EU·CONCERT

COST EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

COST Action CA24103

EUropean COllaborative Network on electroCatalysis for Efficient Renewable Technologies (EU-CONCERT)

Call for applications for Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC) Conference Grants

for implementation from January to May 2027

Call 1

Deadline 15/12/2026

1. About EU-CONCERT

EU-CONCERT (European Collaborative Network on electroCatalysis for Efficient Renewable Technologies) is a COST Action dedicated to advancing the fundamental understanding and modeling of electrocatalytic processes at electrified solid-liquid interfaces. Electrocatalysis underpins key technologies for the green energy transition, including water splitting, hydrogen production, and the electrochemical conversion of small molecules such as CO_2 and N_2. However, predictive descriptions of these processes remain limited due to the complexity of interfacial phenomena and the lack of systematic validation of theoretical models against well-controlled experimental data.
EU-CONCERT addresses this challenge by encouraging close collaboration between theoretical, computational, and experimental communities, with a strong focus on benchmarking, reproducibility, and data sharing. The Action aims to improve the accuracy and reliability of electrochemical modeling approaches while strengthening links between simulations and experiments through coordinated research, dissemination, and targeted networking activities.

The objectives of EU-CONCERT are:

- Develop and assess advanced theoretical and computational methods for modeling electrified solid-liquid interfaces, including solvent, electrolyte, and potential-dependent effects.
- Generate high-quality, reproducible experimental data on well-defined model systems suitable for rigorous comparison with simulations.
- Establish shared benchmarking protocols and promote open data sharing to enhance reproducibility and comparability across studies.
- Facilitate knowledge transfer and interdisciplinary collaboration between theory and experiment.

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- Train and support early-career researchers and strengthen capacity building across the European electrocatalysis community.

EU-CONCERT is organized into the following Working Groups (WGs):

- WG1 - Advanced Theoretical and Computational Approaches in Electrocatalysis: development and improvement of computational methods for electrochemical interfaces, including potential-dependent phenomena and reaction kinetics.
- WG2 - Collection of Experimental Data on Model Systems and Comparison with Simulations: design and execution of experimental studies on well-defined systems and direct comparison with theoretical predictions.
- WG3 - Benchmarking and Data Sharing: development of standardized benchmarking protocols and promotion of FAIR data sharing practices.
- WG4 - Communication, Dissemination, and Capacity Building: training activities, dissemination, mobility grants, and engagement with the broader scientific community.

2. What is an ITC Conference Grant?

An Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC) Conference Grant supports an **EU-CONCERT Action Participant affiliated to a legal entity located in a COST Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC) or a Near Neighbour Country (NNC)** in attending a high-level scientific conference fully organised by a third party, i.e. not organised or co-organised by EU-CONCERT.
The grant supports an accepted oral presentation of the applicant's own work that is clearly related to the objectives of EU-CONCERT. Poster-only presentations are not eligible for ITC Conference Grants.
The purpose of the grant is to widen access to scientific conferences for participants affiliated to institutions in ITCs and NNCs, increase their visibility in the research community, enable scientific networking and knowledge exchange, and contribute to the visibility of EU-CONCERT.
An ITC Conference Grant should:

- support an eligible Action Participant in presenting original research related to one or more EU-CONCERT objectives or Working Groups;
- increase the visibility of the applicant and EU-CONCERT in relevant scientific communities;
- help the grantee establish international contacts that may lead to future collaborations within or beyond the Action;
- contribute to wider and more inclusive participation in international research networks.

3. This open call

Applications are invited from eligible EU-CONCERT Action Participants affiliated to institutions in ITCs or NNCs for support to deliver an oral presentation relevant to the scientific objectives of the Action.
Applications can be submitted until 15 December 2026 and will be screened and evaluated after the deadline.
The conference must take place between 1 January 2027 and 31 May 2027. Applicants should allow sufficient time for selection and issuance of the Grant Letter.
Up to four (4) ITC Conference Grants may be awarded under this call. The maximum financial contribution is EUR 1,000 for an in-person conference, subject to available funds. Online conferences are **not** funded by this call.

