

Short Term Scientific Missions COST IS1301

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Aim and Criteria for Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs)

1. STSMs are primarily designed to support early-stage researchers (ESRs). ESRs are researchers who obtained their PhD degree no longer than eight years prior to joining the COST project. Senior researchers can also apply for STSM funding, but priority is given to early-stage researchers and researchers with a temporary position.
2. STSMs should stimulate cooperation within the COST network. They should also lead to the researcher obtaining expertise that is not available from his/her home institution. For example, we can imagine a situation in which an early-stage researcher obtains expertise from a senior researcher at a host institution in order to complete a research paper or project. All missions that aim at collaboration and obtaining expertise are eligible for funding.
3. A scientific mission may also involve the investigation of source material in libraries or archives. If this is the case, it is recommended that the applicant include some degree of cooperation with the host institution in his/her original work plan (i.e. the description of projected research as part of the application for the STSM). For example, we can imagine a situation in which the investigation of source material furthers cooperation through the classification and identification of material, which, in turn, improves the cataloguing system at the host institution.
4. A STSM can be awarded in connection with participation in a COST Training School.
5. During an STSM, neither the Management Committee (MC), the COST Office (CO) nor the Grant Holder (the University of Groningen) may be considered as an employer.

For further specifications, please see the Appendix.

Procedure¹

1. The applications are collected and assessed twice a year. The deadlines for applications are 1st June and 1st December of each year. The coordinators will publish the calls regularly.
2. First, the applicant must contact the host institution in order to obtain a written agreement of its willingness to take part in the STSM. Please remember that the host institution must be part of the COST network.
3. The applicant must then complete the online application form (<https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>).
4. The applicant must send the completed file as email attachment together with the necessary supporting documents (CV, full work plan, list of publications, motivation letter, letter of support from the home institution) to the STSM host institution and to the STSM coordinators (Joost Robbe <gerjr@hum.au.dk> and Suzan Folkerts <s.a.folkerts@rug.nl>).

¹ A description of the application procedure and a link to the official COST application form are available on the COST Action IS1301 website.

5. The coordinators make a selection and submit their selection to the MC for approval (via email). In the selection procedure, the coordinators assess whether the application meets the criteria.

6. Our total STSM budget for the first grant period is €2000,- .

Duration

The minimum duration of a STSM is one week (5 working days) and the maximum duration of a STSM is 3 months (6 months for early-stage researchers (PhD+8 years)).

Financial Support

For senior researchers: up to EUR 2500

The calculation of this contribution for a STSM is based on the following rules:

- The reimbursement rate per day is EUR 160 maximum;
- Up to EUR 500 may be attributed for the travel expenses;
- A maximum EUR 2 500 in total can be afforded to the grantee.

For early-stage researchers: up to EUR 3500

The calculation of this contribution for an ESR STSM (for a duration of more than 91 days) is based on the following rules:

- The reimbursement rate per day is EUR 160 maximum;
- Up to EUR 500 may be attributed for the travel expenses;
- A maximum EUR 3 500 in total can be afforded to the grantee.

In all cases, the MC can approve differentiated country rates for subsistence per day, based on the cost of living in each respective country.

Appendix: General COST information and rules regarding STSMs

A. From: Minutes of the First Management Committee (“Kick-Off”) meeting of COST Action IS1301 New Communities of Interpretation: Contexts, Strategies and Processes of Religious Transformation in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe

Short-term scientific missions (STSMs): Missions or exchange visits are aimed at strengthening the existing networks by allowing scientists to visit an institution in another COST country to foster collaboration or to learn a new technique and/or methods not available in their own institution. They are particularly intended for Early-Stage Researchers. The SO invited the members of the Management Committee to consider nominating a STSM coordinator/manager.

The duration of a STSM can vary between one week minimum (5 working days), and 3 months maximum (6 months for early-stage researchers (PhD+8 years)). The Applicant must be engaged in a research programme in an institution of a COST Member State having accepted the MoU of the Action concerned. Both home and host institution should be in a COST Member State having accepted the MoU and participating in the COST Action. Short-Term Scientific Missions between different Actions in the same field can be considered by the Management Committees involved.

The Management Committee (MC) of the Action is in charge of the selection of the applicant. The financial support is a contribution to the expenses of a STSM and may not necessarily cover all the costs in each case. The grant covers a contribution to travel, accommodation and subsistence. The average contribution for a STSM will be a fixed grant based on the applicant's budget request and decision of the relevant assessment committee. It will normally not exceed € 2,500 (€ 3,500 for early-stage researchers). Any exception needs special justification.

B. From: COST Action Vademecum – STSM, RSTSM

6.1 STSM - rules

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) are aimed at supporting individual mobility and at strengthening the existing networks and fostering collaborations by allowing scientists to visit an institution or laboratory in another Participating COST Country or an approved NNC institution or an approved IPC institution. A STSM should specifically contribute to the scientific objectives of the COST Action, while at the same time allowing applicants to learn new techniques or gain access to specific instruments and/or methods not available in their own institutions;

The evaluation of STSM applications is performed by the MC and must avoid any potential conflict of interest. The MC may formally delegate the evaluation of STSM applications to an STSM coordinator or committee (refer to section 1.3.8).

