

Online COST Info Day Q&A document

27 March 2024

This document provides answers to the questions posted by attendees in the Zoom webinar and the YouTube live chats or sent to events@cost.eu.

Event webpage: <https://www.cost.eu/cost-events/online-cost-info-day-2024/>

Presentations: <https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2024/04/2024-Online-COST-Info-Day-.pdf>

Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wdHzIOB6I18>

The answers to the questions have been provided based on the applicable COST rules at the date of the webinar. These rules are regularly updated and may be subject to changes. In case of doubt, you can check COST rules on <https://www.cost.eu/funding/documents-guidelines/>

YOUTUBE questions

Are non-academic partners (e.g. local government orgs) able to join the COST Actions, to both increase capability and to ensure that the research / impact translates back into society / policy?

COST Actions are open to NGOs, to SMEs/industry , academia. The important thing is to have an affiliation to an institution.

Can we apply for Post Doc position ?

Your question requires to understand more your situation. You can contact us at events@cost.eu.

ZOOM questions

What is the process of the nomination from Country Coordinator of Action Management Committee members?

This depends from country to country, every country has its own procedures. Please check with your COST National Coordinator on how the system in your country works. The information is available on the website.

I wonder about the definition of researchers. We are working on a project with artists, in some countries they are involved in academical institutions while in others there might not be a PhD in the arts available. Do all the participants have to be researchers?

Researchers is defined in a large term, it could be innovators, artists...

Is there a template of report after the task is done?

A template for reports is available for STSMs: https://www.cost.eu/STSM_Report and VM: https://www.cost.eu/VM_reports

Also, is it possible for a research association to be part of the Action Management Committee? And if yes, are there any financial requirements applicable for this or certain organizational requirements that need to be complied with for this role?

The Management Committee (MC) members are individuals appointed by the COST National Coordinator to represent its country, being a COST member or COST Cooperating Member (see Art 3.1 of the [Annotated Rules](#)). They may be affiliated with a research association – being a legal entity.No financial requirements for research association is applicable.

With respect to the online toolkit (D3.2), does the COST action fund also the technical development of the toolkit (ICT company, hosting, maintenance, etc.)?

We assume this is a question related to a deliverable of some Actions. In such case, please contact directly the Administrative Officer in charge of the concerned Action.

Is this right that the Grant Holder and the Applicant are not the same person? How does this work then?

The Grant Holder Institution is elected at the 1st Management Committee meeting. It is not necessarily the same institution where the proposer of an Action is affiliated with. The elected GH Institution must be affiliated with an MC member of the Action.

Are social science/business focused proposal fit for the COST?

Sure!

Do you have a Mastodon account that I can follow?

No, but you can follow us on other social media (see the last slide of the presentation).

Does a proposer (Main or Secondary) have to be permanently affiliated with their institution, or can a postdoc with a fixed-term contract be a proposer too? Thanks!

Thank you very much for your question. To participate in COST you need to be affiliated to an institution. You can change your affiliation at any moment.

What are the types of PARTNERS we can have in a COST proposal? Only academia, or also SMEs, industry and so on???

You will see now in the slides. COST Actions are open to NGOs, to SMEs/industry , academia. The important thing is to have an affiliation to an institution

Can researchers who are based at private companies participate in COST?

Yes, COST Actions are open to any kind of institutions, SMEs, academia, NGOs...

Is currently Israel considered a cooperating partner? Or have the situation changed?

Israel is a Cooperating member and can participate and be eligible to all COST Activities. The only difference with a full member is that they cannot vote at governance level

I'd like to clarify whether 'cost members' refers to one's location or nationality?

Researcher affiliated to institutions of COST Members. It is not about nationality but where the researcher is affiliated

Does it make sense to have more than one proposer from the same country?

You can, the important thing is to respect the eligibility conditions of a minimum of 7 countries and 4 coming from Inclusiveness Target Countries (widening countries)

Can researchers from low-and-middle income countries (that are not COST member countries) be funded?

Eligibility to be funded depends on the researcher's affiliation. Those affiliated in non-COST members have limitations in terms of funding. Example: an individual affiliated in India (an International Partner Country (IPC)) can be reimbursed to a meeting once in the lifetime of the Action, but can be reimbursed as Trainer in a Training School as many times) . Please see p. 59 of the Annotated Rules (<https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2023/11/COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V1.4-Final-.pdf>)

We are now preparing our proposal, and we know about a former COST Action, which is somehow related to our topic, but had a different focus than we have. What are your suggestions in framing our Action in order to have high chances for funding?

This type of questions is better you contact the COST National Coordinator of your country, available under the COST website <https://www.cost.eu/about/who-is-who/#tabs+Name:National%20Coordinators>

Is it advisable to have a junior scholar as the main proposer? Or should this role be taken by a senior?

Young researchers have equal chances of getting funding, in the same manner as senior researchers. What counts is the idea of the proposal.

Proposers are countries, or institutions, or individuals? Is it allowed to have multiple individuals as proposers per country? Should it be motivated, i.e. does it matter for the evaluation of the proposal?

