

# Online COST Info Day Q&A document

**16 June 2026**

This document provides answers to questions posted by attendees in the Q&A box of the Zoom webinar and on a selection of questions that received many votes in Zoom. Given the high number of questions, it is not possible to answer them all. Thank you for your understanding.

Answers to the questions in the YouTube live chats are available in the [Live Chat replay](#). Questions sent to [events@cost.eu](mailto:events@cost.eu) have been answered directly to the person who submitted the request.

Event webpage: <https://www.cost.eu/cost-events/online-cost-info-day-2026/>

Presentations: <https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2026/06/Online-COST-Info-Day-16-06-2026.pdf>

Recording: COST YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d593TclFWik&t=5064s>

**More information about the COST Actions can be found in the [Annotated Rules](#)**

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/>. Questions answered after the webinar are marked in *italic*. Further clarifications to the answers provided during the webinar are underlined.

### **ZOOM questions**

#### **Do applicants have to be in contact to national coordinators in proposal phase?**

No, there is no obligation to contact the COST National Coordinator at the proposal phase.

#### **What age group does the term 'young people' cover in COST Actions?**

Researchers and Innovators up to 40 years old.

#### **Who decides who is part of the MC and WG?**

Management Committee Members are nominated by the Cost National Coordinators. Working Group members are open to individual applications, so everyone can apply through the dedicated page of the Action.

#### **I heard Australia joined the last year of the Horizon Programme. Are they now eligible to join COST?**

Australia is considered in COST as Third State. More information about the possibilities in COST can be found here: <https://www.cost.eu/am-i-eligible/>

#### **Who is organizing the YRI and ITC conferences and when?**

These are international conferences that happen all year round, organised by 3rd parties, not the COST Action.

#### **How is funding paid to the Action? To individual or organization?**

Each Cost Action has a Grant holder institution, so the funding is provided to them, to be then distributed to all participants in the networking activities.

#### **Does a young proposer enhance the chance of being funded?**

The criteria for young researchers is related to the composition of the network of proposers- 40%. As long as this criteria is met, this is what counts for the evaluation.

#### **Do we have to prove in the technical annex that 40% of the participants are Young researchers?**

It is automatic in the system. You will be able to see in the platform, what the current % is and what is needed to fulfill the criteria.

#### **How can NGOs and Private Education institution contribute?**

*NGOs and Private Education institution can contribute in different ways. Individuals affiliated to these organizations can be part of a network of proposers submitting a proposal and they can also participate to Actions.*

#### **Are applications judged more favourable if the main proposer is from an inclusion country and under 40?**

Our evaluation process is double blind, so identities of the proposers and/or evaluators are not known to each other.

#### **Are ITC Conference Grants for all researchers or just young researchers?**

ITC Conference Grant is exclusively for researchers whose affiliation is from ITC. Strictly Oral presentation is a must. It is possible the researcher is young (aged below 40). YRI CG is open to all researchers (ITC and non-ITC affiliation ) aged below 40. Minimum poster presentation.

#### **If we propose with the minimum 7 partners, will it result in a negative evaluation?**

No, 7 is the minimum. 50% should come from ITC.

**Are costs for Trainers admissible in the Training Schools?**

No. Trainers are reimbursed for their travel like any other COST participant. Lecture fees or speaker fees are not eligible.

**Does COST financially support administrative support for the Action at the host institution?**

Yes, 15% of the budget spent goes to the Grant Holder for administrative support (in our jargon: FSAC)

**Can you give some further information about including COST members from the Global South? In terms of membership eligibility and about role and funding possibilities**

More information about the possibilities for Global South can be found on : <https://www.cost.eu/am-i-eligible/>

**Can COST Actions fund PhD scholarships?**

PhD scholarships are not among our funded tools

**Are the Inclusiveness Target Countries the same as the Widening countries?**

Mostly. The full list is on our [website](#).

**How does COST support early-career researchers from ITCs, especially Libya, in building sustainable research careers beyond short-term participation?**

Near Neighbors country participants are eligible to be WG members and get funding for their participation in COST activities, not only the Grants.

**"at least 40% young researchers and innovators". Could you clarify what is meant by these terms? Does this imply that we should encourage postdoctoral researchers to join the network as members?**

Young researcher is defined as "younger than 40 years old".

**Hello, thank you for the enlightening presentation. Regarding applying to COST actions, can someone only apply for an MC position, without applying for a WG role? If yes, are there any particular requirements for applying for the MC role, ie. previous experience in the MC role increases possibility etc?**

MC positions in Cost Actions are not through application but through nomination. MC members are nominated by the Cost National Coordinators and different countries have different procedures for nominating MC members.

