

An european multidisciplinary Industrial symbiosis community

Yearly Grant report – First Grant Period

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Introduction

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the grants awarded under the LIAISE COST Action for the year, highlighting the support provided to foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and research advancement within the Action's network. It focuses on the following grant categories: Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs), Virtual Mobilities, ITC Conference Grants, and Dissemination Conference Grants.

The purpose of these grants is to promote cross-border mobility, enhance the integration of researchers from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs), and ensure effective dissemination of the Action's findings. By facilitating opportunities for researchers to engage in collaborative activities, present their work at international conferences, and access specialized training, these grants play a crucial role in advancing the goals of the LIAISE COST Action.

This report outlines the allocation and impact of these grants, providing insights into how they contribute to the Action's objectives and foster an inclusive, collaborative research environment.

Open Calls for the First Grant Period

The LIAISE COST Action offers various types of grants to support its objectives, with open calls for Virtual Mobility Grants (VMG), Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSM), ITC Conference Grants, and Dissemination Conference Grants. These grants are crucial in enabling collaboration across countries, supporting researchers in advancing their work, and disseminating the results of the Action's activities. Below is an overview of the grants, eligibility criteria, evaluation processes, and application procedures.

Open Call for LIAISE COST Action Short Term Scientific Missions

Introduction

Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSM) provide funding for researchers to visit host organizations in different countries to work on specific tasks and projects. This grant promotes international collaboration and knowledge exchange by facilitating visits to organizations that offer unique research environments or techniques.

Cut-off Dates and Budget

- 15th April 2024
- 15th June 2024
- 15th August 2024
- After August 15, 2024, applications will be processed as received, depending on the remaining budget.

Applications will be evaluated within 15 days of submission.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the criteria for affiliation and demonstrate active participation in Working Groups. The output of the STSM must contribute directly to the Action's objectives.

Evaluation Criteria

- 40% Appropriateness of STSM for the selected Working Group.
- 15% Quality and feasibility of the work plan.
- 15% Quality and feasibility of planned outcomes.

- 15% Suitability of the applicant to work on the plan.
- 15% Benefits for the applicant.

Open Call for LIAISE COST Action Virtual Mobility Grants

Introduction

Virtual Mobility Grants (VMG) support collaboration in virtual settings, allowing researchers to engage in research activities without the need for physical travel. The objective is to foster collaboration and strengthen existing networks by enabling researchers from one COST country to participate in virtual activities carried out in other COST countries. Virtual mobility facilitates knowledge sharing and networking through digital platforms, such as videoconferencing.

Cut-off Dates and Budget

- 15th April 2024
- 15th June 2024
- 15th August 2024
- After August 15, 2024, applications will be processed as received, depending on the remaining budget.

Applications will be evaluated within 15 days of submission.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must have appropriate affiliation, and priority will be given to active Working Group members. VMG output must align with the goals and deliverables of the LIAISE Action.

Evaluation Criteria

- 40% Appropriateness of VMG objectives for the selected Working Group.
- 30% Involvement of members from different countries.
- 15% Suitability of the applicant's scientific background.
- 15% Benefits of the VMG for the applicant and COST LIAISE objectives.

Open Call for LIAISE COST Action ICT Conference Grants

Introduction

ICT Conference Grants support researchers from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs) and Near Neighbour Countries (NNCs) to attend and present their work at international conferences. This grant enables young researchers and innovators to gain exposure and establish new collaborations.

Cut-off Dates and Budget

- 15th April 2024
- 15th June 2024
- 15th August 2024
- After August 15, 2024, applications will be processed as received, depending on the remaining budget.

Up to €2,000 for face-to-face conferences and €500 for virtual conferences.

Eligibility Criteria

The grants are available to PhD students and Early Career Investigators (ECIs) from ITC or NNC countries. Applicants must have an accepted paper/poster and must present at the conference.

Evaluation Criteria

- 50% Quality and relevance of the publication/presentation.
- 25% Ranking of the conference.
- 10% Diversity of participants.
- 15% Oral presentation.

