

# Guidelines for Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) Conference Grants

## Mission

Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) Conference Grants aim to support the participation of Researchers affiliated to a legal entity located in an Inclusiveness Target Country / Near Neighbour Country (NCC) at high-level conferences fully organized by a third party. The grantees receive support for attending and presenting their work (oral presentation) and can establish new contacts for future collaborations.

## Eligibility

- ITC Conference Grants are exclusively reserved for researchers affiliated to a legal entity located in an Inclusiveness Target Country/ Near Neighbour Country, according to COST definition;
- The applicant must be a member of the Action at the time of application (with a primary affiliation to a legal entity located in a COST Full or Cooperating Member country, a COST Near Neighbour Country or a European RTD Organization) and listed as a Working Group (WG) member in the WG selected in the application document;
- The applicant must have a confirmation of an accepted oral presentation;
- The conference must be located in a different country than the country of affiliation or be an international conference in the applicant's home country;
- The main subject of the presentation at the conference must be on the topic of the Action results;
- The presentation and (if applicable) conference paper must acknowledge COST by showing the COST logo, DESIGNAE logo (both available on the [www.designae.eu](http://www.designae.eu)) and/or the mandatory funding phrase ("This publication is based upon work from COST Action DESIGNAE CA24126, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology));
- Attendance at European conferences is preferred. However, conferences held elsewhere can also be considered.

## Submission of applications

The evaluation of grant applications and the issuance of a formal decision regarding approval must be completed prior to the applicant's attendance at the conference where the scientific presentation will occur.

Applicants should ensure that their submission is made at least 14 days preceding the conference they plan to attend.

- Preparation of the required documents for the Grant application including additional supporting documentation:
  - ITC Conference Grant Application Form using DESIGNAE template (based on e-COST template): the document can be downloaded from DESIGNAE website ([www.designae.eu](http://www.designae.eu)). Save as PDF once completed;
  - Copy of the abstract of the accepted oral presentation;

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- Acceptance letter/email from the conference organizer committee confirming your oral presentation;
- Copy of the information sheet of the congress: a document where the registration fees for attending the congress are listed.
- Candidate's CV: Applicants must upload their CV in their e-COST profile (max. 3 pages). This information will be visible to the holders of leadership positions and any reviewers appointed by the Action for evaluation purposes.
- Submission of the application in e-COST (<https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants>): The applicant encodes a grant application by logging into e-COST and clicking on the Grant Applications tab. The applicant can select the grant from the page 'Apply for new grant'. Applicants need to fill all requested sections and to upload all required documents before submitting the application.

### Evaluation Procedure

As approved by the Management Committee (MC), the evaluation will be performed by selected reviewers representing the individual WGs. The application undergoes initial screening concerning the following points by the Grant Awarding Coordinator (GAC) - substituted by the Action Chair (AC):

#### *Pre-screening criteria:*

- The applicant is a member of DESIGNAE and of the selected WG;
- The applicant is a Researcher and/or Innovator from an ITC or NNC;
- The applicant has an approved oral presentation;
- The conference is taking place in a different country than the country of affiliation of the applicant or is an international conference in the applicant's home country;
- The conference is taking place within the current Grant Period.

After passing the pre-screening stage (otherwise, the grant will be rejected), the GAC will send the application to 1-2 reviewer(s) representing the WG of strongest alignment as indicated by the applicant in the application form. Reviewer selection will ensure no conflict of interest and will take into account balance in gender/country/age of the reviewers. The reviewers are asked to fill a review-template based on the following evaluation criteria:

#### *Evaluation Criteria Score* (from 0 to 15 points):

- **Relevance of the congress/conference:** Is the congress/conference recognized within the academic/professional community as a forum for presenting and discussing topics that are relevant to the WG of the Action? (0-5 points)
- **Relevance of the proposal:** Is the topic and content of the presentation relevant to the topic of the WG of the Action? Is the quality of the work and its novelty appropriate for representing DESIGNAE? (0-5 points)
- **Additional Benefit to the Action:** Additional benefits to the WG/Action (e.g. by accumulating data for a database or knowledge to be distributed with the WG or Action) and additional Action Dissemination Activities at the conference will be considered (0-3 points);
- **Additional Diversity and Inclusiveness points for Young Researchers/Innovator** (+1 point), as well as for **conferences located in Europe** (+1 point).

Participants will be selected based on their evaluation score, when obtaining a minimum of 9 points in the evaluation process (otherwise the application will be automatically rejected) and provided budget availability.

In case of the necessity of decision making between candidates with similar scores, applications will be prioritized (by the Network Balance Coordinator) as follows:

- Number of previous grants granted to the applicant;
- Additional benefit to the DESIGNAE COST Action and wide-reach nature of the conference;
- Young Researcher/Innovator, country, and gender balance.

**The Grant Holder will inform each approved applicant by sending a Grant Letter generated from e-COST.**

### **ITC Conference Grants Financial Support**

An ITC Conference Grant will cover (but not necessarily cover all) costs for economy travel, accommodation, and meal expenses for the selected candidates. ITC Conference Grant grantees must make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health, taxation, social security, travel insurance and pension matters.

- The calculation of the financial contribution up to 2500 EUR for each ITC Conference Grant will be up to a maximum of the daily allowance per day in the specific country, registration and travel costs for face-to-face conferences.
- When meal and accommodation expenses are supported by the hosting institution as part of the provisions offered in their conference package, the accommodation and meal allowances must be deducted from the claim accordingly.

**The financial support might be reduced by the GAC or Grant Holder Manager (GHM) through budget limitations or upon suggestion by the reviewers. It should be noted that the request made by the applicant should reflect the duration and location of the conference.**

Further details can be consulted at the COST Annotated Rules.

### **Approving an ITC Conference Grant for Payment**

The pre-approved grantee must submit the following documents at the latest 30 days after the end date of the conference or 15 days after the end date of the Grant Period, whichever comes first:

- A Grant Report, using DESIGNAE ITC Conference Grant Report template, which can be found at the DESIGNAE website ([www.designae.eu](http://www.designae.eu)). When preparing it, please consider the following:
  - The report for COST is a public document;
  - It should describe the outcome of the presentation of the accepted contribution, in terms of grantee's visibility, including the establishment of new contacts for future collaborations;

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- It should include a short summary for dissemination purposes: A very short statement (maximum 280 characters, including spaces) for the DESIGNAE Social Media accounts, including a photo or short video taken during the conference (uploaded separately in e-COST). Alternatively, a proof of the grantee's own post tagging official DESIGNAE Social Media accounts will also be sufficient;
- Save the document as PDF before submitting.
- The certificate of attendance to the conference;
- The program of the conference or book of abstracts / proceedings indicating the presentation (oral) of the grantee;
- Copy of the given oral presentation showing the COST logo, DESIGNAE logo (both available on the [www.designae.eu](http://www.designae.eu)) and/or the mandatory funding phrase ("This publication is based upon work from COST Action DESIGNAE CA24126, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology);
- Photo or short video taken during the conference (if not posted and tagged on social media).

The GAC is responsible for approving the scientific report (in case of doubt after consulting with the reviewers or WG leaders) and informing the GHM that the mission has been successfully completed. Reasons for rejection of the report can be: incomplete information, disagreements with the initial application (with respect to location, dates and topic).

Grants are paid by the Grant Holder Institution after the completion of the activity and approval of all required report/documentation.

**Failure to submit the requested documents within the established period from the end date of the ITC Conference Grant will effectively cancel the Grant.**