

FABER Project

-

COST Rules

Jan Papuga

jan.papuga@fs.cvut.cz, papuga@pragtic.com

COST Projects Call

- <https://www.cost.eu/funding/how-to-get-funding/documents-and-guidelines/>
- Deadline: November 13, 12:00 am (CET, noon)
- Minimum 7 participating countries, from which at least 50% should be from Eastern Europe + Portugal
- Planned for 4 years

Eligible costs

- No research, the funds are intended for networking:
 - Meetings (i.e. Management Committee meetings, Working Group meetings)
 - Training Schools
 - Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) – Early Career Investigators (less than 8 years from obtaining PhD) up to 6 months, others up to 3 months
 - Dissemination

But note

- In the Czech Republic, an additional grant call is opened for those involved in any COST project, to support their activity by further funds available also for research itself
- Check that in your country

Full Members

- **Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC)** should form the majority or at least a half of all project members involved
- The ITC are in **bold letters** in the complete Full Member list below

Albania

Austria

Belgium

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bulgaria

Croatia

Cyprus

Czech Republic

Denmark

Estonia

Finland

France

Germany

Greece

Hungary

Iceland

Ireland

Italy

Latvia

Lithuania

Luxemburg

Malta

Moldova

Montenegro

Netherlands

North Macedonia

Norway

Poland

Portugal

Romania

Serbia

Slovakia

Slovenia

Spain

Sweden

Switzerland

Turkey

United Kingdom

Other countries supported

- Cooperating members: Israel
- Near Neighbour Countries (NNC):
 - Algeria
 - Armenia
 - Azerbaijan
 - Belarus
 - Egypt
 - Georgia
 - Jordan
 - Kosovo
 - Lebanon
 - Libya
 - Morocco
 - The Palestinian Authority
 - Russia
 - Syria
 - Tunisia
 - Ukraine

Action Management Committee (Action MC)

- National representatives of **each COST Full or Cooperating Member** nominated by COST National Coordinators (CNC) to take charge of the **coordination, implementation and management of an Action's activities as well as supervising the appropriate allocation and use of the COST funds** with a view to achieving the Action's research coordination objectives and capacity building objectives.
- First meeting happens in Brussel (could be expected in September 2021?)
 - This one is organised, administered and **funded (2 nights)** by the COST Association administration). The Brussel stuff is solved in a one-day meeting, administrative tasks above all. A joint meeting could follow the other day to minimize the costs and discuss the first activity.
 - Established **legal entity is elected**, of which one Action MC Member must hold an affiliation, to **manage the COST Action** under the tenets of the COST Grant System (CGS). The CGS requires that the elected legal entity, which becomes **known as the Grant Holder**, will administer the Action Grant by overseeing the financial and administrative management and the various coordination tasks required to successfully support the implementation of approved Action activities

Action Chair and Action Vice-Chair

- **Elected during an Action MC meeting by the Action MC** from amongst the Action's MC members. The Action Chair is **responsible for the coordination and implementation** of the Action. The Action Vice-Chair assists in these activities when requested to do so by the Action Chair and can substitute for the Action Chair when required or mandated to do so.

Grant Holder

- Legal entity selected by the Action MC
- Should dispose of adequate administrative capacity and financial stability
- Must be confirmed by COST Association
- May be replaced
- Four key positions (one person can hold more positions):
 - Scientific Representative
 - Legal Representative (e.g. Rector of the university)
 - Financial Representative
 - Grant Manager
- Gets a financial contribution (Financial Scientific and Administrative Coordination tasks - FSAC) from COST to support these actions of up to 15% of the actual scientific expenditure

Action Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- The agreement accepted by a minimum of seven different COST Full Members and / or COST Cooperating Member which describes the Action's objectives. This agreement has to be accepted by any COST Full Member and / or COST Cooperating Member who is to join the Action. The MoU contains, in the form of a technical annex, core elements of the proposal submitted in the frame of the Open Call.

Action MC Observer

- An **individual observing** at the Action MC a COST Action's coordination and decision-making processes and monitors activities on behalf of his / her institution of affiliation - namely **individuals from COST Partner Members, Near Neighbour Countries or International Partner Countries Approved Institutions or Specific Organisations**.
- Cannot be elected as an Action Chair / Vice-Chair / Working Group Leader.

Committee of Senior Officials

- The **main decision-making body of COST**, responsible for the **strategic development** of the COST framework. Each COST Full Member can appoint up to two Delegates to the CSO.

Early Career Investigators (ECI)

- An individual who is within a time span of **up to 8 years from the date** they obtained their **PhD/doctorate** (full-time equivalent).

Participation in the Action – Full Members

- **Individuals** of primary affiliation with an institution located in a COST Full and / or a COST Cooperating Member **can participate** in a COST Action as an Action Participant **once their respective country has accepted the MoU** of the respective Action.
- **Up to 12 months after** the date the Action was approved by the CSO, COST Members can join the Action **without the approval of the Action MC**.
- When a period of **12 months has elapsed** from the date the CSO approved the Action, the participation of additional COST Members becomes subject to **formal approval by the Action MC**.
- Subject to Action MC approval, Action Participants can attend approved meetings / Training Schools, benefit from ITC Conference Grants and partake in Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM).
- Individuals affiliated to universities, research centres, companies or other relevant legal entities located in **COST Partner Members may participate** in a COST Action as Action MC Observers (having no voting rights in the MC) if their COST Partner Member has formally accepted the Action's Memorandum of Understanding.

