EXPAND ACTION CA24149 — CONTEST GUIDELINES

EXPAND Best image/video contest: Rules & technical specifications

Extreme Plasma Network for Advanced Discovery (EXPAND) — https://expand-plasma.eu/

Purpose & Scope

The EXPAND COST Action (CA24149) invites researchers to submit striking, high-quality scientific images and videos of extreme plasma physics, spanning numerical simulations, laboratory experiments, and astrophysical observations. Submissions may focus on **physics insights** or **science outreach** and **communication**.

Selected entries will form the official EXPAND Visualization Gallery on our website and will be featured across EXPAND social media channels (LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube) with full scientific credit to the authors.

Eligibility, timeline & how to submit

Who can apply: Open exclusively to **Young Researchers and Innovators (YRIs)**—defined as researchers or innovators under the age of 40—who have signed up to be part of the **EXPAND** Action. Submissions must be made by an individual applicant, even if the research or visualization was developed as part of a team effort.

Call opens: November 2026

Submission deadline: Friday, 15 January 2027 at 23:59 CET

Winner announcement: Early February 2027

Prize: Two winners will receive priority selection for YRI Conference Grants (up to €2,500 each) to support their in-person participation (travel, accommodation, and registration) in a third-party scientific conference relevant to EXPAND topics.

Submission portal: Complete the official Google Form at https://forms.gle/RnWefrdnsMRz3mVMA (requires a Google sign-in for file upload validation).

Contact: For questions, contact expand.plasma@gmail.com.

Technical Specifications

Participants may submit entries to one or both categories: **Category 1: Image** and **Category 2: Video / Animation**. All files must be high quality and adhere to the minimum resolution and maximum file-size limits below. Because raw simulation outputs often reach gigabytes or terabytes, please compress and downsize your files before uploading:

Parameter	Category 1: Image	Category 2: Video / Animation
Accepted formats	.PNG or .JPG/.JPEG (RGB color space; no raw data, HDF5, TIFF, or EPS files)	.MP4 (standard web-playable container; no AVI, MOV, or raw sequences)
Maximum file size	**Max. 10 MB** per image (enforced by the submission form)	**Max. 100 MB** per video (enforced by the submission form; target bitrate 8–15 Mbps)
Minimum resolution & aspect ratio	**Min. 1920 × 1080 px** (Full HD) or **1080 × 1080 px** (1:1 square). Higher resolutions (e.g., 4K) are encouraged within the 10 MB limit.	**Min. 1920 × 1080 px** (1080p Full HD, 16:9 widescreen) or **1080 × 1080 px** (1:1 square).
Duration	Not applicable (single still frame or multi-panel composite figure)	Flexible, provided the file stays under the 100 MB limit (loopable animations or time-evolution sequences strongly encouraged)

Mandatory text explanations & references

Every visual submission must be accompanied by two text explanations so that it can be presented both on social media feeds and in the permanent online EXPAND Visualization Gallery:

1. **Title of the visualization:** A concise, compelling title (maximum 12 words).
2. **Short explanation (Max. 280 characters / ~40 words):** A plain-language summary written for a broad scientific and public audience. This text will accompany the visual in social media posts and appear on the main gallery overview page alongside a *"Read More"* link.
3. **Extended explanation (150–400 words):** A deeper description explaining the physical phenomenon, numerical code or experimental setup, parameters shown, and scientific significance (or outreach approach). On the EXPAND website, clicking a visualization opens a dedicated subpage displaying this full explanation.

4. **Scientific references & links (Optional but recommended):** Citations, DOIs, or arXiv links to published papers, software repositories, or datasets associated with the visualization, which will be listed at the bottom of the dedicated webpage.

Selection process & prizes

Core Group evaluation: All eligible entries meeting the technical specifications will first be reviewed by a Grant Evaluation Committee composed of the EXPAND Core Group, who will score the submissions based on scientific insight, outreach value, and visual quality.

Prizes & Grant Conditions: Two winners will receive priority selection for YRI Conference Grants (up to €2,500 each) to support their in-person participation (travel, accommodation, and registration) in a third-party scientific conference relevant to EXPAND topics occurring before October 2027. To receive the grant, winners must fulfill all standard COST eligibility criteria (being under 40, affiliated with an eligible institution, and holding an accepted oral or poster presentation) and submit a formal application in e-COST for Core Group approval prior to the event, in accordance with the COST Annotated Rules and Grant Period deadlines.

Usage rights, copyright & mandatory Attribution

Author credits guaranteed: Authors retain full copyright and intellectual property rights over their work.

License to display: By submitting an entry, participants grant the EXPAND COST Action (CA24149) a non-exclusive, royalty-free license to display, reproduce, and adapt the submitted image/video and accompanying descriptions on the official EXPAND website (expand-plasma.eu), social media channels, newsletters, and promotional or conference materials.

Attribution: EXPAND commits to always displaying the author's specified credit line (Author Name(s), Institution/Group, and publication reference where applicable) whenever the material is used.