



An european multidisciplinary Industrial symbiosis community

Yearly Grant report – Second Grant Period

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Introduction

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the grants awarded under the LIAISE COST Action for the second 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 Second 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 Mission (STSM) is a grant that allows Researchers or Innovators to visit a host organization located in a different country than the country of their affiliation, for the specific work to be carried out and for a determined period. We have an Open Call for STSM Grants using a rolling system for the deadlines for STSM Grant Applications, which for this grant period are as follows:

Cut-off Dates and Budget

- 15th December 2024
- 15th February 2025
- 15th April 2025
- 15th July 2025

After 15th July 2025, if there is a budget available, the applications will be processed as they are received. In the same vein, if the budget runs out in any of the previous cut offs, participants will be informed and the following calls will not be carried out.

All the applications that have been sent by the cut off date will be evaluated within 15 days and the applicants will be informed about the decision.

Applicants whose proposals are accepted receive funding for implementing a project with an international team and gain new knowledge or access to equipment or techniques not available in

the home institution. The decision on the awarded amount is decided by the Grant awarding coordinators and the action chair of the COST Action LIAISE CA22110,

Based on the request of the applicant and should reflect the duration and location of the STSM. All STSMs need to be finished and reports submitted by the end of the grant period.

Eligibility criteria

Researcher and Innovators with appropriate affiliation as described in the [Annotated Rules](#) section 4.1.1.1.1. AFFILIATION.

Additionally, **priority** will be given to active Working Group members whose application is endorsed by the Working Group and whose STSM output is closely related to the goals and deliverables of the Action. For more information please see the [LIAISE Memorandum of understanding](#).

Participation of Young Researchers/ Innovators (<40-year-old) in STSM is encouraged. In the evaluation of two applications with the same score, the one from a Young Researcher will be considered first.

The Table below (page 59 COST ANNOTATED RULES) describes all eligible scenarios. Applicants may receive only one STSM per Grant Period and may not receive more than one STSM for the same Host institution for the duration of the LIAISE COST Action.

| Affiliation to | | Meetings | | Training Schools | | | Other networking activities | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|---|-----------------|------------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|--|
| | | Invited individual | Local Organiser | Trainer | Trainee | Local Organiser | ITC Conf Grant* | All others | |
| COST Members | Legal entity in COST F/C Member | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Legal entity in CPM | At COST Partner Member's costs (dedicated budget line) | | | | | | | |
| Specific Organisations | EC/EU | At EC, EU body, office or agency cost (minimisation of cascade funding) | | | | | | | |
| | Eur. RTD Org. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ | |
| | IO | Once in the lifetime of the Action | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | |
| NNC | Legal entity in a NNC | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| IPC / Third States | Legal entity in an IPC | Once in the lifetime of the Action | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | |

* ITC Conference Grants are limited to Young researchers and innovators from COST Inclusiveness Target Countries and NNC.

Note that STSMs can be organised anywhere in the world, provided budget availability and MC approval of the scientific justification of the specific benefit of visiting the proposed Host.

Evaluation criteria

All the applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 40% Appropriateness of the STSM for the selected Working Group and objectives.
- 15% Quality and feasibility of the work plan.
- 15% Quality and feasibility of the planned outcomes.
- 15% Suitability of the applicant to work plan objectives.
- 15% Benefits of the STSM for the applicant (visitor).

Open Call for LIAISE COST Action Virtual Mobility Grants

Introduction

Virtual Mobility Grant (VMG) is a grant that allows financial support to foster collaboration in virtual settings. The aim is to strengthen existing networks by enabling individual researchers from one COST country to participate in research activities carried out in institutions in other COST countries, in order to foster collaboration and contribute to the scientific objectives of COST LIAISE. Virtual mobility refers to activities that do not require physical travel but involve online collaboration, communication and knowledge sharing between researchers or participants of different countries. The focus is on facilitating collaboration, sharing expertise and networking through virtual means such as videoconferencing and other digital platforms. We have an Open Call for Virtual Mobility Grants using a rolling system for the deadlines for VMG Applications, which for this grant period are as follows.

