

COST ACTION CA17139
Short Scientific Term Missions – Application Procedure

1. STSMs are exchange visits supporting individual mobility from an Institution, Organisation or legal entity participating in the Action CA17139 (called hereinafter the Home Institution) to a Institution/Organisation (called hereinafter the Host Institution) that will host the successful Applicant. The aim of a STSM is to strengthen existing networks and foster collaboration between Participants in the COST Action CA17139.
2. To be eligible, the STSM Applicants must be engaged in an official research programme as a PhD student/postdoctoral fellow or may be employed by/affiliated to an institution/organisation/legal entity, which has within its remit a clear association with performing research. Applicants who are not PhD students should have a proven track record in performing research.
3. STSM Applicants can apply for a total or partial financing of their visit at the Host Institution. To reduce the costs of STSMs and to allow the participation of the largest possible number of researchers, partial support from the Host Institution is encouraged.
4. Only applications that are fully compatible with COST rules and with the rules of Action CA17139 will be considered. To get supported from Action CA17139 the Applicant should have been an official Member (MC members, MC substitutes, MC observers and WG Members) of the Action before the submission of the STSM, though viable and valuable applications will be considered as far as the main aim of the STSM will be to start/strengthen the collaboration with an official Member of Action CA17139.
5. Each STSM must take place within one Grant Period (GP). No STSM should take place at the end of the GP.
6. The STSMs calls in each GP will be announced in the official web page of CA17139 (<http://eutopia-cost.eu>) and communicated to the MC members and Working Group members by e-mail.
7. Within CA17139, the minimum permitted length of STSM is 5 days.
8. An average STSM in our COST Action is estimated to receive funding up to 2000 EUR. Exceptions will be carefully considered.
9. According to the COST rules, the calculation of the financial contribution for each STSM must respect the following criteria:
 1. Up to a maximum of EUR 3500 in total can be afforded to each successful applicant.
 2. Up to a maximum of EUR 160 per day can be afforded for accommodation and meal expenses.
 3. Up to a maximum of EUR 300 can be afforded for travel costs.
10. The STSM Committee composed by Adj. Prof. Tiina Salminen (STSM Coordinator), Prof. Rui Travasso (STSM Co-Coordinator), Dr. Luca Tubiana (Action Chair), Dr. Raffaello Potestio (Scientific Representative of the Grant Holder) and Dr. Franco Ferrari (Action Vice-Chair) can approve differentiated country rates to cover accommodation and meal expenses based on the perceived cost of living in the host country.
11. Any matter concerning STSMs not regulated herein shall be governed by COST rules, as described in the COST Vademecum available from the depository of COST documents and guidelines:
https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Vademecum_June2019.pdf
(See also the COST STSM User Guide at the address:
<https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/STSM-userguide.pdf>).
Remark: Please note that COST documents are constantly updated. Check also the following site to have the latest version:
<https://www.cost.eu/funding/how-to-get-funding/documents-and-guidelines/>

12. Eligible STSM Applicants must submit their STSM applications online: <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>
13. Simultaneously with the submission of the STSM application on the COST site, the Applicant must send the following documents by e-mail as separated pdf files to our COST Action's Secretary Mrs. Chiara Toldo (e-mail: chiara.toldo@unitn.it):
 - a) **A Letter of invitation** to the Applicant from a senior Researcher employed by/affiliated to the Host Institution (max one A4 page). This letter should be countersigned by qualified Authorities of the Host Institution and contain a declaration that the Host Institution is approving the visit under the covid-19 pandemic management measures that will be in force at the moment of the signature, notwithstanding the fact that this declaration shall have no legal value and can not bind the Host Institution should further restrictions be imposed nationwide or by any other administrative authority at a more local level.
 - b) **The submitted STSM application form** (downloadable after the online application is submitted)
 - c) **A Motivation letter** including an overview of the proposed activities that will be performed, including a work plan for the visit highlighting the proposed contribution to the scientific objectives of our COST Action (max two A4 pages) with the following information: a short introduction; details of the planned work; why the Host Institution is chosen; potential outcomes (publications, conference presentations, etc.).
 - d) **A Two-page CV** (including, if possible, a list of the applicant's academic publications most appropriate for this application)
 - e) **A Letter of support from the Home Institution**
 - f) **A Financial justification** with a breakdown of all costs including travel and living expenses (max one A4 page)
 - g) **A Letter of consent** (based on article 6.1 of the GDPR) to allow the treatment of the data necessary for performing the selection process of the STSMs. The data will not be distributed outside the Management Committee of the Action CA17139 and the staff of the Grant Holder strictly involved in the process.
 - h) **A signed declaration** by the Applicant in which it is stated that the Applicant is aware of the information of COST concerning covid-19 that can be found at the site: <https://www.cost.eu/who-we-are/about-cost/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-actions/> and has read the COST document containing the procedures for handling travel derogation requests. Please notice that the most updated versions of all relevant COST documents, including that explaining the derogation procedure, can be found at the web page: <https://www.cost.eu/funding/how-to-get-funding/documents-and-guidelines/>.
14. Applications will be reviewed on a call by call basis. The workflow of the selection procedure is described in the STSM User Guide: (<https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/STSM-userguide.pdf>).
15. After the deadline of a given STSM round, the STSM Committee approves or rejects the received applications for regular STSMs. In the case of pre-paid STSMs, the whole Core Group (CG) of the Action should approve the STSM. **No booking can be made by the Applicant before obtaining the approval of the STSM Committee or of the CG and the Applicant has received the Grant Letter notification from the Grant Holder stating the amount of the grant that was awarded.**
16. The STSM Committee will review proposals by judging the work plan against the stated scientific aims of CA17139. The selection criteria will be published on the web page of the CA17139.
17. At latest within one month and preferably within ten days after the STSM completion, the Applicant has to upload in e-COST the STSM report together with the host approval.

Simultaneously, the Applicant has to submit these documents by e-mail to Mrs. Chiara Toldo. After receiving the opinion of the CG, the report will be approved or rejected by the STSM Committee. The applicant will be reimbursed once the STSM Committee has approved the report. The Grant Holder has up to 30 calendar days from the approval of the STSM Committee to make the payment of the grant.

18. The list of granted STSMs will be available on the official web site of the Action (<http://eutopia-cost.eu>) with the following information: Project title, Applicant's name, Home Institution and country, Host Institution and country, WGs involved in the funded STSM, amount of received funding.
19. In the case of questions and requests for further instructions on the STSMs, please, contact by e-mail our COST Action's Secretary Ms. Chiara Toldo.
20. In connection with the ongoing outbreak of covid-19 and, in general, any event or circumstance beyond the Action Participant's reasonable control and occurring without its fault or negligence, the Applicant is asked to follow the instructions of the public authorities in both the departing and destination countries. We also recommend Applicants not to engage expenses before a clear view of the travel situation is available. Refundable expenses should always be preferred if possible. Additionally, if the application for an STSM is approved, the Applicant is encouraged to buy a valid travel cancellation insurance whose costs are currently eligible for reimbursement under COST rules. It is responsibility of the Applicant to check if the purchase of such insurance will still be eligible for reimbursement at the time of the purchase. Please also notice that **applications for STSMs that will not contain the declaration mentioned in point 13., subpoint h), will not be considered.**