

Circul-a-bility (CA19124)
4th Call for Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) grants
(1st grant period (GP1) from 1 November 2020 to 30 October 2021)

For the updates, please check the following links;

The website: <https://circul-a-bility.org/>

LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8992517/>

Deadline for STSM Application: 16 July 2021 16:00

STSM should be completed by 30 October 2021.

Grant holders will be announced by 23 July 2021.

STSMs

What are STSMs?

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) are short term exchange visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, strengthening existing networks, establishing new partnerships, fostering collaboration, learning and sharing of new techniques, data, instruments, methods and infrastructure not available at home institutions / organizations. An STSM should specifically contribute to the scientific objectives of the COST Action (CA19124 – Circul-a-bility).

Who can apply?

STSMs are open for PhDs, PostDocs, and *Early Career Investigators (ECI) and Advanced Career Researchers employed at institutions in countries participating in the Action, or at approved institutions. STSMs must be performed between COST countries - researchers cannot apply for an STSM within their own country.

** Early Career Investigators (ECI): maximum 8 years since obtaining their PhD at the time of application.*

What can you apply for?

You can apply for an STSM with a minimum duration of 5 calendar days that includes travel. The STSM will be a fixed grant to cover part of the travel expenses and living allowance. STSM Grants do not necessarily cover all expenses related to undertaking a given mission. STSM grantees shall make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health, taxation, social security and pension matters. The grant will be paid only after the STSM has been completed (the Grant Holder can arrange a pre-payment of 50% of the STSM grant for researchers from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC).

The following funding conditions apply and must be respected:

- up to a max of EUR3500 in total can be afforded to each successful STSM applicant (including travel and accommodation, etc.);
- up to a max of EUR160 per day can be afforded for accommodation & meal expenses (which is part of the total funding);

- STSM activities must occur in their entirety within the dates specified in this call. STSM awards may be combined with other funding sources, but these must be acknowledged in the application.

For detailed rules regarding eligibility and financial support, please see the relevant sections of the COST Vademecum (<http://www.cost.eu/download/COSTVademecum>).

When can you apply?

Calls for regular STSM applications will be issued one time during each grant period.

Applications submitted after the deadline will be subject to individual assessment. The selection of successful STSM applicants will be done in consideration of the scientific scope of the proposed mission and how the mission can support the Action in achieving its scientific objectives. In respect to supporting the policy on **COST Excellence and Inclusiveness will also be considered.

**The policy on COST Excellence and Inclusiveness is built upon two pillars:

- Strengthening the excellence through the creation of cross-border networking of researchers
- Promoting geographical, career age and gender balance throughout its activities and operations.

What is the application and grant process?

- (1) Applicants must carefully read the funding rules detailed in Vademecum (<https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Vademecum-V8-1-May-20202.pdf>)
- (2) Applicants must complete and submit online at: <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>. (If you do not already have an e-COST account you will first need to 'create an account' - which will include providing the details of the bank account where the grant will be lodged if your STSM application is approved and the STSM successfully completed.)

*****Grant period extension is ongoing. Until then, you are kindly encouraged to submit your application to the STSM committee by an email.**

The list of supporting documents to be submitted for the evaluation are:

- a. A C.V. (including a list of academic publications) and a letter including
 - i. an overview of the aims and the proposed activities that will be performed,
 - ii. a workplan and research plan for the visit,
 - iii. a description of the proposed contributions to the scientific objectives of the Action.
- b. A letter of invitation from a senior Researcher at the Host institution confirming that they can undertake the STSM on the given dates should their application be approved
- c. A letter of support from the Applicant's Home Institution.

- (3) The STSM coordination group will propose a ranking of application to the Core Group of the action. Depending on the available budget the Core Group will determine the final ranking and decide how many applications can be approved.
- (4) If approved, the STSM coordinator sends notification to the applicant.
- (5) The Grant Holder sends the applicant a grant letter to sign and return. The STSM should not be started until this letter has been signed and returned.
- (6) Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM, the successful applicant must submit a scientific report to the Host institution and to the e-COST system. This must include: the purpose of the mission; description of work carried out; description of main results/outputs; plan of future collaborations with Host (if applicable); planned publications resulting from STSM (if applicable); confirmation of successful STSM by Host.
- (7) STSM Coordinator and Action Chair approve the final report.
- (8) The Grant Holder executes payment to STSM Applicant.

Criteria for Awarding STSM

STSM funding will be awarded according to the COST key principles and as follows:

- **Relevance:** if the scientific aims of the work will be relevant and applicable to the Action's aims (1-5 points).
- **Quality and clarity:** if the proposed research is of high quality, and argues clearly and cogently the importance and timeliness of the research (1-5 points).
- **The choice institution:** if there are adequate specific scientific reasons for visiting the chosen Host institution (1-5 points).
- **Balance:** if there is a fair spread of researches across the network in terms of gender, career stage, affiliation, and nationality (1-5 points).
- **Potential:** if the publication/output potential of the research is adequate (1-5 points).

COVID restrictions

We recommend all individuals purchase travel cancellation insurance, which is an eligible expense. Participants who are unable to participate to an Action event due to prohibitions, may, where the prohibitions apply 48 hours before the date of travel, cancel their attendance to the event. This is to allow participants to cancel their hotels and minimise costs under Force Majeure for COST. Force Majeure will also apply where, within those 48 hours before the meeting, such a new prohibition is put in place. Participants shall provide supporting documents proving the prohibition (for example via a screenshot from a National Foreign Affairs website or other competent ministry in case of restrictions of travel, or a quarantine certificate). Further information can be found on the dedicated COVID-19 page (<https://www.cost.eu/who-we-are/about-cost/coronavirus-covid-19/>).

The STSM Committee

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