

# Pax Europa

A Steampunk Larp



## Design Document

Version 2.0

## It is the late 19th Century

The world has taken a weird turn. Steam powers human-like automata and the calculation engines in their skulls. The discovery of aether led to the creation of ships that ply the space between Earth, the Moon and beyond. Mars has been found to be populated and civilised. Venus is a steamy jungle.

Now, in accord with the wishes of the late Alfred Nobel, the Swedish Institute of Science has invited delegations from the great imperial nations of Europa to a symposium. Under the watchful eye of the Swedes they will compete for Nobel Medals and bragging rights as the most advanced scientific nation on Earth.

Britain, France, Germany and Russia are sending delegations of their best scientists, adventurers, military officers and diplomats. With them they bring their latest electric rifles, steam-powered automata, unearthed Egyptian treasures, and Martian envoys.

Not only is national pride at stake, but also individual honour and reputation. Delegates hope to arrange international treaties, settle old grudges and indulge in romantic assignations, all the while dealing with intrigue, espionage, blackmail, and duels.

For Science!

## Overview

**Pax Europa is a rules-lite, consent-based larp.** The organisers provide a setting, framework and schedule, while players provide relationships and plot. Characters are provided by the organisers and are written gender-neutral and without pre-established relationships. Players may change their characters to make them their own. Characters will be distributed several weeks prior to the game to allow players to prepare costumes, props and relationships.

Pax Europa is set at an international scientific symposium hosted by the Swedish Institute of Science at which Nobel prizes will be awarded. The major powers of Europa send delegations made up of scientists, adventurers, military officers and diplomats to present proof of their superiority and win the prizes.

The delegations will each have to make an impression on their Swedish hosts to win the Nobel prizes. This will happen in two places: on the exhibition showroom floor and in lectures. The event ends with a formal dinner at which the prizes are awarded.

In the exhibition room each delegation has a dedicated space where they can present inventions and discoveries. Everyone at the symposium will mingle in the exhibition room, examine exhibits that interest them, and ask questions of the presenter. The Swedish hosts will take special note as they assess delegations for the Nobel Prizes.

The lecture room is where larger presentations take place in a space set up as a small theatre with a stage area and seating for the audience. Delegations can request a time slot on the stage for major presentations. The audience - composed of the Swedish hosts and members of the other delegations - will be able ask questions at the presentations.

During the symposium there will be a summit. At the summit diplomats and military officers will come together to push their national agendas, carve up the world and negotiate alliances. The summits conclude with the signing of treaties.

Outside of exhibiting players will be encouraged to come up with supportive, romantic and antagonistic relationships. Some of the things that could happen: duels, blackmail, romantic assignations, ray-gun shooting competitions, steam automata running amok, and visits by Martian royalty.

## The Pillars

Pax Europa is a larp about an international scientific symposium, where the brightest minds of Europa strive to raise their personal and national prestige.

The design pillars are meant to give an idea of the most important facets of the symposium, so that participants are on the same page for the larp. Individual experiences are as varied as individual players however, so one character might be more focused on science than on politics, while another explores personal relationships in an alternate Victorian age.

## International Politics

Pax Europa is first and foremost a larp about the meeting of great and powerful imperial powers. National rivalries and history matter here.

## Personal Pursuits

Second, Pax Europa is a larp about individuals of renown in a Victorian age. Personal honor and proper behaviour matter, but also how human foibles and desires rub against those.

## Steampunk Science

Pax Europa is also a about the wonders of Steampunk science, but that comes in third place. Crazy science and epic struggles are more interesting if not overused. Wonder is best in smaller doses!

## Schedule

- 13:00 - 13:30 Arrival
- 13:30 - 15:00 Workshops
- 15:00 - 15:30 Players get ready
- 15:30 - 15:45 **Game starts** with formal welcome by hosts and socialising
- 15:45 - 19:00 Exhibition & Lectures
  - 16:15 First Summit
  - 18:30 Second Summit
- 19:00 - 19:30 Hosts deliberate awards. Exhibition space is prepared for dinner
- 19:30 - 20:30 Dinner & Announcement of Prizes
- 20:30 - 21:00 **Game end** & Debrief
- 21:00 - 00:00 After party

# Setting

## History

Much of Europa resembles the Europe of our late 19th century. The great powers of the continent are world spanning empires, or have aspirations to be. They also have a long history of conflict.

At the start of the century France, under Napoleon, controlled continental Europa. Now it clings to dreams of past glories. Britain has build the largest maritime and aether navies in the world and adopted a policy of splendid isolation. Feudal serfs have only recently been freed in Russia but it may be too little too late to avoid revolution. Prussia has forged Germany into an Empire and hopes to prove itself the equal of the great imperial powers of Britain and France.

## Alternate

This is not history as we know it. Some of it has been rearranged, some of the bad bits removed and some fantastical bits added.

One emphatic change is the role of gender and race in the world of Pax Europa. Women are able to enter military service and rise through the ranks to the highest positions. The same is true for all professions including political, medical and scientific. Likewise race poses no professional or social impediment.

## Alternate science

The laws of nature and science don't quite work in the ways a modern person would recognise. Theories that were disproved in our history still hold up in the world of Europa.

Phlogiston, terlluric rays, and animal magnetism amongst other weirder sciences all have applications. Most of those applications are very experimental and the experts are still arguing how exactly they work.

Other sciences are a bit more established. Luminiferous aether is a substance that permeates the Universe and, with electrically activated sails, can be harnessed to propel interplanetary ships. This technology is currently about 30 years old and (most of) the kinks have been ironed out.

Analytical engines are general purpose mechanical computers. It has been 15 years since Sir Charles Babbage demonstrated his first model. Every year the engines double in power and speed. The French recently unveiled a massive new engine called *Le Grande Napoleon* which they proclaim has computing power equivalent to all the other analytical engines of Europa combined.

Automata are mechanical contraptions shaped like humans or animals. Powered by clockwork or steam and guided by compact analytical engines, most automata have very limited intelligence if any. They are used to do mundane, repetitive and dangerous work. However every year their sophistication grows.

## Mars

Mars is mostly red desert crisscrossed with verdant river valleys. It is in these valleys that the Red Martians live. The Red Martians look very much human except for a distinct red tint to their skin. They have a long history and sophisticated culture including architecture, art, and literature. Their governments tend towards city states with one or two large metropolis. They are limited by their reach up and down the river valley they occupy. Just about every system of government is represented - monarchies, democracies, dictatorships and socialist collectives. Conflicts between city states are common and can result in outcomes from diplomacy to all out war.

The largest Red Martian city state is Helium, situated at the conjunction of six river valleys. Helium is a monarchy currently ruled by Jeddak (High King) Tardos Mors. There are more than a dozen noble houses of Helium, each having as many as two dozen Princes or Princesses. Byzantine laws mean the royal line of succession can change on a daily basis.

Other Red Martian cities include Ptarth, Zodanga, Gathol and Thark.

Red Martian technology is almost advanced as the steam powers of Europa, but Mars has no ready fuel source like coal or oil and has not gone through an industrial revolution.

Outside the river valleys live the Green Martians. To human eyes they are brutish, tusked apes. Despite their name Green Martians have grey skin. The general perception is that they are subhuman. The few adventurers who have had contact with Green Martians have a more nuanced opinion of their unique culture.

Britain and France have an extensive network of embassies and forts across Mars.

It takes about four weeks to travel to Mars via aethership. There is no faster way to communicate between the two planets.

## Venus

Venus is covered in dense jungles, swamps and sulfurous seas. There is teeming wildlife, much of it vicious, and so far none has been found to be intelligent. Adventurers from all the major spacefaring European powers have explored Venus to some extent, but only Germany has gone so far as to claim permanent territory there.