Cut-off Dates and Budget

There is no cut-off date for VMs, the applications can be made throughout the year. All the applications will be evaluated within 15 days and the applicants will be informed about the decision.

Applicants whose proposals are accepted receive funding for implementing a project with an international team and gain new knowledge. The decision on the awarded amount is decided by the Grant awarding coordinators and the action chair of the COST Action LIAISE CA22110 on behalf of the Action MC or Core Group based on the request of the applicant and should reflect the complexity and the effort required by the VMG. All VMGs need to be finished, and reports submitted by the end of the grant period.

Eligibility criteria

Researcher and Innovators with appropriate affiliation as described in the [Annotated Rules](#) section 4.1.1.1.1. AFFILIATION.

Additionally, **priority** will be given to active Working Group members whose application is endorsed by the Working Group and whose VMG output is closely related to the goals and deliverables of the Action. For more information please see the [LIAISE Memorandum of understanding](#).

Evaluation criteria

All the applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 40% Appropriateness of the VMG objectives for the selected Working Group and objectives.
- 30% Members from different countries involved in plan for participation.
- 15% Suitability of the applicant's scientific background for the work plan objectives.

- 15% Benefits of the VMG for the applicant and COST LIAISE objectives.

Open Call for LIAISE COST Action ICT Conference Grants

Introduction

One of the main COST Action CA22110 LIAISE objectives is to support research in Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs) and Near Neighbour Countries (NNCs). ITC Conference Grants are financial support for Young Researchers and Innovators affiliated in an Inclusiveness Target Country / Near Neighbour Country for their participation in high-level conferences. The grantee receives support for attending and presenting their work (poster/oral presentation) at a conference and can establish new contacts for future collaborations. This is a contribution for traveling, accommodation and subsistence expenses, registration fee, printing of scientific posters and overall effort. For this reason, we have an Open Call for ITC Conference Grants using a rolling system for the deadlines for ITC Conference Grant Applications, which for this grant period are as follows.

Cut-off Dates and Budget

- 15th December 2024
- 15th January 2025
- 15th March 2025
- 15th May 2025
- 15th July 2025

After 15th July 2025, if there is a budget available, the applications will be processed as they are received. In the same vein, if the budget runs out in any of the previous cut-offs, participants will be informed, and the following calls will not be carried out.

All the applications that have been sent by the cut-off date will be evaluated within 15 days and the applicants will be informed about the decision. Up to 2000 EUR can be awarded for face-to-face conferences and up to 500 EUR for virtual conferences.

Eligibility criteria

Conference Grants are reserved for PhD students and ECI's with a primary affiliation in an institution located in an ITC (Inclusiveness Target Country) or an NNC (Near Neighbour Country):

- EU Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia
- EU Member States Outermost Regions: French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, Reunion Island and Saint-Martin (France), Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain)
- Full Members that are not EU Member States: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Ukraine
- NNCs: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Egypt, the Faroe Islands, Jordan, Kosovo, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, and Tunisia.

Participation of Young Researchers/ Innovators (<40-year-old) in STSM is encouraged. In the evaluation of two applications with the same score, the one from a Young Researcher will be considered first.

The applicants must have an accepted paper or poster at a conference and must make an oral/poster presentation. The publication/presentation must be listed in the official event/conference programme. The main subject of the oral presentation / poster presentation / speech at the approved conference must be on the topic of the Action LIAISE and must acknowledge COST (see [How to acknowledge COST funding](#)).

The conference, the submission of the expenses, and the reporting must take place before the end of the current Grant Period.

Additional information

- Priority will be given to active Working Group members whose application is endorsed by the Working Group.
- The submission for ITC CG must be after the acceptance of the paper.
- Attendance at European conferences is preferred. However, conferences held elsewhere can also be considered.

