

Call for Papers

Shaping the Future Living Places

Act 2. DATA COLLECTION AND ARCHIVING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 7 - 8 May 2026, CHIȘINĂU, MOLDOVA.

We are pleased to invite researchers, practitioners, decision makers, and scholars from across disciplines to submit proposals for our upcoming international conference **SHAPING THE FUTURE LIVING PLACES, Act 2. DATA COLLECTION AND ARCHIVING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**, that will take place at the Technical University of MOLDOVA on May 7-8, 2026, in CHIȘINĂU. As societal challenges become more complex, the concept of “ambiance” has emerged as a critical lens for understanding how the sensory, cultural, and spatial dimensions of built environments interrelate to shape human experience. Rooted in the fields of architecture and urban studies, this event - the second conference of CA23145 - seeks to build a shared corpus that sustains our inquiry into architectural and urban ambiances, we invite submissions that address the challenges of gathering, organising, and preserving resources, advancing our understanding of how we perceive and conceptualize the multifaceted qualities of architectural and urban environments - from initial conception through practice - and feeding those insights back to architects, urban planners, and the wider field of spatial design.

Main Conference Focus and Guiding Questions

Submissions may address (but are not limited to) the following questions:

Scope and Resource Ecology

What counts as data for studying architectural and urban ambiances, including sensible space and user conducts (sensory recordings, measurements, mappings, narratives, images, regulations, prototypes, code, etc.)? How do we document context (site, time, situation, devices, protocols) so resources remain meaningful, comparable, and reusable-especially when they concern users’ embodied engagement?

Collecting Multi-Modal and Situated Data

Which fieldwork protocols and capture workflows best support multi-sensory, in-situ documentation (sound, light/shadow, thermal, movement, smell proxies, social practices), while accounting for users’ embodied engagement? How can we connect “raw captures” to interpretive layers (annotations, transcripts, maps, diagrams) without losing traceability, including the active, creative, or inventive part users play in the making of ambiances?

Diversity, Inclusivity, and Representativeness

How can a corpus reflect a plurality of cultures, histories, geographies, languages, and disciplines-without homogenising ambiances or flattening the diversity of the sensible? What practices help include non-expert knowledge (communities, oral histories, local archives) while recognising users as actors (conducts, adjustments, inventions) and maintaining scholarly robustness?

Metadata, Indexing, and Interoperability

What metadata is essential for discovery and comparison across cases (place/time, sensory modalities, methods, scales, rights, equipment, uncertainty), including descriptors of user conducts and embodied engagement? Which classification and indexing strategies enable cross-reading between disciplines and support future interoperability across platforms and repositories, without losing the sensible dimension of situations?

Quality, Validation, and Reproducibility

What quality criteria should guide acquisition, curation, and validation (calibration, provenance, documentation completeness, methodological transparency) for data that include gestures, uses, and user conducts?

How can we make data workflows auditable (versioning, change logs, citation practices) while remaining workable for diverse teams and heterogeneous field conditions?

Ethics, Rights, and Responsible Sharing

How do we manage consent, privacy, sensitive locations, and potential harms when archiving in-situ recordings and testimonies, especially where they involve embodied engagement?

What legal and licensing frameworks best support reuse (copyright, Creative Commons, data protection) while respecting contributors, communities, and the users' active role?

Preservation and Long-Term Accessibility

Which formats, storage strategies, and preservation plans best prevent data loss and obsolescence (migration, redundancy, fixity checks), including multi-modal content related to the sensible?

How do we ensure long-term access beyond the project lifecycle (governance, stewardship, institutional anchoring) while preserving links between data, context, and user conducts?

Access, Usability, and Research Impact

How do we design user-friendly access for project members and external researchers (search, browsing, multilingual interfaces, pedagogical entry points) that enable exploration of sensible space and users' practices?

How can we evaluate the corpus' value for research, training, dissemination, and practice (metrics, reuse cases, derived outputs), including its capacity to illuminate users' creative/inventive role in ambiances?

