



SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS

Rules for applications

Definition of STSMs

Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) in genderSTE COST Action are intended to foster collaboration, strengthen existing and develop new networks, disseminate state-of-the-art information, share best practices and create new knowledge and policies. This will be achieved by allowing especially early-career researchers (doctoral and postdoctoral levels), administrators and policy officers responsible for gender research, gender equality and human resource development, to go to institutions and laboratories in other COST member states. Men are particularly encouraged to participate.

Aims of the STSMs

The aim of Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) is to contribute to the policy and scientific objectives of genderSTE, namely: **to promote a better integration of gender dimensions in science and technology** at three main levels:

- i. **promoting women's careers in science and technology through structural change of institutions** (as recommended by EC) by disseminating existing research and practice;
- ii. **promoting a better integration of gender in the content of science, research and technology**, by disseminating existing research on the topic, i.e. the UE-US Gendered Innovations Project;
- iii. **identifying gender dimensions relevant to environment-related Horizon2020 Grand Challenges and to the JPI Urban Europe.**

The genderSTE COST Action focuses on:

- Disseminating and implementing work on structural change to science policy and funding organisations, European-wide organizations, universities and research institutions, journals, individual researchers and other stakeholders.
- Disseminating and implementing work on gendered innovations to science policy and funding organisations European-wide organizations, universities and research institutions, journals, individual researchers and other stakeholders.
- Completing a stocktaking of the current situation, developing a research agenda to identify main issues, and advance on the state of the art in the following fields: i) energy and climate change, ii) Urban Europe and iii) transport from a gender perspective and disseminating and implementing this to science policy and funding organisations as well as to researchers directly in order to feed into Horizon 2020 and urban development related European initiatives.

The work of genderSTE COST Action is divided into three Working Groups:

1. Promoting Structural and Institutional Change
2. Promoting Gendered Innovations
3. Mapping Gender in Environment-Related Horizon2020 Grand Challenges with three subgroups:

- 3.i Cities
- 3.ii Transport
- 3.iii Energy and Climate Change)

Who can apply

The Applicant should normally be employed in an institution of a COST participating country having accepted the MoU of the genderSTE, with a record of active participation. The STSMs are particularly intended for early stage researchers at the doctoral and postdoctoral levels, early career institutional administrators or policy makers/officials responsible for gender equality or human resources development.

To ensure gender balance men are encouraged to apply.

Duration

The duration of STSM is **minimum one week (5 working days) and maximum 3 months**. Awardees may request an extension from the Management Committee; in such a case the STSM may take up to 6 months in total.

Budget and number of STSMs for the Grant period

A total amount of EUR 22,500 has been allocated for STSMs in 2013 which will cover at least 10 STSMs. At least 2 STSMs will be organized in each of Working Group 1 and 2; Working Group 3 will organize at least 2 STSMs per SubGroup.

Home and Host Institution

The home and the host institutions can be public or private.

A STSM may only be approved:

- From a home institution in a COST participating country to a host institution in another COST participating country or to a formally approved host institution in a non-COST country.
- From a formally approved home institution in a Near Neighbour country to a host institution in a COST participating country.

In exceptional cases, the COST Office reserves the right to analyse the possibility of reimbursement of any person designated by itself or by the Management Committee of an Action or by a Domain Committee to further the interests and aims of COST.

Short-Term Scientific Missions between different Actions may be considered by the Management Committees of both Actions.

The Applicant is responsible for obtaining the agreement of the host institution, before submitting his/her application.

Expression of interest

Those intending to apply for a STSM should inform the STSM Coordinator of their intention and expected time frame, even if it is months before the planned STSM. This will help the MC in making informed decisions about the distribution of the funds allocated to STSMs.

Deadlines and terms

Based on a decision adopted by the MC kick-off meeting, there will be two fixed collection dates (deadlines) in 2013 for the STSMs applications.

In 2013 the collection dates will be **Friday 15 March 2013** and **Friday 3 May 2013** for STSMs starting no earlier than Monday 15 April 2013 and finishing no later than the end of November 2013.

The complete application file, including MC approval, must be received by the Grant Holder **no later than four weeks before the start date** of the proposed STSM.

Application registration

Applications can only be submitted by using the **on-line registration tool** (www.cost.eu/stsm) and **forwarding the necessary documents to STSM Coordinator**.

The following information has to be encoded with the registration:

1. the Action number;
2. the title of the planned STSM;
3. the start and end date;
4. the applicant's details, including key academic, institutional-administrative or policy-making details and workplan; and home institution details ;
5. the applicant's bank details;
6. the host institution's details;
7. financial data (amount for travel and subsistence requested).

After encoding the information via the on-line registration tool, a formal STSM application is generated which has to be downloaded and sent by the Applicant electronically (by e-mail as attachment) together with the proposal to:

- the future Host institution of the STSM;
- the STSM coordinator.

Each proposal should include the following sections:

- Summary (this will be also used in the COST reporting form)
- Background to the STSM
- Specific Aims of the STSM
- Preliminary Results (if they exist)
- Workplan
- Relevance of the collaboration (why this project should require a visit to the host institution)
- References (should not exceed one page)
- Letters of support from the home and host institutions
- CV (should not exceed one page)

Applicants are encouraged to be **brief**. Overall, the proposal should not exceed **4 pages** (excluding references and letters of support).

The working language of genderSTE is **English**; specific arrangements may be made between an Applicant and the Host Institution about the choice of another acceptable language. However, the official documentation submitted (application, scientific report) shall be executed in English.

