

## 4.1. Objectives

The aim of a Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) shall be to contribute to the scientific objectives of a COST Action.

These Missions (Exchange Visits) are aimed at strengthening the existing networks by allowing scientists to go to an institution or laboratory **in another COST Country** to foster collaboration, to learn a new technique or to take measurements using instruments and/or methods not available in their own institution/laboratory. They are particularly intended for young scientists.

An Action should normally set up at least 4 STSMs per year.

## 4.2. The Applicant

The selection of the applicant is the responsibility of the Management Committee (MC) of the Action.

The **Applicant** should normally be engaged in a programme of research as a postgraduate student or postdoctoral fellow or be employed in an institution of a COST Country having accepted the MoU of the Action. This institution shall be actively participating in the COST Action.

For the period of the STSM neither the MC of the Action, the COST Office nor the Grant Holder may be considered as the employer and grantees must make their own arrangements for all health, social, personal security and pension matters.

## 4.3. Home and Host Institution

**The home and the host institution** 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.

## 4.4. Duration

Short-Term Scientific Missions, **minimum one week (5 working days), maximum 3 months**, shall be made within the time frame of the operation identified in the proposal and within the period of the respective Action.

For Early Stage Researchers (less than PhD + 8 years) the Management Committee may approve an extension to a duration beyond 3 months, but normally not more than 6 months in total.

## 4.5. 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 normally not exceed EUR 2 500 up to 3 months (or EUR 3 500 for Early Stage Researchers – above 3 months). **Any exception needs special justification and prior approval from the COST Office.**

In any case the costs associated with the STSM must not exceed the limits set in the rules for reimbursement by COST of expenses for experts eligible for reimbursement (see 2. - Travel and Subsistence).

An advance payment may be made in exceptional circumstances, which will require additional special justification.

## 4.6. Registration and Deadlines

The Applicant must use the **on-line registration tool**. (see 4.10 - How to submit an application).

Applications may be submitted according to the schedules stipulated by the MC of the relevant Action, bearing in mind that delays must be taken into account for the assessment and administrative procedures.

The application together with the MC approval should be sent to the Grant Holder and respect the deadline set by the Grant Holder (e.g., at least 4 weeks before the STSM starts).

## 4.7. Assessment

a) The MC of the Action will make the scientific and budgetary assessment and take the final decision.

The MC may formally delegate these tasks to :