

## **COST ACTION CA17118 - IDENTIFYING BIOMARKERS THROUGH TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH FOR PREVENTION AND STRATIFICATION OF COLORECTAL CANCER (TRANSCOLOCAN)**

### Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) and ITC conference grants committee duties

- Disseminate STSM and ITC conference grants availability for each single grant period in the network and outside (applications at <https://e-services.cost.eu/user/login/STSM>).
- Check if applications align with the scientific objectives of the Action.
- Dedicate inter-laboratory exchanges in the form of STSMs and ITC conference grants especially for young researchers.
- Take into account gender balance and inclusiveness targeted countries (ITC) policies.
- Check fulfillment of COST STSM rules (Vademecum section 8 and 9, see below).
- Check requested financial support according to cost of living in the host country.
- Prioritize when necessary if applications exceed the available budget for a grant period.
- Check STSM and ITC conference grants are performed entirely during a single grant period.
- Check the grantee submits a report after the end of the STSM or ITC conference grant (1 month limit).
- If satisfactory, approve the report and communicate to the grant holder/chair.
- Remind grantees to acknowledge the Action in research articles ("This article is based upon work from COST Action CA17118, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology). [www.cost.eu](http://www.cost.eu)." ) in the subsequent articles or in their conference oral/poster presentation.

### **SECTION 8. SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS (STSM)**

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) are institutional visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, fostering collaboration between individuals. The Guidelines for Action Management, Monitoring and Assessment should be followed to ensure the proper implementation of this networking instrument (see [http://www.cost.eu/download/Guidelines\\_Action\\_management\\_monitoring\\_assessment](http://www.cost.eu/download/Guidelines_Action_management_monitoring_assessment)).

#### **8.1. STSM – ELIGIBILITY RULES**

STSM applicants must be engaged in an official research programme as a PhD Student or postdoctoral fellow or can be employed by, or affiliated to, an institution, organisation or legal entity which has within its remit a clear association with performing research. The institutions / organisation or legal entity where applicants pursue their main strand of research are considered as Home Institutions. The Host Institution is the institution / organisation that will host the successful applicant.

The following table shows the scenarios available to eligible STSM applicants:

<b>Applicant's Home Institution</b>	<b>STSM Host Institution</b>
<b>Located in a Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member</b>	Located in another Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member
	Located in a Participating COST Partner Member
	An Approved IPC Institution
	An Approved NNC Institution
	The EU Commission or a EU Body, Office or Agency
	An Approved European RTD Organisation
<b>Located in an Approved NNC Institution</b>	Located in a Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member
	Located in a Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member
<b>Located in an Approved European RTD Organisation</b>	Located in a Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member

Eligible STSM applicants must submit their STSM applications online at the following web address: <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>

## **8.2. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICANTS**

The evaluation of each received STSM application is performed by the Action MC. The Action Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Action Chair is affiliated to the Grant Holder Institution) or the appointed STSM Coordinator / Committee can assume this responsibility if the Action MC gives them the mandate to perform this task on their behalf. The evaluation criteria defined by the Action MC should be communicated to all potential applicants.

The selection of successful STSM applicants must be done so in consideration of the scientific scope of the proposed mission and how the mission can support the Action in achieving its scientific objectives. There should be special considerations made by the Action MC with respect to supporting COST policies on promoting gender balance, enabling Early Career Investigators (ECI), broadening geographical inclusiveness.

## **8.3. CRITERIA FOR STSM**

STSM must respect the following criteria:

- They must have a minimum duration of 5 calendar days.
- They must have a maximum duration of 90 calendar days.
- STSM need to be carried out in their entirety within a single Grant Period and always within the Action's lifetime.

Specific additional provisions have also been made possible to encourage the participation of Early Career Investigators (ECI) in STSM. To qualify for these specific provisions, the following conditions apply:

- The mission must have a minimum duration of 91 calendar days
- The mission has a maximum duration of 180 calendar days.
- STSM performed by ECI need to be carried out in their entirety within a single Grant Period and always within the Action's lifetime.

The COST Association and the Grant Holder of the Action cannot to be considered as being an STSM grantee's employer. STSM grantees must make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health, taxation, social security and pension matters.

## **8.4. STSM – FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

An STSM Grant is a fixed financial contribution which takes into consideration the budget request of the applicant and the outcome of the evaluation of the STSM application. STSM Grants do not necessarily cover all expenses related to undertaking a given mission. A STSM

Grant is a contribution to the overall travel, accommodation and meal expenses of the Grantee.

The calculation of the financial contribution for each STSM must respect the following criteria:

- Up to a maximum of EUR 2 500 in total can be afforded to each successful applicant;
- Up to a maximum of EUR 160 per day can be afforded for accommodation and meal expenses.