Financial Support

The financial support is a contribution to the costs of a STSM and may not necessarily cover **all the costs in each case. The grant should normally cover only travel and subsistence.**

The financial contribution for a STSM will be a fixed grant based on the Applicant's budget request and the evaluation of the application by the STSM assessment committee. An amount of EUR 60 to 90 for the daily allowance in particular for longer stays and EUR 300 for the travel is recommended but not obligatory. The total of a STSM shall not exceed EUR 2,500 up to 3 months (or EUR 3 500 for early stage researchers, early career institutional administrators or policy makers if the STSM exceeds 3 months). Grantees must make their own arrangements for all health, social, personal security and pension matters.

Any exception needs special justification and prior approval from the COST Office.

An advance payment may be made in exceptional circumstances. The Applicant shall provide an explanation why an advance payment is requested. The Evaluation Panel shall take this request into consideration in particular in the case of early stage researchers and/or especially (PhD or other) students on a stipend (rather than with an employment contact).

Assessment

The STSM Coordinator distributes the applications to the relevant STSM WG-specific Evaluation Panel.

Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are available in advance to potential applicants. Every care will be taken to avoid any bias and ensure both a geographical and gender balance.

In the evaluation process, the STSM Evaluation Panel will evaluate each proposal focusing primarily on the relevance of the submitted STSM to the goals of the particular WG and the overall objectives of genderSTE, the clarity and rigour of the submission and the expected impact of the STSM. The working language of the COST Action is English. STSM Evaluation Panel will not approve of any application that is not properly and carefully written.

Each proposal shall be evaluated by a panel composed of a maximum of 5 members among the following persons: the specific WG coordinator, the Action Chair, the Action Vicechair, two additional members of the working group including the Subworking Group coordinator in the case of WG3. The Evaluation Panel shall draft an Assessment Report (see Appendix 1 Assessment Report template).

Assessment outcome

The STSM Coordinator informs the Grant Holder if the proposed STSM has been approved in the form of an e-mail stating:

"Subject: STSM Reference number, COST Action number, grantees name

On behalf of the Management Committee of the above COST Action I would like to inform you after evaluation that:

- a) the attached request for an STSM has been approved and;
- b) a grant of EUR x has been recommended and;
- c) the host institution accepted the proposal."

In the event of a submission failure, the e-mail shall be modified accordingly.

After checking the application for the compatibility with the existing rules and procedures the Grant Holder will inform the Applicant about the outcome of the assessment and will arrange the necessary formalities for the issue of the grant in case of a positive result and availability of funding. The Grant Holder informs the Applicant about the assessment outcome through the **Grant letter** in which the Applicant is informed about:

- a) the approval of the STSM and;
- b) the level of the financial grant given.

The Applicant has to return this **Grant letter**, after accepting the grant with his/her signature, without any delay. The Applicant will receive a **Payment Request Form** at the same time.

The decisions and assessments regarding all STSM applications shall be **reported to the next MC meeting and recorded in the minutes of the meeting**.

After the STSM

STSM Scientific Report

After completion of the STSM the Grantee is required to submit to the **host institution** and **the STSM Coordinator** a short report on the visit **within 4 weeks after his/her stay**. The report should contain the following information:

- Summary (to be also used for reporting to the COST Office]
- Purpose of the STSM;
- Description of the work carried out during the STSM;
- Contribution to the goals of the COST Action;
- Description of the main results obtained;
- Future collaboration with host institution (if applicable);
- Foreseen publications/articles/dissemination tool or document resulting or to result from the STSM (if applicable);
- Confirmation by the host institution of the successful execution of the STSM;
- Other comments (if any).

The report shall be executed in English and delivered in the PDF, RTF or HTML format.

Once the STSM is paid, the details (recipient, host, countries, amount, and length of time) appear in the financial reports that the Grant Holder can generate from eCOST. Each STSM report should be ideally uploaded onto the Action website.

Notice of completion

The STSM Coordinator is responsible for approving of the final report and sending the notice of completion of the STSM to the Grant Holder with the confirmation that the STSM has been successfully accomplished and that the grant can be paid. The information is usually in the form of an e-mail which should include the scientific report and state:

"Subject: STSM Reference number, COST Action number, grantee's name

On behalf of the Management Committee of the above COST Action I would like to inform you that:

- 1) The above STSM has been completed from <Start date> to <End date>
- 2) The scientific report has been approved by the MC and Host.
- 3) The amount of EUR X can be paid"

Payment

After reception of the approval mail and the Scientific Report, the Grant Holder shall execute the payment of the fixed grant directly to the grantee or the host institution as requested in the application within a period of 30 days:

- Completed Payment request form;
- Summary of scientific report (maximum 1 page).

Deviation from procedure

Any deviations and exceptions from this procedure may be considered, provided that they contribute to the scientific or policy objectives of the Action. They require prior approval from the COST Office.

Appendix 1 Assessment Report Template

Does the application meet the aims of the COST Action?

Yes

No

Overall assessment of the Short-Term Scientific Mission application

The application is recommended for funding.

The application is not recommended for funding because it does not fulfil the aims of the COST Action.

The application is not recommended for funding because of budgetary reasons (budget is too high).

The application is not recommended for funding on scientific/policy merit.

Statement of the Evaluation Panel:

Note (where applicable): The Assessment Panel recommends resubmission of the application provided that the following changes are made:

Date, place

Evaluation panel members