It takes about five weeks to travel to Venus via aethership.

## There are also dark things in the corners of the map...

Werewolves roam the forests of Germany. Vedma - witches and warlocks - practice hedge magic in the under-populated expanses of Eastern Europe and Siberia. Vampires infest the Carpathian mountains. The Tuatha Dé Danann hold court in Ireland.

## When exactly is this set?

The exact date the game takes place is intentionally vague. It might be some time in the mid to late 1870's. But it could also be anytime between 1850 and 1900.

Why keep it vague?

A vague timeline lets us throw in historical events and personalities that were not contemporaries in the real world. For example the first Nobel Prizes were not awarded until 1901. Alfred Nobel was still alive until 1896. So already we are putting the 'alternative' in alternative history.

Additionally the intent is to run this game multiple times and players may wish to return with characters they have previously played. By keeping the timeline fluid it is easier to cater for them.

## Luminous Aether Travel

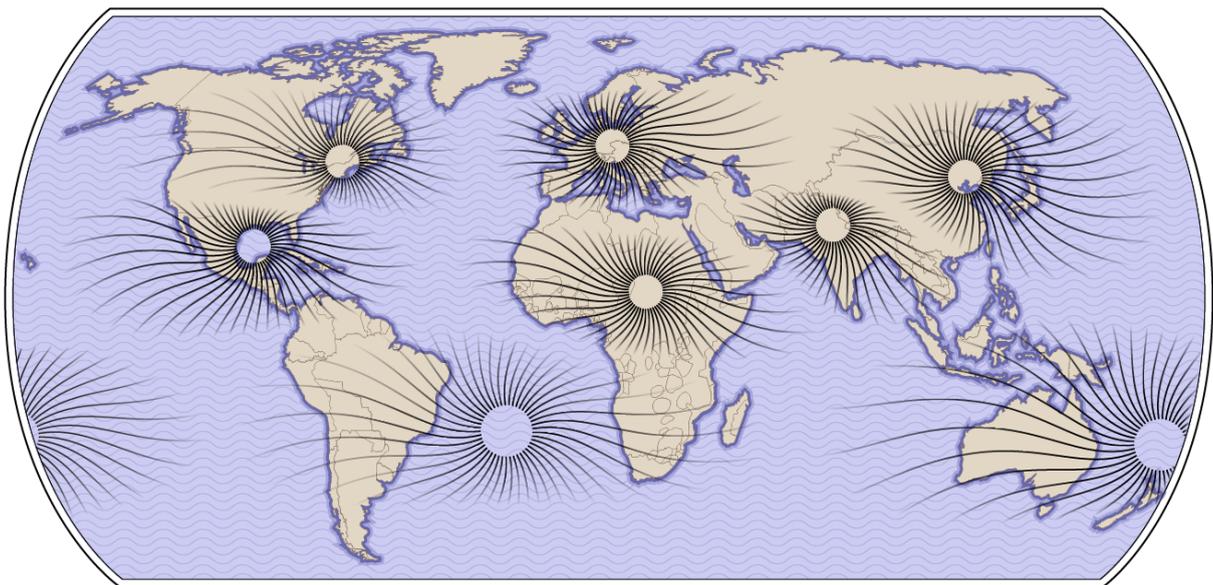
The French discovered luminous aether and were the first to harness it for travel. They shared their discovery before learning it could be used to travel to other worlds. These days every great power of Europa is able to build the electric sails needed to harness the flows of aether.

Aside from the electric sails the other requirement to get to other worlds is a great aether upwelling - a point on Earth where the interaction of the magnetic field and telluric energies produce a massive column of aether that can carry ships into orbit.

There are ten of these upwellings distributed across the globe. The British have exclusive use of one in North India and share use of another on the US-Canadian border. The French have exclusive use of one in central Africa. Others occur in North China, the Gulf of Mexico, the South Pacific North of New Zealand and the South Atlantic. The final two upwellings are located at the North and South magnetic poles.

The only upwelling on continental Europa occurs in Alsace-Lorraine on the border of France and Germany. The region was part of the French empire for over a century. Germany seized the area in the Franco-German war a decade ago.

The upwellings that occur in oceans and at the poles are not claimed by anyone but the logistics of getting resources to them makes them not economically viable to use. The United States claims the upwelling in the Gulf of Mexico but it too is difficult to access and underdeveloped. The Chinese upwelling is unavailable to the European powers for a variety of diplomatic and geographical reasons.



# The Exhibition

In order to win the Nobel Prizes the delegations will have to make an impression on their Swedish hosts. This will happen in two places: on the exhibition room floor and in lectures.

In the **exhibition room** each delegation will have a dedicated area where they can present inventions and discoveries. Everyone at the symposium can mingle in the exhibition room, examine exhibits that interest them, and ask questions of the presenter. The Swedish hosts will take special note as they assess delegations for the Nobel Prizes.

The **lecture room** is where larger presentations can take place. This will be a small theatre with a stage area and seating for the audience. Delegations can request a time slot on the stage for major presentations. These should be theatrical show and tell with interactivity. The audience - composed of the Swedish hosts and members of the other delegations - will be able ask questions at the presentations.

## Organising the Exhibition Room

Each delegation will have a table in the exhibition room. There they can show off their latest creations. This can be a quite informal affair.

If you have props and other items to exhibit you can have them on your table. An appropriate label including the name of the delegate responsible would be a nice touch.

Feel free to show national pride by decorating your table with flags, crests and banners.

It is good form to always have someone at your exhibition table. Rostering who will be there when is something head delegates should do or delegate to someone.

When you have nothing else to do it is usually a good idea to return to table in the exhibition room to check in with your delegation and see if anyone is looking for you.

## Organising the Lecture Room

The lecture room will be set up as a small theatre with a stage area and seating for the audience. All delegations will use the lecture room.

Each delegation has 30 minutes in which to present. **Presentations are optional.** Not every Scientist and Adventurer has to present - we understand that getting up in front of an audience is not for everyone. If they all do they will have 10 minutes each. This does not seem like much time but you can do a lot with even five minutes.

The schedule for the lecture room will be managed in-game by the butlers (organisers) and hosts. Let us know you have something you want to present and we will put it on a publically available schedule.

# What to Exhibit

If you are playing a scientist or adventurer you are asked to exhibit something and/or give a lecture. **This is entirely optional.** If you do want to exhibit something here are a few things to consider:

## Demonstration

Demonstrating a discovery is much better than simply talking about it.

Having tangible artifacts (props) helps. An adventurer might present a cursed item from an Egyptian or Martian king's tomb, maps of strange territories, or a gem the size of a fist. A scientist might have a lightning rifle, a healing serum, or kirlian aura goggles. A prop that can be demonstrated, handled and possibly stolen can make a good story better.

Off-stage inventions, like a dirigible, or intangible discoveries can be presented through documentation, blueprints or formulas.

Also consider NPCs such as a Martian Princess, albino Ape-man from the Congo, an automata soldier, or reanimated creature created from sewn together corpses. The organisers will play NPCs for you if you organise it.

## Interactive

Get other characters involved in your presentation, discovery or expertise. Use them as a demonstration or test subject. Have a problem other experts can help you with. Offer to use your expertise to help someone with their problem.

## What does it mean? What can go wrong?

What does your discovery mean for the balance of power in Europa and for the world in general? How could it change things for the better or worse? Who will it affect the most? Making these things obvious will give other players a hook.

Have a think about what could go wrong in-game with what you are presenting so you can lean into it. This is science on the edge and things can go unexpectedly (and entertainingly).