Thank you for your question.

Proposers are individuals - and it is allowed to have more than one per country.

There are evaluation criteria related to the disciplines and the size of the network.

Can we have more than 2 proposers from the same institution?

Yes, there is no limitation on the number of proposers from one institutions.

Can a researcher participate in more than one COST application?

Yes

What is the process of the nomination from Country Coordinator of Action Management Committee members?

This depends from country to country, every country has its own procedures. Please check with your COST National Coordinator on how the system in your country works. The information is available on the website.

And in blue?

Blue stands for COST Partner Member

Is COST part of the european partnerships of horizon europe?

No, COST receives a dedicated budget from the Widening pillar in Horizon Europe.

Please can you elaborate on funding for Near Neighbour Countries?

Researchers affiliated in Near Neighbour countries can equally participate in COST Actions, and also receive reimbursements

We are now preparing our proposal, and we know about a former COST Action, which is somehow related to our topic, but had a different focus than we have. What are your suggestions in framing our Action in order to have high chances for funding?

Thank you for your question. I will cover it briefly in the section on how to submit an application. There's a section, related to Q4 of the evaluation, which relates to added value of networking in relation to European and international efforts, where you can highlight the novelty of your proposal wrt to past Actions.

How can be reached the gender balance in a network about gender issues, as mainly women are working in gender studies?

Gender balance is not a pre-condition to receive funding, although it is important to be as open as possible in your activities, with the understanding that some science fields have a non-balanced distribution regarding gender.

1) Will only COST-Coordinator within our COST cooperation be the budget responsible person or it will be somehow divided between all proposers according to how many "packages" / "Working Groups" we will combine?

2) All of proposers will be Work-Package/Work Group Leaders. Is it correct?

3) What is supposed to be after 4 years of COST interaction? Is it obliged to write an EU research project from every Working Group or combined?

1) The sole entity responsible for budget is the Grant Holder Institution - it is elected after the Action, there is no need to specify this at a proposal stage

2) No, proposers may not even become part of the Action. People who were in the network of proposers typically join the Action, along with others - and leaders are elected, regardless of their participation in the proposal.

3) It is not mandatory, but it is highly recommended for sustainability of your efforts, and Actions, that participants do secure further funding.

Sometimes COST is considered inside WIDERA horizontal aspect of Horizon Europe, is that correct?

Yes, COST is part of the Widening pillar in HE

How does a country become member or partner of COST?

The COST Statutes defined the different categories of countries, https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2022/04/20220419_COST-Association_-Statutes_EN.pdf But mainly COST Full members are only European Countries, then we have Near Neighbours and then Third States (these last ones can participate but not eligible)

Will these questions and answers be published somewhere after the event?

Yes, in the event page <https://www.cost.eu/cost-events/online-cost-info-day-2024/>

Can participants in third countries part of a funded COST Action also receive COST funding to do short visits to Europe?

Short-Term Scientific Missions are only available for researchers affiliated to institutions in COST member countries, or near neighbour countries.

I noticed South Africa was indicated in blue on the map? what does that mean?

South Africa is considered a COST Partner member. This means they provide their own funding to researchers affiliated from South Africa.

Can you describe the process between when the Action is selected for funding and when the Action activities start?

Actions are approved in May, and usually start activities in September / October of the same year.

I wonder about the definition of researchers. We are working on a project with artists, in some countries they are involved in academical institutions while in others there might not be a PhD in the arts available. Do all the participants have to be researchers?

Researchers is defined in a large term, it could be innovators, artists...

How is the budget for a particular Action going to be determined? is it fixed for all 4 years or reviewed every year? What is the max. that one could expect?

Every year a work and budget plan is established depending on the activities. First year have less budget, around 125K as it takes sometime to kick off the activities. But as from the second year, there is an average of 150k year. For 4 year period around 600K

Would each proposal include a single type of COST Action? Or several types of Actions (e.g. training and a short-term scientific mission)

An Action is a network - training and short term scientific missions are among the activities, along with other activities that an Action can use to achieve its objectives (Ms. Malimban will present this later)

Is there a networking platform to help researchers interested in joining a potential COST action and build a consortia?

No, we do not offer such a platform.

Can a non profit association (already a network of research entities) be a main proposer? If yes, how its members can join the action?

Main and secondary proposers are always individuals, affiliated to legal entities. Several members of the same entity can join the Action once it is approved.

Are there specific deadlines to apply or is it open? And also when did it started and how long does it last?

It is open and the deadline will be 23rd October at noon - it will be covered in my presentation later

I have a question related to the researcher age: are there age reductions linked to childbirth/maternity? if so, is it 18 months per child as in other EU initiatives?

No, this we do not take into account. But please note that everyone is welcome to join the Action.

Is COST a complementary funding to Horizon Europe or is it independent on being a grantee in it?

Yes, COST is funded 100% from HE from the widening pillar

Using an example of an already established Network which was funded so far internally from a research institute: Does the cost actions also support the further development of an initiated scientific network?

