

Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) Applications

1st Call for STSM Applications - Grant Period: December 15th, 2023 – October 31st, 2024

COST Action Precision-BTC-Network opens a call for applications for Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) to be developed under the scope of the referred Action, in the terms described in this document.

The main procedures/regulations concerning STSMs can be found here: <https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2023/11/COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V1.4-Final-.pdf> (see A2-1.1 MOBILITY OF RESEARCHERS AND INNOVATORS)

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1. Scope of Precision-BTC-Network COST Action

For details and specific objectives, please read the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU): <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA22125/>

2. Purpose of STSMs

STSMs are stays of a researcher or innovator to a host organization located in a different country than the country of affiliation (for Affiliation, see Article 4.1.1.1 on Annotated Rules for COST Actions document) for a specific work and for a determined period of time. STSMs are worthwhile:

- i) for the STSM grantee, who has the chance to receive funding to help him/her to undertake a stay to participate in a project with an international team, to gain new knowledge or to access to equipment or techniques not available in the home institution.
- ii) for the STSM host, who can receive an international partner in their institution and extend or create a long-lasting collaboration.

A STSM should specifically contribute to the scientific objectives of the COST Action, helping to achieve the Action MoU objectives and deliverables.

3. Eligibility criteria

1. The Grant applicant(s) are Action participants with a primary affiliation to a legal entity located in a COST Full or Cooperating Member country, a COST Near Neighbour Country or a European RTD Organization (see Article 4.1.1.1.1 on Annotated Rules for COST Actions).
2. The Grant applicant is a researcher or innovator who visits a host organization located in a different country than the country of affiliation (for Affiliation, see Article 4.1.1.1.1 on Annotated Rules for COST Actions document) for a specific work and for a determined period of time.
3. The STSM must have a minimum duration of 5 calendar days (including travel) and conclude before September 30th, 2024.
4. The COST Association and the Grant Holder of the Action cannot be considered as being an STSM grantee's employer, i.e., the STSM Grant cannot be considered as a salary.

4. Application deadlines

Applications will be welcomed between January 2024 and July 2024 and the STSMs need to be concluded by September 30th 2024.

5. Funding

Up to a **maximum of 2,500 € in total*** will be allocated to each successful STSM applicant (subject to the total number of applicants): up to 500 euros per month and up to 500 euros for travel. For shorter stays, 300 euros will be financed for two weeks and 200 euros for one week and up to 500 euros for travel.

**Please note that in compliance with the Annotated rules the maximum amount that can be reimbursed is up to 4,000 €, however, under this call the maximum amount that may be granted to each applicant is 2,500 €.*

An STSM Grant is a fixed financial contribution that takes into consideration the budget request of the applicant and the outcome of the evaluation of the STSM application. Please note that STSM Grants do not necessarily cover all expenses related to undertaking a given mission, being only a contribution to the overall travel, accommodation and meal expenses of the Grantee. Applicants are encouraged to assess their budget request based on a high benefit/cost ratio and to justify it based on the perceived cost of living in the host country/city.

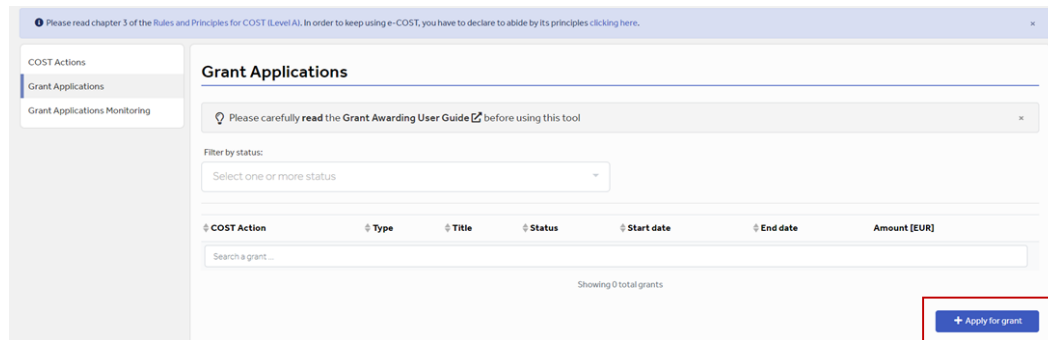
STSM grantees should make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health, taxation, social security and pension matters.

Grants are paid by the Grant Holder Institution after the completion of the activity and approval of all required report/documentation. However, STSMs grantees may request up to 50% pre-payment of the approved grant. This amount is subject to availability of funds and approval by the Grant Holder Institution.