General Conference Focus and Guiding Questions

1st Topic | Defining an Ambiance

Potential topics may include (but are not limited to):

- Epistemological and philosophical foundations of Ambiance Theories
- Methods for in-situ observation and data collection (e.g., sensor networks, ethnography, mapping)
- Case studies of researching ambiance in architecture, urban planning, or public space design
- Comparative analyses across cultural, geographical, or historical contexts
- Technological tools for simulating or visualizing multi-sensory experiences
- Policy implications for more human-centred urban design
- Ethical dimensions of measuring, modelling, or manipulating ambiances.

This call for papers invites contributions that interrogate “ambiance” through a range of complementary lenses, including (1) the *Ambiances, Architectures, Urbanités* Laboratory and Cresson research group works, which foregrounds situated, multisensory and culturally embedded spatial experience; (2) Central-European and North American architectural phenomenology, which frames ambiance as an existential bond with place; (3) Japanese aesthetics, attentive to *ma*, light, void and spatial fluidity; (4) the Scandinavian “lived space” tradition, which examines domestic, climatic and sociopolitical atmospheres; (5) postcolonial and critical perspectives, viewing ambiance as a terrain of power, exclusion and resistance; (6) cognitive-science and neuro-architectural studies that quantify emotional and sensory responses; (7) interaction design and immersive arts, which stage technologically mediated sensory environments; and (8) transversal, ecosystemic approaches that conceive ambiance as a dynamic interface between material, symbolic and living systems. Proposals adopting other perspectives on ambiance are likewise warmly welcomed.

2nd Topic | Data collection and archiving | Main Topic of the Conference

To build a shared corpus that sustains our inquiry into architectural and urban ambiances, we invite submissions that address the challenges of gathering, organising, and preserving resources, which aim to tackle some of the following questions:

- What types of resources are essential for advancing our understanding of architectural and urban ambiances?
- How can we ensure that the corpus collected is diverse, inclusive, and representative of historical, contemporary, and interdisciplinary perspectives of ambiances?
- What sources (case studies, articles, interviews, regulations, oral history, etc.) offer the most reliable and relevant materials for our study of architectural and urban ambiances?
- How can we best structure, categorise, and index these resources for easy access and effective use?
- What quality criteria should guide the collection and validation of resources?
- How can we ensure the long-term preservation and accessibility of these resources?
- What strategies can enhance user-friendly access for project members and researchers?
- How might we assess the broader impact of “Data Collection and Archiving” on the project’s goals and activities?

We invite submissions showcasing innovative data collection and archiving approaches, such as methodological reflections, workflow proposals, or case studies demonstrating their impact on architectural and urban ambiances.

3rd Topic | Balancing and aligning

In this third topic, the upcoming first conference on defining Ambiance offers an important opportunity for members of the working group to begin reflecting on key challenges in our collaborative exploration of architectural and urban ambiances. To foster a coherent and inclusive framework, we invite submissions that directly address the following questions:

- How can we reach a consensus definition of architectural and urban ambiances that is acceptable to all members of the working group?
- What are the key areas of divergence among the various approaches and perspectives on ambiances, and how can we resolve them constructively?
- What are the best practices for unifying terminologies and concepts related to ambiances to ensure clear and consistent communication within the working group?
- How can we identify and strengthen points of convergence among the different approaches to ambiances to create a common understanding?
- What are the potential benefits of adopting a unified methodology for ambiances research, and how can we develop such methodologies?
- How can we effectively train working group members to adopt a harmonized perspective on ambiances?
- How can we ensure the participation and validation of results by all working group members?
- How can the “Balancing and Aligning” task make a significant contribution to harmonizing concepts and achieving the overall project goals related to architectural and urban ambiances?

Contributions may propose conceptual frameworks, comparative studies, terminological tools, training methods, or collaborative practices that facilitate alignment without sacrificing diversity. Submissions may also present case studies, methodological experiments, or reflections on previous collaborative experiences that shed light on any of these challenges.