1.3.8 STSM coordinator / committee

It is a usual practice for an Action to appoint a STSM coordinator or committee, who will ensure the evaluation of the STSM applications, the selection of successful candidates, and the approval of the scientific report of the STSM applicants (as defined in section 6). The setup of the committee, its composition (or the name of the STSM coordinator) and the mandate received from the MC to take decisions on its behalf must be approved by the MC. The MC must be informed of any conclusions/decisions reached/taken by the STSM

coordinator or committee during the following MC meeting. The successful STSM applicants, the institutions involved and the amount of the Grant in question should be recorded in the minutes of the first subsequent MC meeting.

The assessment criteria defined by the MC should be communicated in advance to all potential applicants.

The selection of applicants is based on the scientific scope of the STSM application that must be in line with the Action objectives. Necessary geographical and gender balance issues are to be taken into consideration and applications from ESR should be privileged.

STSM applicants must be engaged in a research programme as a postgraduate student or postdoctoral fellow, or be employed by or officially affiliated to an institution or legal entity. This institution is considered as the Home institution. Institutions may be public or private entities.

Possible STSM scenarios are:

From a Participating COST Country or Cooperation State

- To another Participating COST Country or Cooperation State
- To an approved NNC institution
- To an approved IPC institution
- To an approved Specific organisation

From an approved NNC institution

- To a Participating COST Country or Cooperation State

From an approved European RTD Organisation

- To a Participating COST Country or Cooperation State

During an STSM neither the MC, nor the COST Office nor the Grant Holder may be considered as an employer. Grantees must make their own arrangements for all health, social, personal security and pension matters.

Standard STSMs need to take place according to the following rules:

1. Be a minimum duration of 5 days;
2. Be a maximum duration of 90 days;
3. Needs to be carried out in their entirety within a single grant period and within the Action's lifetime.

Specific provisions had been adopted by the CSO to foster the participation of ESR (COST 295/09). ESR may extend the duration of the STSM beyond the 90 days; in this case, ESR STSM must take place according to the following rules:

1. Be a minimum duration of 91 days;
2. Be a maximum duration of 180 days;
3. Needs to be carried out within their entirety with in a single grant period and within the Action's lifetime.

6.2 STSM - financial support

A STSM grant is a fixed contribution based on the budget requested by the applicant and the evaluation of the application by the MC Chair /STSM Coordinator or Committee. The aim of this grant is to support the costs associated with the exchange visit. This grant will not necessarily cover all

expenses; it is intended only as a contribution to the travel and subsistence costs of the participant.

The calculation of this contribution for a STSM must be based on the following rules:

- ♣ The reimbursement rate per day is EUR 160 maximum;
- ♣ Up to EUR 500 may be attributed for the travel expenses;
- ♣ A maximum EUR 2 500 in total can be afforded to the grantee.

The calculation of this contribution for an ESR STSM (for a duration of more than 91 days) must be based on the following rules:

- ♣ The reimbursement rate per day is EUR 160 maximum;
- ♣ Up to EUR 500 may be attributed for the travel expenses;
- ♣ A maximum EUR 3 500 in total can be afforded to the grantee.

In all cases the MC can approve differentiated country rates for subsistence per day, based on the cost of living in each respective country.

6.3 STSM - process

1. Before the STSM

In order to receive a STSM grant, the applicant must:

- ♣ Obtain the written agreement of the host institution, before submitting an application;
- ♣ Complete the online application form (see <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>);
- ♣ Send the completed file as e-mail attachment together with the necessary supporting documents (CV, full work plan, list of publications, motivation letter, letter of support from the home institution etc.) to the STSM host institution and to the MC Chair or the STSM coordinator.

Assessment and Grant Letter:

- ♣ The MC (or STSM Coordinator or Committee) will perform the scientific and budgetary assessment of the applications considering the Action objectives and define an acceptable funding level;
- ♣ Once approved by the MC (or STSM Coordinator or Committee), the Grant Holder needs to receive the approval and then send a grant letter generated from e-COST to the applicant.

2. After the STSM

The grantee is required to submit a short scientific report to the host institution (for information) and MC Chair (or to the STSM coordinator) for approval within 30 days after the end date of the STSM containing:

- ♣ Purpose of the STSM;
- ♣ Description of the work carried out during the STSM;
- ♣ Description of the main results obtained;
- ♣ Future collaboration with the host institution (if applicable);
- ♣ Foreseen publications/articles resulting from the STSM (if applicable);
- ♣ Confirmation by the host institution of the successful execution of the STSM;
- ♣ Other comments (if any).

The failure to submit the scientific report within 30 days will effectively cancel the grant; The MC Chair (or the STSM coordinator) is responsible for approving the scientific report and informing the Grant Holder that the STSM has been successfully accomplished; After receipt of the approval by email, the Grant Holder will execute the payment of the grant.