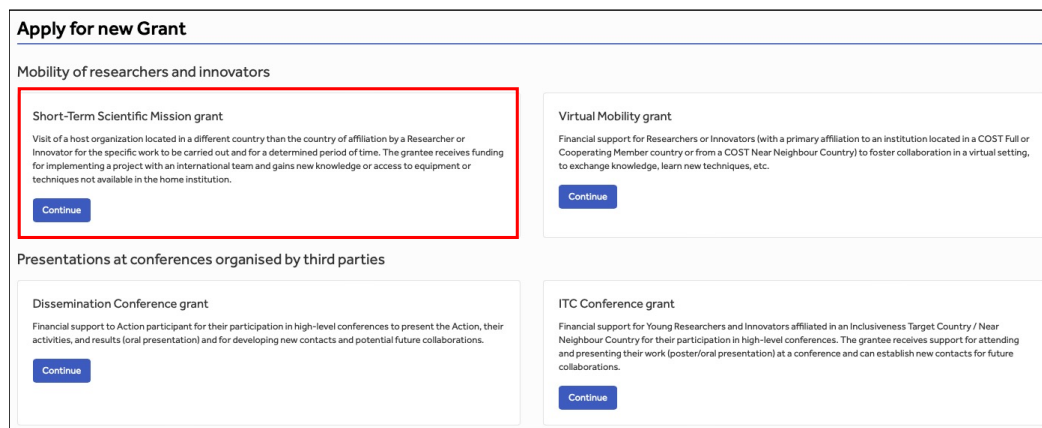
The request of pre-payment shall be submitted to the Grant Awarding Coordinator (Dr. Marta Afonso, mbafonso@ff.ulisboa.pt) and the Grant Holder Manager (Samuel Kocsis, samuel.kocsis21@gmail.com).

6. Application procedure

The application procedure is legally bound to the Rules for COST Actions. Eligible STSM applicants must submit their STSM applications online by logging into e-COST (<https://e-services.cost.eu>) and go to “Grant applications and click on “Apply for a grant”.



The applicant can select “Continue” on the “Short-Term Scientific Mission grant” section.



The application form will contain different sections, some are pre-filled by e-COST, such as Application name or Primary affiliation.

Apply for new Grant

Applicant name

Primary affiliation

Type

COST Action *

Please select from the list the Action to which you want to apply. You can apply only to Actions for which you are eligible for the selected grant.

Grant period *

A Grant Period is the duration defined in the Action Grant Agreement during which the COST Action budget shall be spent, in accordance with the Work and Budget Plan. A Grant Period runs for one year unless stated otherwise. Any grant application must start and end within the duration of a single Grant Period.

Title *

Amount * EUR

Bank account *

Start date *

End date *

Host institution name *

Host institution city *

Host institution country *

Host institution url *

Host contact person name *

Host contact person email *

After encoding the Grant application form by filling all above-mentioned sections, the applicant also needs to upload:

- the **Grant Application Template** (you can find it here: https://www.cost.eu/STSM_GrantApplication) that you should previously prepare.

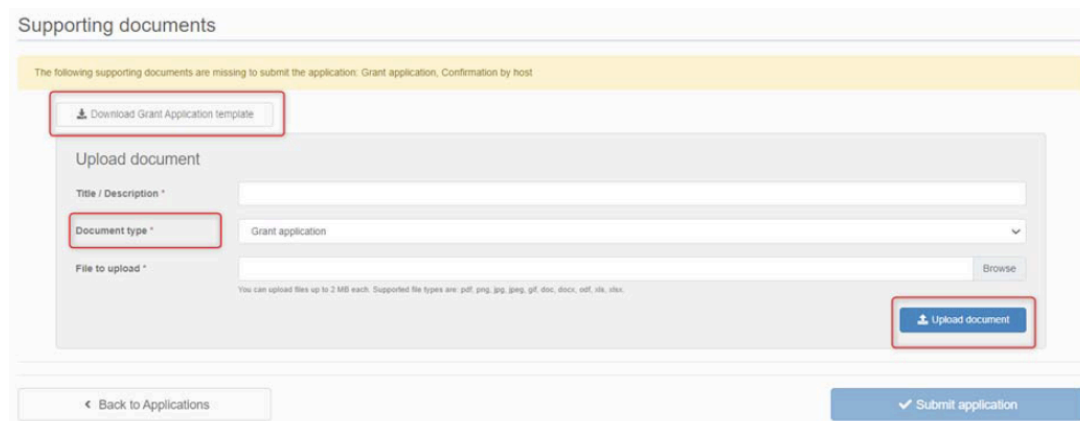
- **Acceptance/Invitation letter from the Host institution**: it is responsibility of the applicant to obtain a written agreement from the Host institution stating that the applicant may perform the activities detailed in the STSM working plan on the agreed dates. The letter must be dated back not more than 3 months and must be signed by a permanent staff representative of the Host institution (e.g., head of the research group, PI, director of the department, head of the institute/division etc.).