Yes, this is possible.

Can researchers from third countries participate in a COST action without being funded. For example, can a researcher from a third country host a meeting or the network is strictly limited to the COST member countries (or near neighbour countries)?

COST Actions are open and any researcher from a third country can participate (need to find their own funding) and also near neighbour countries can participate but these countries are eligible for funding

For clarification: an applicant is a person, not an institution, correct?

Yes, a person affiliated to a legal entity in Europe

Can companies of any size participate and receive funding?

Yes, all companies are welcome.

I am a partner in a COST action now, but I would like to ask who can guide me to involve in a VM grand? I have been previously involved in a VM grand, but then a specific member of the action guided me.

Please contact the MC Chair of the COST Action where you would like to apply for a virtual mobility grant. There is also a grant awarding coordinator in the Action who can help you. The main contacts can be found in the Action page (type Action number in search box or Browse Action) on the COST website : www.cost.eu

What (economic) benefit is there for participants in third countries part of a funded COST Action?

As I was told before, "Short-Term Scientific Missions are only available for researchers affiliated to institutions in COST member countries, or near neighbour countries.". Can those visits be carried out anywhere in the world or only at third countries part of a funded COST Action?

Thanks!

Yes, visits can be carried out everywhere in the world via the STSM. Participants from third countries can not receive funding, but can benefit from the network, and take part in the activities on own expenses.

How the main grant recipient is elected? and by whom?

The Grant Holder institution is elected at the first Management Committee meeting by the Management Committee - that is to be considered, not necessarily at a proposal stage.

Hello everyone. First of all, thank you for today.

I take part in 3 Cost action working groups. And there is a lack of information about cost sub-working groups and we cannot reach detailed but plainly explained information. Can there be additional information such as participation and contributions to sub-working groups, etc.?

In addition, I would like to finally express here; If Cost is a project, we also participate as researchers and why does this participation not contribute to us as points in the academy? Can something be done about this with a joint decision?

Believe me, all these are not my personal thoughts.

Thank you, we take your comments into account.

Will every Working Group/Group Leader writes a separate report or a report is always a joint one?

This is a common effort, which should result in one report.

Is it recommended to generate a network between recently funded 5-year EU grants? Is that considered an added value?

This can be an added value, but please note that the proposal needs to be anonymous. More information on that will follow.

Can you send me link for more details for calls that are open for Montenegro? It is easier for me to read than to listen. Thank you!

All the information on our Open Call is on our website. For dedicated information on Montenegro, please check with the Montenegrin CNC (information is also on our website)

What is the success rate?

This varies from year to year, for the last call it was at around 12%

Is another call planned in addition to the 23 October 2024?

The open call is always open and you can submit your proposal at any time. One collection per year, around the month of October

I understand all COST Actions should be linked to a "research challenge". A COST Action centered for example in sustainable practices at institutional level, will be eligible?

There is a difference between eligibility and the research topic of the Action. This topic seems relevant, so you can consider to submit a proposal.

Are there any categories eligible for lump sum funding in the COST Actions?

Yes, there are grants available in the networking activities. and these will be presented later on in the presentation.

Is the Grant Holder institution the institution of the Action Chair or these two institutions do not need necessarily to be the same?

While majority of the GH is also the MC Chair institution, it is also possible to have another institution (part of the Management Committee) as GH institution.

Can a researcher join an ongoing (funded) COST action anytime throughout the action implementation date?

Yes, go to the website and browse the COST Actions page, select the Action of interest and contact the chair of the Action

Can a COST Action also be considered as a follow up of a previous H2020 Project? i.e. to extend and keep the network "alive" and to assure a further development and outreach of the actions?

Yes, this is perfectly possible.

What is the STSM coordinator?

This is someone within the Action who oversees the STSM's that are carried out in the Action.

Can the same entity be a partner in multiple applications?

Yes

What is STSM please ?

Short term scientific mission. It consists of a visit to a host organization in a different country other than the country of the participant for a specific work to be carried out for a specific period of time.

Who is the grant holder?

This is a representative of an institution. This is decided during the first Management Committee meeting of the Action

Is it only 2 people per country who can receive reimbursements to attend network meetings or are there exceptions to this e.g. Action chair, vice chair, WG leaders, horizontal coordinators?

It is the Management Committee of the Action who decides, depending on the type of meeting who can be reimbursed. But any participant may be reimbursed, not limited to the 2 Management Committee members

I wonder about the definition of researchers. We are working on a project with artists, in some countries they are involved in academical institutions while in others there might not be a PhD in the arts available. Do all the participants have to be researchers? And it is not so clear what legal entities can be involved in the actions, do they have to be research institutions or can they be NGO's?

The only criterium is that a participant needs to be affiliated to legal entity. This can be an academic institution, a company, an NGO, etc.

Can you expand on the career opportunities? Do you mean within COST or is this a consequence of networking?

COST provides you with training on topics that may help you to get leadership positions in the Action, for example. This is key to expand your career opportunities

Hello, when is the 1st call for application please?

