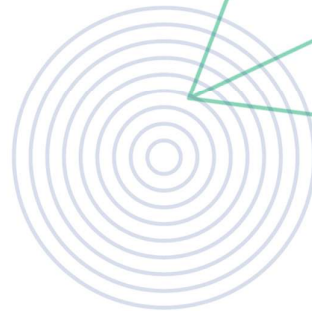


Networking tools checklists for Grant Holder Managers



March 2026

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1. MEETING / TRAINING SCHOOL

Principles:

- Check the **eligibility** of the participants according to any specific communication sent by the COST Association and the [Annotated Rules for COST Actions](#) (Annex 1. Networking Activities Organised Through Action Events).
- Delete:
 - any event which did not take place.
 - any pending claim older than 45 days.
 - any non-eligible expenses (see section A1-3.1.4 NON-ELIGIBLE TRAVEL EXPENSES, Annotated Rules).
- In case of a derogation, request in advance to the AO the derogation approval, in line with the [Derogation Guidelines](#). Upload the COST approval under the relevant claim in e-COST.
- No derogations for additional meals and/or nights, or long-distance travel above a total of EUR 1500 will be considered.

ATTENDANCE LIST:

- Verify that the participants indicated in e-COST in the section “Review attendance” match the participants who signed the attendance list.
- Check the attendance list for the individual OTRR (signature for each day) and for the **unique** participants (for the LOS).
- Indicate in e-COST in the section “Review attendance” the actual participants.
- Upload the signed attendance list of each meeting / training school.
 - *In case of an **online** event, upload the attendance log of the system.*
 - *In case of a **hybrid** event, upload the signed attendance list + the attendance log of the system.*

For online Management Committee and Core Group meetings attendance logs must be reviewed in “Review attendance”.

**Online participants need to have their actual names displayed to ensure an accurate check of the attendance of those invited. GHM are recommended to upload an online presence log with 2 tabs: 1 tab displaying the raw information, 1 tab with the clean information to ensure an easy check of the attendance.*

MINUTES:

- Upload the MC / Core Group minutes under the e-COST section “Supporting documents” and ensure they correspond to the specific meeting.

LONG-DISTANCE TRAVEL:

Check that:

- copies of all long-distance travel documents are uploaded under each travel claim. Supporting documents refer to documents issued by a service provider, such as invoices, receipts, e-tickets ,or booking confirmations. Bank statements, print screens, screenshots, partial documents or edited files are not accepted.
- the amounts claim under each long-distance travel match the supporting documents and are encoded in the currency of the invoice. Au automatic calculation into EUR is done in e-COST.
- the supporting documents clearly detail the following information:

- name of the service provider
- the travel itinerary including travel dates (and hours only for stop overs/ layovers), the departure and arrival cities,
- In the case of travel by plane, the passenger(s)' name and the e-ticket number and/or booking number references.
- the amount paid for the ticket,
- If extra charges are claimed, the type of extra charges must be indicated. The eligible extra charges are: seat reservation, extra leg room, exit row seat, fast lane, priority boarding, sms priority boarding fees, luggage associated expenses, sustainable fuel surcharge, carbon offset fees and cancellation insurance.

Clarification:

When a single document (e.g. invoice, receipt, e-ticket or booking confirmation) contains all the required information mentioned above, no additional booking or ticket document or boarding passes are needed.

When the required information is spread out across multiple documents (e.g. invoice + e-ticket or booking confirmation), these documents must be consistent and clearly linked by:

- passenger name(s), and travel dates, and cities/airports;
- OR
- passenger's name, ticket number and/or booking reference.

Train Subscription Passes (e.g., Interrail, Swiss Pass, Deutschland Ticket, etc.)

Subscription passes are not eligible for reimbursement.
Seat reservation fees associated with such passes are eligible.

Package purchase

For package purchases (flight + hotel), a detailed cost breakdown showing transport and accommodation separately must be provided. Without this breakdown, the difference between the total amount and the daily allowance may be reimbursed for the long-distance travel (see conditions above.)

