

COST Director

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COST

COST – European Cooperation in Science and Technology – provides networking opportunities for researchers and innovators to strengthen Europe’s capacity to address scientific, technological and societal challenges. There are three strategic priorities: promoting and spreading excellence, fostering interdisciplinary research for breakthrough science, and empowering and retaining young researchers and innovators. COST implements its mission by funding bottom-up, excellence-driven, open and inclusive networks for peaceful purposes in all areas of science and technology.

The COST Association is an international non-profit association based in Brussels with a membership of 43 European countries. It draws its funding from the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe, through Specific Grant Agreements signed under the umbrella of a Framework Partnership Agreement with the European Commission.

Position responsibilities

The Director of the COST Association primary responsibility is to ensure the operational implementation of decisions taken by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and the Executive Board (EB) through the management, as well as the day-to-day operation and administration of the Association. The Director of the COST Association is accountable to the Executive Board.

This position will involve:

- Operating in accordance with the overall strategies, policies and decisions taken by the CSO and the EB in cooperation with the President and Vice-President of the Association.
- Preparing, organising and following up the meetings of the EB and the CSO in coordination with the President and Vice-President.
- Ensuring the quality of accounting records and the timely production of reliable financial and management information to the EB and CSO.
- Initiating and maintaining relations of the COST Association with the European Commission and other third parties.
- Preparing the Agreements in relation with the European Commission.
- Implementing the Agreements between the COST Association and the European Commission (or any other organisation) and the corresponding activities including the successful implementation of the funding scheme(s) applicable to COST Actions: smooth implementation, contributing to the preparation of proposals, grant agreements, amendments, reports, continuous monitoring duties, etc.
- Preparing and signing the Agreements with institutions benefitting from COST financial support.
- Being responsible for the implementation and development of internal policies and procedures.
- Being responsible for the respect of the rules and procedures applicable to COST Association activities.
- Preparing and executing the work and budget financial plan of the Association.

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- Ensuring the appropriate use of the financial resources at the disposal of the Association through prudent and sound financial management, within the limits of the delegation of authority received by the EB.
- Signing contracts with external contractors.
- Being responsible and managing the personnel of the Association in a professional manner, including recruitment and dismissal in a close coordination with the EB.
- Creating positive working atmosphere and sense of mutual trust among the staff members in the COST administration.
- Providing support to other COST actors such as the COST National Coordinators (CNC) and the Scientific Committee, possible EB Task Forces, CSO Working Groups, Committees for advisory purposes, Expert Groups, etc.
- Fulfilling other responsibilities and tasks as necessary for the good organisation of the Association.

Profile and competencies

Candidates should demonstrate the following competencies:

Education & experience

- PhD or equivalent research experience.
- At least 10 years of experience in research management and/or science policy preferably gained part in a European setting. At least 5 years of proven experience in leadership positions.
- In-depth knowledge of EU R&I policy, European and national research systems, EU institutions, and European and international science policy making.
- Sound knowledge and understanding of the COST mission, objectives and activities.
- Experience in supporting high-level governance and/or executive boards.
- Extensive experience in staff management.
- Have proven finance, communications, and IT skills.
- Good knowledge of relevant legal, financial, and social regulations.
- Excellent standard of spoken and written English, good knowledge of French or Dutch, another European language being an advantage.
- Knowledge of the Belgian laws and legislations is an asset.
- A working experience of at least 3 years in the private sector is an asset.

Specific competencies

- Capacity to define and manage an effective internal organisation and optimise resources complying with strategic priorities and implementation needs.
- Ability to steer and manage organisational change.
- Ability to facilitate change by stimulating the COST Association to promote constructive changes and to constantly improve best practices.
- Demonstrable leadership skills to gain staff support, motivate and develop a multidisciplinary team in a European, multicultural and multilingual context.
- Aptitude to encourage the commitment of internal and external stakeholders and to create cross-functional and collaborative working relations.
- Capacity to represent COST convincingly.

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Other competencies

- Service-oriented attitude with strong sense of purpose and drive to make a meaningful contribution to the COST mission.
- Proven capacity to deliver on allocated tasks, responding in a timely manner to deadlines.
- Excellent communication skills across cultural and scientific boundaries, showing discretion, integrity and diplomacy.
- Strong interpersonal and internal communication skills within a multi-national context and convincing public speaking skills.
- Positive and constructive attitude in an evolving environment.
- Excellent analytical and mediating skills.
- Ability to lead and to motivate.
- Good, practical working knowledge of Microsoft 365 (especially Word, Outlook, Excel and PowerPoint) and websites.

The COST Association offers

- **A first limited contract of 4 years** under the Belgian law **corresponding to the mandate of the COST Director**, with a possibility of a 2 years + 2 years extension under open ended contract for mandate extension – **the whole duration of the mandate is maximum 8 years in total.**
- Start date: as soon as possible.
- A European working environment located in Brussels.
- **Unless a national of the 'EU and EEE', candidates must be eligible to work in Belgium. If a non-EU/EEE candidate is selected, a residence and work permit would be requested by the COST Association to the Belgian authorities, subject to their approval. More information can be found on the following link: <https://economy-employment.brussels/single-permit-other-cases>.**
- Flexible working hours – 37.5 hours per week – 7.5 hours per day.
- Gross monthly salary as from EUR 10,775 to maximum EUR 11,500 – Salary based on Belgian law (social security and taxes).
- Meal vouchers of EUR 8 net per worked day – employee contribution is EUR 1.09 net per day (vouchers not granted for absences like holidays and sicknesses).
- Transport costs reimbursed according to the legal prescriptions.
- Joint Committee (commission paritaire) 337 – private sector.
- Company closed from 24/12 until 02/01 included – salary paid but no meal vouchers granted.
- Group insurance and hospitalisation insurance – fully paid by the employer.
- 20 days legal holidays per year (if the employee has worked a full year in Belgium the previous year – based on Belgian law) + 2.5 days extra-legal holidays per trimester = 30 days per year (+ the closing of the company as mentioned above).
For staff members not entitled to legal holidays, possibility to take unpaid leave (maximum 10 days per year) and European holidays.
- Teleworking/homeworking: only on voluntary basis – maximum 8 days per month – Teleworking only possible in Belgium – not abroad.

Electronic applications – motivation letter with possible start date mentioned + CV in English, should be addressed to Barbara Bottiau and sent to job@cost.eu, mentioning the reference code DIR2026 in the subject line.

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Please also mention the channel through which you applied.

On the CV, the complete months and years of experience have to be mentioned (example: from 01/05/2014 until 24/09/2020).

Please note that the COST Association will only contact the candidates who are invited to the interview. No individual feedback will automatically be given to unsuccessful candidates.

The first round of interviews will take place in the premises of the COST Association on Thursday 10/09/2026.

Successful candidates will be invited to the second round which will take place on Wednesday 23/09/2026.

Address where the interviews will take place:

COST Association – Avenue du Boulevard/Bolwerklaan 21 – 1210 Brussels – (Near the Brussels North train station).

For more information, please visit our website: www.cost.eu

Deadline for application: Sunday 05/07/2026 included.

All personal data provided by applicants will be dealt with in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC). Details about how we handle your data for recruitment purposes are to be found [here](#).