invited to the official pre-conference thank you event, on the evening before the start of the EAPRIL Annual Conference.
- A guaranteed time slot for the Cloud's Spotlight session at the EAPRIL Annual Conference.
- Visibility through the display of the Cloud posters and other support material both at the Annual Conference and online.
- Support from the EAPRIL office for Cloud-related activities, e-mailing, use of Zoom, etc.
- Financial support for Cloud-related activities up to a maximum of €1'000.00 per year.

Network Clouds

- A guaranteed time slot for the Cloud's Networking session at the EAPRIL Annual Conference.
- Visibility online at the EAPRIL Cloud page.
- Support from the EAPRIL office for Cloud-related questions.

Benefits for Cloud members
- All EAPRIL members and conference attendees are invited to join one or more Clouds. This does not entail a formal EAPRIL Membership as we wish to keep the threshold to benefit from the EAPRIL Clouds as low as possible. They are encouraged to formally indicate their interest as Cloud Follower via the EAPRIL User Platform. This will allow them to receive all updates related to their Clouds of interest.
- Like-minded colleagues and peers, with a similar curiosity in a specific domain, can easily connect, not only at the conference but also in between conferences e.g. for writing projects together, organising symposia, visiting each other's institutions, working on joint publications, etc.
- Information that is relevant to their field of interest can be sent to all EAPRIL members for their information, e.g. calls for various activities, job announcements or interesting new publications in the field.

Cloud activities

EAPRIL expects Research Clouds to organize activities in between the Annual Conference in line with their annual goals and objectives and to allow for interaction between Cloud members. These may include things such as the following:

- Prepare a seminar, webinar or members' meeting on a particular theme during the year, for all Cloud members who can attend in person or online.
- Ask a past or present Keynote speaker to attend Cloud events in person or online.
- Use the LinkedIn Cloud groups to communicate with members during the year on a regular basis. For example:
    - Pose a problem via video clip or cartoon e.g. about student motivation.
    - Upload important international research and reports on aspects of teaching, learning, education, or practise-based projects.
    - Share resources, video links and ideas.
    - Promote Cloud activities.
- Send a newsletter to your members.
- Organize a book or reading group.
- Attend a conference and present a paper with the support of EAPRIL.
- Organize a workshop, physical or online, at one's institute or open to the public with EAPRIL support.
- Use online technology (e.g. Padlet or Google docs) during speed-dating, or other Cloud activities, to upload members' expectations or feedback or to suggest topics for webinar, seminar, members meetings etc.

Support provided

The EAPRIL Executive Board and the EAPRIL Office will grant as much autonomy as possible to the Cloud Coordinators. After all, they know best what is 'out there' and what their Cloud really needs. EAPRIL will provide the Cloud Coordinators with support in order to successfully launch and consolidate their Clouds. Although this list is neither exhaustive nor binding, the following support can be provided on request:

- EAPRIL will provide the Cloud Coordinators with the email addresses of interested Cloud Followers. Only those followers that have formally indicated their interest and that have given permission to use their contact details can be contacted. Of course, these details can only be used for Cloud-related issues (GDPR).
- EAPRIL will support the Cloud Coordinators in organising Cloud activities during the year, if needed and/or requested.
- All questions related to the Clouds, memberships, and conference-related issues can be forwarded to the EAPRIL Office (info@eapril.org).
- EAPRIL can provide support towards the organization of additional Cloud sessions or activities at the annual EAPRIL Conferences.
- EAPRIL will support the Cloud Coordinators in setting up the EAPRIL LinkedIn Subgroups. The EAPRIL Office will invite the Cloud Coordinators to become a member of the EAPRIL LinkedIn Cloud subgroups. Once they have accepted this invitation, the EAPRIL Office will appoint them as moderator of this group which will give them more options to use this LinkedIn platform.

Cloud funding

All Research Cloud Coordinators can apply for EAPRIL Cloud Funding, which aims to foster existing and new contacts among EAPRIL Cloud members. The budget and deadline can differ from year to year.

The EAPRIL Funding application must include the following elements:

- Information about the nature, goals and aims of the activity and the preliminary programme, for example: invited speaker; webinar; Cloud members meeting; etc.
- The expected number of members.
- A preliminary budget showing the estimated income and expenses of the event as well as the costs for which the funding will be used.

