

COST Vademecum

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COST Association AISBL

Avenue du Boulevard - Bolwerklaan 21, box 2 | 1210 Brussels, Belgium
T +32 (0)2 533 3800 | office@cost.eu | www.cost.eu



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SCOPE OF THIS DOCUMENT

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology – see www.cost.eu), the longest running European framework, is a unique platform where European researchers can jointly develop their ideas and initiatives across all scientific disciplines through the trans-European networking of nationally funded research. It is funded by the European Union (EU) Horizon 2020 Programme whereby the European Commission (EC) has entered into a Framework Partnership Agreement with the COST Association which itself operates under direct instruction from the COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) - see “explanation of terms used in this document”.

COST activities are largely arranged as COST Actions. The rules and principles governing all COST activities are established in a series of documents approved by the CSO. These documents can be found on the COST website at <https://www.cost.eu/cost-actions/how-to-participate/>The administrative provisions detailed in this document: COST Vademecum direct the implementation of COST Actions and are aligned to the aforementioned rules and principles.

EXPLANATION OF THE TERMS USED THROUGHOUT THIS DOCUMENT

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| Action Management Committee (Action MC) members and substitutes | National representatives of each COST Full or Cooperating Member nominated by COST National Coordinators (CNC) to take charge of the coordination, implementation and management of an Action's activities as well as supervising the appropriate allocation and use of the COST funds with a view to achieving the Action's research coordination objectives and capacity building objectives. |
| Action Chair and Action Vice-Chair | Elected during an Action MC meeting by the Action MC from amongst the Action's MC members. The Action Chair is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the Action. The Action Vice-Chair assists in these activities when requested to do so by the Action Chair and can substitute for the Action Chair when required or mandated to do so. |
| Action MC Observers | An individual observing at the Action MC a COST Action's coordination and decision-making processes and monitors its activities - namely individuals from COST Partner Members, Near Neighbour Countries or International Partner Countries or Specific Organisations. |
| Action Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) | The agreement accepted by a minimum of seven different COST Full Members and / or COST Cooperating Member which describes the Action's objectives. This agreement has to be accepted by any COST Full Member and / or COST Cooperating Member who is to join the Action. The MoU contains, in the form of a technical annex, core elements of the proposal submitted in the frame of the Open Call. |
| Action Participant | Any person being an Action MC member, an Action MC substitute, an Action MC Observer, a Working Group member or an ad-hoc participant. |
| Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) | The main decision-making body of COST, responsible for the strategic development of the COST framework. Each COST Full Member can appoint up to two Delegates to the CSO. |
| COST Action Grant Agreement | The agreement between the COST Association and the Grant Holder that governs the administrative and financial implementation of the COST Action. |

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| COST Cooperating Member | <p>Is any Non-European State as depicted under Article 7 of the Statutes of the COST Association that has been admitted to the COST Association as a COST Cooperating Member.</p> <p>The COST Cooperating Member is Israel.</p> |
| COST Full Member | <p>Is any European State as depicted under Article 6 of the Statutes¹ of the COST Association that has been admitted to the COST Association as a COST Full Member.</p> <p>The 38 COST Full Members are: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, The Netherlands, the North Republic of Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, The Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and United Kingdom.</p> <p>The above COST Full Members govern the COST framework via their Delegates in the COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) - the General Assembly of the COST Association.</p> |
| COST Members | The COST Full Members, the COST Cooperating Member(s) and COST Partner Member(s). |
| COST National Coordinators (CNC) | The individuals appointed by COST Members in charge of confirming the acceptance of the Action's Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of their COST Member and nominating the Action Management Committee members of their COST Member as well as the experts from their COST Member to be part of the pool of Experts for the Review Panels. |
| COST Near Neighbour Countries (NNC) | <p>States that can benefit from dedicated support that enables participation in COST Action activities.</p> <p>The full list of NNC is as follows: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Kosovo², Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Russia, Syria, Tunisia, and Ukraine.</p> |
| COST Partner Member | Is any State as depicted under Article 8 of the Statutes of the COST Association which has been admitted to the COST Association as a COST Partner Member. South Africa is currently a COST Partner Member. |
| Early Career Investigator (ECI) | An individual who is within a time span of up to 8 years from the date they obtained their PhD/doctorate (full-time equivalent). |
| EU Institutions, Bodies, Offices and Agencies | <p>Any body defined in accordance with the Treaties on the European Union and on the Functioning of the European Union established in the EU to accomplish specific tasks of a legal, technical and/or scientific nature in a given policy field and to support the EU member States.</p> <p>A list of the EU Bodies, Offices and Agencies may be found at</p> |

