

COST Action 24129
European Media and Born-digital Art Conservation and Knowledge Network (EMBARK)

Open Call for Inclusiveness Target Countries Conference Grants (ITCG)

The COST Action CA24129 EMBARK is a pan-European research and collaboration network focused on the conservation of media and born-digital art, bringing together interdisciplinary expertise from academia, cultural heritage institutions, and the creative and technology sectors. Its main goal is to address the growing preservation crisis of media art by connecting fragmented knowledge, developing shared methodologies and tools, and strengthening Europe's capacity to sustainably conserve, document and access these technologically complex artworks, ensuring their long-term availability for research, culture and future generations.

More information including the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) can be found in the following web page: <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA24129/>.

Important Dates:

Application: open continuously

Notification of Results: 15 working days after application submission

Mission Period (Mission to start and be completed within): 1 April 2026 - 1 October 2026

Grant Type Overview:

Inclusiveness Target Countries Conference Grant (ITCG) funds an oral presentation of their own work within the scope of the Action by an Action Participant affiliated to a legal entity located in an Inclusiveness Target Country / Near Neighbour Country in a high-level conference fully organized by a third party, i.e. not organized nor co-organized by the COST Action.

ITC Conference grant:

- Serves COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy;
- Supports Action Participant affiliated to a legal entity located in an Inclusiveness Target Countries/ Near Neighbour Countries to establish a strong network and increase their visibility in the research community through sharing their work and to gain knowledge;
- Can contribute to increasing visibility of the Action.

ITC Conference grant benefits to:

- ITC Conference Grantee: receives support for attending and presenting their own work within the scope of the Action (oral presentation) in a conference and can establish new contacts for future collaborations.

Eligibility:

ITC grants are intended for ITC/NNC Action Participants who actively contribute to one or more Working Groups within COST Action CA24129. The work proposed must be relevant to the scope and objectives of the Action. Applications will be evaluated based on criteria assessing the relevance, quality, feasibility of the proposed work, its expected impact for the Action, and the expected benefit for the applicant.

Applicants must comply with the eligibility rules in accordance with the Annotated Rules for COST Actions. The current list of ITC countries include: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Serbia, Türkiye and Ukraine. COST Near Neighbour Countries (NNCs) are: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus*, Egypt, The Faroe Islands, Jordan, Kosovo**, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine***, Russia****, Syria, and Tunisia.

Before submitting an application, it is mandatory to ensure that all eligibility criteria are met. Applicants must carefully read the rules applicable to ITCGs as specified in the following documents:

- Annotated Rules for COST Actions (pp. 96-104):
<https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2025/11/COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V3.0-25-IX-2025.pdf>
- COST Grant Awarding User Guide:
<https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2025/01/COST-Grant-Awarding-user-guide.pdf>

Financial Support

The total budget allocated for ITC grants under this COST Action for Grant Period 1 (GP1) amounts to €3,600 with an estimated capacity to fund up to three applicants, based on typical average costs of €1,200 per ITCG across COST Actions. Individual grant amount will be decided based on the applicant's requested budget, and should reflect the duration and location of the Conference and the actual conference fee, as well as overall funding considerations, including average grant levels across COST Actions. The financial contribution will be awarded as a fixed grant, subject to the evaluation of the application by the Grant Evaluation Committee. The awarded grant will be paid only after the successful completion of the ITC Grant. The grant provide a contribution for travelling, accommodation and subsistence expenses, registration fee and overall effort. Applicants to Conference Grants shall not receive different types of conference grants in the same period.

Application

Please read the COST Annotated Rules and Grant Awarding User Guide before applying.

The ITCG application procedure will be conducted online via the e-COST platform. Individuals can apply using their e-COST profile. Log in => Click COST Actions on left hand side of screen => My grant applications => Apply for a Grant => Inclusiveness Target Countries Conference Grant (ITCG).

To be filled in e-COST:

- Title of the presentation;
- Conference title, date (within the active Grant Period, i.e. no overlap across two consecutive Grant Periods) and country;
- Budget requested;
- Attendance Type (face to face or online).

To be uploaded to e-COST:

- **Application form** (template available on e-COST) describing: Relevance of the conference topic to the Action and Motivation describing the potential for impact on the applicant's career.
- **Copy of the abstract of the accepted oral presentation;**
- **Acceptance (or invitation) letter** from the conference organisers.

Evaluation

ITCG applications are evaluated by the Grant Evaluation Committee of the Action. The selection of ITCG applications to be funded will be carried out based on the following main criteria:

- 1 Alignment with the objectives and priorities of the Action (including relevance to the Working Groups and planned activities);
- 2 Quality and excellence of the proposed work (clarity of objectives, expected outcomes, or contribution to the Action);
- 3 Methodology/feasibility of the proposed work plan/activity (methods, planning, timeline, and expected outputs);
- 4 Expected benefit and impact for the Action and its Working Groups (scientific contribution, capacity building, collaboration, networking and dissemination potential, knowledge exchange);
- 5 Expected benefit for the applicant, taking into account their career stage (e.g. knowledge exchange, skills development, networking opportunities, and career advancement).

The Committee will also assess feasibility of the proposed activities, the profile of the applicant, and the expected output of the ITC Grant. Gender balance, career stage, and geographical inclusiveness will be taken into consideration. The Grant Evaluation Committee determines the final financial contribution, taking into account the available budget, the requested amount, the scope of the proposed activities, as well as overall funding considerations, including average grant levels (i.e. average costs) across COST Actions. Once the selection process is complete, applicants will receive a formal notification via the e-COST platform informing them of the outcome of the evaluation. If the application is successful, the applicant will receive a Grant Letter indicating the approved amount and the conditions for receiving the grant. The applicant may not start the ITCG activities before receiving the Grant Letter.

Reporting and Grant Payment

Upon completion of the ITCG, the grantee is required to submit a report via e-COST within 30 days after the end of the ITCG, or within 15 days after the end of the Grant Period, whichever occurs first.

In addition to the report, the submission must include a set of mandatory supporting documents. The following documents must be uploaded in e-COST:

- **ITC Grant Report** (template available in e-COST);
- **Certificate of attendance;**
- **Programme of the conference or book of abstracts / proceedings** indicating the oral presentation;
- **Copy of the given presentation that must include the COST and EMBARK Action logos and a clear acknowledgment of funding;**
- **One-page summary of the ITC Grant (template to be provided),** including the title of the ITCG presentation, name of the grantee, name of the conference, as well as a short descriptive paragraph outlining the presented work and activities undertaken. The summary should also include a photo of the grantee and one representative photo illustrating the ITCG activities. This material is intended for communication and dissemination purposes and may be published on the Action's dedicated webpage or other dissemination channels.

Upon approval of the report by the Grant Awarding Coordinator, the grant will be processed and paid directly to the grantee.

Contact person

Grant Awarding Coordinator – Dr Jelena Brajković, jelena.brajkovic@arh.bg.ac.rs