NON-ELIGIBLE AMOUNTS:

Delete from e-COST any non-eligible expenses:

- Any meal costs included in travel tickets
- Flight upgrades ex. class upgrade after the ticket has been purchased.
- Stand-alone medical, luggage and life insurance;
- Fees, charges, and/or penalties linked to a participant changing or having to rebook travel tickets. This also includes bids made to upgrade plane seats.
- Any short distance travel expenses encoded separately: taxi, parking expenses
- Medical / health / property insurance, medical tests,
- Long-distance travel expenses exceeding EUR 1500

DAILY ALLOWANCE:

Check that:

- the participant signed the attendance list for each day of the event for which (s)he was invited.
- for DA reimbursement requests for the day before and /or after the event, relevant transport ticket, travel booking itinerary, or accommodation invoice are uploaded*.
- If the participant travels by car on the day before and/or after the event, an accommodation invoice with the participant's name, check in and check out dates is required for the calculation of the daily allowance
- For collocated events, not more than 100% of the DA is reimbursed.
- The MC decision to lower the daily allowance shall be uploaded in e-COST as a supporting document.

**Otherwise only the daily allowance corresponding to the days on which the participant signed the attendance list can be reimbursed.*

OTHER TRAVEL EXPENSES: TRAVEL VISA EXPENSES

Check that:

- Receipt / stamp from the embassy / consulate issuing the visa are provided
- Amount paid for the visa fee

Clarification:

Travel visa processing fee, exit visa fee, electronic travel authorisation (ETA) may be claimed.

NON-ELIGIBLE AMOUNTS:

Delete from e-COST any non-eligible expenses (any other fees associated with visa). The list of non-eligible expenses is available on section A1-3.1.4 of the Annotated Rules.

CO-LOCATED EVENTS:

Check that:

- attendees in both events did not receive reimbursement for the same event date. This constitutes double funding and it is not permitted. It is advisable that participants also declare/add information in e-COST in the 'Justification' section of their reimbursement claim if they are attending more than 1 event (even in different COST Actions).
- the daily allowance does not exceed 100% in e-COST on any of the days.
- the travel expenses are claimed only once - either in the meeting or in the training school.
- there is no double funding with a grant* for the same period as the meeting and/or training school.

**For STSMs overlapping with a meeting/Training School, please refer to the recommendation section in the Annotated Rules – A1-3.1.3.1 Accommodation, Meals, And Short Distance Travel Expenses – Daily Allowance.*

2. LOCAL ORGANISER SUPPORT

Principles:

- Check the eligibility of the local organiser according to page 60 of the Annotated Rules for COST Actions.
- Delete any pending claim older than 45 days.
- Ensure there is no double funding in case of collocated activities (a single LOS is afforded to collocated meetings. For TS, a separate LOS grant can be requested.)
- In case a f2f event needs to take place online, change the type of LOS grant accordingly.

Ensure that:

- the correct meeting type (Face to Face / Hybrid / Online) is encoded in e-COST under the section 'Meeting details'.
- the signed attendance list for face-to-face events and/or an attendance log for online and hybrid events are uploaded in e-COST.
 - Face-to-Face meeting -> 2 checks:
 1. Signed attendance list is uploaded.
 2. Ensure that the names of signatories on the signed attendance list match with the names on the 'Review attendance' section.
 - On-line event with LOS – verify that the number of unique participants is in proportional to the LOS grant awarded.
 - Hybrid event -> 3 checks:
 1. Signed attendance list is uploaded
 2. Ensure that the names of signatories on the signed attendance list match with the names on the 'Review attendance' section
 3. Verify that the number of unique participants is in proportional to the LOS grant awarded
- the Local Organiser Support grant is paid to an institution bank account and never into a personal bank account.
- the grant calculation matches the total number of unique participants who were invited on e-COST.
- delete any invoices or receipts uploaded in e-COST. If the Local Organiser or GH Institutions require detailed supporting documents, it is recommended that these are archived by the LO or GHM.

3. NETWORKING ACTIVITIES ORGANISED THROUGH A GRANT AWARDING PROCESS

Principles:

- Check the **eligibility** of the grantee according to the [Annotated Rules for COST Actions](#).
- Verify that each of the uploaded supported documents are associated to the specific grant, grantee, and respective conference and are not empty or incomplete files.
- Delete any grant which did not take place.