The next open call closes on 23 October 2023

How does a third state person or organization be included in an action? How can he/se learn about an action that is being organized?

Go to the COST website and contact the Chair of the Action, email details are available

COST Action is about research coordination and capacity building. Can a research manager (or similar) join COST Action, or is it open exclusively to researchers?

Everyone is welcome to join, as long as your expertise matches the activities of the Action.

Will this online presentation be available on youtube for later watching? If this is the case, can you provide us with link of video materials?

Please go to the COST You tube channel at any time. Video will be stored there

Sorry, I'll try to reformulate: What takes place between the Action approval and the start of Action activities? E.g.: How fast must the proposers manage their nomination to the MC by the National Coordinator? When is the annual Action budget proposed and approved? Who is invited to the kick-off and who pays for their travel? I struggle to find out how this phase works.

After the approval of the Action, each COST National Coordinator can nominate interested researchers to the Action. They form the MC meeting, and will come together in Brussels for their first meeting. This is paid by COST centrally. The budget for the first year of the Action is 125.000 euro.

Is the Grant Holder institution fixed for the lifetime of the Action, i.e. cannot be changed during the active Action?

No, it is not fixed. A GH can change during the lifetime of an Action.

Could you please elaborate on Grant Holder Representative training?

COST provides workshop/training to all new GH managers -the person in charge of treating reimbursements and claims of Action participants (to name a few) in our online platform: e-cost.

Is Dissemination Conference Grant for articles/research results produced only within COST action or independent of the Action?

Topics need to be linked to the topic of the Action in order to be eligible for funding.

If I understood correctly, the funding goes through the grant holder -- that would be the same as the Main Proposer, right?

Is it possible to have two grant holders (in two different institutions)?

And if the grant holder changes institution (because e.g. they are on a fixed-term postdoctoral contract), what happens?

Thanks a lot!

Main proposer? Not necessarily. but it should be an institution affiliated with an MC member in the Action or Action Chair. It is not possible to have 2 GH institutions per Grant Period. if the MC Member/Chair leaves the GH Institution, then a new GH institution must be selected from among the MC members.

Hello, I am a PhD scholar in animal nutrition, is there any program for the researchers to participate in trainings related to animal science? please

For this, please check the running Actions on our website. www.cost.eu

Will this Q&A chat be provided to participants?

Yes, they will be available in the event page <https://www.cost.eu/cost-events/online-cost-info-day-2024/>

Hello. I misunderstood one of the slides.

When talking about "COST Action participants nominated by COST National Coordinators",

Are COST National Coordinators members of the general EU COST structure itself or are they people nominated by the main and secondary proposers?

COST National Coordinators are based in the national ministries in the COST member countries. They nominate their researchers to the Management Committee of the Action.

Good morning. Could you please share the link to browse the COST actions? Thanks in advance.

You can find it here: <https://www.cost.eu/cost-actions-event/browse-actions/>

For the 7 minimum countries, does an outermost country count as an additional country? For example, if we have UK, France, and French Guiana, is that 2 countries or 3?

No, at proposal level the outermost regions are linked to their country. Only once the Action is approved researchers from these countries can benefit from Inclusiveness Target Measures, ie ITC conference grants

If joining as a participant of a running action, will there be any funding provided to complete/co-finance the activities/participation in the working groups ?

If you are part of the Action (MC or WG), or participate in one of the activities, you can receive funding to participate in the activities.

Can individuals from third countries join to running action ?

Yes

Hello, is a proposer's ORCID ID mandatory when filling in the profile on the e-Cost platform? Thank you

No.

How competitive is the the COST action at the proposal stage? Can you give an indication of success rate?

This varies from year to year, last open call the success rate was at 12%

Once a researcher participates in a COST, what is the commitment required?

This is up to you to decide, in stays a voluntary commitment. Although, you will get out what you put in (knowledge, expertise, network)

How can a researcher become a member of the COST network?

Contact the Chair of the Action you are interested, Go to the COST website, select the Action and contact the Chair of the Action

Can research managers join COST Action, not only researchers?

Yes, everyone can join.

2.2.1. of the Technical Annex demands "demonstrat(ing) that the proposed network contains the critical mass and expertise". How can this be done without breaking the anonymity of the proposers?

Write about the expertise of the proposed network, without mentioning details or names.

I understood there are contact persons in each COST country. Could you advice where we can find the those contacts?

This is available via this webpage: <https://www.cost.eu/about/who-is-who/#tabs+Name:National%20Coordinators>

Are references included in the 15 pages of the proposal?

No

Good morning. Thank you for this seminar, very useful. We are based in Sweden and considering applying. I want to ask if COST is able to cover all of the overheads. I ask that as most of the European open calls would not cover all of our overheads as these are higher than other EU countries. Can you pls offer some guidance on that. In Sweden overhead are in the range of 45 to 55%. Thank you so much.

No. The GH institution can receive max 15% of the Grant but it is not fixed, it will depend on the Action scientific expenditure. a lower scientific expenditure will mean a lower 15% (Financial and Scientific Administration and Coordination (FSAC)

How much of the outputs should be specified in advance and how much can be developed during the COST Action?