## It's OK to be uncertain

If you're in doubt about something, you're always welcome to ask. Some problems can be solved by talking to your fellow players in the game, and others by talking to the organisers. Don't be afraid to ask questions, for help, or for inspiration - especially of the organisers. We're there to help you and the rest of the players have a good time, so make use of us.

## The Nobel Prizes

The Nobel Prizes are funded from a bequeathment made by Alfred Nobel. In his will he set out criteria for a number of prizes which are to be awarded each year by the Swedish Institute of Science. The prizes come with with a sizable cash component, a gold medal and, perhaps most importantly, great renown for the winning person and nation.

### The Nobel Prize for Science

*The Science Prize shall be awarded to the person who has conferred the greatest benefit on mankind in the field of science.*

The recipient of this prize is usually a Scientist, but not always. ‘Conferring the greatest benefit’ typically precludes awards for discoveries that only have application as a weapon. The prize is judged on the basis of the most benefit to the most people.

### The Nobel Prize for the Advancement of Human Knowledge

*The Knowledge Prize shall be awarded to the person who has produced the most outstanding work adding to the general knowledge of mankind.*

Because of its nature the Knowledge Prize is usually awarded to an Adventurer, though not always. “Adding to the general knowledge” is interpreted as a requirement for nominees to have publicised or exhibited their work. Recovering or rediscovering something previously known but then lost (for example the secrets of the pyramids) is still considered ‘adding’.

### The Nobel Prize for Peace

*The Peace Prize shall be awarded to the nation who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, and for the promotion of peace.*

Unlike the other prizes the Peace Prize is awarded to a nation overall, not to individuals. Of the three prizes on offer it is the most prestigious and most sought after. Similarly while the other prizes are awarded for a singular endeavour the Peace Prize is awarded on consideration of the overall efforts of the nation.

The Peace Prize criteria originally included “...for the abolition or reduction of standing armies...”. But some years ago the British, with the support of the Germans, successfully petitioned to have this clause removed. The argument being that increasing the size of your armies (and navy) do not preclude you from being peaceful.

## How the Prizes are awarded

Members the Swedish Institute of Science can award the prizes in any way they see fit, but tend to follow established conventions. After the the exhibition has finished and before dinner the Swedish hosts confer and reach agreement as to who will receive each prize.

### For the Science and Knowledge Prizes

- Prizes are awarded to individuals, not nations.
- Each prize is awarded for a singular discovery, endeavour or work having nominally happened in the preceding year. They are not lifetime achievement awards.
- Prizes can be awarded jointly where several people have contributed to the one winning endeavour. These joint winners do not have to be from the same nation.
- For each prize the Institute names 2 or 3 nominees from which the winner is then announced.

### For the Peace Prize

- The Prize is awarded to a nation and accepted by that nation's Head Delegate.
- Consideration is given to the overall effort of each nation to promote peace.
- Having delegates receive either of the other prizes theoretically should not aid or handicap a nation in winning the Peace Prize.

## The Summit

Simultaneous with the Symposium there will be a summit of the great nations of Europa. Diplomats and Military Officers are expected to negotiate and sign formal treaties.

The Summit is divided into two formal sessions. At the first delegates from each nation will meet and announce their positions. At the second nations are expected to enter into formal alliances by agreeing to terms and having delegates sign formal documents.

Between these two formal sessions delegates can negotiate as they wish throughout the symposium.

Both formal sessions of the summit are to be attended by one diplomat and one military officer from each nation. Both need to sign each treaty for their nation. A Swedish host can chair the sessions, but they are expected to only help with meeting procedures and not otherwise participate.

At the start of the game there are no existing treaties.

## Europa's Attitude to War

In the late nineteenth century the attitude to war was different from modern sensibilities. The terrible lessons of the world wars are in the future. In Europa the populations of the great powers are nationalistic and militaristic - there is an almost romantic notion that war can be a proud and noble undertaking.

## German Expansion

German expansion is the main stress on international relations in Europa.

Germany is a recently formed empire and has grand aspirations. It wants to gather all the territories of Europa it sees as traditionally Germanic. These include regions on the border with France in the West and regions currently controlled by Russia in the East. It wants to establish its own international and interplanetary empire to rival those of the British and French.

German expansion inherently threatens the British and French hegemon. The French have suffered a military humiliation at the hands Germany in the Franco-German War.

Russia forms the Eastern front of Europa which makes them important in stemming German expansionism, or not - a fact they could leverage to their benefit. A Russian alliance with Germany would give Germany greater latitude in attacking France. A Russian alliance with France would have Germany surrounded.

## Types of Treaties

In decreasing order of obligation placed on signatories:

**Defence Treaty:** Requires signatories to come to each other's aid militarily if either is attacked by a third party.

**Peace Treaty:** Requires signatories to not use, or otherwise support the use of, force against other signatories. It does not require the parties to come to each other's aid if either is attacked by a third party.

**Limited Treaty:** The signatories agree to specific undertakings or limitations within a limited scope. Examples might be a transfer of territories between the signatories or an agreement to allow commercial shipping through national waters.

## Declarations

If talks break down and differences are irreconcilable a formal declaration can be made.

**Declaration of War:** A country declares war on another. It normally lists the provocations and/or problems that the attacking nation has with the nation attacked. A declaration of war will likely trigger other treaties.

## Recent Conflicts

These are not all the wars that have happened in Europa but they are the major ones in living memory that involved the delegations present.

### The Crimean War (1853 – 1856)

(Approximately 25 years before the game is set)

Belligerents: Russia vs Britain and France

The immediate cause involved the rights of Christian minorities in the Holy Land, which was a part of the then crumbling Ottoman Empire. The French supported the Roman Catholics, while Russia supported the Eastern Orthodox Church. The two churches had reached an accord before the war even started, but that did not stop Russia and France heading to war.

The longer-term causes involved the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the unwillingness of Britain and France to allow Russia to gain territory and power at Ottoman expense.

This is considered the first war fought with modern technologies. Military tactics had not caught up with the technology and the war quickly became mired by logistical, medical and tactical failures and mismanagement by all sides. This was reported back home (using photographs for the first time) helping make the war hugely unpopular in Britain and France.

Russia lost the war, but no one was really a winner. Peace negotiations resulted in all territories being returned to whoever controlled them at the start of the war.

### The Franco-German War (1870 – 1871)

(Approximately 10 years before the game is set)

Belligerents: Germany vs France

The conflict was caused by Prussian ambitions to unify Germany and French fears of what would result if the Prussians succeeded.

In 1870 the French declared war on Prussia. The German coalition mobilised its troops much more quickly than France and rapidly invaded. The German forces were superior in numbers, training, leadership and technology. The army of the French Empire was decisively defeated, Napoleon III was captured, and Paris laid to siege.

The conflict allowed Bismarck to unify Germany into an empire. Some say that was his objective all along.

When France sued for peace in 1871 Germany demanded five billion francs, had a small victory parade in Paris and then retreated back to Germany. Germany annexed the territory of Alsace-Lorraine which the French are determined to see returned.

# Current Conflicts

## Control of the Mediterranean

The Mediterranean makes up Europa's Southern border. It is also a major shipping lane. A decade ago the opening of the Suez Canal connected the North Atlantic to the North Indian Ocean through the Mediterranean. Currently the Mediterranean is controlled by the British Navy with bases at Gibraltar, Malta, and the Suez.

**Britain:** The Mediterranean and Suez Canal connects Britain to its colonies in India, Asia and Australia. This is a vital strategic route which can not be allowed to come under threat.