3.1. Short Term Scientific Mission

Check that the host organisation is located in a different country than the country of the grantee.
<p>Make sure that all supporting documents are uploaded in e-COST.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ e-COST Application form ➤ host confirmation of grantee acceptance ➤ report ➤ any other documentation required by the Action
<p>Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the grant does not exceed the maximum amount of EUR 4.000. ▪ the grant letter and host confirmation contain the same dates.

3.2. Virtual Mobility Grant

<p>Make sure that all supporting documents are uploaded in e-COST.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ E-COST application. ➤ report detailing the work done. If not explicitly mentioned in the report, ask for proof of the work done (eg. minutes of the meeting, draft publication, website, survey, or questionnaire results, etc). If the grant report mentions the results, no proof need be requested.
<p>Ensure the grant does not exceed the maximum amount of EUR 1.500.</p>
<p>Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ there is no duplication with other networking or support tools. <p><i>Eg. A VM grant is awarded to set up a website while a separate invoice is claimed under Dissemination for website setup costs. This is double funding.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The grant is not used to compensate the tasks of leadership positions. <p><i>Eg. A VM grant is awarded to compensate the tasks of the GAC, GHM, etc.</i></p>

3.3. ITC / Young Researcher (YR) & Innovator/ Dissemination Conference Grant

Check that the conference is organised by a **third party and not by the Action**.

Make sure that all supporting **documents** are uploaded in e-COST and the documents correspond to the correct grantee:

- e-COST application;
- copy of the **abstract*** of the accepted poster or oral presentation;
- the acceptance or invitation letter from the conference organisers;
- certificate of attendance issued by the conference organiser;
- programme of the conference or book of abstracts / proceedings indicating the oral presentation of the grantee;
- report.

If the event was initially scheduled as face-to-face, but it changed to online or if there are any other discrepancies related to the grant, the Grant Holder must inform the Administrative Officer of the Action and provide a justification. COST will then assess each Conference Grant in case the amount needs to be reduced a posteriori.

** A copy of the abstract of an oral presentation is a short, written, stand-alone summary of the research or project that a speaker intends to deliver at a professional gathering.*

Ensure that:

- grant does not exceed a maximum amount of **EUR 2.500** per grant for face-to-face conferences, or **EUR 500** for an online conferences.
- The certificate of attendance is valid. Pictures from the event are not valid supporting documents.

4. DISSEMINATION & COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS

Principles:

- Check the eligibility of the expenses according to the [Annotated Rules for COST Actions](#).
- Ensure that invoices are provided for each Dissemination product claimed.
- Amount encoded in e-COST must exclude VAT.
- Delete any Dissemination item which did not take place.
- For amounts over EUR 30.000 COST may request, for audit purposes, offers and proof that the procurement process was followed.
- Any dissemination item should be final* and invoiced during the running Grant Period.
- Ensure that a proof of delivery of the publications, website, videos, etc. (in electronic format, pdf, link, DOI, etc.) is uploaded in e-COST. *For items accepted for publication, ensure the proof of acceptance is uploaded in e-COST e.g. acceptance letter from publisher.*
- Ensure that the COST acknowledgement is implemented according to the visual identity (<https://www.cost.eu/visual-identity>).

*See below specific conditions for the Scientific publication in Open Access.

The uploaded **INVOICE** must include:

- An invoice number and date

A Proforma / intermediate invoice is not acceptable.

- Addressee

The invoice must be addressed to the Institution requesting the goods/services (not COST).

- A description of the goods/services paid for in accordance with the order made. It is recommended that the Action number and title be indicated on the invoice..

Eg. CD ordered, CD paid for.

- Breakdown of costs and charges

A list of amounts without indicating for what product/service they are for is not sufficient.

- VAT amount

In case of VAT exemption, this must be mentioned on the invoice.

- Total amount due

For Dissemination products developed in-house, when invoices cannot be provided, **time sheets** must be uploaded. Check that the following information is provided:

- the name of the person performing the tasks
- a description of the work performed
- the hourly/daily rate
- the total number of hours worked
- the total amount
- be signed by a person with financial/legal authority of the institution (*e.g. head of department, financial representative, etc*)
- be on the letterhead of the institution

WEBSITE

Check that the total amount for the Action does not exceed a maximum of **EUR 12.000 for the entire lifetime** of the Action.