This is not easy to answer, and will vary from proposal to proposal. Try to be as concrete as possible in submitting your proposal.

Is there a possibility to get some feedback as to whether your COST idea fits the scope well, before preparing the entire proposal?

On our website, all COST Actions can be viewed, as well as the MoU (which is largely build on the proposal). By scanning these, you can get an understanding on what a good proposal would look like.

Thank you, so I understand the way to join the COST network is either:

- Join an active COST action
- Propose your own COST action for a grant

Is it correct?

Yes

Is there an age limit for being considered "Young researcher"?

40 years.

Hello everyone. First of all, thank you for today.

I take part in 3 Cost action working groups. And there is a lack of information about cost sub-working

groups and we cannot reach detailed but plainly explained information. Can there be additional information such as participation and contributions to sub-working groups, etc.?

For this issue it is best to contact the Action Chair of each COSDT Action, since each Action is unique in the way the network operates internally.

What are the criterias for "young researcher" ?

Any research or innovator aged below 40 years

Is the Main Proposer the future Action Chair?

Not necessarily. The MC Chair can also be any of the secondary proposers.

So can I propose a cost to get a grant? Thanks

No. You have to join a COST Action or network in order to apply and be selected to receive a grant: STSM, ITC Conference Grant, Dissemination Grant or Virtual Mobility Grant

When is the e-cost open for creation of proposal?

It is already open. We close it on 23 October

Is there a financial spreadsheet that should be incorporated in the proposal?

No

Can the main proposer include two individuals from different institutions?

Yes, the main and secondary proposers may come by a minimum of 7 countries, 50 of those need to come from Inclusiveness Target Countries

How will the main proposer invite the second one to participate in the proposal?

That happens via e-COST, where you can fill in an email address and send the invitation to the secondary proposers.

In the perspective of the expansion of the network to new participants, this means that the project may evolve over time in order include new partners? I mean it will be possible to add new working groups, new tasks..? Or the new participants will have to fit in the original work plan?

The structure of the Action is decided by the Management Committee, which can decide to add or change WG's

Following Francesco Caruso's question: What if a researcher is already 40, but a career switcher, who started with his/her career in this sphere after the 30th birthday?

It does not matter regarding career; age should be below 40 years to be considered Young Researcher

What is the success rate of a new cost action

Around 12% last year, although this varies on the number of proposals received.

Could you disclose how much it was the cutoff score of the proposals for funding last year?

Reaching 45 will give you good chances for funding.

Then a third state organisation will always join late a COST action, when both budget and activities are already defined.

In general is the case, but third states can be part of the secondary proposers when submitting an Action proposal

Can you show the next call date again?

23 October 2024

As mentioned that researchers can join as a WG participant and participant in action activities. Does participating in a WG can also benefit from action activities supports. Or do we need to apply for participation in action activities?

Yes, you always need to apply if you want to participate in Training School, STSM, etc. The Action sets the rules.

Can you re-submit the proposal if it's not successful in the upcoming round?

Yes. resubmissions are possible

Does the application receive a detailed evaluation (when funded or not funded)?

Yes, there is a report provided.

Can you show the next call date again?

23 october 2024

But do you need an affiliation to apply, right?

Yes

Do we get experts report with comments about our proposal?

Yes, feedback is provided.

What do actually matter for country identification of a participant? nationality or country of affiliation?

Country of affiliation

When do you recommend to start sending invitations to co-proposers so that we are in time?

The sooner the better.

Anonymity: citing papers where you are author as references may impact on anonymity?

Generally, no. It is important to be careful in this case. For instance, if you cite a paper which is pending publication, and that note - pending publication, or accepted - remains in reference, that may be an anonymity breach.

As an Indian national pursuing a PhD at a university in Poland, am I still eligible to apply for STSM programs?

Yes, because your affiliation is in Poland which is a COST member country.

When do you recommend to start sending invitations to co-proposers so that we are in time? I mean, that they have time to fill out their information in e-cost

The sooner, the better.

Following the "young researcher" topic: is there a separate section on the web page or a dedicated budget for young researcher proposals?

No, there is no a separate budget for young researchers, but once in the Action there are different measures to boost the careers, like trainings in the COST Academy to follow the leadership programme

Is the participation as Expert remunerated?

Yes

What is anonymity breach?

Thank you - I would point you to page 11 of the Applicant guidelines - https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2023/10/COST_Open_Call_Applicant_Guidelines_oc-2024-1.pdf

The chances to be selected are higher if the main proposer is a young researcher, from an ITC, and of the underrepresented gender?

These can be criteria, along with the COST Excellence Policy specific objectives, for selection by the Scientific Committee. The chances may not necessarily be higher.

Hello- I'm sorry if this is repetitive. If I'm associated with a Swiss NGO but based in Thailand, would I be considered a member or a 3rd country member

This we will need to review in more detail. You can always contact us a opencall@cost.eu

What was OERSA again? sorry very fast :-)

Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities, such as bank charges. Full detail in our annotated rules via our website.