**Russia:** Russia wants access to the Mediterranean through the Black Sea. Currently Russian fleets travel through the Arctic (often closed by ice) or the Adriatic (controlled by the German Navy) to reach the North Atlantic.

**France:** The French colonies in Africa much easier to reach by crossing the Mediterranean. Access to the African aether upwelling is necessary for French access to Mars (unless Alsace-Lorraine is returned).

## Martian Aethershops

Since the development of aethershops three decades ago first France and then Britain have established diplomatic and colonial outposts on Mars. By implicit agreement these two powers have worked to restrict the access of other nations of Earth to Mars, and to prevent the Red Martians from developing their own aethership capability.

Recently Red Martian diplomats have started agitating for the technology to be made available to them so they can build their own aethershops.

**Britain:** Does not want Mars to have its own aethershops which would threaten Britain's near monopoly on Earth-Mars trade.

**France:** Historically France has been reluctant for Mars to have its own ships for reasons similar to the British. However the loss of the European aether upwelling and the aethership yards there to the Germans has meant they are falling behind the British. A new French plan is to partner with Red Martians and start building French (and Martian) aethershops on Mars.

**Germany:** Happy for Mars to have their own ships. But would prefer selling them German built ships to them having the technology to build their own.

**Russia:** Would be happy with Mars having their own aethershops as they see it as a way to break Britain and France's monopoly on trade.

## Alsace-Lorraine

Alsace-Lorraine is a German speaking region on the border of France and Germany and has changed hands between the two many times in its history. It is the location of the only great aether upwelling on continental Europa (see p.9). France held the region until recently. With the discovery of the luminous aether upwelling it became an important embarkation place for French missions to Mars. In the recent Franco-Prussian war Germany successfully conquered the area and has built on the French infrastructure to launch its own aetherships.

**Germany:** Wants to hold on to the aether upwelling and aethership yards as it aggressively expands its aether navy. Their claim is justified as returning the German-speaking region to German control.

**France:** Losing the aether upwelling was a huge blow to France. Aether travel was invented and the first ever aethership yards built in the region by France.

**Britain:** Knows who controls of the European aether upwelling will determine which nation is Britain's major competition in space.

**Russia:** With no aether upwelling of its own Russia would love to be able to use Alsace-Lorraine. Ideally the area becomes independent and neutral. Barring that Russia will be open to supporting whichever nation or coalition would allow them to use it.

## Adriatic

The Adriatic Sea provides access to the Atlantic Ocean and from there to terrestrial colonies and trade routes for both Germany and Russia.

**Germany:** Germany currently controls the Adriatic with a small but technologically advanced fleet of warships. As one of the few strategic strangleholds Germany owns, it would like to either retain control of the sea, or leverage it for other trade or strategic advantages.

**Russia:** If Russia can't access the rest of the world through the the Mediterranean (via the Black Sea), then it needs access to the Adriatic. If it cannot come to an arrangement with Germany it may have to resort to threats, or seek a powerful ally to threaten the them.

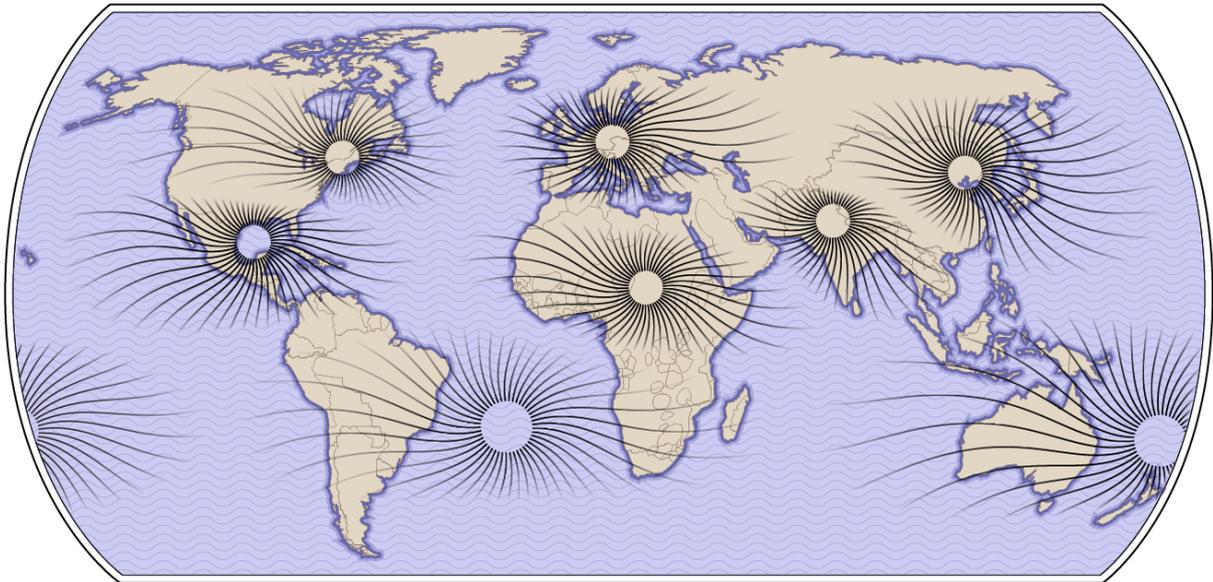
**Britain:** Has no designs on the Adriatic itself, but would much prefer the nascent German navy not venture into the Atlantic where the British maintain naval supremacy.

## And more...

The conflicts listed above are not the only ones. Feel free to come up with your own issues to resolve in the summit.

## Science!

Any of the diplomatic situations above could be affected by nations developing new technologies. New discoveries may give nations new resources to trade or valuable territories to defend. Delegates should make sure they are aware of the discoveries being presented by their own and other nations and consider how it will affect their position in negotiations.



# Characters

# Characters

Organiser provided characters are written gender-neutral without pre-arranged relationships. They are sketches and you should expand on or change the character in order to make it your own.

You are free to substantially change your character. The only things that cannot be changed are the assigned name, nationality and role, as those are needed for balancing distributions.

Characters do not come with a first name, just an initial. You should choose an appropriate first name and let the organisers know your choice. You can also choose a title for your character if you wish.

You will need to arrange relationships with other players. You should work with them to build a shared understanding of your character's history together and how they interact.

In keeping with consent based play, players arrange with each other to know their character's secrets (and secrets are always much more interesting when someone knows them). For example your character is being blackmailed - for this to come into play you will have to arrange with another player for their character to be blackmailing yours.

Characters have the following aspects:

**Nationality** - provides both a group affiliation and idea of group personality.

**Role** - indicates character strengths, interests and objectives. The roles are Adventurer, Diplomat, Military officer and Scientist.

**Background** - a brief history of the character with an emphasis on personality traits and action.

**Light/Dark Side** - a brief description of the character at their best and at their worst. This provides directions you can take the character or dramatic extremes to move between.

**Questions (5)** - questions you can answer to flesh out your character and make it your own.

**Suggestions for relationships (5)** - suggestions for relationships to other player characters. Use these as a starting point to negotiate character relationships with other players and build stories together.

**Suggestions for things to do (5)** - suggestions for things to do during the game. These may not necessarily be goals.

## The National Delegations

The great nations of Europa have sent delegations to Sweden. For the sake of keeping delegates' allegiances clear the Swedish hosts insist they wear sashes denoting their nationality. The game organisers will provide sashes.

Each country's citizens have a reputation, deserved or not. But characters are individuals and can deviate from these stereotypes. You should think about if and how your character diverges.

### Sweden

Sash: Blue and Yellow - matching the Swedish flag.