Participation in the Action – Other Members

- Individuals affiliated to universities, research centres, companies or other relevant legal entities located in **COST Partner Members may participate** in a COST Action as Action MC Observers (having no voting rights in the MC)
 - If their COST Partner Member has formally accepted the Action's Memorandum of Understanding
 - Cannot be elected to any role
 - Source their funding for their participation in COST Activities from national budget and are not eligible to receive funding from the budget afforded to the Action.
- Non-COST countries (NNC or any other)
 - May participate
 - Only observers
 - Cannot be elected to any role
 - Can be funded in particular cases from the COST action

Work and Budget Plan

- For each Grant Period (typically 12 months), Actions are allocated a fixed budget - the maximum financial contribution that will be provided.
- Action MC must plan, define, agree and approve, in the guise of a Work and Budget Plan, the Action's scientific activities for the given Grant Period.
- Funds cannot be directly used for submitting research proposals to acquire funding for national, European or internationally sourced research grants.
- The approved Work and Budget Plan detailing activities of the Action forms an Annex to the Action Grant Agreement, it must be signed by the COST Association and the Grant Holder Institution.
- Budget lines:
 - A) Science expenditure:
 1. Meetings.
 2. Training Schools.
 3. Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM).
 4. Conference Grants for ECI (and PhD students) from ITC.
 5. COST Action Dissemination.
 6. Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities (OERSA).
 - B) FSAC for the Grant Holder

Stakeholders

- Anyone who has a vested interest in the COST Action or will be affected by its outcomes. The COST Action should strive to engage with industry, policy makers, standards organisations, national authorities, and any other stakeholders, if relevant to the topic, objectives and deliverables of the COST Action.
- Their involvement can be relevant to problem definition and/or knowledge generation and/ or dissemination.
- Their mapping, analysis, prioritisation, and engagement strategy must be initiated at the onset of the COST Action. Their roles may change throughout the COST Action.
- COST Actions are advised to have either dedicated meetings with stakeholders, e.g. Roundtable discussions, WG meetings or integrate the relevant stakeholders in a COST Action Workshop/Conference as keynote speakers or in dedicated sessions during a COST Action's activity.

Proposal Assessment Criteria – Eligible If:

- Represent a network of proposers from at least seven (7) COST Members amongst which a minimum number shall be from COST ITC;
- All proposers having a registered e-COST profile;
- **Be anonymous**, hence contain **no reference to the proposers' and/or institutions' names** participating in the network of proposers, meaning that proposers and/or institutions' names should neither be explicitly mentioned nor be potentially identifiable;
- Respect fundamental ethical principles as described in the COST Code of Conduct and in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity with particular emphasis on the originality of findings and ideas, and on peaceful purposes of the addressed science and technology challenges ;
- Respect word or page limits as described in the SESA Guidelines (15 pages of the Technical Annex);
- Be written in English, the working language of the COST Association.

Evaluation Criteria

- S&T Excellence – 15 points
- Networking Excellence – 15 points
- Impact – 15 points
- Implementation – 5 points
- Total mark – 0-50 points
- Threshold condition – 34 points

Network of proposers

- The reviewers get from the system the following summary:
 - COST Full or Cooperating Members (number and list in alphabetic order)
 - % of COST Inclusiveness Target Countries
 - NNCs (number and list in alphabetic order)
 - IPCs (number and list in alphabetic order)
 - European Commission, EU bodies, offices and agencies
 - European RTD Organisations
 - International Organisations
 - Number of proposers
 - **Gender distribution of proposers: Males (%) – Females (%)**
 - **Average number of years elapsed since PhD graduation of proposers**
 - **Number of Early Career Investigators**
 - Core Expertise of proposers: distribution by sub-field of Science
 - **Institutional distribution of the Network of Proposers**
- It is likely that the project should be well-balanced (how?) in those categories in bold letters...
- Not just academia! Industry widely invited, females, ECI,... - all these items are political issues critical for the application phase

Network of proposers – Practical outcome

- Percentage of ITC countries, while most of the research happens in big western countries – I started to invite mathematicians to get help with the analyses, big data processing etc. – target countries are those ITC, women preferred. If you know about any interesting candidate, let me know
- At this stage, we are missing industry – contacts to automotive and aircraft industry are strategic
- Involvement of fresh women ECI (early career investigator) necessary!
- According to older successful projects
 - Approx 150 kEUR per year
 - 1 action MC per year
 - 2 workshops per year
 - 2-3 trainings per project run (4 years)
 - All these items are good to run as appendix to other conferences to save the costs, countries cheap for stay preferred
 - About 60-100 short-stay missions organized per project!