Evaluation criteria

All the applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 50% The quality and relevance of the publication/presentation.
- 25% The conference rankings.
- 10% Diversity.
- 15% If the contribution is an oral presentation.

Applications review

The total number of applications this year was 34, nine more than last year. The distribution and approval of grants across mainly the four 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: 9 (3 ITC, 6 STSM)
- Grants Approved:
 - 3 ITC Conference Grants
 - 3 STSM
- Outcome: A solid start with a successful approval rate for the available grants, particularly in the ITC Conference Grant, showing an alignment with the Action's goals of fostering cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Second Cut-off:

- Total Applications: 7 (5 STSM, 2 VM)
- Grants Approved:
 - STSM: 3
 - Virtual Mobilities: 2
- Outcome: Again, an important number of applications were received, and the approval rate was positive. This indicates a strong interest in virtual collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Third Cut-off:

- Total Applications: 10 (4 STSM, 2 Dissemination Conference, 4 ITC Conference Grants)
- Grants Approved:
 - STSM: 2 approved
 - Dissemination Conference: 2
 - ITC Conference Grants: 4
- Outcome: The third cut-off saw a high approval rate for ITC CG, with all 7 applications receiving funding. The same happened with Dissemination Conference Grants. STMSs had a lower approval rate, with 2 out of 4 grants being approved. This highlights the competitive nature of these grants and the importance of alignment with the Action's objectives.

Fourth Cut-off:

- Total Applications: 7 (2 STSM, 1 Dissemination Conference, 4 ITC Conference Grants)
- Grants Approved:
 - STSM: 0
 - Dissemination Conference: 0
 - ITC Conference Grants: 3
- Outcome: The last cut-off concluded with no approval for the categories of dissemination conferences and STSM. This highlights the competitive nature of these grants and the lower budget at the end of the grant period.

Overall Observations:

- Virtual Mobility Grants (VMGs) showed lower demand in this second year although they have 100% approval rates.
- STSMs had a generally positive approval rate, especially in the first 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. However, in this second year, both categories increased the number of applications but also the number of approvals.
- 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 2 under Grants Categories

| LIAISE Budget GP2 | Budget (EUR) |
|---|----------------|
| Mobility of Researchers and Innovators | 19,000€ |
| Presentations at Conferences organised by Third Parties | 7,500€ |
| TOTAL | 26,500€ |

Details of the grants approved

Mobility of Researchers and Innovators

Table 2. Expenditures in mobilities in the second grant period

| Grant Description | Date | Budget |
|--|------------------|--------|
| STSM: Isaak Trajkovic - Research on the influence of pigment additives in PLA material in order to reduce the amount of waste due to inadequate product planning | 15-30/01/2025 | 2,600€ |
| VM: Llesh Lleshaj - Critical Social and Cultural Drivers for Effective Industrial Symbiosis (IS) Implementation | 17/03-28/04/2025 | 700€ |
| VM: Nazim Kuyer - Innovative Grant Writing for Young Researchers in Industrial Symbiosis and the Circular Economy | 01/04-01/06/2025 | 1,000€ |
| STSM: Aleksandar Petrovski - Investigation on the potential for Industrial and Urban Symbiosis | 11/04-05/05/2025 | 3,000€ |
| STSM: Dzintra Atstaja - Networking for joint projects and publications by Circular economy and Industrial symbiosis | 21-26/04/2025 | 1,200€ |
| STSM: Mine Gungormusler - Networking for joint projects and publications by Circular economy and Industrial symbiosis | 23-30/04/2025 | 1,700€ |
| STSM: Blizard Zani - Reconnoitering social and economic KPIs: Barriers and obstacles of Industrial Symbiosis implementation | 11-17/05/2025 | 1,700€ |
| STSM: Azemina Mashovic - Exploring Industrial Symbiosis Solutions for the Western Balkans: Collaborative Research Between North Macedonia and Serbia | 02-06/06/2025 | 1,500€ |
| STSM: Berk Dalkilic - Austria-Türkiye Industrial Symbiosis Collaboration: Development of Chitin Nanofiber-Reinforced Gelatin Biofoams for Sustainable Insulation | 11-25/06/2025 | 2,986€ |

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.