¹ See the COST Statutes at http://www.cost.eu/about_cost/organisation

² This designation is without prejudice to position on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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| | http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/agencies_en |
| European RTD Organisations | The intergovernmental scientific research organisations whose members are States, the majority of which are COST members. |
| Grant Holder | The legal entity responsible for the administrative and financial implementation of the COST Action. |
| Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) | Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, the North Republic of Macedonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey |
| International Organisation | Any Intergovernmental Organisation governed by international law. Organisations qualifying under the present Decision as European RTD organisations or EU bodies, officer, or agencies shall not be considered International Organisation in the COST framework. |
| International Partner Countries (IPC) | States that are neither COST Members nor COST Near Neighbour Countries. |
| Invited Speakers | Specialists who are not COST Action Participants but can partake in one COST Action meeting and/ or one Training School throughout the lifetime of the COST Action. |
| Participating COST Full, Cooperating or Partner Member | COST Full, Cooperating or Partner Member that has accepted the Action's MoU. |

SECTION 9. ITC CONFERENCE GRANTS FOR EARLY CAREER INVESTIGATORS AND PHD STUDENTS

ITC Conference Grants aim to support ECI and PhD students from Participating ITC to attend international science and technology related conferences, event or activity on the topic of the Action that are not organised by the COST Action.

9.1. ITC CONFERENCE GRANTS – ELIGIBILITY RULES

The following eligibility criteria apply:

- Conference Grants are exclusively reserved for PhD students, PhD candidates, and ECI's with a primary affiliation in an institution located in an ITC participating in the Action.
- The applicant shall make an oral/poster presentation at the conference in question and shall be listed in the official event/conference programme. The main subject of the oral presentation / poster presentation / speech at the approved conference shall be on the topic of the Action and shall acknowledge COST (see Section 10).
- The participation of each applicant shall be pre-approved by the Action MC.

9.2. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICANTS

The evaluation of each received Conference Grant application is performed by the Action's MC. The Action Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Action Chair is affiliated to the Grant Holder Institution) or an appointed Coordinator / Committee can assume this responsibility if the Action's MC gives them the mandate to perform this task on their behalf. The person responsible for performing the related tasks into e-COST is referred to as ITC Conference Grant Manager. The evaluation criteria defined by the Action's MC should be communicated to all potential applicants.

The selection of successful applicants shall be done so in consideration of the scientific scope of the proposed participation and how it will support the Action in achieving its scientific objectives.

9.3. ITC CONFERENCE GRANTS – FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A Conference Grant is a fixed financial contribution which takes into consideration the budget request of the applicant and the outcome of the evaluation of the application by the delegated person(s). Conference Grants do not necessarily cover all the expenses related to participating in a given conference. A Conference Grant is a contribution to the overall travel, accommodation and meal expenses of the selected Grantee.

The calculation of the financial contribution for each Conference Grant shall respect the following criteria:

- Up to a maximum of EUR 2 500 in total can be afforded to each successful applicant.
- Up to a maximum of EUR 160 per day can be afforded for accommodation and meal expenses.
- Up to a maximum of EUR 500 can be claimed for the conference fees to be incurred by the selected Grantee. Virtual conference fees can be considered eligible provided all other eligibility conditions are fulfilled.