Is it real costs or lump sum costs for the budget?

Real costs

I am in Netherlands, can I find a partner in other orange countries (e.g. in Iran)?

Yes you can, but bear in mind that researchers from Iran will need to find their own funding to participate in COST Activities

Anonymity should be respected in the proposal - what exact data are considered to be anonymous? (for eg. via e-COST submission the main proposer as well as co-proposers are well known, if I am not mistaken?)

The technical annex shall be anonymous. For anonymity, please see page 11 of the Applicant guidelines: proposals may not contain any direct or indirect reference to people and/or their institutions participating in the Network of Proposers (Main or Secondary Proposers). This means that names of proposers or their institutions should neither be explicitly mentioned, nor be potentially identifiable through, e.g., links to web pages or through references to their role and/or participation in existing or ended projects, grants, networks.

What is the min/max duration of the STSM?

There is no minimum and max duration. What it is important is that it happens within the Grant period

Can the STSM also be to visit a lab in US - collaborator?

Yes, STSMs can take place in any place in the world if funds are available

How can a third state organisation join as a secondary proposer. Does it have to be invited by a main proposer?

Yes, this happens via the main proposer, via e-COST

I am a working group member of a COST Action. Can I have my STSM with someone who is not involved in the action?

Yes

But what about being considered "under 40"?

No, we do not take anything into account to calculate age.

The ITC countries are the same listed as Widening countries? thanks!

Our ITC list is wider, and also includes non EU countries, such as the Western Balkan countries.

Is there a minimum/maximum stay length for the STSM?

No

Is the 40-years threshold increased by childcare times etc.?

No, it is 40 years of age - without exceptions.

I would like to participate in one of Cost Action. I'm not a COST Action member, I don't want to get reimbursement. Is it possible to participate in COST Action in such situation?

Yes, just contact the Chair of the Action and show your interest and situation

Hi, we are company about chemical, microbiological analysis laboratory, we provide training courses (health and safety) as well, is it possible, for us, as individual o company to partecipate? we don't do any research/experiment activity.

Yes, you can participate in the Action as industry. Browse a COST Action of interest and contact the Chair of the Action to show your interest

For the dissemination conference grant, contributed talk is enough? ot it must be an invited talk?

The grantee should receive a letter confirming the oral presentation in the conference and he/she is listed in the programme of the event.

Even if I am not a part of a particular action, can I apply for an STSM?

yes you can but some Actions can put in place specific conditions that only WG members can apply.

Can you please list the ITC countries?

Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Serbia, Türkiye and Ukraine

In the case that a third state person or organisation is part of the secondary proposers, can he/she receive funding from COST?

Unfortunately not.

Do I understand it correct that how it basically works, you have an excellent proposal for an action as a group of individuals based in COST countries including at least 50% ICT, and then after your proposal has been accepted, the members of the action can organise activities and apply for reimbursement of grants? Meaning, it is not the case you need to have a four-years plan and budget beforehand ?

This is correct. Budgets for the Action are established on a yearly basis

Good morning and thank you for this session. I have doubts regarding the budget. If no budget is needed in the submission, how can we know what will be funded in our proposal?

Thank you for your question.

Without a budget, it means that you are proposing, in the activities, a 4 year plan - with the networking activities. If the proposal will be successful and become an Action, we will negotiate each year a Work and Budget plan, which details which activities happen in the next year.

For a proposal, it is worth considering that the total budget will be in the range of 600k euros over four years, as highlighted by Ronald.

Can a work package leader also be someone from a Canadian research institute, and if not, what could be an alternative leadership position?

Mandatory leadership positions in COST Actions are only for COST Full Members, so unfortunately not

Is it possible for the beneficiary to claim costs related to the management of the action? You mentioned the bank costs. But what about other costs?

The selected GH Institution can receive up to 15% of the Action budget called Financial and Scientific Administration and Coordination (FSAC) . however, this is not a fixed amount; it is based on the scientific expenditure; if the Action spends less, then the FSAC will be less.

The grant holder can be the main proposal but also some other member and this will be decided after the award by the MC. Are there any financial requirements for an institutions/organisation/research association to be main proposer or grant holder?

There are requirements for the grant holder (i.e. after award), not for the main proposer. Details can be found on page 65 of the Annotated Rules for COST Action - https://www.cost.eu/Annotated_Rules_for_COST_Actions_C

Allow me to clarify: When we submit a proposal for a COST Action, are we not required to detail the budget at that stage? Is the budget formulated only after our proposal has received approval? Additionally, could you inform me of the funding rate for these actions?

Thank you.

Indeed, a detailed budget is not needed at the proposal stage.

Details about the budget process, after approval, can be found on page 62 of the Annotate Rules for COST Actions - Annotated Rules for COST Actions (COST 094/21; https://www.cost.eu/Annotated_Rules_for_COST_Actions_C)

How can the GH know in advance whether their costs can be covered or not, if the FSAC is not budgeted but instead based on 15% of the scientific expenditure (and thus variable)?