4th Topic | Innovation scouting

To broaden our understanding of sensory design and ambiances through concrete practices, we invite submissions that explore and document exemplary projects, tools, and methodologies that can inspire future developments. Contributions are encouraged to address the following questions:

- What about sustainability, inclusiveness, and low-cost solutions derived from traditional or innovative design techniques? Are there under-recognized practices that deserve to be highlighted?
- How can we bridge the epistemological gap between engineering sciences and phenomenological approaches to process both quantitative and qualitative data?
- How are artistic practices, such as dance, performance, music, and art in general, relevant to ambiance-oriented design?
- How can participatory methods-such as interviews, sensory walks, and co-design workshops-be useful for ambiance-oriented design?
- What digital or analogue tools and technologies are relevant to Ambiance-Oriented Design? (e.g., simulation, modelling, virtual and augmented reality)
- How are ambiances included-or imposed-in project specifications, and what are the consequences for designers?
- What tools do we have to consider the interspecies complexity in the design of ambiance?
- How can we identify and select outstanding projects related to sensory experiences and ambiances?
- What criteria should guide the categorization of these projects (e.g., domain of application, scale, geographic location, sensory or methodological approach)?
- What methods and sources can ensure comprehensive documentation of these projects (including texts, photos, evaluations, and user feedback)?
- How can we evaluate and prioritize the selected projects based on their innovation, sensory relevance, impact, and sustainability?
- How should the documentation of selected projects be organized and made available as a useful database for the working group and broader research community?
- How can exemplary projects be effectively showcased through publications, exhibitions, presentations, or workshops within the network?
- What impact can this “Innovation Scouting” task have on the broader understanding and practical application of sensory design and ambiances in architectural and urban contexts?

Contributions may include project documentation, analytical comparisons, design research methods, or reflective critiques. We welcome both academic and practice-based inputs that support the identification and diffusion of innovative, ambiance-sensitive approaches.

5th Topic | Outreach and training

To expand the reach and applicability of our collective work on ambiances and lived spaces, we invite contributions that explore strategies for effective communication and knowledge transfer to various target audiences. The following questions may serve as a guide:

- How can we communicate what has been achieved so far in the most comprehensible and practicable way?
- What and how should we communicate about ambiances and lived spaces to **designers**, so that it supports design-oriented thinking and practice?
- What and how should we communicate about ambiances and lived spaces to **researchers**, to build transdisciplinary bridges and stimulate further studies?
- What and how should we communicate about ambiances and lived spaces to **end users**, to ensure their experiences, needs, and perceptions are acknowledged and integrated?
- What and how should we communicate about ambiances and lived spaces to **policy makers**, to foster better-informed decisions regarding spatial and urban policies?

Contributions may include communication tools, training models, didactic formats, co-creation experiences, exhibitions, participatory media, or any innovative form of outreach adapted to specific publics. We particularly welcome reflections on how to make ambiance-based knowledge actionable across disciplines and social roles.

Submission Guidelines

Abstracts (500) should clearly state the research question, methodology, and anticipated findings or arguments. Presentation Papers (2000 words, up to 6 pages) are expected for accepted contributions and must align with the conference's central theme.

Accepted abstract for presentations and submitted papers before the deadline will be eligible for travel and accommodation funding, subject to available places and according to COST reimbursement rules!

Please submit your abstract or proposal via our online submission portal before February the 15th. Notifications of acceptance will be sent 15 days after the abstract submission, and full papers are due by March the 30st.

Important Dates

Abstract Submission Deadline:	18 Feb 2026
Acceptance Notification:	15 days after the abstract submission.
6 Pages Full Paper Deadline:	30 March 2026
Conference Dates:	7-8 May 2026

No registration fee

IMPORTANT: According to the COST rules, all reservations must be made on a refundable basis, so that they can be cancelled or modified in the event of changes to plans or dates. Under no circumstances should the conference dates be used as a condition for purchasing airline tickets or booking accommodation. We strongly recommend that you complete these arrangements as early as possible to benefit from reduced fares.

Please do not leave these bookings until the last minute, as reimbursements may be subject to capped amounts.

Contact and Further Information

For questions or more details, please visit our website at www.citysenz.eu or contact the conference organizers <olga.harea@fua.utm.md>. We look forward to your contribution to this vibrant discussion on how to define, study, and create ambiances that meaningfully shape the future living places.



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