Reputation: Diplomatic and Academic

Sweden, while not neutral, has maintained cordial relations with all the major powers. Sweden also had the good fortune to be the birthplace of Alfred Nobel, who made his fortune from the invention and manufacture of high explosives. Wanting his legacy to be something other than destruction, Alfred left his fortune to fund the several prizes which he hoped would promote scientific progress and world peace. The Swedish Institute of Science now adjudicates those prizes, a responsibility it takes very seriously.

The Swedes are in the position of being the hosts of the Symposium and judges for the prizes, but Sweden itself is not a major power of Europa like its guests.

All the Swedes present are members of the Swedish Institute of Science and so are institutional academics of one kind or another.

### British Empire

Sash: Red - matching the red coats of your nation's soldiers and marines.

Reputation: Dignified and Self-Assured

Preference: Diplomats, Adventurers

Britannia rules the waves - her massive navies, both on the waves and now in space, have made Britain unassailable, allowed her to amass an extensive terrestrial and martian empire, and able to pursue a policy of splendid isolation. Things are changing though with the rise of a unified and powerful German empire, and Britain will now have to find allies on the continent.

The British have a reputation as being dignified and self-assured - stiff upper lip and all that. A British citizen never lets their emotion get the better of them. Rather they have a cup of tea and then take appropriate and reasoned action. This is not to say they don't have emotions - they do just as strongly as the French - but decorum must be maintained in public.

Queen Victoria rules the British Empire, resolute and unmoveable. She is related to most of the royal houses of Europa.

## French Empire

Sash: Tri-color (blue, white and red) - matching your nation's flag and representing the qualities of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Reputation: Energetic and Stylish

Preference: Military Officers, Adventurers

The French are always fashionable. The end results are not so important as arriving at them with flamboyance and passion. At the start of the century France ruled Europe under the military genius of Napoleon, whose legacy still dominates the continent. But since then France itself has waned. It still has the continent's second best army after Germany (the newly formed German Empire invaded and defeated France a few years ago) and the second best navy after Britain (but Germany is fast catching up).

There is a saying in France: "Where France leads Europa follows." The French are always experimenting in the realms of governance, science, philosophy and, of course, fashion.

The French have a reputation for being energetic and stylish. They even have a word for it - Élan! The French lead passionate, and detractors would say fickle, lives. But French passion has led them to build the most beautiful cities, the tallest towers and the most powerful difference engines in the world.

Napoleon III (Bonaparte's nephew) is the Emperor of the Second French Empire. He used to be the democratically elected President of the French Republic, but the French constitution only allowed him one term, so he led a coup. Despite his path to power Napoleon III is the most progressive and liberal leader in Europa. He is intent on restoring the greatness of France.

## German Empire

Sash: Prussian Blue - matching the military coats of your nation's soldiers - a colour synonymous with the founding principality of the modern German Empire.

Reputation: Efficient and Ambitious

Preference: Military Officers, Scientists

The German Empire is only a few years old, having been forged from many disparate German principalities by Prussia, which has installed its King as Kaiser. The new Empire is eager to prove itself as a military, imperial and scientific power. Late to the race for extra-world colonies, Germany has been locked out of Mars, so has gone to inhospitable Venus instead.

The Germans have a reputation for ambition and efficiency - they know what they want and will take the shortest path to get there. Their detractors caricature them as naively humorless and blind to anyone's point of view but their own. But they do great things.

Wilhelm II is the Kaiser of the German Empire. He is brash and eager to establish a historic reputation for himself and his empire. Queen Victoria is his Grandmother.

## Russian Empire

Sash: White - matching the snow and ice that covers large tracts of your country and breeds people of indomitable spirit.

Reputation: Conservative and Pragmatic

Preference: Diplomats, Scientists

The Russian Empire has three things in abundance: people, land and harsh, harsh winters.

In Russia the divide between the aristocracy and common folk is the most stark in Europa. The aristocracy and affluent upper classes live in opulence in the major cities of Moscow and St Petersburg and enjoy retreats to extensive country manors. Meanwhile most Russian commoners live the life of feudal peasants. It was only a couple of decades ago that Tsar Alexander II freed 20 million people from serfdom.

Russians have a reputation for being conservative and pragmatic. Their detractors caricature them as simple and superstitious. Russians would counter that simple and proven solutions are often the best.

Militarily Russia does not have the best equipment, but no other nation can muster the sheer number of troops the Russians can. They use their vast size and harsh winters to their defensive advantage. Even the military genius Napoleon could not overcome them.

Alexander II is the Tsar of Russia. He is quite progressive having outlawed serfdom and instigated constitutional reform. This does not make him particularly popular with the old ruling nobility. Meanwhile revolution is brewing amongst the disenfranchised poor.

## Roles



### Adventurer

Adventurers seek out dark places on the map, open ancient tombs, fight vile monsters, and claim vast treasures. Their insatiable curiosity is only matched by their need for action.

Adventurers are at home beyond ‘civilisation’, surviving by their own wits and bravado. Their experiences and opinions are likely to diverge from those of their less travelled fellow countrymen and they tend toward a skepticism of tradition and authority. They disrupt the status quo, but rarely promote chaos. They act from strong moral basis, just one that does not necessarily match that of their countrymen.

### What do Adventurers do at the Symposium?

At the symposium adventurers will be called on to present their discoveries. This might be as simple as being available in the exhibition room or as involved as making a presentation on the main stage. This is basically telling a good story.

Adventurers are... adventurous. They are the ones most likely get themselves caught up in other character’s business and secrets, ignore proper channels, and get themselves and other into mischief.



### Diplomat

Diplomats keep the peace, but they also seek the best outcome for their Nation.

Keeping the peace means keeping the peace between members of your delegation and well as between their own and other nation’s delegations.

They are mediators.

Diplomats and Military Officers recognise that the political and military landscape of Europa is shifting. Conflict threatens and the best shield will be negotiating new alliances with one or more of the other great nations of Europa.

A Diplomat may also be a spy. The line between diplomacy and spying can be blurry. Compromising foreign delegates, facilitating defections and stealing blueprints, formulas and artifacts can be part of a diplomat’s purview. At the same time they need to prevent similar from happening to their own delegation.

### What do Diplomats do at the Symposium?

Part of the Diplomat’s role is to keep other members of their delegation focused on the best interests of their nation (Adventurers and Scientists tend towards a little too much independence).

In addition, Diplomats are charged with establishing treaties with other nations at the Summits. Treaties come with obligations and should not be entered without consideration of their strategic ramifications. The result of summit can also be a declaration of war. Diplomats work with the Military Officers of their delegation to do this.



## Military Officer

Generals and Admirals look to the security of their countries.

Most officers at this level have purchased their commission and gone to an exclusive military college. This does not preclude commoners from these ranks, but it does make them more available to affluent nobles. Rising from the rank and file is very rare.

The military systems promote fervent nationalism by design. Exclusive officer colleges with prestigious peers reinforces this. Military personnel tend to have a very strong sense of nationalism.

That said most Military Officers recognise that the political and military landscape of Europa is shifting. Conflict threatens and the best shield will be negotiating new alliances with one or more of the other great nations of Europa.

### What do Military Officers do at the Symposium?

You should always be assessing your and other nations' scientific discoveries in terms of national security. How will the introduction of soldier automata change the balance of power in Europa? Will lightning guns make steel armor obsolete? This involves asking questions and discussing consequences with other delegates.

Military officers have been charged with establishing treaties with other nations at the Summits. Treaties come with obligations and should not be entered without consideration of their strategic ramifications. The result of summit can also be a declaration of war. Military Officers work with the Diplomats of their delegation to do this.



## Scientist

Scientists seek to unlock the mysteries of nature and to harness their powers.

