

COST Action CA24164

Sensing Europe's Court Spaces at the Crossroads of Past, Present and Future (SENSES)

Continuous call for applications for ITC Conference Grants

1. About SENSES

SENSES brings together researchers and professionals to combine knowledge and find novel ways of presenting the European court residence, seen as the locus of multiple sensorial experiences. At the crossroads of court studies, sensory history and digital humanities, SENSES focuses on the “court residence” of late mediaeval and early modern Europe. This means the material and spatial environment of the courts in Europe from 1300 to 1800 within their social context, at all spatial scales from the single building (or part) to the landscape created around it and the supra-territorial residence network it belongs to. We will explore the full gamut of sensory experiences linked with the court residence and its life throughout history until today: from essential human activities, such as preparing food and crafting things, to the grandest and most complex, such as perceiving performances of music and dance in dedicated spaces and dining rituals.

Our goal is to build a better understanding of this complex cultural phenomenon and thus to support its survival as European heritage. To achieve this, SENSES will be multi-disciplinary and trans-sectoral, building bridges between academic disciplines on the one hand, and between academia and the cultural heritage sector on the other. We want to offer a sound research-based platform for developing novel, sensory-based interactions between the public (consumer), and the heritage (art, architecture, music) of the past. By exploring new ways of making and keeping this artistic heritage relevant for audiences of the future, we will contribute actively to European identity-building.

SENSES brings together researchers, heritage professionals, and digital specialists to advance a shared understanding of the multisensory dimensions of Europe's court residences. Its objectives fall into three interconnected areas:

1. Aims to deepen knowledge of court residences as multisensory environments by studying how sight, sound, smell, touch, taste, and movement shaped palace life between 1300 and 1800. The Action supports innovative research that investigates sensory experience in relation to architecture, material culture, ritual, and daily practice. It also promotes the use and critical evaluation of digital tools — from 3D and acoustic modelling to VR/AR — to explore past environments and reconstruct sensory phenomena that are otherwise difficult to access.
2. The Action strengthens collaboration across disciplines and sectors by creating a shared platform for historians, art and architectural historians, musicologists, archaeologists, heritage curators, and digital experts. Through conferences, workshops, and joint activities, SENSES encourages dialogue on methods, sources, and best practices for studying and communicating sensory heritage. This includes developing a common language and clearer “academic specifications” for digital reconstructions, ensuring that new digital outputs are both historically grounded and publicly meaningful.

3. Works to reduce disparities in knowledge, access, and technical resources across Europe. It provides training opportunities for early-career researchers, supports the exchange of expertise between academia and the heritage sector, and fosters inclusive participation throughout the network. By encouraging collaborative projects and linking research with museum practice, the Action aims to strengthen the long-term preservation, interpretation, and public relevance of palace heritage. Ultimately, SENSES seeks to raise awareness of the rich sensory dimensions of court residences and to contribute to a stronger shared European cultural identity.

Four working groups (WG) focus on work as follows:

WG1 SACRED

Explores the multiple sensorial experiences involved in the religious acts taking place in medieval and early modern European court residences 1300-1800.

WG2 DINING

Addresses the multiple sensorial experiences involved in the dining ceremonies of the medieval and early modern European court residences 1300-1800.

WG3 FABRIC

Addresses all the sensory experiences linked with a particularly rich and varied range of objects in the medieval and early modern European court residences 1300-1800: textile fabrics.

WG4 BODY looks at the multiple bodily experiences which are part of daily life at the medieval and early modern European court residences 1300-1800.

2. What is an ITC Conference Grant

An ITC Conference Grant supports a presentation of own work given by a Young Researcher and Innovator affiliated in an Inclusiveness Target Country / Near Neighbour Country. The purpose is foster grantees' participation in high-level conferences fully organized by a third party, i.e. not organized or co-organized by the COST Action. An ITC Conference Grantee receives support for attending and presenting their work (poster/oral presentation) at a conference. This:

- Serves COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy.
- Supports Young Researchers and Innovators affiliated in a legal entity in an Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) / Near Neighbour Countries (NNC) to establish a strong network and increase their visibility in the research community through sharing their work and to gain knowledge.
- Contributes to increasing visibility of the Action.

The list of COST ITCs is available [here](#), and the list of COST NNCs is available [here](#).

A supporting video is available [here](#).

3. Eligibility

Grant applications need to meet the following criteria:

- The applicant must be a Young Researcher and Innovator (i.e. anyone is less than 40 years old) with a primary affiliation in an institution located in a participating ITC or NNC.
- The applicant must make an oral/poster presentation at the conference.
- The applicant must be listed in the official event/conference programme.
- The application should be sent at least 45 days before the start date of the conference.
- The main subject of the presentation oral / poster presentation at the approved conference must be relevant to one Working Group and must acknowledge COST.

For more details regarding the regulations related to ITC Conference Grants, please refer to the [COST Annotated Rules](#).

4. Financial support

ITC Conference Grants are a contribution for travelling, accommodation and subsistence expenses, registration fee, printing of scientific poster and overall effort. No invoices are required. The maximum grant amount is 2,000 EUR for face-to-face conferences, and 500 EUR for online conferences.

5. The grant awarding process

The supported activity, including reporting and payment, must be carried out entirely within one Grant Period. Each Grant Period runs from the 1 November until the 31 October of the following year.

Each application is reviewed by two (or three in case the outcome is not consistent) MC or WG members who are guided by the Grant Awarding Coordinator. The Grant Awarding Coordinator advises the Action Chair who acts on the advice if the budget allows. Successful grantees receive a grant letter.

The supported activity ends when the payment is recorded. Therefore, applicants should allow time for submitting the report, evaluating it, and processing the payment within the Grant Period. This means that the work of conference participations funded in this call should be complete by 30 September to give adequate time for reporting and grant payment by 31 October.

6. Application procedure

Applicants must have an [e-COST profile](#) and applications must be submitted online in e-COST. The applicant starts by encoding an ITC Conference Grant application by lodging into e-COST and clicking on the ITC Conference Grants tab.

Applications include:

- 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)

The following documents need to be uploaded:

- Application form describing relevance of the conference topic to the Action and motivation describing the potential for impact on the applicant's career, available [here](#).
- Copy of the abstract of the accepted oral or poster presentation.
- Acceptance letter from the conference organisers.

Documents that cannot be uploaded via the e-COST interface should be sent directly to the Grant Awarding Coordinator (Bernardo J. García García bigarcia@ucm.es) and the Chair of COST Action (Konrad Ottenheym k.a.ottenheym@uu.nl).

7. Submission of the report and payment

The applicant claims the payment of the grant via [e-COST](#) when the activity has ended, and the report is submitted and accepted. For this, the grantee submits the report using the ITC conference report template before 15 October. The template for the report is [here](#).

Notes:

Each publication produced with support of an ITC Conference Grant should acknowledge the support of the COST Action and whenever possible use the COST and SENSES logos (on slides and posters).

Acknowledgement text:

"This publication is based on work supported by the COST Action CA24164: Sensing Europe's Court Spaces at the Crossroads of Past, Present and Future (SENSES)."