Applications review

The total number of applications this year was 25. The distribution and approval of grants across mainly the three cut-off periods provide insights into the demand and success of different types of grants within the LIAISE COST Action. Here's a summary of the applications and approvals:

First Cut-off:

- Total Applications: 3 (1 ITC, 2 STSM)
- Grants Approved:
 - 1 ITC Conference Grant (approved)
 - 1 STSM (approved)
- Outcome: A solid start with a successful approval rate for the available grants, particularly in the ITC Conference Grant and STSM categories, showing an alignment with the Action's goals of fostering cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Second Cut-off:

- Total Applications: 14 (3 STSM, 5 ITC CG, 1 Dissemination Conference, 5 VMs)
- Grants Approved:
 - STSM: 1 approved (out of 3)
 - ITC CG: 2 approved (out of 5)
 - Dissemination Conference: 1 approved
 - Virtual Mobilities: 4 approved (out of 5)
- Outcome: A higher number of applications were received, and the approval rate was positive, especially for Virtual Mobility Grants (VMGs), with 4 out of 5 applications approved. This indicates a strong interest in virtual collaboration and knowledge sharing, aligned with the flexibility offered by VMGs.

Third Cut-off:

- Total Applications: 7 (3 STSM, 1 Dissemination Conference, 3 ITC Conference Grants)
- Grants Approved:
 - STSM: 3 approved (out of 3)
 - Dissemination Conference: 0 approved
 - ITC Conference Grants: 1 approved (out of 3)
- Outcome: The third cut-off saw a high approval rate for STSMs, with all 3 applications receiving funding. However, the Dissemination Conference and ITC Conference Grants had a lower approval rate, with 1 out of 3 ITC grants being approved. This highlights the competitive nature of these grants and the importance of alignment with the Action's objectives.

Post-Cut-off (After August 2024):

- Additional Application: 1 Virtual Mobility Grant (approved due to available budget)
- Outcome: After the final cut-off, an additional Virtual Mobility Grant was approved, demonstrating flexibility in the budget allocation and the ongoing support for collaboration even after the deadline.

Overall Observations:

- Virtual Mobility Grants (VMGs) showed strong demand and high approval rates, reflecting the growing importance of virtual collaboration in fostering international research connections.
- STSMs had a generally positive approval rate, especially in the later cut-offs, which is promising for future collaborations.
- ITC Conference Grants and Dissemination Conference Grants had more selective approval rates, highlighting the competitive nature of these grants and the importance of meeting the specific evaluation criteria.
- This distribution of grants underscores the success of the open calls in fostering international collaboration, promoting research mobility, and supporting the dissemination of results, particularly through virtual and short-term collaborations.

Grant Expenditure

Table 1. Budget Grant Period 1 under Grants Categories

LIAISE Budget GP1	Budget (EUR)
Mobility of Researchers and Innovators	13,000€
Presentations at Conferences organised by Third Parties	5,500€
TOTAL	18,500€

Details of the grants approved

Mobility of Researchers and Innovators

Table 2. Expenditures in mobilities in the first grant period

Grant Description	Date	Budget
STSM: Merim Kasumović - Academic Stakeholder Mapping	13-20/05/2024	1,750€
VM: Radu Mirza - Empowering Young Researchers (EYR)	13/05-08/08/2024	500€
VM: Aleksandar Erceg - Developing base for the State-of-the-Art Report on Industrial Symbiosis	10/07-31/07/2024	500€
VM: Pawel Krzeminski - Identification and selection of promising Industrial Symbiosis opportunities	01/08-11/10/2024	500€
STSM: Yasemin Ülker - Industrial Symbiosis in the Textile Industry: A case study comparing Turkiye and Portugal	09-15/09/2024	1,500€
STSM: Llesh Llesha j- Industrial Symbiosis Awareness: Economic and Organizational Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	22-28/09/2024	2,250€
STSM: Estelle Giacomi - Advancing Industrial Symbiosis: Mastering Life Cycle Assessment for Sustainable Innovation.	07-11/10/2024	2,500€

STSM: Olesia Plotnic - Developing and Implementing Future Training Programs for Industrial Symbiosis in Romania	07-19/10/2024	1,500€
VM: Olivija Filipovska- Connecting and Raising Awareness for Industrial Symbiosis	21/10-31/10/2024	500€

It can be seen that a wide variety of topics related to the Industrial Symbiosis and the research and capacity building objectives of the action have been funded.

