

## **ITC Conference Grants Eligibility Criteria and Rules**

### ***Aim***

We aim to support Young Researchers and Innovators (YRI) up to 40 years old from Participating Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) and Near Neighbor Country (NNC) to attend international science and technology related conferences on the topic of the project which are not organized by the COST action CA18216.

**ITCs** are as follows: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia (as EU Member States), Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine (as Full Members that are not EU Member States) and French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, Reunion Island and Saint-Martin (France), Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain) (as EU Member States Outermost Regions)

**NNCs** are: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, the Faroe Islands, Jordan, Kosovo, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Russia, Syria, Tunisia. (As of 6 May 2022 until further notice, measures are taken to suspend cooperation with Russia for the execution of the COST Actions and COST activities. Amongst these measures, participation and eligibility of COST Action participants affiliated to a legal entity established in Russia are suspended for all COST Actions and COST activities).

### ***Mandatory preapproval criteria***

1. Conference Grants are exclusively reserved for **YRIs up to 40 years old**, with a primary affiliation in an institution located in an ITC or NNC
2. The applicant must provide an **oral/poster presentation/speech**, in an international conference, on the topic of the Action and **must acknowledge COST**
3. Filled ITC Grant application form

### ***Additional ranking criteria to be considered***

1. The Applicant's CV with publications related to vascular ageing, arterial stiffness (compatibility and relevance with the topic of the Action)
2. Type of conference: European/international (Attendance at European conferences is preferred. However, international conferences held elsewhere can also be considered)
3. Applications related to the currently ongoing Working Groups, submitted by the WG members, and endorsed by the WG leaders

4. Originality, impact, new research directions, implications for clinical practice, new techniques/devices to assess arterial stiffness and vascular age

### ***Application submission***

After ITC Conference Grants Call launching by VascAgeNet GH Manager and ITC Conference Grant Coordinator, please submit the application form, to the ITC Conference Grant Coordinator (ITCCG) **Ioana MOZOS** through the VascAgeNet site <http://vascagenet.eu/itc-grant-application>

Supporting documents to be uploaded on the VascAgeNet site within the application form:

1. the Applicant's CV, including recent publications and information about their implication in currently ongoing Working Groups
2. the accepted abstract
3. acceptance letter
4. a document demonstrating that the applicant is a YRI < 40 years

The evaluation of ITC grant applications and the selection of the successful candidates are in charge of the of the Action Management Committee (MC). The Action MC formally delegates the evaluation of ITC grant applications to an ITC CG Coordinator and ITC grant Committee (ITCGC). The application will be first **evaluated** by the ITC Conference Grants Committee and the ITCCG Coordinator of the COST Action, checking compatibility and relevance with the topic of the Action, if the applicant is a YRI up to 40 years old from Participating Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) and Near Neighbour Country (NNC), **ranking** the submitted applications considering additional ranking criteria. Then, if the remaining budget allows to provide funding, it will be submitted for approval by the MC Chair of the Action, informing Applicants about the **result** of the pre-approval.

The ITCG is constituted by one member per each working group plus the ITCCG Coordinator. Potential conflict of interest that may involve participants to the ITCG Committee are not allowed.

After pre-approval of the ITC grant proposal by the ITC Grant Committee and MC Chair, the applicant must submit the application through e-COST, using the e-COST template and the grant letter notification is sent to the applicant.

### ***After the conference***

*Each ITC grantee will upload, within **30 calendar days** from the end date of the Conference, to the COST website a Scientific Report including:*

- Conference title, date (within the active Grant Period) and country
- Budget requested
- Attendance Type (face to face or virtual)
- 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
- Certificate of attendance
- Experience report
- The Programme of the conference or book of abstracts / proceedings indicating the presentation (oral or poster)
- Copy of their presentation/poster/paper
- Copy of the abstract of the accepted oral or poster presentation
- Acceptance letter from the conference organizers
- A one-page short report, including a photo, to be published on the webpage, is also mandatory (photographic material from the conference: e.g. the Applicant with the Action logo in background)

The Grant Awarding Coordinator is notified when the grantee submitted the report, must verify the validity and content of the report and must approve/reject it on behalf of the MC. After that, the **reimbursement** process is completed.

The one-page short report will be then disseminated using the website of the COST action: <http://vascagenet.eu/itc-grants>

Virtual meetings are also eligible and conference fees can be reimbursed.

The latest ITC Grants must be finished by October 31th, 2023.

#### **Financial support and payment terms:**

We can reimburse 1000 EURO/applicant: conference fee (max. 500 Euro), estimated travel costs, stay and meals (max. 160 Euro/day). For International Meetings (outside Europe) we can reimburse up to 2000 EURO.

The grants can cover registration fees for on-line international meetings, as well, but for virtual events we can reimburse only 500 EURO.

Conference Grants do not necessarily cover all the expenses related to participating in each conference.

#### ***Additional rules related to coronavirus pandemic***

1. The ITC CG management committee is not responsible for cancellation of conferences due to travel restriction, border shutdowns or other transport limitations related to possible evolutions of the coronavirus pandemic
2. It is at personal responsibility of each applicant to check for restriction rules and reopening timetables regulating travels between home and host countries.
3. An approved ITC grant that is cancelled due to coronavirus pandemic restrictions could be postponed, but should be completed one month before the end of the Grant period
4. Beyond that date, the ITC grant will be cancelled
5. Additional costs related to prolonged stay in the Host country due to new wave pandemic restrictions will not be reimbursed.