Scientists can be bookish recluses, gregarious show ponies, or anything in between. The one thing that scientists have in common is unshakable faith in the power of science, especially the branch of science they personally practice.

Scientists, especially those sent to the Symposium, have a reputation for preeminence in their particular field - they have a speciality. That might be analytical engine programming, automata, weapons, mechanical prosthetics, healing concoctions, reanimation, etc.

### What do Scientists do at the Symposium?

At the symposium scientists will be expected to demonstrate their discoveries and inventions. This might be as simple as being available in the exhibition room or as involved as making a presentation on the main stage. This is basically telling a good story.

Scientists do science. They may be called on to create or repair contraptions on the spot, heal (or reanimate) people. Scientists may also be called on to assess the scientific breakthroughs of other nations and advise their delegation on potential national threats.



## Host

The Swedish Institute of Science is hosting the Symposium, and so members of the Swedish delegation have an additional role in proceedings. They are hosts for the event and also adjudicators of the Nobel Prizes.

### **What do Hosts do at the Symposium?**

Hosts of the Symposium have a responsibility to ensure things go (somewhat) smoothly. There is a schedule for the evening and they will be jointly responsible for keeping everyone to it.

The lead Host has to make a few small speeches demarking various points of the game. The organisers will have short list of points to get across in each speech.

As adjudicators hosts will be called on to award the Nobel Prizes at the end of the night. During the main part of the game they wander the exhibition hall and attend the presentation space, ask pointed questions and speculate out loud. They are always watching and judging. Towards the end of the night they gather and determine who the winners are.

## Relationships

Creating a place for your character in a tapestry of relations will be an important part of the game for players wanting to experience an emotional journey. The most fulfilling and impactful emotional moments will come from interactions from other players.

Your organiser provided character will have suggestions for relationships. These are suggestions only. To have these relations in game you will need to approach other players and build a mutual understanding of the relationship.

You can either do this in the lead up to the game with meetings, on Facebook or through email. Alternatively there will be some opportunity for relation building in the pre-game workshops.

Forming relationship prior to play is not mandatory, but is strongly encouraged for your enjoyment.

### Important Relationships

Friends, colleagues, family: Who are the people who have your back, whose support and confidence you can rely on? Who will you support without question?

Adversaries: Who are your rivals? Who do you have bad blood with and why? How do you express this antagonism?

Romances: Lovers/Paramours present and past, open and secret. The Symposium is a chance to meet up with people you may only see once a year.

### Other Relations

- Transactional relations: Someone you need something from, or is helping you with something.
- Relations of duty: Someone you answer to. Someone you outrank.
- Prejudicial relations: Someone you react to based on your prejudices

### Consent is Important

No matter if they are friendly or antagonistic, all of your relationships need to have the consent of everyone involved. This is especially true of antagonism and romance, but applies to all relationships that put any type of expectation on other players.

Consent can also change. Relationships organised before the game may not work in game. A player may find the relationship is not what they want. In such a case it is fine to drop out of a relationship - just let the other player(s) know.

If your partner drops out of a relationship thank them for letting you know and let them get on with their game. Don't pursue them for explanation.

## Tips on playing relationships

Relationships in larp are different from what you experience in real life. They're much more compressed and "heightened". Everything is simpler and happens faster, reactions and counter-reactions are more over-the-top. For this reason, we have some tips for playing relationships. They're meant to give you some ideas and inspiration. And if you feel you don't need them, that's ok!

### Playing friendship

Friends talk about things small and large. Tell your friends what's going on in your life, and ask about theirs. Overshare! Get involved in what they're doing. Do your friends favours. Say good things about them to others. Help them out when they're in trouble, and ask them for help when you need it. Their problems are your problems and you can always try to make your problems become their problems! Be loyal. Be supportive. Unless you're going to screw them over, of course, which is also interesting and part of friendship. After all, the worst of enemies can have started out as the best of friends.

### Playing conflict

Enemies come in all shapes and sizes, but they have one thing in common; they will go out of their way to make your life worse, and you'll definitely do the same for them. Share their dirty secrets if you know them. Make them up if you don't. Say bad stuff about them behind their back. Make it known that you're not on good terms when you see each other. Fake smiles, nasty "compliments" or outright verbal attacks are all part of the package. Get involved in the lives of your enemies, so you can make them worse. But most importantly, be prepared to change your views. Enemies today can be friends tomorrow.

### Playing romance

Romance is a tricky thing. Sometimes it's easy and light-hearted, and makes everyone happy. Sometimes it's complicated and dark, and is the glue that keeps two (or more!) people together even though it's unhealthy. It can also be one-sided and exist only in someone's head. There are many ways to be romantic. Take walks and share inner desires and dreams. Hold hands in the hallways. Stand up for each other. Send love letters. Recite poems. Promise each other the world. And remember that sometimes love fails, and that is also a part of romance. Rather something fast and furious than slow and safe.

### Playing countrymen

The great nations of Europa have co-existed for centuries, but the competition between them is fierce. For some, making friends with foreigners feels like betrayal, while others effortlessly maintain friendships across borders. No matter how you feel about your nation, remember that its fate is bound to you, and everything you do reflects upon it. Working hard for national prestige will make you popular amongst your own, and costing your nation reputation will get you into trouble. Your country is a bit like your family - you may not always like them, but you always know you belong.

## Conflicts and Prejudices

Conflicts are generally good for stories.

If you want to be in conflict or portray prejudices check with those you engage with to ensure they are okay with it. No character should be subjected to antagonism unless the player is happy for it.

## Gender, Sexuality and Race

Historically the Victorian era was one of ingrained sexism and racism. This is a game set in an alternative history, and one of the things altered are these attitudes. All roles and professions are available to all genders and ethnicities. Characters should not have prejudices based on gender, sexuality or race.

Basically we do not want any bigotries or prejudices based on attributes of PLAYERS.

Bigotries and prejudices based on attributes of CHARACTERS are available for play with, provided all the players involved, especially those being prejudiced against, agree.

The following are some types of conflicts appropriate to the game.

## Nation vs Nation

Nationalism is strong in Europa. It is natural for delegates at the symposium to prefer their homeland. But for some national pride not enough, they must put down other nations.

The nations of Europa, rightly or wrongly, all have stereotypes attached: Germans are humorless, the British are snobs, the French can't keep it in their pants and the Russians are all bumkins. Some will hold the worst of these stereotypes as truth.

Some expound the inferiority of all other nations. Some have a particular disdain for just one neighbour.

You choose how your character expresses their nationalism.

## Role vs Role

Your character's role determines how they see the world. For some it is a world full of wonders to be explored or exploited. For others it is full of dangers and enemies to ward against or vanquish. The symposium brings the many roles together and frustrations from clashing worldviews are certain.

Some believe in the eminence of their own role, like the officer who considers anyone who has not served in the military as less of a person.

Others have a particularly dim view of another profession, such as considering all diplomats to be charlatans, cads or cowards.

## Progress vs Tradition

In Europa scientists and adventurers make new discoveries on a daily basis, any of which could render existing technologies and power structures obsolete.

For some change should be embraced. Science promises to end the world's ills and create a new utopia. There may be some short term upheaval, but the ends will be worth it.

For others the unchecked overreach of science risks too much disruption. In the worst case this puts the whole world at risk of catastrophe. At a smaller but just as troubling scale it threatens to overthrow traditional power structures - structures in which many have vested interests.

## Noble vs Commoner

Some characters are born to title and privilege. Traditionally wealth and free time comes with titles, which allows freedom to pursue science or adventure. Second sons and daughters are bought commissions or enter public service.

In recent decades there has been the rise of self-made prodigies, inventors, and leaders. It seems intelligence and courage do not know class.

