



European Cooperation
in Science and Technology



Building European Science

□ COST Builds Science and Technology networks

COST, an intergovernmental European initiative, is an active partner in the European Research Area. COST exists to foster cooperation between nationally-funded research activities. COST Actions are networks of scientists receiving support to enable them to cooperate and to disseminate the results of their cooperation. Existing COST Actions operate across a wide spectrum of scientific fields and can be multi-disciplinary in nature.



COST Application Procedures

Proposals for COST Actions must demonstrate a contribution to the scientific, economic, cultural or societal development of Europe. Proposals involving young scientists or novel ideas, or seeding activities that may flourish later under another European S&T programme, are especially welcome. COST uses a continuous "Open Call" to invite proposals for new Actions, with predefined collection dates.



The COST Principles

- **"Bottom up"**: new COST Actions are proposed by the scientists themselves (from COST countries or the European Commission)
- **"A la carte" participation**: COST countries join only those Actions they are interested in, thus Actions can differ greatly in membership
- **Concerted "Action"**: COST Actions unite existing nationally-funded research projects
- **COST supports the coordination activities only (not actual research)**: Action workshops, meetings, short-term scientific missions, publications, etc. are funded

COST addresses the growing demand for cooperation across national borders and across research disciplines. It complements the European Union's Framework Programme. Now one of the largest frameworks for research cooperation in Europe, COST supports the cooperation of more than 30 000 scientists.

The COST Actions

COST is based on Actions. These are networks of national research projects in fields that are of interest to at least 5 COST Countries. COST Actions cover basic and pre-competitive research for peaceful purposes. They can also leverage research to address public needs, as part of the Lisbon objectives. Every COST Action has an objective, defined goals and clear deliverables. These are described in a "Memorandum of Understanding", accepted by the participating COST Countries.

The Action achieves results through its cooperative activities: meetings, workshops, short-term scientific missions, etc. Such activities build efficient networks, which often maintain their working relationships beyond the normal 4-year duration of a COST Action.



The COST Funding

National research funding underpinning the many projects represented in COST Actions totals more than € 1.5 billion annually. COST funding covers the coordination costs associated with organising and attending meetings, workshops and conferences. Short-term scientific missions, enabling researchers to collaborate in person with other laboratories, are also funded. COST also funds publications and other dissemination activities. It does not fund research itself. The funds for COST are provided by the EU Framework Programme.

The COST Countries

COST, with 35 member states in Europe, has a membership which extends beyond the European Union. There is one cooperating state from outside Europe (Israel). On the basis of mutual benefit, COST also welcomes participation from institutions in non-COST countries and from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). There are no geographical restrictions on this ad hoc participation.

The COST Domains

There are currently more than 200 Actions running in the following 9 Domains:

- **Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences**
- **Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies**
- **Earth System Science and Environmental Management**
- **Food and Agriculture**
- **Forests, their Products and Services**
- **Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health**
- **Information and Communication Technologies**
- **Materials, Physical and Nanosciences**
- **Transport and Urban Development**

The COST Governance

The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), COST's senior decision-making body, is composed of representatives from the COST member states. One CSO member from each country acts as that country's COST National Coordinator (CNC). Each CNC serves as the liaison between that country's scientists and institutions, and the Council COST secretariat.

The nine **Domain Committees (DC)** provide scientific and technical advice to the CSO, and are responsible for the development of their Domain. They play an important "quality-controlling" role in recommending new Actions for funding. They also monitor and evaluate ongoing Actions.

Each Management Committee (MC) is in charge of one COST Action. An MC implements, supervises and co-ordinates its Action and is responsible for getting the work done. An Action's MC includes up to two representatives from each Signatory Country (COST member country that has accepted the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)).

The COST Office provides scientific and administrative support to the COST DCs and the individual COST Actions. It acts as a focal point for advice on European research networking. The COST Office is provided by the ESF through an EC contract.

For more information please visit the COST website:
www.cost.esf.org



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Information and Contacts

Information about COST and support in starting a new Action or joining an existing COST Action is given by the National Coordinators in the respective home country of the interested scientist or by the COST Office.

Further information may be obtained directly from the COST Office at:
<http://www.cost.esf.org>

For more information about COST and your country, contact your COST National Coordinator:

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COST is supported by the
EU RTD Framework Programme



ESF provides the COST Office
through an EC contract