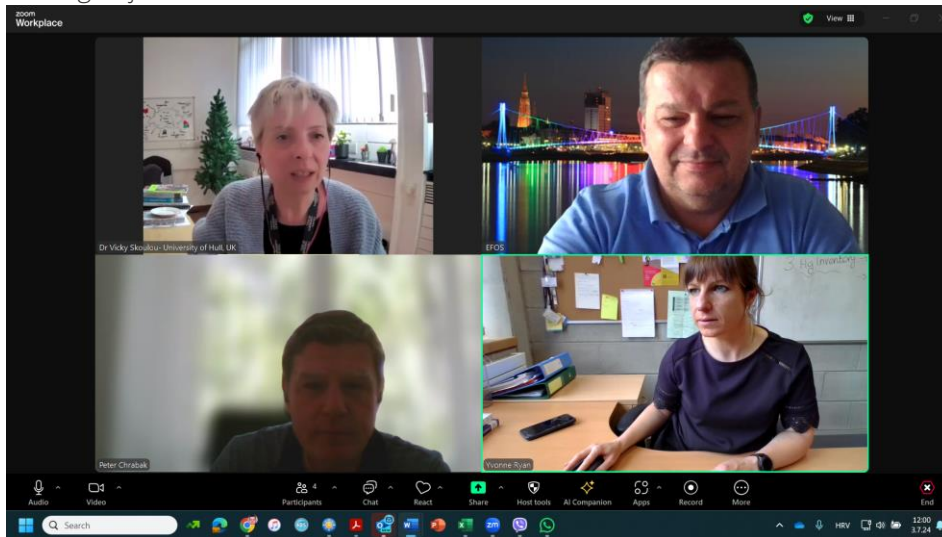




Figure 1. Some images of the mobilities funded under LIAISE COST Action-Grant Period 1

Presentations at Conferences organised by Third Parties

Table 3. Expenditures in presentations at conferences in the first grant period

Grant Description	Date	Budget
ITCYRIG: Ina Keçi - "INDUSTRIAL SYMBIOSIS AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY UNDER THE FRAMEWORK OF INDUSTRY 4.0	12/06-15/09/2024	1,100€
ITCYRIG: Donjeta Bucaj - Dispelling Myths Addressing Taboos that Hinder the Zero Waste Economy	24/08-25/08/2024	1,500€
ITCYRIG: Dr. Natālija Cudečka-Puriņa- Development of a methodological framework for Circular Economy business model valorization	22/09-25/09/2024	900€
DCG: Almudena Muñoz Puche- Attendance EU Circular Week	21/10-24/10-2024	1,000€



Figure 2. Some images of the attendance to conferences funded under LIAISE COST Action-Grant Period 1

Overview of the grants

The distribution of grants across countries demonstrates a significant engagement of researchers from various regions, particularly from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs), which is a key goal of the LIAISE COST Action. The grants provide valuable opportunities for researchers from these countries to contribute to and benefit from international collaborations.

Geographical Distribution:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina (1), Albania (2), and Moldova (2) received a notable number of grants, indicating strong participation from researchers in these countries, which aligns with the Action's aim to enhance collaboration in ITCs.
- Countries such as Latvia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Norway, and Türkiye received fewer grants, which reflects a more selective distribution based on the research proposals and the availability of funding.
- Spain (2) and Croatia (1) show strong engagement from EU member states, further underlining the diversity and wide reach of the programme.

Types of Grants:

- Virtual Mobilities: A total of 4 virtual mobility grants were awarded, supporting researchers' participation in remote activities and knowledge exchange without the need for physical travel. This indicates the Action's flexibility in promoting virtual collaboration.
- STSM (Short-Term Scientific Missions): The 5 STSM grants awarded demonstrate a focus on facilitating intensive, short-term research exchanges between researchers from different countries, promoting in-depth collaboration and idea sharing.
- Dissemination Conference Grant: With only 1 grant awarded, this category reflects targeted support for researchers who present findings at conferences, helping to disseminate the LIAISE COST Action's impact to the broader academic and industry community.
- ITC Conference Grants: A total of 3 grants were awarded to researchers from ITC countries, providing them with the opportunity to attend international conferences and build their visibility within the global research community.

Overall, the distribution of grants reflects a balanced approach in promoting cross-border collaboration, enhancing research mobility, and ensuring equitable access to opportunities, particularly for researchers from less-represented regions. These grants play a key role in achieving the LIAISE COST Action's goal of fostering inclusivity and advancing industrial symbiosis research on a global scale.