It is important that the Action spends its budget closed to what is budgeted, so the real FSAC amount is know to the grant holder.

The Financial and Scientific Administration and Coordination (FSAC) is a contribution to the expenses incurred by the Grant Holder institution in the implementation of the Action Grant Agreement. The Action can always monitor their budget spending by generating the Financial Report in e-COST by the MC Chair or GH Manager, to be reported back to the Management Committee. By being aware of the budget situation, the MC make an informed decision on how to spend or reallocate the funds available.

Are 40 y.o. still considered young career researchers?

No. YR is aged below 40.

Can an interested candidate from Europe, realised a mobility in a country in America for an example?

Yes

Good morning. Will it be possible to receive the slides? And the video of today will be shared to be watched again in the next days?

The slides will not be shared but will be posted in the event page of the COST website: www.cost.eu. the video will be available on the COST channel in youtube

The remunerated external experts can be to provide training or bioinformating analysis?

Budget can be foreseen for trainers in training schools, yes.

When you say that proposers have to be affiliated to a legal entity of various types, what does affiliation mean? Does it need to involve a paid contractual position, or can it involve an unpaid formalised honorary position?

Affiliation: work contract ; enrolment in a research performing study program; voluntary service in an NGO and emeritus professorship

I get an Approval of my Working Group Application. What is the next step?

You may contact the MC Chair or WG leader of the Action concerned to tell them how you can contribute.

Is there a web page that allows finding consortiums that are being built and are actually looking for partners?

All the participants of a COST Action are available in the COST website, check the Action and find experts on the topic from many different countries

Memo of understanding is signed during preparation of the proposal, or after the Action is granted?

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is prepared by the proposer - collaborating with the COST Science Officer - after the Action is granted (May-June, typically)

The budget (2020-2024) mentioned 160K/year is per proposal or per participant?

160k per year per Action to fund networking activities within the Action

Hi, we are company about chemical, microbiological analysis laboratory, we provide training courses (health and safety) as well, is it possible, for us, as individual o company to participate? we don't do any research/experiment activity.

Yes, this is possible.

I meant, would it be possible to receive the slides from the speakers? Also, will the video from today be shared so it can be watched again in the coming days?

The presentation will be available in the events page after the meeting. Video will be in the COST you tube channel. <https://www.cost.eu/cost-events/online-cost-info-day-2024/>

Can the salary of a project manager be covered by the COST?

This can be considered via FSAC, the budget which is for the grant holder to manage the Action

So budget is not included in the proposal, but a detailed plan of activities is?

Yes, as detailed as it is necessary, remaining the 15 pages limit.

Any COST Action Memorandum of Understanding (available on the Action page on the COST website) is based on the technical annex - thus you may refer to these for successful proposals (please do consider template may have changed since then)

What is the min/max duration of the STSM?

There is no minimum nor maximum duration, but it should take place within one Grant period (usually 1 Nov -31 Oct)

One thing was not clear, and following up on [name removed] question answered by [name removed]: "You have to join a COST Action or network in order to apply and be selected to receive a grant: STSM, ITC Conference Grant, Dissemination Grant or Virtual Mobility Grant". Are these funding separate and an extra from the COST budget, or should these be included on each COST budget and the participants apply to each COST network?

The budget given to the successful COST Action shall spend this budget on Meetings, Training School , STSM, ITC CG, etc called the networking activities. this is where the Action budget is spent.

Is a proposal with only 7 partners at a disadvantage compared to one with 35 partners, such as the one illustrated here

In the proposal, you will need to show how to be as inclusive as possible, also in geographical terms. So an idea needs to be included in how you will grow the network of 7 countries. But as such it should not be a disadvantage

Regarding the conferences funding, if we are more than 40 years we must be invited speakers or we might just propose an oral presentation? Thank you

You should be accepted (with a letter from the organizers) for an oral presentation included in the programme of the conference.

I would like to participate in one of Cost Action. I'm not a COST Action member, I don't want to get reimbursement. Is it possible to participate in COST Action in such situation?

Yes, this is possible. when you are invited to an event, the Action can set your status as Not Eligible , and still be invited to the event. It is better to inform the MC Chair or WG leaders of this information.

Sorry, I'm not sure what you mean by 'enrolment in a research performing study programme, and Does a visiting professorship count as an affiliation?

For ex. research master where the candidate focuses on particular topic in-depth and independently to complete a significant research project, PhD or Post doc . if the visiting professorship can be supported with a letter from the institution then it can be considered as affiliation. Affiliation is a recognized relationship between the individual and a legal entity.

The membership of the countries are therefore based on citizenships rather than university affiliations?

No, it is the country of affiliation which matters - regardless of individuals' citizenship(s).

Can the formulation of the proposal receive funding, for example to pay someone who will help to write the proposal? If so, for how long and how much?

No we do not pay for writing proposals

Can a participant join an existing COST action without having initially participated in the proposal? How does this work? Does the participant contact the Grant Holder?