Presentations at Conferences organised by Third Parties

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

| Grant Description | Date | Budget |
|--|---------------|--------|
| ITC CG: Olivija Filipovska - Finance for Circularity: Innovations and Challenges | 12-14/02/2025 | 1,500€ |
| ITC CG: Andreas Kyriakidis – ITC grant | 13-16/02/2025 | 1,200€ |

| | | |
|--|------------------|--------|
| ITC CG: Andelka Stojanovic - The position of European countries regarding opportunities for Industrial Symbiosis: A comparative analysis employing multi-criteria decision-making tools | 30/03-05/04/2025 | 800€ |
| ITC CG: Besa Shahini - Integrating Waste Management and Carbon Mitigation through Industrial Symbiosis: Strategies for Green Urban Development in Eastern Europe | 15-18/05/2025 | 1,700€ |
| ITC CG: Aleksandar Petrovski - INVESTIGATION ON THE POTENTIAL FOR INDUSTRIAL AND URBAN SYMBIOSIS | 21-25/05/2025 | 700€ |
| DC: Apostolos Michopoulos – Participation in an International Conference | 15-19/06/2025 | 1,200€ |
| DC: Almudena Muñoz – Attendance to 6th Symposium on Circular Economy and Sustainability | 15-19/06/2025 | 1,500€ |
| ITC CG: Ana Ramos- Participation in the 6th Symposium on Circular Economy and Sustainability - Advancing Industrial Symbiosis from an RTO's training perspective | 15-19/06/2025 | 2,000€ |
| ITC CG: Isidora Milosevic- Industrial symbiosis: Encouraging circularity through cross-sector cooperation | 10-11/07/2025 | 700€ |
| ITC CG: Llesh Lleshaj- Inclusiveness Target Countries Conference Grant | 04-05/09/2025 | 500€ |
| ITC CG: Dilber Ayhan- Participation in the 12th International Conference on Life Cycle Management (LCM 2025) in Palermo with an oral presentation by the LIAISE COST Action ITC Conference Grant | 09-12/09/2025 | 2,426€ |
| ITC CG: Aida Szilagyi- Dissemination of Industrial Symbiosis Practices at ERSCP Conference | 14-17/09/2025 | 1,600€ |
| ITC CG: Sanela Arsic - Multi-Criteria Assessing Industrial Symbiosis Potential in European Countries: An Integrated Entropy-COPRAS Approach | 16-18/09/2025 | 1,100€ |



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

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:

- Serbia (3), Albania (3), and North Macedonia (3) received a notable number of grants, indicating strong participation from researchers in these countries. This aligns with the Action's objective to strengthen collaboration and capacity building in ITC regions.
- Cyprus (2), Türkiye (3), and Romania (1) received fewer grants, reflecting a more selective distribution based on the quality of research proposals and the availability of funding opportunities.
- Spain (2), Portugal (1), and Latvia (1) demonstrate continued engagement from EU member states, further underlining the diversity and wide geographical reach of the programme.

Types of Grants:

- Virtual Mobilities: A total of 2 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 9 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. It is also important to mention that only 7 grants were finalised due to illness and problems with the applicant.
- Dissemination Conference Grant: 2 grants were awarded in this category. It 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 11 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.

Conclusions

The second year of the LIAISE COST Action's grant awarding process has proven to be consolidated, with more applications than last year. It has been 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 VMs, ITC CG and DC, indicate strong engagement with the grant opportunities, with a notable increase in the number of approved applications, especially in the first three 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 STSMs, the funding provided to successful applicants has contributed to the impact on the scientific community.

The flexibility in the grant process, especially the approval of VM without specific deadlines, 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, without the need of travelling.

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.