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4. Priorities for applications

The call prioritises conference participation that supports the scientific objectives of EU-CONCERT while strengthening the involvement and visibility of participants from ITCs and NNCs.
In line with the purpose of ITC Conference Grants, priority will be given to applications that demonstrate:

- a clear relation between the proposed oral presentation, one or more EU-CONCERT Working Groups, and the objectives of the Action;
- an accepted oral presentation of the applicant's own work at a scientifically relevant third-party conference;
- the potential to increase visibility of EU-CONCERT in electrocatalysis, electrochemistry, computational chemistry, surface science, materials modelling, operando characterisation, benchmarking, or related fields;
- a clear benefit for the scientific and professional development of the applicant, including new contacts and potential collaborations;
- a contribution to COST Excellence and Inclusiveness principles through broader participation of eligible ITC/NNC researchers and institutions, and fair distribution of opportunities;
- a willingness to share the outcomes with relevant EU-CONCERT Working Groups, if requested by the WG Leaders.

5. Eligibility and general rules

- Applicants must be EU-CONCERT Action Participants affiliated to a legal entity located in a COST Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC) or Near Neighbour Country (NNC), as defined by the COST eligibility rules in force at the time of application.
- Applicants must comply with the COST eligibility rules in force at the time of application. Overlapping or double funding is not permitted, including simultaneous funding from different COST Conference Grant schemes for the same activity.
- Researchers and innovators at any career stage may apply; no age limit applies to ITC Conference Grants. Applicants must have an active e-COST profile with an up-to-date affiliation and CV.
- The conference must be fully organised by a third party and must not be organised or co-organised by EU-CONCERT. Conferences may be held in any country or online, subject to COST rules.
- The applicant must deliver an accepted oral presentation of their own work at the conference. **Poster-only presentations are not eligible.**
- The work presented must be relevant to the objectives of EU-CONCERT and must acknowledge the COST Action in accordance with the applicable visibility requirements.
- The grantee is responsible for arrangements concerning travel, accommodation, health, personal security, taxation, social security, and insurance.
- Applicants must not receive another type of COST Conference Grant in the same Grant Period. They should not make non-refundable bookings before receiving the official Grant Letter.

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6. Financial support

An ITC Conference Grant provides a contribution towards conference participation expenses, taking into account the requested budget, the location and duration of the conference, and the available Action budget. It does not necessarily cover all expenses incurred by the applicant. **The maximum financial contribution under this call is EUR 1,000 for an in-person conference.** The requested amount may be adjusted by the Management Committee or its delegated Core Group on the basis of the evaluation and budget justification.
The contribution may support:

- travel costs for in-person participation;
- accommodation and subsistence costs for in-person participation;
- conference registration fees;
- the overall effort associated with the approved oral presentation.

Research materials, equipment, poster printing, and costs unrelated to the approved conference participation are not supported by this grant type. Grants are paid after the conference and approval of the required report and documentation; applicants should be able to pre-finance the activity.

7. Application procedure

Applications must be submitted via the e-COST platform using the online grant application system: https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants/add
Applicants must submit a complete application. Incomplete applications cannot be evaluated; the Grant Awarding Coordinator may request clarification or corrections before the submission deadline.
The application must include:

- the online e-COST application, including the oral presentation title, conference title, dates, country, attendance type (in person or online), and requested grant;
- the ITC Conference Grant application form (available in e-COST), explaining the **relevance to EU-CONCERT objectives** and the potential benefits for the applicant's scientific career and networking;
- a copy of the accepted abstract for an oral presentation directly relevant to EU-CONCERT;
- an **acceptance or invitation letter from the conference organisers** confirming the oral presentation;
- information on the conference, including title, dates, location, website, and scientific scope;
- an estimated budget distinguishing travel, accommodation/subsistence and registration costs, and declaring any support already obtained from other sources.

