



**European Cooperation  
in Science and Technology  
- COST -**

**Brussels, 21 June 2012**

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**Secretariat**

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**COST 4156/12**

**NOTE**

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To: COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)

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Subject: COST in the next FP for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020": Follow-up of the COST Position paper: "The COST Framework - A cornerstone of the ERA"  
- Action Plan to increase inclusiveness in COST activities while fostering scientific excellence throughout Europe

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Delegations will find attached the *"Action Plan to increase inclusiveness in COST activities while fostering scientific excellence throughout Europe"* approved by the CSO through a written procedure.

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## **COST Horizon 2020: Follow-up of the COST Position Paper**

### **“Action Plan to increase inclusiveness in COST activities while fostering scientific excellence throughout Europe”**

#### **Introduction**

Following the approval of the COST Mission, the COST Strategy and most recently the COST Position Paper “The COST Framework – A Cornerstone of the ERA”, the CSO has agreed to prepare an Action Plan to “especially contribute by networking and supporting young promising teams in the field of Research and Innovation and contribute to “widening pan-European participation, while reinforcing cooperation with near neighbour countries based on mutual benefit”<sup>1</sup>.

#### **1) Information sharing for best management and practices**

- **COST National Coordinators (CNC)**

Organisation of CNC information and working sessions two times a year with the aim to foster a common approach to fulfil COST’s objectives and share best practices; the reimbursement of one CNC per country through the COST GA II funds will be determinant for the success of this measure. Some important items to further explore are: reinforcement of the CNCs’ role, MC/DC nomination, Action approval, data export for statistics, use of e-COST new features, mutual information on national practices (comparison between national/internal procedures, links with other ministries, etc.), methods for identification of talented young investigators and female researchers, follow-up of DC members and Action MC activities (including replacements, participation, etc.), and reflection on improvement of processes.

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<sup>1</sup> On the basis of this paper, the COST Office has introduced these measures and the related budgetary estimations in the submitted Amendment N°5 to the COST Grant Agreement II.

- **Internal trainings**

Preparation and training of the COST Office Managers, Science Officers and Communication and Conference Team so as to better support and advice Action Chairs and members as well as best disseminate opportunities and information accordingly.

- **Revision of Communication tools**

Revision of Communication tools to make policy visible (through slides, downloadable video, training kit, etc.), and more in particular the COST website.

## 2) **Capacity building**

- **Training sessions**

Develop training sessions for European science and technology communities to improve their inclusion in COST Activities.

“Training Schools” in the frame of COST Actions shall be allowed in COST Near Neighbour Countries on a case by case basis when considered an added value to an Action<sup>2</sup>.

- **Intensify cooperation**

Encourage closer cooperation with: DG Research & Innovation and Framework Programme National Contact Points; Ministries of Research, Innovation, Industry; Members of the European Parliament when applicable.

Increase the budget dedicated to participation of “COST Near Neighbour Countries”<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> This will be developed in the coming COST Strategy for International Cooperation.

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### 3) **Preparing the future: young talents / next generation leaders**

Develop and share methods among COST countries for the identification of young talents, next generation leaders paying particular attention to the promotion of female investigators.

### 4) **Connecting research infrastructures to all potential users**

- **Contribute to dissemination**

Support COST countries in their efforts to integrate and open their research facilities to the European research communities through dissemination of information on the accessible national/regional research infrastructures.

- **Foster connection with European Infrastructures**

Link the COST Actions with national/regional research infrastructures in order to promote their attractiveness for European science and technology research communities: COST will foster that every COST Action connects, where appropriate, with relevant infrastructures that have reached a high level of research capacity. Training schools, short-term missions or any other activity of the COST Action shall thereby contribute to increase the “circulation of knowledge” and mobility of researchers.

## 5) Targeted Actions

Based on the Plan for Strategic Activities, use of the policy-driven targeted Actions to support the present policy; for example:

- **“Best practices in S&T management”**: one dedicated COST Action for networking the administrative, finance and legal services in universities, research organisations and related legal entities supporting researchers involved in the lifecycle of European funded projects (e.g. FP7, ERC, JTI). The network would allow to exchange financial, legal and administrative experiences and to share and develop best practices encouraging knowledge share, knowledge transfer and increased efficiency in project management European wide.
- **“Developing the Euro-Mediterranean Research and Innovation Area”**: One COST Action providing Mediterranean countries with the opportunity to build networks around a central topic which has a clear interdependency with EU policy and is of vital importance to the stability of the region (e.g. water).

## Conclusion

COST is convinced on the potential impact of such measures and targeted additional activities, which shall reinforce inclusiveness, favour mutual learning, increase networking and support to young promising teams throughout COST activities.

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