Visa and Travel Information for Conference Participants

This document provides general guidance for participants travelling to Madrid for the conference. Visa and entry requirements depend on your nationality, country of residence, travel document and itinerary. Requirements may change, so please check the latest information from the Spanish consulate responsible for your country of legal residence before making travel arrangements.

The Organizing Committee can provide documentation confirming acceptance of a presentation and, on request, an individual conference invitation letter. However, the Committee cannot submit visa applications on participants' behalf, intervene in consular decisions or guarantee that a visa will be granted.

1. Do you need a Schengen visa?

Participants travelling to Spain for the conference may need a Schengen short-stay visa (Type C, up to 90 day stays for business, tourism, etc.), depending primarily on their nationality. See Annex I of Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 (on page L 303/51 of the document) which lists the countries for which a visa is required; check to see if your country is on the list.

2. Where should you apply?

If Spain is your sole destination, or the country in which you will spend the longest part of your trip, you should apply through the Spanish consulate responsible for your country or place of legal residence. If you intend to visit several Schengen countries and will spend an equal amount of time in each, you should generally apply through the consulate of the country whose external border you will cross first.

Applications are submitted either directly to the relevant consulate or through an external visa application centre designated by the consulate. The arrangements vary by country. Please check the instructions of the Spanish consulate responsible for country of legal residence, rather than assuming that a particular application centre is available.

Useful links:

- Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs: list of consulates and embassies
- BLS International – Spain visa application centres (where designated by the Spanish consulate)

3. When should you apply?

A Schengen visa application can normally be submitted up to six months before the intended date of travel and should be submitted no later than 15 calendar days before

departure. The normal processing time is 15 calendar days, although this may be extended to as many as 45 calendar days in certain cases. Appointment availability and the time needed to gather documents may add to the overall process. **For the conference beginning on 22 July 2027, the six-month application window opens on 22 January 2027**.

4. What documents are commonly required?

The documents and supporting evidence required for a Schengen visa application vary according to the applicant's circumstances and the consulate handling the application. Please consult the website of the Spanish consulate responsible for your country of legal residence for the current application requirements and any country-specific instructions. The Organizing Committee recommends checking these requirements carefully and allowing sufficient time to obtain any necessary documentation before submitting your application.

Participants who require an individual invitation letter to support a visa application may request one from the Organizing Committee **after completing their conference registration**. Please contact: anne.mccabe@slu.edu

When making your request, please provide:

- Your full name, as it should appear on the letter
- Your institutional affiliation, if applicable
- The title of your accepted presentation
  Any specific additional information that the consulate requires the invitation letter to include.

An invitation letter is supporting documentation only, and will only be issued upon confirmation of payment of the conference registration fee. The letter does not guarantee that a visa will be granted; this decision rests entirely with the competent consular authorities.

Important note: This document is intended as general practical guidance for conference participants. It does not constitute legal or immigration advice. Visa and entry requirements are determined by the competent authorities and may change. The instructions issued by the relevant Spanish consulate take precedence over the general information provided here.