COST Action CA24125 – CRICULT
Cultural Heritage in Crisis. Transdisciplinary Assessment of Legal and Regulatory Frameworks

3rd Call for Applications for Action Grants

Virtual Conference Grants ONLY

1st Grants Awarding Period

Call for Applications: August 17th , 2026 – August 31st, 2026

Results: mid-September 2026

Period of Implementation: September 15th, 2026 – October 31st, 2026

1. About CRICULT

CRICULT is an initiative aimed at safeguarding cultural heritage during times of crisis. Cultural heritage often bears the brunt of various crises, be they human-made or caused by natural disasters. CRICULT seeks to create transdisciplinary research networks to enhance our understanding of how crises impact the cultural heritage sector and, most importantly, to develop sound policy proposals for its protection. In the past, research and teaching on cultural heritage security during crises have been fragmented and sparse. CRICULT aims to change this by uniting experts from diverse backgrounds, each offering unique perspectives on the subject. The way we perceive, and address crises is significantly influenced by disciplinary and cultural viewpoints. The examination of a wide range of crises affecting cultural heritage will be conducted through six dedicated Working Groups. These crises encompass trafficking of artifacts,

climate change and natural disasters, threats to intangible heritage, crises arising from warfare, historical injustices, forced migration, and issues related to overtourism and heritage neglect.
CRICULT's core objective is to create comprehensive crisis and solution matrices. They will encompass a wide range of potential factors that can lead to crises and the methods to identify them. Subsequently, we'll identify potential solutions for crisis situations and compile them into a solutions matrix to be used for research and policy formulation.
The success of CRICULT hinges on the collective efforts of an international, interdisciplinary team comprising both young and experienced researchers. Its impact will extend beyond academia; external stakeholders, from non-academic circles will also be engaged.

2. CRICULT Working Groups

Six working groups (WG) are operating in CRICULT action:

WG 1: Trafficking of cultural goods as a security issue
WG1 analyses existing legal and policy instruments aimed at protecting heritage in crisis, focusing on vulnerabilities in postcolonial contexts. The team will identify legal gaps and best practices related to cultural goods trafficking and public security. Their goal is to propose regional and international measures, including a Cultural Goods Security system that addresses the complexities of postcolonial heritage and its significance to national and global identity.

WG 2: Climate change and natural disasters as sources of heritage crises
This WG leverages its team's multidisciplinary expertise to move beyond existing policy documents, addressing both risks and solutions. The goal is to develop new legal and social frameworks for heritage while navigating potential conflicts between preservation and broader environmental concerns.

WG 3: Heritage law and policy in the context of warfare, cultural cleansing, and the enduring legacies of colonialism and slavery
Establishing a framework to safeguard cultural heritage, prevent crises, and address their aftermath. WG3 assesses the impacts of warfare, political Actions, and historical legacies, including colonialism and slavery, on heritage access. The group will develop strategies to enhance heritage resilience, addressing both modern challenges and the enduring effects of historical oppressions.

WG 4: The crisis of intangible heritage and its impact on tangible heritage loss
This WG focuses on identifying crises that endanger intangible heritage and the tangible assets linked to it. Our efforts will prioritise legal solutions to preserve both the traditions and their material carriers. By ensuring legal frameworks are in place, we aim to mitigate these crises and secure the continued transmission of intangible heritage. Where transmission is not viable, documenting traditions in their authentic form will be a secondary focus.

WG 5: Overtourism and neglect of cultural heritage as the opposite treats and challenges that are faced by tangible cultural heritage
Through research and collaboration, this WG works to develop effective strategies for addressing overtourism's and cultural heritage neglect's challenges and advocate for sustainable tourism policies and guidelines. By connecting stakeholders and fostering research-driven solutions, this group will play a vital role in managing the complex issues surrounding overtourism at heritage sites.

WG 6: Heritage in crisis: supranational cooperation aiming at developing of a workable policy.
The WG 6 task is to analyse the results of the WG 1-5 research and network exchange and to transform them into workable policy proposals for supranational (transboundary, regional and international) cooperation in crises relating to cultural heritage. The WG focuses on the identification of strong and weak points of the existing legal and policy framework and then formulate proposals for the future. This will take the form of, for instance, guidelines for entities directly engaged in safeguarding cultural heritage, legislative and policy proposals. The WG also coordinates management and dissemination tasks, orienting the contribution of the other WGs. This task is assigned with the goal of ensuring a comprehensive strategy above the specific activities and objectives conducted by each WGs.

The working groups are following a similar operational framework, including:

1. Identification of potential sources of crisis situations;
2. An analysis of existing models of crisis monitoring;
3. An analysis of legal, policy and factual frameworks for dealing with crises on national and supra-national levels.
4. Identification of shortcomings of the existing frameworks and development of new frameworks for heritage crisis management.
5. Formulation of new policy proposals and legislative solutions, from transdisciplinary synergy.