Any documents that cannot be uploaded through e-COST should be sent directly to the Grant Awarding Coordinator and the Action Chair (contact details in Section 11).

8. Evaluation and selection procedure

The Grant Awarding Coordinator will screen all applications for completeness, eligibility, consistency of the requested budget, and scientific relevance to EU-CONCERT. Applications that are ineligible, incomplete after the deadline, or outside the Action scope will not be evaluated.

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Each complete and eligible application will be assessed by an independent reviewer appointed by the Grant Awarding Coordinator from among the Action members. Reviewers with institutional, supervisory, collaborative, personal, or other conflicts of interest must not assess the application concerned.
Applications must achieve at least 30/40 points, with no score below 6/10 for the first three criteria and no score below 3/5 for the remaining criteria, to be considered fundable.
Eligible applications will be ranked by total score. In the event of a tie affecting the allocation of the available grants, the Grant Awarding Coordinator may coordinate a documented comparative assessment of the reviewers' evaluations to resolve the tie, while retaining the original scores. The final ranking and grant amounts are subject to approval by the Management Committee or its duly delegated Core Group. The Grant Holder then issues the official Grant Letter via e-COST. The grant becomes effective only after the applicant has signed and returned the Grant Letter.
Evaluation criteria are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation criteria

Criterion	Assessment focus	Score
Relevance to EU-CONCERT	Relation of the accepted oral presentation to one or more EU-CONCERT objectives and Working Groups.	1 - 10
Scientific quality and relevance of the conference	Scientific quality of the conference, relevance of its audience, and suitability of the accepted oral presentation.	1 - 10
Expected impact on the Action	Expected contribution to the visibility, dissemination, networking, and scientific objectives of EU-CONCERT.	1 - 10
Contribution to the applicant's development	Expected benefits for the applicant's scientific profile, networking, skills, and future international collaborations.	1 - 5
Excellence and Inclusiveness	Contribution to widening participation from eligible ITC/NNC institutions, geographical reach, and fair access to grant opportunities across the network.	1 - 5
Grant request suitability	Requested funding is proportionate to the activity, supports eligible conference costs, and is not duplicated by other support. A budget revision may be requested.	Y / N

9. After the ITC Conference Grant: reporting and payment

After the conference, the grantee must submit the required report and supporting documentation via e-COST within 30 days after the end of the activity or within 15 days after the end of the COST Grant Period, whichever date comes first.
The report and supporting documents must include:

- a short scientific report describing the oral presentation delivered, the main scientific outcomes, the impact on the grantee's visibility, contacts established, and possible follow-up activities;
- the certificate of attendance;
- the conference programme, book of abstracts, or proceedings showing the oral presentation by the grantee;
- a copy of the oral presentation or related dissemination materials, with evidence that COST Action CA24103 EU-CONCERT was acknowledged in accordance with COST visibility rules;
- a short publishable summary of approximately 200 words for EU-CONCERT communication channels, including newsletters, the website, or social media;

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The Grant Holder may request additional supporting documentation where required by COST rules. The grant will be paid only after the conference has taken place and all required reports and supporting documents have been approved. Failure to comply with the reporting deadline may result in the grant not being paid.

10. Acknowledgement and visibility

ITC Conference Grant holders must acknowledge the support of COST and EU-CONCERT in their oral presentations and any related publications or dissemination outputs. Where possible, COST and EU-CONCERT logos should be displayed in accordance with COST visual identity guidelines.
The following acknowledgement text should be used where appropriate:
"This presentation/publication is based upon work from COST Action CA24103, EUropean COllaborative Network on electroCatalysis for Efficient Renewable Technologies (EU-CONCERT), supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology)."

Grantees may be invited to share their conference outcomes with relevant EU-CONCERT Working Groups or Action communication channels.

11. Contact

For questions regarding this call, eligibility, application documents, or reporting requirements, applicants may contact:
Grant Awarding Coordinator: Michele Re Fiorentin, michele.refiorentin@polito.it
Action Chair: Giancarlo Cicero, giancarlo.cicero@polito.it

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