If the website is provided by university/private person, invoices for an external contractor or time sheets for an in-house developer are provided.

LOGO:

Check that the amount for the logo / graphic design does not exceed **1.000 EUR**.

SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATION IN OPEN ACCESS:

Check that, in addition to the invoice, the following is provided:

- If **published**: final publication in pdf format.

- If **not published yet**, but Accepted (or in Press),
 - the accepted final manuscript in pdf format and proof of acceptance by the publisher, (pdf with the publisher's header) providing the expected date of publication must be provided,
OR
 - the accepted final manuscript in pdf format and accepted publication full text from the publisher's website

Check that COST rules concerning branding and acknowledgment are fulfilled.

- Check that it is the work of participants from:
 - at least 3 different COST Members countries
OR
 - Action participants from at least 2 different COST Members and 1 Near Neighbour Countries.
OR
 - Action participants from at least 2 different COST Members if resulting from an STSM funded by the Action.
- No embargo period is allowed.
- Only full open access venues are eligible (Gold Open Access).

Booth at a conference

Check that:

- the certificate of participation issued by the event organiser is uploaded in e-COST.
- the web link to the event website is provided,
- COST Action (title or number or acronym) is visible in the event programme as an exhibitor.

5. EXPENSES INCURRED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NETWORK

5.1. Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities (OERSA)

Principles:

- Check the eligibility of the expenses according to the [Annotated Rules for COST Actions](#).
- Ensure that invoices are provided for each OERSA item claimed.
- Delete any OERSA item which did not take place.
- For amounts over EUR 30.000 the COST Association may request, for audit purposes, offers and proof that the Grant Holder procurement process was followed.
- Amount encoded in e-COST must exclude VAT.

BANK CHARGES:

- Ensure that official **bank statements** are uploaded (*no screen shots from accounting, excel files or payment orders will be accepted*).
- Ensure that the total sum of the individual bank charges amounts match with the amount claimed in e-COST.

VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION, DESIGN, AND COLLABORATION TOOLS:

- Check the **invoice (see Dissemination for info on invoice)**
- Ensure that the total amount does not exceed a maximum **EUR 500** until end of Grant Period.
- In case of an annual subscription, only the months related to the current Grant Period can be claimed (calculated pro-rata per month)

Eg. subscription take for 500 EUR for period Jan – Dec 2022. Only EUR 416.66 can be claimed corresponding to the pro-rated eligible period of Jan – Oct 2022 when the Grant Period ends.

CONSUMABLES, RENTING OF EQUIPMENT, SHORT-TERM USE OF SOFTWARE & DATABASE LICENCES

- Check the **invoice (see Dissemination for info on invoice):**
- Strictly eligible if these costs are associated with an existing Training School encoded in e-COST. (*A stand-alone claim for these items is not eligible.*)

SHIPPING COSTS:

- Check the **invoice (see Dissemination for info on invoice):**
- Ensure the costs are associated with an existing event encoded in e-COST. (*A stand-alone claim for these items is not eligible.*)
- Ensure the distribution list is encoded and traceable to the encoded COST event. (*eg. event is in Brussels, but the items were shipped to Denmark – not eligible*)

Review the list of non-eligible items provided in the Annotated rules, A4-1.3.2 NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

5.2. Virtual Networking Support (VNS)

Make sure that all supporting documents are uploaded in e-COST and the documents correspond to the grantee, and not someone else.

- virtual network strategy
- report

Ensure the grant does not exceed the maximum amount of EUR 4000 per Grant Period.

6. FINANCIAL REPORTING

6.1. Intermediate Financial Report

Before submitting, check that:

- the report is submitted only if cash is required and no later than 2 months before the end date of the Grant Period.
- the forecast is updated.
- events older than 45 days are deleted.

6.2. Financial Report

Before submitting, check that:

- all payments are recorded.
- all accruals must be zero.
- forecast must be zero.
- items with invoices dated before or after Grant Period appear in the FR.
- the contact information of the Grant Holder's Financial Representative in e-COST is up to date.