3. Call for Applications for Action Grants

CRICULT grants, as financial support dedicated to official Working Groups (WG) of CRICULT Action, are awarded as strategic instruments to:

- support transdisciplinary research on Cultural Heritage in Crisis;
- contribute directly to WGs objectives and deliverables;
- foster capacity building and training to scholars and practitioners;
- promote inclusiveness, geographical balance, and gender equality;
- strengthen international and interdisciplinary cooperation.

Applications are invited from scientists and innovators for grants that support the CRICULT objectives and Working Groups as described in this call and in the action MoU.
The 3rd Call for Grant Applications is structured on the following criteria and deadlines:

Virtual Conference Grants ONLY!
Call for Applications: August 17th, 2026 – August 31st, 2026 (23.59 CEST)
Results: mid-September 2026
Period of Implementation: September 15th, 2026 – October 31st, 2026

Type of Grants available:

- **Virtual Conference Grants ONLY!**

Grants will be awarded following the availability of the budget planned for the 1st Granting period of CRICULT action, net of grants already accepted from the previous calls, considering around 2 Virtual Conference grants available.

Applications received outside the scheduled period of the Call for Applications will be automatically rejected. Applications received for types of grants not foreseen in the present call will be automatically rejected.

Required information, documents and materials for the applications are listed in the CRICULT Action-specific Grant Rules (section 7), as well as the Evaluation Criteria Scoring (section 8) and the Grant conditions (section 10). **Applications not complying with the requirements of the CRICULT Action-specific Grant Rules will be rejected.**

Applicants should not book anything (e.g., transportation or accommodation) before receiving confirmation through a Grant Letter.

4. CRICULT Action-specific Grant Rules

Grant awarding, application and eligibility will follow the COST action rules and the CRICULT Action-specific Grant Rules.
CRICULT Action-specific Grant Rules are considered complementary to all the Calls for Applications for Action Grants. Applicants are required to carefully refer to these rules to ensure the eligibility and quality of their applications. CRICULT Action-specific GR define the framework and action structure on:

- Types of Grants covered
- Eligibility principles, Governance and Roles
- Grant Evaluation Committee (GEC)
- Open Calls and Application
- Evaluation Criteria and Scoring
- Ranking, Selection, and Approval
- Grants Conditions

The rules are available on the CRICULT website (https://cricult.uni.opole.pl/grants/).

5. Commitments after Grant Approval

Applicants awarded with a CRICULT Grant agree to fulfil the following commitments:

- Once the activity has ended, the applicant claims the payment of the grant via e-COST. Applicants must submit the grant report within 1 month after the termination of the STSM, the virtual mobility or the conference event, or within 15 days from the end of the granting period (the one which comes first). **The submission after the deadline leads to the cancellation of the Grant.**
- Grants are paid by the Grant Holder after the completion of the activity and approval of all required report/documentation.
- Templates for grant applications and reporting are available on the COST website and reported in the CRICULT Action-specific Grant Rules. The applicant must also send the report to the Grant Awarding Coordinator.
- Successful applicants should write a **narrative report** to be used for public dissemination within CRICULT communication and dissemination channels. The report should include: the background and a full description of the work and the main scientific findings; the effect of the visit on personal development, networking, and capacity building (e.g., collaborations); foreseen publications/articles resulting from the grant (if applicable); pictures of the researcher and hosting group/premises during the project activities are also strongly recommended for communication purposes (e.g., a picture of the grantee working at the host institution facilities and a picture with the collaborators).
- Successful applicants for conference grants should provide preliminary information on the event to guarantee their communication within the CRICULT network for members' involvement.
- Successful applicants will be in contact with the Science Communication Coordinator (SCC) for CRICULT (Dr. Alina Elena Voina, alina.voinea@arch.utcluj.ro), and they will be available to share on request any other information and material regarding the purpose of their grant for facilitating the communication and dissemination within the CRICULT channels and social media.
- The applicant should produce a joint publication (or potentially leading to a forthcoming publication) from the activities developed under the grant, **with mandatory coordination with the WG leaders of the corresponding working group.**
- Acknowledgement to the COST program, EU label and CRICULT action must be respected in each production, presentation/poster, seminar, etc. related to the Grant award. Official logos and visual identity will be provided from the CRICULT communication channels.

CONTACTS AVAILABLE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Grant Awarding Coordinator: Dr. Raffaella De Marco (raffaella.demarco@unipv.it)

CRICULT Chair: Prof. Piotr Stec (pstec@uni.opole.pl)

CRICULT Vice-Chair: Dr. Izabella Parowicz (Parowicz@europa-uni.de)