



Guide for STSM applicants

Dear colleagues,

with this guide we would like to give applicants and institutions, interested in realizing a short-term scientific mission within COST Action FP1402, a concise overview over possibilities and regulations that are associated to this type of scientific exchange, offered by COST. COST uses terms and acronyms that might be unfamiliar to some. In this case, we kindly refer to the COST glossary, given in Annex I of this document.

APPLICANTS AND INSTITUTIONS

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.

Home Institution	Host Institution
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 organization
From an approved NNC institution	To a Participating COST Country or Cooperation State
From an approved European RTD Organization	To a Participating COST Country or Cooperation State

DURATION

STSMs can take place according to the following rules:

- Minimum duration of 5 days
- Maximum duration of 90 days
- **Early stage researchers (ESR)** may extend the duration of the STSM beyond 90 days, the maximum duration is 180 days
- All travels must be completed during the grant period of the action (Jan.-Dec.)
- The Home and Host institution should be located in different countries. STSMs within the same country are not allowed.



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 Core Group of the Action. The aim of this grant is to support the costs associated with the exchange visit. The grant will not necessarily cover all expenses, it is intended 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 maximum reimbursement rate per day is EUR 160
- Up to EUR 500 may be attributed to the travel expenses
- A maximum of EUR 2.500 in total can be awarded to the grantee
- **ESRs** may be granted a maximum of EUR 3.500 in total in case of a duration of more than 91 days.

The MC can approve differentiated country rates for daily subsistence, based on the cost of living in the respective country.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Documents

To apply for a STSM, the applicant shall:

1. Obtain the written agreement of the host institution before submitting an application (see template in Annex II).
2. Complete the online application form (see <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>)
3. Send the completed file as E-mail attachment to the STSM Manager (thierry.descamps@umons.ac.be) and to the Chair of Action (dietsch@tum.de) together with the following supporting documents:
 - a. STSM Proposal (description of the scientific content of the STSM)
 - b. Short CV (maximum two pages A4)
 - c. List of publications (maximum one page A4)
 - d. Signed letter of support from the host institution.

The STSM grant is paid only when the STSM is completed and the report is approved by the STSM Manager!

Assessment of the STSM proposal

The STSM Manager sends the proposal to the Core Group for evaluation. In case of rejection, the STSM Manager informs the applicant. Resubmissions are accepted. Once approved by the Core Group, the STSM Manager will notify the applicant. To accept the grant, the applicant has to return the Grant letter with his/her signature.



After the STSM – Reporting

The grantee is required to submit a scientific report to the host institution (for information) and to the STSM Manager for approval within 30 days after the end date of the STSM. This report shall contain:

1. Purpose / objective of the STSM
2. Description of the work carried out during the STSM
3. Description of the main results obtained
4. Future collaboration with the host institution
5. Foreseen publications / articles resulting from the STSM
6. Confirmation by the host institution of the successful execution of the STSM.

Failure to submit the scientific report within 30 days will effectively cancel the grant. After receipt of the approval from the Core Group that the STSM has been successfully accomplished, payment of the grant will be issued.



Annex I – COST Glossary:

- The Action's **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** means the agreement accepted by a minimum of five different COST Member Countries describing the Actions objectives and the added value of networking. This document has to be endorsed by any additional COST Member Country or Cooperating State joining the Action.
- **Researcher:** is anyone engaged in the conception or creation of new knowledge, products, processes, methods and systems in the project concerned. For the purpose of participating in COST Actions, any individual, independently of their institutional affiliation shall be considered as a researcher.
- **Early Stage Researcher (ESR):** is a researcher in the start phase of his/her career with at least a PhD and up to 8 years of experience after the PhD.
- **Core Group (CG)** of the COST Action: group composed of the Action Chair, the Vice Chair, the WG leaders and the STSM manager. Additional experts may be included in the Core Group if accepted by the Management Committee.
- **Management Committee (MC)** of the COST Action: is a group of researchers, nominated by the COST National Coordinator (CNC), in charge of the coordination, implementation, and management of an Action's activities as well as supervising the appropriate allocation and use of the COST funding.
- **Working Group (WG):** The objectives of Working Groups are to perform the necessary tasks required for the Action to fulfil its objectives as defined in the MoU. WG Members are selected from amongst MC Members, or MC Observers as well as any researchers from Participating COST Member Countries.
- **Participating COST Countries** refer to COST Countries or Cooperating States which have accepted the Action's MoU.
- **COST Near Neighbor Countries (NNC)** are countries approved by the CSO to benefit from dedicated support for the integration of their researchers in COST activities. NNC approved institutions are institutions located in a NNC whose participation to an Action has been approved in accordance with the relevant COST rules.
- **Specific Organizations** refer to the European Commission, other EU Institutions and EU Agencies, European RTD Organisations and International Organisations
- **Approved Specific Organisations** refers to a Specific Organisation whose participation to an Action has been approved in accordance with the relevant COST rules.
- **International Partners Countries (IPC)** are all countries that are neither COST Member Countries, nor Cooperating State nor COST NNC.
- **IPC approved institution** is an institution located in an IPC whose participation to an Action has been approved in accordance with the relevant COST rules.
- **Action Participants** are any researchers who participate actively in a COST Action (MC Members, Working Group members etc.); this can include researchers from Near Neighbour an International Partner Countries as well as other Specific Organisations, i.e. the European Commission, EU Agencies, etc.



Basis of Structural Timber Design
from Research to Standards

Short-term
scientific missions

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Annex II – Agreement of the host institution: