

THE COST ACTION CA17117 Towards an International Network for Evidence-based Research in Clinical Health Research (EVBRES)

The main aim of the COST Action CA17117 is to encourage researchers and other stakeholders to use an Evidence-Based Research approach while carrying out and supporting clinical research, and thus avoiding redundant research. This aim will be achieved through the specific objectives:

Research Coordination

- Raise awareness and acceptance of the challenge among all relevant stakeholders.
- Prepare teaching material to teach Evidence-Based Research.
- Catalyse collaboration between relevant stakeholders to increase the efficiency of updating and preparing SRs.
- Create a common agreement of how to evaluate the implementation of the EBR approach.

Capacity Building

- Formulate implications of an EBR approach for relevant stakeholders.
- Teach researchers how to be evidence-based while doing Research.
- Describe working processes and technologies used when preparing a SR that could be improved.
- Establish a common understanding of how to monitor the EBR approach in clinical Research.

What are Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs)?

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) are institutional visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, fostering collaboration between individuals. It might involve improving collaboration and exchange, developing capacity building, joint research, publications, and preparing for future projects.

Eligibility

1. STSM applicants must be engaged in an official research programme as a PhD Student or postdoctoral fellow or can be employed by, or affiliated to, an institution, organisation or legal entity which has within its remit a clear association with performing research.
2. The institutions/organisation or legal entity where applicants pursue their main strand of research are considered as Home Institutions. The Host Institution is the institution/organisation that will host the successful applicant.
3. The following table shows the scenarios available to eligible STSM applicants:

Applicant's Home Institution	STSM Host Institution
Located in a Participating COST Full Member/COST Cooperating Member	Located in another Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member
	Located in a Participating COST Partner Member
	An Approved IPC ¹ Institution
	An Approved *NNC ² Institution
	The EU Commission or a EU Body, Office or Agency
	An Approved European RTD Organisation ³
	An Approved International Organisation
Located in an Approved NNC Institution	Located in a Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member
Located in an Approved European RTD Organisation	Located in a Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member

¹International Partner Country (IPC)

² Near-Neighbour Country (NNC)

³ One of 8 European intergovernmental scientific research organisations namely: CERN - European Organization for Nuclear Research, EFDA JET - European Fusion Development Agreement, EMBL - European Molecular Biology Laboratory, ESA - European Space Agency, ESO - European Organisation for Astronomical Research in the Southern Hemisphere, ESRF - European Synchrotron Radiation Facility, European XFEL - European XFEL Free-Electron Laser Facility and ILL - Institut Laue Langevin.

How to apply

1. The STSM applicant is responsible for identifying, contacting, and securing a host institution that will develop a working plan and activities.
2. Applicants should provide the following documents in addition to the application;
 - a. The letter of the invitation from the host institution which should include the name of the applicant, the title of STSM, and timeline.
 - b. Working plan which should include the objectives of the STSM, timeline, and planned activities, and expected outcomes.
 - c. The letter of support from the home institution.
 - d. A motivation letter in which the applicant will highlight the importance of this STSM to the COST Action CA17117 as well as the applicant's professional growth.
 - e. A full CV (if applicable, with a publication list)
3. Eligible STSM applicants must submit their STSM applications online at the following web address: <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>

Selection criteria

1. The aims and objectives of STSM should align with the aim and objectives of the COST Action CA17117 as outlined above.
2. The expected outcomes of STSM should support or further the short-term or long-term scientific impact of working groups' activities.
3. STSM must respect the following criteria:
 - They must have a minimum duration of 5 calendar days including traveling days.
 - They must have a maximum duration of 90 calendar days.
 - STSM need to be carried out in their entirety within a single Grant Period and always within the Action's lifetime.
4. Specific additional provisions have also been made possible to encourage the participation of Early Career Investigators (ECI) in STSM. Applicant is considered early career investigator when the time has elapsed between the award date of applicant's PhD and the applicants first involvement in the COST Action CA17117 does not exceed 8 years.

There should be special considerations made by the Action MC with respect to supporting COST policies on promoting gender balance, enabling Early Career Investigators (ECI), broadening geographical inclusiveness.

The COST Association and the Grant Holder of the Action cannot to be considered as being an STSM grantee's employer. STSM grantees must make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health, taxation, social security and pension matters.

Evaluation and selection of applicants

1. This call for Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) applications will start on 1st June 2021 and will be closed when the needed number of STSMs will be full field
2. Starting date of the STSM could be from June 25th and ending date no later than September 20th, 2021
3. The evaluation will be done by the STSM committee, Action chair and vice chair.
4. The selection of successful STSM applicants will be done so in consideration of the scientific scope of the proposed mission and how the mission can support the Action in achieving its scientific objectives.

It is not recommended for applicants to making travel arrangements prior to securing the approval of the application from the Action chair, vice chair, and STSM committee.

STSM Grant

An STSM Grant is a fixed financial contribution which takes into consideration the budget request of the applicant and the outcome of the evaluation of the STSM application. **STSM Grants do not necessarily cover all expenses related to undertaking a given mission.** A STSM Grant is a contribution to the overall travel, accommodation and meal expenses of the Grantee.

The calculation of the financial contribution for each STSM must respect the following criteria:

- Up to a maximum of EUR 2000 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.

The Action Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Action Chair is affiliated to the Grant Holder Institution) and/or the appointed STSM Coordinator/Committee should consider and can approve differentiated country rates to cover accommodation and meal expenses based on the perceived cost of living in the host country.

Specific provisions have been introduced to enable researchers from ITC participating in the COST Action to request a pre-payment of 50% of their STSM Grant when they complete the first day of their STSM. In such case, the representative of the Host Institution must confirm by e-mail to the Grant Holder that the STSM applicant has officially started the mission on day 1. Only then the Grant Holder can arrange the payment of 50% of the STSM grant. The remaining 50% of the Grant is payable once the administrative requirements have been satisfied after the STSM.

Approving for payment

Within 30 calendar days from the end date of the STSM, the applicant must do the followings to be able to receive the grant;

1. The applicant must submit a scientific report to the researcher from the Host Institution who oversaw the STSM.
2. The applicant must obtain a written approval letter for the STSM scientific report from the researcher from host institution.
3. The applicant must send the scientific report and the approval letter to the Action Chair, the Vice-Chair, and the appointed STSM Coordinator/STSM Committee via e-mail for their approval.
4. After the approval from the Action Chair, the Vice-Chair, and the appointed STSM Coordinator/STSM Committee, the scientific report and the approval letter must be uploaded in e-COST by the applicant for archiving purposes.
5. The STSM coordinator will approve the reports in e-COST system which will notify the grant holder. Then, the grant holder will execute the payment of the grant directly to the grantee.