For ECIs, the calculation for an increased financial contribution must respect the following criteria:

- Up to a maximum of EUR 3 500 in total can be afforded to ECIs for missions with a duration of between 91 and 180 calendar days;
- Up to a maximum of EUR 160 per day can be afforded for accommodation and meal expenses.

The Action Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Action Chair is affiliated to the Grant Holder Institution) and / or the appointed STSM Coordinator / Committee should consider and can approve differentiated country rates to cover accommodation and meal expenses based on the perceived cost of living in the host country.

Specific provisions have been introduced to enable researchers from ITC participating in the COST Action to request a pre-payment of 50% of their STSM Grant when they complete the first day of their STSM. In such case, the representative of the Host Institution must confirm by e-mail to the Grant Holder that the STSM applicant has officially started the mission on day 1. Only then the Grant Holder can arrange the payment of 50% of the STSM grant. The remaining 50% of the Grant is payable once the administrative requirements have been satisfied after the STSM.

#### **8.4.1. APPROVING STSM FOR PAYMENT**

The STSM Grantee has 30 calendar days from the end date of the mission to submit a scientific report to the Action Chair (or to the Vice-Chair if the Action Chair is affiliated to the Grant Holder Institution) / the appointed STSM Coordinator / Committee and to a senior researcher affiliated to the Host Institution. Payment of the Grant is subject to a STSM scientific report being approved on behalf of the Action's MC by the delegated person(s) responsible and by a senior researcher affiliated to the Host Institution. Written approval of the STSM scientific report by the aforementioned persons must be uploaded in e-COST for archiving purposes.

### **SECTION 9. ITC CONFERENCE GRANTS FOR EARLY CAREER INVESTIGATORS AND PHD STUDENTS**

ITC Conference Grants are aimed at supporting ECI and PhD students from Participating ITC to attend international science and technology related conferences on the topic of the Action that are not organised by the COST Action.

#### **9.1. ITC CONFERENCE GRANTS – ELIGIBILITY**

The following eligibility criteria apply:

1. Conference Grants are exclusively reserved for PhD students and ECIs with a primary affiliation in an institution located in an ITC.
2. The applicant must make an oral/poster presentation at the conference in question and must be listed in the official event/conference programme. The main subject of the oral presentation / poster presentation / speech at the approved conference must be on the topic of the Action and must acknowledge COST (see Section 10).
3. The participation of each applicant must be pre-approved by the Action MC. Attendance at

European conferences is preferred. However, conferences held elsewhere can also be considered.

## **9.2. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICANTS**

The evaluation of each received Conference Grant application is performed by the Action's MC. The Action Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Action Chair is affiliated to the Grant Holder Institution) or an appointed Coordinator / Committee can assume this responsibility if the Action's MC gives them the mandate to perform this task on their behalf. The evaluation criteria defined by the Action's MC should be communicated to all potential applicants.

The selection of successful applicants must be done so in consideration of the scientific scope of the proposed participation and how it will support the Action in achieving its scientific objectives.

## **9.3. ITC CONFERENCE GRANTS – FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

A Conference Grant is a fixed financial contribution which takes into consideration the budget request of the applicant and the outcome of the evaluation of the application by the delegated person(s).

Conference Grants do not necessarily cover all of the expenses related to participating in a given conference. A Conference Grant is a contribution to the overall travel, accommodation and meal expenses of the selected Grantee.

The calculation of the financial contribution for each Conference Grant must respect the following criteria:

- Up to a maximum of EUR 2 500 in total can be afforded to each successful applicant;
- Up to a maximum of EUR 160 per day can be afforded for accommodation and meal expenses.
- Up to a maximum of EUR 500 can be claimed for the conference fees to be incurred by the selected Grantee.

In addition when meal and accommodation expenses are supported by the hosting institution as part of the provisions offered in their conference package, the amount for subsistence afforded to each eligible participant must be deducted from the Grant. Documentary evidence of the conference fee amount must be provided by the applicant and in kind, must be archived by the Grant Holder along with the relevant administrative documents.

## **9.4. APPROVING ITC CONFERENCE GRANTS FOR PAYMENT**

The Grantee has 30 calendar days from the end date of the Conference in question to submit a Scientific report to the Action Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Action Chair is affiliated to the Grant Holder Institution) and the Action's Grant Holder.

Payment of the Grant is subject to the submitted Conference Grant scientific report being approved by the Action Chair (or Vice-Chair if the Action Chair is affiliated to the Grant Holder Institution). Written approval of the submitted scientific report must be sent to the Grant Holder for archiving purposes. As mentioned in Section 2.3, should the Action Chair apply for a Conference Grant, the mandate for approval or rejection of the request via e-mail is transferred to the Vice-Chair, as well as the approval of the Conference Grant scientific report. The written approvals shall be sent to the Grant Holder for archiving purposes.