COST Action CA21158

SMILES

Enhancing Small-Medium IsLands resilience by securing the sustainability of Ecosystem Services

Funded ITC and YRI Conference:

Third Open Call (2025)

Third Grant Period

Purpose of an ITC or YRI Conference under SMILES

The main objective of SMILES[1] is to provide a platform for coordinated interdisciplinary research on several aspects of mapping and assessment of ecosystem services (ES) in small and medium European Islands in order to synthesize and strengthen the knowledge base for conservation of island realms and contribute to their sustainable development.

There are **six working groups**[2] focus on different aspect of the topic:
1. Small-medium island ecosystems: natural capital assessment
2. Ecosystem Services of Small-medium islands
3. Effects of Land use and climate changes (LU/CC) on ES
4. Nature-based solutions (NbS) for safeguarding ES of small-medium islands
5. Policy and Governance of Small-Medium Islands for ES provision
6. Dissemination, Participatory and user-centered design processes

ITC Conference grant 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[3] / Near Neighbour Country[4] in a high-level conference fully organized by a third party, i.e. not organized nor co-organized by the COST Action. ITC Conference:

- Serve COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy;
- Support Action Participant affiliated in a legal entity 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

YRI Conference grant funds a presentation (poster/oral presentation) of their own work by a Young Researcher and Innovator (YRI) in a high-level conference fully organized by a third party, i.e. not organized nor co-organized by the COST Action.

ITC Conference benefit to:

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

YRI Conference benefit to:

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

Currently, CA21158 SMILES calls for ITC or YRI Conference Grants Applications targeting participation at conferences that will take place before 15th September 2025.

Applications for an ITC or YRI Conference grant can be made throughout the year from the date of publication until **31 July 2025**. or until financing is available. Evaluations will be carried out as they are received for greater agility in the organization of evaluations, voting, reservations, etc.

ITC or YRI Conference Grants provide contribution for traveling, accommodation and subsistence expenses, registration fee, printing of scientific poster and overall effort. Up to EUR 1500 per grant for face to-face conferences or EUR 500 for virtual conferences.

More information can be found in Section A2-1.2 of the Annotated Rules for COST Actions.

How to apply?

Applications for ITC or YRI Conference Grants are first submitted on the e-COST website: https://e-services.cost.eu/conferencegrant

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 virtual)

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 or poster presentation;
- Acceptance (or invitation) letter from the conference organisers;
- CV

The following documents must also be e-mailed to the SMILES Grant Awarding Coordinator, Dr. Xana Álvarez: xaalvarez@uvigo.gal

- document generated by e-COST,
- a CV, including a list of academic publications if applicable,
- acceptance letter from the conference organizers (confirming either your speaking slot or your poster presentation),
- a copy of the abstract or poster submitted to the conference.

Applicants must be eligible (see Annotated Rules for COST Actions, Section 6.4) and the oral presentation (in case of ITC or YRI)/poster (in case of YRI) submitted to the conference must be in line with the Action scientific objectives.

The applications will be ranked by the SMILES Action Chair, Co-Chair and the Grant Awarding Coordinator base on:
- scientific quality of the paper/poster accepted at the conference
- high-level international conferences
- CV of the applicant
- benefit to the development of the COST Action

The selection will follow COST policies on gender inclusiveness and geographical balance. Please, include this information if you want it to be considered in your evaluation. Preference will be given to applicants who did not previously receive funding for STSM, Conference Dissemination, ITC or YRI conference.

The final ranking will be approved by the SMILES Action Chair, Co-Chair and the Grant Awarding Coordinator.

The researchers who applied to the call will receive the results of the selection from the SMILES Grant Awarding Coordinator. The selected researchers should wait for the official invitation from the Grant Holder before booking any travel arrangements and paying conference fees.

The selected researchers will have to acknowledge the COST Action in their final contribution to the conference.

After the ITC Conference

The required report/documentation for claiming an **ITC Conference Grant** is:
- Report to the Action MC on the outcome of the presentation of the accepted contribution, in terms of grantee's visibility, including the establishment of new contacts for future collaborations,
- The certificate of attendance,
- the programme of the conference or book of abstracts / proceedings indicating the oral presentation of the grantee,
- copy of the given oral presentation, with the SMILES logo and thanks for the funding received.
- A short text and photo describing the activity for the Action's social media should be also provided after the completion of the ITC.
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The required report/documentation for claiming **a YRI Conference Grant** is:
- Report to the Action MC on the outcome of the presentation of the accepted contribution, in terms of grantee's visibility, including the establishment of new contacts for future collaborations,

- The certificate of attendance,
- The programme of the conference or book of abstracts / proceedings indicating the presentation (oral or poster) of the grantee,
- Copy of the given presentation (oral or poster).

It will be mandatory for all beneficiaries of an ITC or YRI Conference grant to participate in the activities organized by SMILES with the aim of disseminating the activities developed when requested throughout the duration of the COST ACTION.

Receiving payment of the grant:

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

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[1] To learn more about aims and the key questions of COST Action SMILES, please look at the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) here: https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA21158/.

[2] Detail of the working groups can be found here: https://sites.google.com/view/cost-smiles/working-groups

[3] COST Inclusiveness Target Countries: 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. More information: https://www.cost.eu/who- we-are/cost-strategy/excellence-and-inclusiveness/

[4] COST Near Neighbour Countries: Annex-I-level-A-Country-and-Organisations-Table-Version-1.5.pdf (cost.eu)