**The Annotated Rules state that the Core Group consists of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and WG leaders. Is there any formal rule preventing the Action Chair or Vice-Chair from also holding a WG leader position? Can both be from the same institution?**

Chair and Vice Chair should be from 2 different institutions and countries. Considering the responsibilities of the Chair and VC, it is highly recommended that they nominate other members for the other leadership roles within the Action.

**Hi, I have a quick question regarding eligibility. I am originally from Nepal and currently pursuing my PhD in Italy. Will I still be eligible for COST opportunities after completing my PhD, and is eligibility based on nationality or institutional affiliation?**

Eligibility to receive funding is based on affiliation, not nationality.

**Can an expert from outside of Europe be eligible to be a Lecturer in a training school? Or in any other role? (eg at a COST Conference?)**

Yes, a participant affiliated in an International Partner Country (IPC) or 3rd state may be eligible to be reimbursed as a Trainer in a Training School .

**To join COST by project, how many country or institution are there in the project?**

Minimum of 7 countries.

**Who is the local organiser?**

The institution who organises an event in the frame of a COST Action.

**Is there any eligibility criteria related to the type of organizations that can participate as main or second proposers?**

You can find the eligibility criteria in Section 4 of the [https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2026/03/COST-101-21-Submission-Evaluation-Selection-and-Approval-SESA-Level-B\\_version3.0.pdf](https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2026/03/COST-101-21-Submission-Evaluation-Selection-and-Approval-SESA-Level-B_version3.0.pdf)

**May I please know if I can access the recording of the webinar?**

The link for the recording will be available here <https://www.cost.eu/cost-events/online-cost-info-day-2026/>

**Can we create a cost action plan based on our Horizon project?**

Sure.

**How is compliance with the eligibility requirement of at least 40% young researchers and innovators verified during the evaluation process? What evidence/documentation should be provided in the proposal to demonstrate this?**

You cannot submit the proposal if this criterion is not met.

**A conference organized by the Action would be funded?**

Funding is limited to the travel reimbursement of Action participants and Local Organiser Support .

**For the 50% ITC's, is this the percentage of the number of countries in the overall bid or the amount of people?**

Number of countries.

**The new Technical Annex includes a dedicated Deliverables section. Should deliverables be presented as a limited set of Action-level outputs (e.g. frameworks, roadmaps, policy briefs), or is a more detailed mapping between Working Group activities and deliverables expected?**

That part of the TA has not changed from last year. Deliverables were always part of the TA and their description and connection to the WG should be explained as best as possible.

**For conferences, I am wondering when the grant will be released? after the conference and after providing the report? or before that?**

After

**How can we justify the inclusion of 40% early-career researchers in the consortium at the proposal stage, given the anonymity of participants?**

The system calculates this automatically, but the reviewers do not see this.

**I have identified a conference in the US which is strongly recommended to me for widening my network. Could you please guide me how to apply for this Grant?**

All grant applications are made through your Ecost profile and they should be related to a specific Action. So first, you have to identify the Action and check their webpage about their deadlines for Grant applications.

**Can the proposal be funded from another national or international grant for material and salary costs ?**

Yes.

**Master's students can be involved in a COST Action network?**

Only if they are affiliated to a legal entity.

**Is there age limit for application since I heard young researchers.**

No, no age limit.

**OERSA: 'consumables for training schools' - what are the rules around what and how much can be covered for the consumables for training schools? Can this include low-cost technical materials that would facilitate participants taking part in hands-on technical training, or is it only for 'soft materials' like flyers, posters etc.?**

Flyers and posters can be claimed for the Local Organiser Support ; consumable may mean, as an example , chemical materials.

**Can we obtain a Word file of the technical annex ?**

*The Technical Annex shall be completed online on the e-COST platform. The content of the online Technical Annex with annotations can be found in [COST Open Call proposers guidelines oc-2026-1](#). The Main Proposer can generate a pdf of the proposal at any time during the submission.*

**How can we highlight the current projects and networks of the proposers without compromising the anonymity of the proposal?**

*The anonymity criterion must be respected throughout the proposal. Examples resulting in ineligibility due to the breach of the anonymity criterion are provided in the [COST Open Call proposers guidelines oc-2026-1](#).*

**I have 3 questions:1. How at the stage of application will the proportion of Young Researchers and Innovators be counted: based on individuals or lead applicants in institution or else? 2. The same is for countries: if there are several applicants (different institutions) from the same country, will the country be counted as one in the calculation of proportion of Target Inclusion Countries? 3. Is the participation of stakeholders, business partners, etc. required at the stage of application and will included in the assessment of it, or is it enough to plan the collaboration with them in the future?**