The funding application should be submitted to the EAPRIL Office and should take into account the following:

- The sponsored Cloud activity must take place within Europe.
- A meeting of Cloud Coordinators alone cannot be considered for funding.
- Any funded Cloud activity must be evaluated with the members and a subsequent short report or blog sent to the EAPRIL Office.
- Should the Cloud activity be open to the public and include a registration fee, a reduced fee should apply for EAPRIL members.

The funding can be used for all expenses that (a) add value to the event, (b) are contributing to all participants of the event and are not solely directed to one or two participants – except for invited speakers, (c) are conscious, reasonable, and not-excessive. More specifically, this could involve the following, not exhaustive, list of expenses: e.g., catering cost for participants, costs for making transcripts, travel costs for invited speakers, gift or compensation for invited speakers, infrastructure cost, webinar cost, conference fees, etc. The maximum amount for a gift for a speaker at a cloud event/activity is €35. This can, for example, be a gift basket for speakers on site or possibly a voucher for bol.com/Amazon for online/remote speakers.

Cloud evaluation

How does EAPRIL evaluate a Cloud?

The primary goal of the EAPRIL Clouds is that they function as a thematic network. The EAPRIL Board will review the Clouds annually in December of each year using the following criteria.

Research Cloud evaluations will be based on:
- The number of Cloud members, minimum being 10.
- The event(s) organized between the EAPRIL Annual Conferences, minimum being 1.
- An evaluation of the Conference Spotlight session.
- The visibility & contact with Cloud members through the means of their choice: LinkedIn, other online groups, book clubs, newsletter, research consortiums, etc.
- An annual self-evaluation provided by the Cloud Coordinators.
- Cloud objectives provided for the year to come.

If you are unable to meet these criteria due to personal or professional scheduling constraints, the EAPRIL board may opt to transition your Research Cloud to a Cloud Network format. You may at any time thereafter request to become a Research Cloud again.

Network Cloud evaluations will be based on:

- The number of Cloud members, minimum being 10.
- An evaluation of the Conference Networking event.

If you are unable to meet these criteria the EAPRIL Board reserves the right to dissolve the Cloud.

As mentioned previously, Clouds may request, from one year to the next, to change their status. Such requests may be made annually by December 15th of the current calendar year.

Cloud start-up procedure

EAPRIL is happy to support the establishment of new Clouds that deal with a very specific educational theme or topic in the field of practitioner research, which is both important and emerging. The general rule is that the Executive Board of EAPRIL will only accept suggestions for new Clouds if this comprises at least 10 interested persons at the launch. It is preferable that at least two different nationalities be represented by the Cloud Coordinators. Along with the application to form a new Cloud, at least two Cloud Coordinators should be suggested to the Executive Board, who will evaluate their candidacy and appoint them if applicable. Potential Cloud Coordinators should have a strong interest in the Cloud's focus and should provide the EAPRIL Board with some evidence of their experience and/or expertise in the proposed topic area. It is possible to establish either a Networking Cloud or a Research Cloud. EAPRIL reserves the right to limit the number of Clouds supported by the association.

If you feel that a certain theme or topic is not yet represented in the current list of Clouds, we encourage you to apply for the establishment of a new Cloud. When applying for a new Cloud, the following documents should be sent to the EAPRIL Office (info@eapril.org):

- A mission statement with a clear profile description of the new Cloud. This mission statement gives a description of the identity, aims and scope of the Cloud and should not exceed over 500 words.
- Short curriculum vitae of the suggested Cloud Coordinators who are starting up the new Cloud.
- A plan of activities to be organised within your Cloud in the future.
- A list of at least 10 members who intend to join the Cloud.

The EAPRIL Office will present this proposal to the Executive Board of EAPRIL at its next Board meeting. The Executive Board meets three times a year (February, June, and November). The Board will evaluate the proposal and will take the final decision. Thereafter, the EAPRIL Office will inform the applicants about this decision. In case of a positive decision, the EAPRIL Office will support the Coordinators of this new Cloud in launching their Cloud.