For some nobles the intrusion of upstart commoners into their traditional spheres is disdainful. For some of the self-made the privileges that still accompany being born with a title wrangle. For others such distinctions are of no import.

You choose your character's attitude to class. You can sneer down your nose at interloping commoners, or have a chip on your shoulder because you were not born with a silver spoon in your mouth. If class antagonism is not something that interests you then you can totally ignore it.

## Playing a Swedish Host

Swedish characters have an important role in the game as hosts. You will be helping the organisers keep the game (somewhat) on schedule and play (somewhat) focused. That said you are playing characters and you should aim to have fun as well.

Your main obligations are acting as hosts of the event and judging the Nobel Prizes. For the lead host there are some additional duties, most prominently making speeches and announcements.

### Let the Delegates deal with it

The delegations will create problems for themselves and each other. They will be tempted to turn to you as hosts to solve them. You can if you wish, but feel free to put it back on the delegates. Encourage them talk to each other and solve their own problems. Getting delegates to talk to one another is one of the reasons the Symposium exists.

### Playability comes before plausibility

At Pax Europa experiences and stories come first; even if it sometimes means stretching believability. If a delegate presents you with a discovery that doesn't make sense don't deny it outright. Accept them at their word. Ask them to explain its nature and the implications of their discovery. Answer with "Yes, and..." or "Yes, but...", never "No."

Similarly if you catch the delegates doing something crazy or dangerous don't stop them as hosts. You can join in, ask for an inducement to turn a blind eye, or berate them *after* they have blown something up.

We want you to stay true to you character, but also make sure you (and others) have fun.

### It's OK to be uncertain

If you're in doubt about something, you're always welcome to ask. Some problems can be solved by talking to your fellow hosts in the game, and others by talking to the organisers. Don't be afraid to ask questions, for help, or for inspiration - especially of the organisers. We're there to help you and the rest of the players have a good time, so make use of us.

# Playing a Swedish Host – Duties

All the delegates are guests of the Swedish Institute of Science. As representatives of the institute it is your character's responsibility to ensure the comfort and security of you guests, and ensure the whole event runs smoothly and on schedule. You can lean on the organisers playing butlers for most of this.

Occasionally an organiser may ask you to help keep the game on schedule. This might require you to make an announcement, ask players to hurry up, or be somewhere else. Mostly this will be handled by the organisers playing butlers, but sometimes this we may ask for your help with some in-game authority as hosts.

## Chair the Summits

There are two summits: one at the start of game and one before dinner. While the Swedes have no stake in the treaties decided by the summits, as a the neutral hosts it can fall to them to chair the meetings. This is optional but may give you insight for the awarding of the Peace Prize. A host at the summit will be a neutral chairperson, there only to ensure the rules of decorum for the meeting.

## Adjudicating the Nobel Prizes

You can award the prizes in any way you see fit. However you do it there are three prizes to be awarded at dinner, after the main course and before desert. Here are some ideas that may help you:

**Bring a notebook:** There will be a lot going on - taking notes will help keep it straight.

**Divide and conquer:** Divide the responsibility for assessing the delegations. One way to do this would be for one host to assess scientists' discoveries, one to assess adventurers', and one to assess everyone else. This loosely aligns with the three prizes.

**Have some criteria:** The formal criteria for the prizes are quite vague. It will help to think about what phrases like "greatest benefit to mankind", "most outstanding work adding to general knowledge" and "fraternity between nations" means in general and to your character specifically. You could develop specific criteria and give discoveries points (or remove them) for meeting them. Consult with each other about your criteria.

**Make the delegates work for it:** Ask delegates questions. Ask them to spell it out for you how what they are presenting justifies consideration for a prize.

**Help each other:** Confer before and during the game. Come up with a plan and check in with other that it is working. While the hall is being prepared for dinner, after the formal exhibition has finished, you will have time to confer and reach agreement as to who will receive each prize.

# Playing a Swedish Host – Speeches

The lead host is expected to make some speeches and announcements. If you wish you can share this responsibility around the hosts.

## Welcoming speech

This speech takes place at the start of the event immediately after the delegations have entered.

- Welcome the delegates
- Introduce yourself and your fellow hosts
- Talk about the prizes
  - *My late Uncle Alfred made his fortune in explosives*
  - *Did not want his legacy to be one of destruction*
  - *He bequeathed the prizes to encourage the betterment of all mankind*
- Mention any particular criteria you are looking for in awarding the prizes
- Remind everyone the first summit will be taking place soon
- Formally declare the exhibition open

## End of Exhibition

This speech takes place at the end of the formal exhibition, before you and the your fellow hosts retire to deliberate and the main room is set for dinner.

- Formally declare the exhibition closed
- Thank the delegates for their attendance
- Ask the delegates to retire while the hosts deliberate and the hall is set for dinner.

## Announcements of Prize Winners

These speeches take place after the main course of dinner. The announcements should be made in the order science, knowledge then peace prize.

For each prize:

- Remind everyone of what the prize is for
- For the science and knowledge prizes: Announce nominees, including what they are nominated for.
- For the peace prize: Comment on runner-up delegations and how they are promoting peace.
- Announce the winner. Invite them up to accept their prize and say a few words.

# Systems

## Opt In & Opt Out

This is a consent based game. Every player has the opportunity to decide what they want to be involved in in-game and the right to step out of situations without need for explanation.

To this end we have a number of systems for players to actively opt-in and opt-out of scenes and play, and a system for players to check in with each other and ensure players are comfortable. Player comfort is not always easy to gauge when characters are being played.

Acts of violence and intimacy will require explicit opt-in from everyone involved before they can proceed.

In the workshops we will discuss techniques for negotiating consent, checking in with other players, and leaving or ending scenes players do not want to be part of.

## Play to Lift

In most games, including many larps, there is an expectation of playing to win. This game is based on a different philosophy: play to lift.

In the game, players' experiences and characters' stories are more important than 'winning'. If there is an opportunity for another player to reach a critical turning point, have an emotional encounter or simply have a cool moment, help them get there. Let your character make a mistake or lose a contest if makes for a good story for others. Other players will do the same for you in turn. The game relies on a collaborative rather than a competitive play style.

We ask that you remain open to opportunities to lift others' experience even if this may be at a cost for your own character.

## Show, don't tell

Larp is about "Live" and "Action". It's in the name. When your character does something, have them act or react in character, don't stand around talking about what your character does. But please no stunts that could injure yourself or other players.

If your character has a lightning rifle it is better to have even the most crude of props, than to mime the rifle and have to go off-game to describe it to everyone who enters the scene.

Think about how you can use props, costume and NPCs to represent what you want. If you can prepare and bring your own that will help the game for everyone. If you have an idea but feel you lack the skill to create the effect yourself ask the organisers and other players for help.

Likewise a smartphone in the 19th century setting is out of place. Either put it aside for the duration of the game or disguise it in an appropriately steampunk way.

## Ray guns and Concoctions

At some stage someone is likely to point their experimental lightning gun at someone else and pull the trigger, or drink deeply of Dr Jekyll's 'medical restorative'. When this happens the effect is defined by the recipient.

The general process for using a weird science is as follows:

The creator of the effect makes an announcement about the intent of the effect before or at the time it is triggered. This could be something like stating "This innocuous looking device is my patented Lightning Cannon" during a tense standoff, or yelling "taste 20,000 volts" as you pull the trigger. Potions and concoctions should be labelled with something that indicates the intended effect.

After this initial offer, the resulting effect is entirely up to the recipient to decide on and act out.

This can lead to unpredictable results. All this is happening at the far limits of science - everything is experimental and experiments often go awry.