*Based on the e-COST profiles of the Main and Secondary Proposers, the information on the Network of Proposers, automatically extracted and aggregated in e-COST. This allows you to see the distribution of the YRIs.*

*There may be several secondary proposers from the same country; however, for calculation purposes, the country is counted only once.*

*Stakeholders are the target groups for whom the proposed Action outlines a tailored engagement plan throughout its duration. Accordingly, it is expected to present a clear strategy specifying the roles in which these stakeholders will be involved, the added value they contribute, and the potential challenges that may arise when engaging them in the proposal.*

**Does COST financially support administrative support for the Action at the host institution?**

*Yes, 15% of the budget spent goes to the Grant Holder for administrative support (in our jargon: FSAC)*

**In the submission of a proposal for a new action, no mentions regarding the budget foreseen needs to be included?**

*There is no need to foresee a budget at the submission phase. All the newly approved Actions will receive the same budget in the first year.*

**What kind of contractual relationships participants need to have to be in a Cost action at the proposal stage? Phd are included? Short-term contracts? Post-docs?**

The Main Proposer and the Secondary Proposers need to have an affiliation to a legal entity as mentioned in Section 4 [https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2026/03/COST-101-21-Submission-Evaluation-Selection-and-Approval-SESA-Level-B\\_version3.0.pdf](https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2026/03/COST-101-21-Submission-Evaluation-Selection-and-Approval-SESA-Level-B_version3.0.pdf) (table in page 6). An affiliation is any form of recognised relationship between the individual and a legal entity. For example: A work contract, an enrolment in a research performing study programme, voluntary service in an NGO...

**Why is VAT not an eligible expense? I want to be a local organiser of a summer school. But the VAT expense would be big - my University nor me would pay. This makes it impossible for me to be a local organiser.**

*VAT is not considered an eligible expense under COST funding, including for Local Organiser Support (LOS)*

**If we have non-scientific partners (e.g., local policy practitioners), what should be their legal status in order to participate in the Action?**

*COST Actions is open to non-academia. SME, company, NGO, International Organisation are welcome to participate to COST Actions. The participants need to have an affiliation to such legal entity.*

**When you said the main proposer can participate in one proposal, does it refer for the whole institution or different faculties or departments can participate as the main proposers?**

*It refers to the whole institution, which is the legal entity.*

**How is compliance with the eligibility requirement of at least 40% young researchers and innovators verified during the evaluation process? What evidence/documentation should be provided in the proposal to demonstrate this?**

*Based on the e-COST profiles of the Main and Secondary Proposers, the information on the Network of Proposers, automatically extracted and aggregated in e-COST. This allows you to see the distribution of the YRIs. You cannot submit the proposal if this criterion is not met.*

**As proposals should be anonymous, if we want to include companies supporting our COST proposals, can we name the countries and the sector of the companies for company 1, company 2, etc?**

*Be anonymous means that the proposal shall not contain neither direct nor indirect reference to the proposers and/or institutions participating in the network of proposers.*

**How do you estimate the level of involvement of a Proposer (project coordinator) per year? How many person-months (PMs) does it typically represent?**

*COST does not fund the research and development activities (e.g., employees' time, salary, infrastructures and equipment). COST funds the networking activities (such as meetings, training schools, mobility of researchers, presentation at conferences organized by third parties and other expenses like dissemination and communication etc. Please see the eligible expenses in Annotated Rules for COST Actions (COST 094/21; [https://www.cost.eu/Annotated\\_Rules\\_for\\_COST\\_Actions\\_C](https://www.cost.eu/Annotated_Rules_for_COST_Actions_C)). Also please note that no budget forecast is requested when submitting a proposal.*

**How high is the success rate with COST proposals?**

*The success rate of oc-2025 was 7.3%*

**A lot of management work is involved in a COST action. Will there be a budget for this work?**

*Yes, 15% of the budget spent goes to the Grant Holder for administrative support (in our jargon: FSAC)*

**Can a master degree student, or a student with a master degree only, join as a participant?**

*Any individual, affiliated with a legal entity, wherever in the world, can participate in the COST Actions. Enrolment in research performing study programme, for example, research master (where the candidate*

*focuses on a particular topic in-depth and independently, to complete a significant research project), PhD or Post-Doctoral programme are considered as an affiliation. A legal entity can be (non-exhaustive list) a public entity (national, regional, local public authority or any other kind of public entity), a university, a research centre, company, association, Specific Organisation (see Article 1.3 of Annotated Rules for COST Actions (COST 094/21; [https://www.cost.eu/Annotated\\_Rules\\_for\\_COST\\_Actions\\_C](https://www.cost.eu/Annotated_Rules_for_COST_Actions_C)) ) or any other form of legal entity recognised under a national or international framework.*