GUIDELINES TO APPLY FOR INCLUSIVENESS TARGET COUNTRIES (ITC) CONFERENCE GRANTS

ITC Conference Grants are a networking tool to support scientists affiliated in an Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC) or a Near Neighbour Country (NNC) to present their own work (oral presentation only) at a recognized international conference organized by a third party (i.e. not organized by a COST Action).

Eligibility rules

- The applicant must be affiliated to a legal entity located in an **ITC** or a **NNC**.
- The applicant or their research supervisor must be a Working Group member of LUCES COST Action (CA22131).
- The applicant must make an **oral presentation** at the international conference. The presentation must be related to the research topics of LUCES.
- The conference must start and end within the active Grant Period (01.11.26-15.10.27).
- The conference must start after the date of the relevant call result specified on the web page.

Application

- Register on the e-COST platform.
- Complete the online application in e-COST (Grant applications tab), and upload the following supporting documents:
    a) application form (available on the LUCES website);
    b) abstract of the presentation;
    c) Curriculum Vitae of the applicant;
    d) support letter from the supervisor (if applicable), including the motivation for the participation, in agreement with the Action objectives;
    e) acceptance letter of the communication from the conference organizers;
    f) a detailed estimation of the budget, with costs documented by screenshots (conference fees, travel, accommodation).

Co-funding is encouraged, and other funding awarded or applied for to cover expenses related to the conference in question must be detailed in the application. However, double funding is not permitted (the same expenditure cannot be claimed twice).

In case the acceptance letter is not yet available at the call deadline, it can be provided later. Instead, the applicant must upload a proof of submission and/or any other document indicating the planned notification date. If successful, a pre-approval will be sent to the grantee, but the awarding of the grant will only be officially confirmed after the acceptance letter is received by the Grant Awarding Coordinator and the Grant Holder Manager, no later than 15 days before the conference.

Funding

An ITC Conference Grant is a financial contribution, which takes into consideration the applicant's detailed budget request and the outcome of the evaluation of the application by the Grant Evaluation Committee. Conference Grants do not necessarily cover all expenses related to participation in the conference.

The financial contribution requested for an ITC Conference Grant is limited to 1.000 euros maximum. Funds can be requested to help cover registration fees, accommodation, travel and visa expenses. The contribution requested must consider the amenities already included in the registration fees (meals and/or accommodation). Train travel should be preferred when possible.

Multiple applications to several Actions by the same person to attend the same conference is strictly forbidden and may lead to the cancellation of the grant.

Evaluation criteria

The Grant Evaluation Committee manages the evaluation according to the COST rules and will take into consideration geographical spread, career stage and gender balance. All applications will be assessed at the same time.

The Committee will also consider the scientific merit of the proposal based on the abstract submitted, also considering the scientific scope of the conference and its relevance with respect to the purposes of the Action aims, and how it will support the Action in achieving its scientific objectives.

Priority will be given to:

- Presentation of research activities developed in the frame of a collaborative project within two (or more) different LUCES COST Action Member Countries.
- On-site conferences over online conferences.
- Applicants who have not already received a conference grant.
- Participation in European conferences (if on-site).

Commitments before/during the conference

Acknowledge COST and the LUCES COST Action in abstract and presentation.

« *This communication is based upon the work from COST Action LUCES CA22131, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).* »

The official logos and visual identity must always be used. Failure to acknowledge COST and LUCES would result in grant cancellation. See LUCES website for further acknowledgement instructions and materials.

The Grant Holder Manager must be notified immediately of any cancellation of the conference by either the organizers or the participant.

How to claim the grant

The ITC Grant will only be paid once the conference has taken place and the requested documents have been submitted and approved by the Grant Awarding Coordinator.

- The grantee must submit in e-cost:
  a) a scientific report;
  b) the certificate of attendance;
  c) the program of the conference or book of abstracts / proceedings indicating the presentation of the grantee;
  d) copy of the given presentation (presentation material will not be made public but will be archived by COST for auditing purposes).

  The template for the scientific report is available on the LUCES website; its use is mandatory.
- All listed documents must be submitted within 30 days after the conference or by October 15th, whichever date comes first. Late submission leads to the grant cancellation.
- The grantee certifies that the expenses covered by the ITC grant have not been, or will not be, reimbursed or covered by any other source of funding.

The Grant Awarding Coordinator,

Giulia LICINI