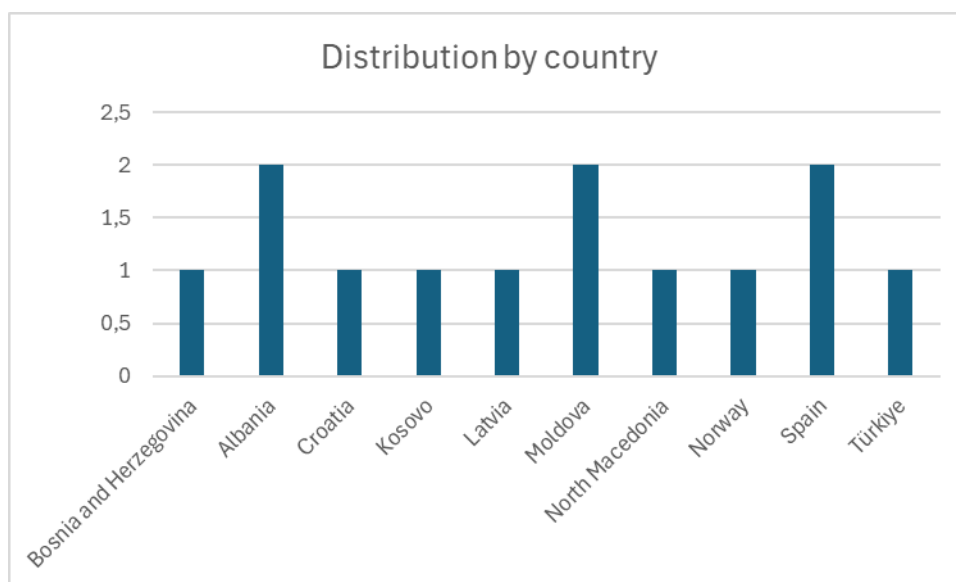


Figure 3. Distribution by country of the grants funded during the first grant period

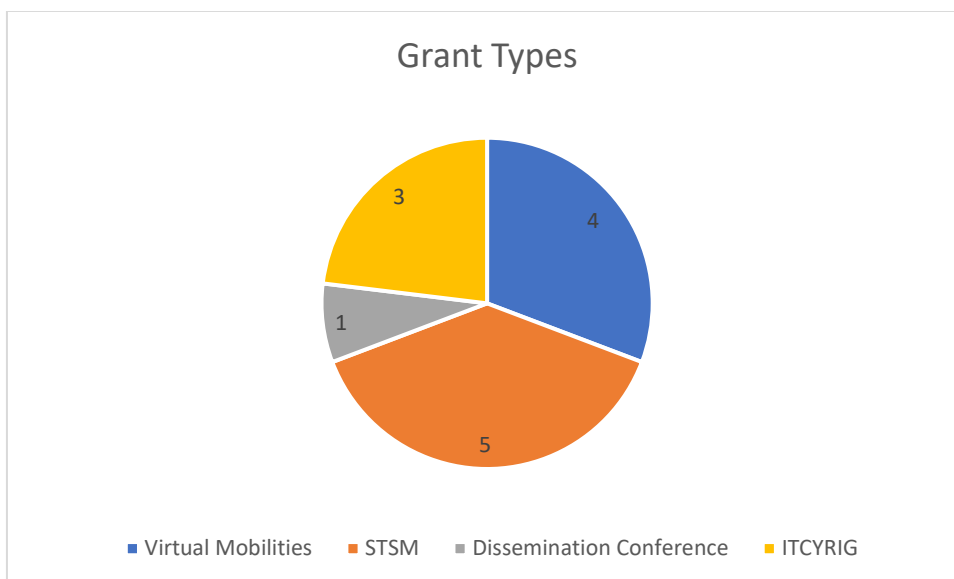


Figure 4. Distribution by grant type funded during the first grant period

Conclusions

The first year of the LIAISE COST Action's grant awarding process has proven to be highly successful in fostering collaboration, supporting international research mobility, and advancing the Action's objectives. The distribution of grants across different categories—Virtual Mobility Grants (VMGs), Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs), ITC Conference Grants, and Dissemination Conference Grants—demonstrates the growing interest and demand for opportunities to connect researchers from diverse backgrounds and regions.

The approval rates, particularly for VMGs and STSMs, indicate strong engagement with the grant opportunities, with a notable increase in the number of approved applications, especially in the second and third cut-off periods. These grants are instrumental in ensuring that the LIAISE COST Action remains inclusive, fostering collaboration across Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs), and supporting the dissemination of key research findings.

Despite the more competitive nature for ITC Conference Grants and Dissemination Conference Grants, the funding provided to successful applicants has contributed to the overall visibility of the Action and its impact on the scientific community.

The flexibility in the grant process, especially the approval of additional VMGs after the final cut-off, demonstrates the Action's commitment to supporting ongoing collaboration and knowledge-sharing, ensuring that all eligible researchers can continue to contribute meaningfully to the Action's goals.

In conclusion, the grant awarding process has significantly contributed to advancing the LIAISE COST Action's mission of fostering industrial symbiosis and strengthening the global research network. Moving forward, continued support for virtual and physical mobility, alongside targeted conference participation, will further enhance the Action's impact and the research community's engagement.