Yes, that is possible. You can join as MC member, or WG, or join one of the activities. Please see the dedicated COST webpage on our website where you find more information.

Ciaran, you don't say too much about stakeholders other than policy-makers - please could you comments on this.

Broad range of stakeholders, existing networks, policy makers. We identify around 70 stakeholders. It was an important part of the proposal.

What is the max. budget per STSM?

4000 EUR

For the dissemination conference grant, contributed talk is enough? or it must be an invited talk?

Can you explain the difference please?

Dissemination Conference Grants consists in an oral presentation by an Action Participant of the work of the Action in high-level conferences fully organized by a third party, i.e. not organized or co-organized by the Action. One of the requirements is the Acceptance or invitation letter from the conference organisers. For a full list of the requirements for Dissemination Conference Grants, please see p. 97-98 of [the Annotated Rules](#).

Is it generally easy to join an on-going action? Is there a specific selection procedure/criteria/restrictions?

You can apply in the WG membership of the Action page on the COST website. a template is provided. However, each Action has unique selecting process so how easy or hard it would be is dependent on each Action.

First of all thank you for this info session. It was very useful. What about the researchers who joined the COST program later? Are they eligible to apply for STSM or other budgets to participate in WG events? Thank you.

Yes, you do not have to be part of the proposal to benefit from the activities such as STSM or Training School

1) You mentioned experts as reviewers are paid. How are the rates calculated?

2) How are expert reviewers selected? By topic and level of experience, age?

3) And the process of review, is it similar to being an Horizon reviewer?

Thank you.

1) In the last evaluation, 50 euros per proposal and 50 euros for taking the role of rapporteurs

2) Indeed, topic being a main criteria. Science Officers are responsible for selecting the reviewers to ensure the best and fair evaluation.

3) Three individual experts complete their reports, one of them compiles a Consensus Evaluation Report, the three of them and a Review Panel member (assigned by the Science Officer among experts nominated by COST National Coordinators) - who participate in Review Panel meetings, following a quality check

can give us recommended methods we can use to make a network for the proposal, also there is a salary for a researcher included in the budget.

We do not pay salaries. To build a network, go to the website and check for Actions in a given topic, you can find all the contact details of participants. You can also contact the COST National Coordinator.

For the invited talk, usually the speaker receive an invitation from the conference organizers. For the contributed talk, the speaker submits an abstract and, if selected, will present the talk at the conference. Is it clear?

I believe that both can be funded via the grant, as long as you have a speaking slot at the conference.

Given the requirements regarding the participation of ICT countries in an Action, COST is obviously about fostering links between ICT and other European countries. Fair enough! But what about the future? Will COST also open up to non-European partners? Are there discussions/plans in that direction?

COST is open. researchers from non-COST can join COST Actions, but there is limitation on thier funding.

In case the question got overlooked: Is there a minimum/maximum stay length for the STSM?

No, but it has to take place within one reporting year, so the maximum will be one year. The overall maximum amount is 4000 EUR

Do COST actions usually include the funding of an administrative manager to help principal scientific coordinators managing the action through the 4 year duration?

No, COST does not pay any salary to the GH Manager.

Is there a matchmaking platform for proposers who wants to submit a proposal in October 2024 ? Thank you.

No, we do not offer this

Is an individua with PhD degree (employed as administrative staff at University) at age more than 40 eligible to apply for any kind of activities within the COST action?

Yes, you can be fully part of the Action and apply to any Working Group you are interested.

What part of the annual budget might be used by the coordinator for Action management?

There is no salary for any of the roles like MC Chair; the GH institution can receive up to 15% of the Action budget. but this is not fixed. if the Action spends less, then the Financial and Scientific Administration and

Coordination (FSAC) will also be less. How the GH institution wishes to spend this will depend on the GH institution.

sorry, something not clear: you just replied that “We do not pay salaries.”, but above it was said that the salary of a project manager be covered by the COST. can you please clarify? is this for a full time manager?
The FSAC is free to spend by the grant holder, so potentially a salary can be covered with it.

Could you please somehow save these Q&A? It would be useful for new applicants. Thanks

Yes, they will be available in the event page at <https://www.cost.eu/cost-events/online-cost-info-day-2024/>

Is there an age limit for the proposer that will submit the proposal? Age balance (young <40 years old) must be ensured among all participants in the Cost proposal?

No, there is no age limit

Where we can find today slides? sorry but there are many questions and I have missed the link

<https://www.cost.eu/cost-events/online-cost-info-day-2024/>

You said: COST National Coordinators are based in the national ministries in the COST member countries. They nominate their researchers to the Management Committee of the Action.

When does this nomination occurs, in the preparation of the proposal?

No, the Management Committee members are nominated when MoUs are published (early June, typically).

May you kindly publish online also the Q&A with all the replies? Thanks

<https://www.cost.eu/cost-events/online-cost-info-day-2024/> Here they will be published

Can school teachers participate in a COST action?

Sure!

Will you make these webinar available for watch latter?

yes, on the event page of the COST website: www.cost.eu