## Swords & Fisty-cuffs

While firearms are now common, swordplay, especially in the settling of matters of honour, is still common in Europa. In civilised society gentlefolk generally do not stoop to fisticuffs, and if they must they usually abide by the rules set down by the Marquess of Queensbury.

All swords in the game will be latex replicas, approved by the organisers. Violence is not a focus of the game, characters do not have abstract statistics representing their martial skills and we want to allow for a character's skill to be divergent from the player's skill. For these reasons we use a simple resolution:

The first step of initiating any violence is ensuring the enthusiastic consent of all players involved. As part of that negotiation players agree off-game to the outcome: who will win, and how. Once you have decided who will win it is good form to let the losing player make narrative decisions about how they lose.

Players are then encouraged to act out the fight in a suitably dramatic fashion. This fight must be done at a controlled speed with lightest touches.

**Under no circumstances should anyone throw a punch or swing a sword with force.**

A system for negotiating the play of violence will be part of the briefing workshop.

## Duels

Matters of honour can be settled with duels.

Traditionally duels are settled with swords, fighting either to the death or to first blood depending on the seriousness of the matter at hand. The ‘American’ style of duel is settled with pistols, each able to fire only one shot. Scientists may choose to use exotic weapons of weird science.

Generally the challenged party chooses weapons and sets the terms.

The game mechanics of duels are just like any other form of combat - the players decide what the outcome will be and then act out the results.

If you are challenged to a duel and don’t want that to be part of your game you can dictate the time of the duel to be ‘tomorrow morning’ or some other time after the conclusion of the game.

## Death and Injury

**You cannot be killed, but you can choose to die.**

Being killed at a larp is very seldom fun. Dying at one can be, but usually only if it is chosen by the player for dramatic impact. For this reason at this game you cannot kill other player characters without their explicit off-game consent. The same goes for injuries that will ruin a large part of their play.

This means that while conflicts will happen and fights and duels can become quite serious, nobody gets killed unless they choose to. And since dying means missing out on the rest of the larp it’s not something that’s going to be happening right and left. If you choose to have your character die, make sure it’s in an interesting way.

It must be said quite clearly, though, that we do not expect character death to be a central part of the larp. It may happen in extreme cases if the players so choose, but this is not a larp where we expect a high death toll.

## Injury and Healing

No-one wants to spend an entire larp maimed, invalided or in a sick bed. So if your character has been injured don’t lie around playing injured for any longer than you want to. Find a scientist to administer you a concoction or replace your limb with clockwork, or an adventurer who knows an ancient Martian remedy, and get it taken care of. Make it interesting instead of boring.

# Miscellanea

# Costuming

The clothing style we are aiming for for the game is European Victorian with a steampunk twist. Often steampunk gets its base aesthetic from the American West which is contemporaneous but different.

## For Gentlemen

### Civilian Dress

- Dark, single or double breasted suit - tail coats or frock coats preferred.
- White long sleeved, collared shirt - unfrilled tuxedo shirts with a tabbed collar are best, but a plain white business shirt will suffice.
- Dress shoes or boots
- Cravat or Ascot - bow ties in a pinch, never modern neckties
- Waistcoat - The style is the age was square cut bottom, form fitting with lapels and two functional pockets.

Suits tend to be dark and sombre. Cravats and waistcoats are bright, garish and patterned. This was the age that invented paisley.

### Military uniforms

- Dark, straight-legged trousers - for added effect sew or glue a contrasting ribbon down the outside leg seams.
- White long sleeved, collared shirt as above
- Military jacket - this can be the hardest element to source. There are online stores that offer reproduction military jackets though these can be quite expensive. For a cheaper option find a solid-coloured single or double breasted suit jacket and sew or glue gold braid to it.
- Dress shoes or boots
- Medals

The most typical colours for military jackets from each nation are:

- British: Scarlet red
- German: Prussian blue
- Russian: Dark green
- French: Any of the above and more!

However do not be concerned if you find the perfect jacket in the wrong color. Imperial armies are huge and different regiments of the same country have wildly different uniform colours.

## For Ladies

Women in Europa may join the military. In such cases their uniforms are the same as the men's, though feel free to change the style and cut to be something you are happy with. Similarly women wearing a version of the men's civilian dress is also common in Europa.

For something more reflective of Victorian female fashion:

- Long sleeved, high collared blouse - can be coloured and patterned (stripes, plaids, checks), puffy sleeves a bonus but not required.
- Full length skirt - tapered to the waist and optionally trimmed with braid, ribbon, lace or beading.
- Dress shoes or boots
- Large broach at the neck
- Hair worn piled up

Victorian women's fashion was as varied as it is today and there was a different style of dress for different occasions. There is a certain look to Victorian fashion that only achieved by looking at pictures of the style and copying the effect.

## Accessories

**Gloves** - White cotton for men's attire. Long gloves for women in evening wear.

**Pocket watch** - with a chain and kept in the waistcoat pocket.

**Hats** - Top hats and bowlers for civilian men, extravagant wide brimmed hats or bonnets with plumes and lace for the ladies. Military headwear is too diverse to describe. Pith helmets are entirely appropriate for adventurous characters. However hats are not a necessity as all the action is taking place indoors.

## Steampunk Elements

Steampunk mostly comes through in accessories.

**Goggles** - Flying on Aether ships, traversing the deserts of Mars, working on lightning guns - whatever the undertaking chances are you need a set of goggles.

**Weapons and instruments** - Appropriately steampunk-ified nerf guns, gloves made to look like robot hands, aether meters.

**Photos** - As evidence of discoveries, secrets or blackmail photographs are good props. You can find a suitable image on the Internet or snap your own. Give it a sepia filter in some imaging software and get it printed at Big W or Target.

**Plans, Blueprints and Maps** - For scientific discoveries in far off lands, or too abstract to represent at the game, blueprints and maps are another great physical representations.

Find a suitable illustration from the British Library's public domain images:

[www.flickr.com/photos/britishlibrary/albums/72157639428882575](http://www.flickr.com/photos/britishlibrary/albums/72157639428882575) - Technology & Industry

[www.flickr.com/photos/britishlibrary/albums/72157638850077096](http://www.flickr.com/photos/britishlibrary/albums/72157638850077096) - Space & SciFi

In imaging software remove any labels and add your own back in.

# Credits

## **Justin Walduck** - Lead organiser and writer

Justin has been doing impro theatre since 1992 and larp since 1996. In that time he has been an organiser as often as a player. He has always been interested in how people collectively tell stories. In 2016 he attended Dziobak's blockbuster larp College of Wizardry in Poland and fell in love with the nordic blockbuster style of play. Pax Europa is his first foray into bringing that sensibility to Australian larp.

## **Michael O'Dempsey** - Character writer

Michael started larping with the Beyond the Sunset larp group in 2009 and held storytelling and organisational roles in the group for many years. Outside that group he enjoys running private games for his friends, and writing fiction.

## **Jason Chappel and Penny Sullivan** - Organisers

Jason and Penny have been writing freeforms and larps independently and for Canberra's annual roleplaying convention, Phenomenon, since 2011. They've specialised in player-driven political and trading freeforms with simple mechanics. After playing Dziobak's Convention of Thorns blockbuster larp in Poland they have adapted what they've learned from the Nordic style and applied it in Threehold, a Changeling: the Dreaming larp.

## **Tole** - Organiser

Tole is a chronic overachiever who loves volunteering for things before thinking through if they are practical. She is passionate about consent culture, project management, helping other people achieve their dreams, and robots. Tole would like to pretend pronouns don't exist but will default to she/her if you don't feel like linguistic shenanigans.