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## How Does COST Work?

**COST does not fund research itself but provides a platform for European scientists to cooperate on a particular project and exchange expertise. These projects are called "Actions".**



Each COST Action is a network centred around nationally-funded research projects in fields that are of interest to at least five [COST countries](#). COST provides the [COST Actions](#) with financial support for joint activities such as conferences, short-term scientific exchanges and publications. Each

COST Action has an objective, defined goals and clear deliverables. COST Actions have located their topic into one of COST's scientific [Domains](#).

One of COST's main characteristics is its **flexibility**, allowing for an easy implementation and light management of the research initiatives. Activities are launched following a "**bottom-up**" approach, meaning that the initiative of launching a COST Action comes from the European researchers themselves. The member countries participate on a "**à la carte**" principle, in that only countries interested in the Action participate.

Researchers who wish to launch a new Action first submit a short proposal to the continuous COST [Open Call for Proposals](#), which is then evaluated by the Domain Committee. If the proposal is accepted, the applicants are invited to submit a full proposal with a complete Technical Annex (the scientific and managerial description of an Action). The full proposal is then assessed through a peer review process.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) provides the formal basis of an Action. The proposal for a new Action must fulfill certain formal and qualitative criteria, and if the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) approves the MoU, the COST countries wishing to take part in the Action can agree to it.

An Action is launched when at least five COST member states have agreed the MoU and starts with the first Management Committee meeting of the Action. It runs for an average of four years.

## Related Documents

▶ [About COST 2011 \(PDF, 7 MB\)](#)

▶ [Annual Report 2010 \(PDF, 1 MB\)](#)

▶ [Forest management for water production and storage \(PDF, 219 kB\)](#)

▶ [Cooperative Radio Communications for Green Smart Environments \(PDF, 183 kB\)](#)

▶ [Paving the way for the mobile access of the future \(PDF, 180 kB\)](#)

▶ [Annual Report 2009 \(PDF, 2 MB\)](#)

▶ [COST Overview February 2012 \(PDF, 2 MB\)](#)