In addition, when meal and accommodation expenses are supported by the hosting institution as part of the provisions offered in their conference package, the amount for subsistence afforded to each eligible participant shall be deducted from the Grant. Documentary evidence of the conference fee amount shall be provided by the applicant and shall be archived by the Grant Holder along with the relevant administrative documents.

Multiple applications to several Actions by the same person to attend the same conference is strictly forbidden and may lead to the cancellation of the grant.

9.3.1. APPROVING ITC CONFERENCE GRANTS FOR PAYMENT

The Grantee has 30 calendar days from the end date of the Conference in question to submit either a certificate of attendance or a report to the ITC Conference Grant Manager of the Action and the Action's Grant Holder.

Payment of the Grant is subject to the submitted certificate of attendance or the submitted report being approved by the ITC Conference Grant Manager. Written approval of the submitted report shall be sent to the Grant Holder for archiving purposes.

Should the ITC Conference Grant Manager apply for a Conference Grant, the mandate for approval or rejection of the request via e-mail is transferred to the Chair or Vice-Chair, as well as the approval of the Conference Grant report. The written approvals shall be sent to the Grant Holder for archiving purposes.

13. ELIGIBILITY TABLE (ANNEX I)

| Participant has an affiliation ¹ in a... | And Participant is a... | Eligible to be reimbursed for their participation in a... | | | | | | |
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| | | Meetings | | | Training School | | STSM | ITC Conference Grant |
| | | MC meeting | Other type of meeting | Dissemination Meeting | Trainer | Trainee | Grantee | Grantee |
| COST Full Member or Cooperating Member Country that joined the Action | MC member/ substitute | Yes ² | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes ⁷ |
| | WG member Ad-hoc participant | NO | Yes | NO | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes ⁷ |
| COST Full Member or Cooperating Member Country that did NOT join the Action | Ad-hoc participant | NO | Once ⁶ | NO | Once ⁶ | Yes | NO | NO |
| Near Neighbour Country | MC Observer (joined the Action) | Yes ² | Yes | NO | Yes | Yes | Yes | NO |
| | Ad-hoc participant (did not join the Action) | NO | Once ⁶ | NO | Once ⁶ | NO | NO | NO |
| COST Partner Member or International Partner Country | MC Observer (joined the Action) | NO ³ | NO ³ | NO ³ | Yes | NO ³ | NO ³ | NO ³ |
| | Ad-hoc participant (did not join the Action) | NO | Once ⁶ | NO | Once ⁶ | NO | NO | NO |

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| EU RTD: that joined the Action | MC Observer | Yes ⁴ | Yes | NO | Yes | Yes | Yes | NO |
| | WG member Ad-hoc Participant | NO | Yes | NO | Yes | Yes | Yes | NO |
| EU RTD: that did NOT join the Action | Ad-hoc participant | NO | Once ⁶ | NO | Once ⁶ | NO | NO | NO |
| EU Body, office or agency: that joined the Action | MC Observer | | | | | | | |
| | WG member Ad-hoc Participant | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO |
| EU Body, office or agency: that did NOT join the Action | Ad-hoc participant | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO |
| International Organisation: that joined the Action | MC Observer | | | | | | | |
| | WG member Ad-hoc Participant | NO ⁵ | NO ⁵ | NO ⁵ | NO ⁵ | NO ⁵ | NO ⁵ | NO ⁵ |
| International Organisation: that did NOT join the Action | Ad-hoc participant | NO ⁵ | Once ⁶ | NO ⁵ | Once ⁶ | NO ⁵ | NO ⁵ | NO ⁵ |

1. Or enrolled in a PhD programme. 2. Max 2 per country. 3. COST Partner Member have at national level a dedicated budget to support participation to COST Action activities. 4. Max 1 per organisation. 5. Even if located in a COST country. 6. In the lifetime of the Action. 7. Only for ECI or participants enrolled in a PhD programme in a COST Inclusiveness Target Country.