- **Candidate CV**: a short CV should be submitted (max. 3 pages). A list of academic publications can be added on separate pages.

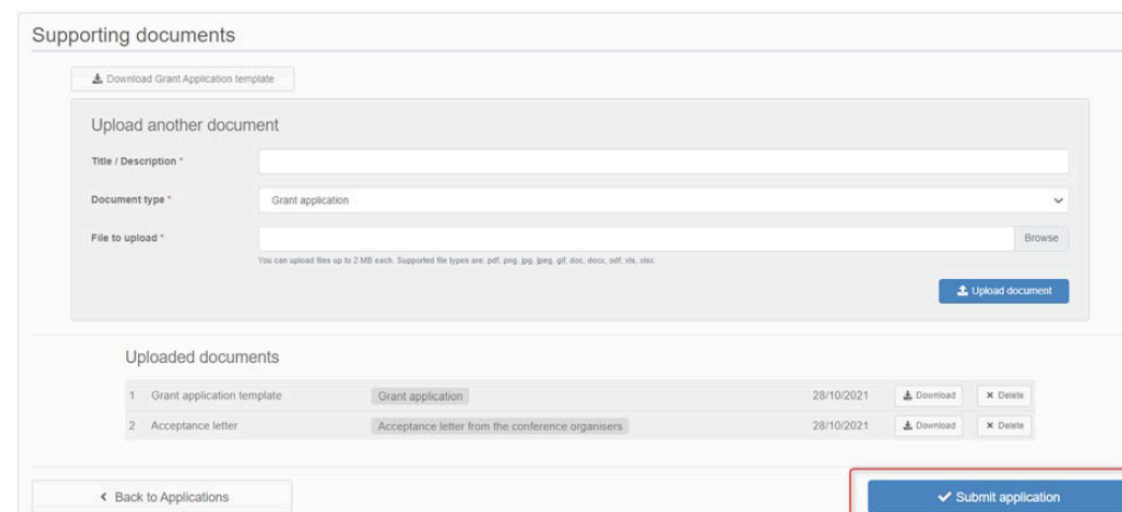
In the Application form field please briefly address the following points:

1. Proposed contribution to the scientific objectives of the Action. Please include how the planned activities will contribute to the plan of one or more WG(s) of the Action.
2. Please detail which techniques or equipment you would wish to learn to use, if applicable. Please underline the aspects of complementarity between expertise and instrumentation of the home and hosting institution/research groups.
3. Please detail the steps you will take to achieve your proposed goals.

Applicants are requested to present a Working Plan reasonably feasible and coherent with the time slot requested in the application.

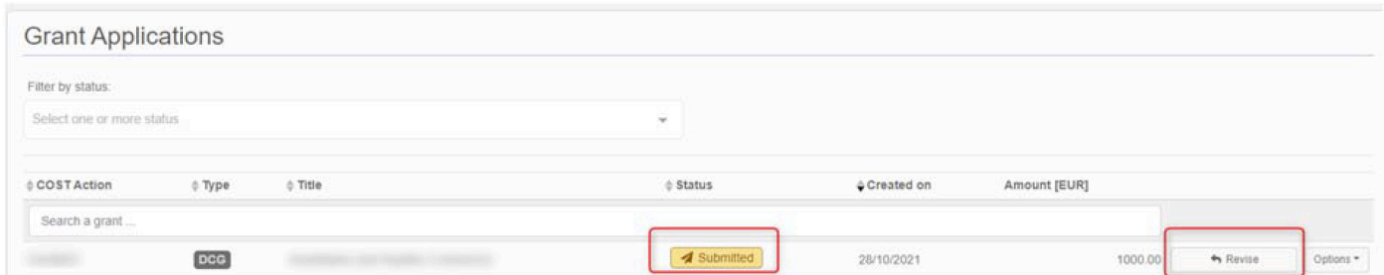


After adding the supporting documents, the applicant can submit the grant application.



ID	Document Name	Date	Actions
1	Grant application template	28/10/2021	Download, Delete
2	Acceptance letter	28/10/2021	Download, Delete

The application status will change from draft to submitted. Prior to approval of the application, if need be, the applicant will be able to revise the application. After confirming submission by clicking on “√Submit”, each applicant is required to send a copy of the downloaded application form and all the other uploaded documents (merged in one single PDF file) to the Grant Awarding Coordinator (Dr. Marta Afonso; mbafonso@ff.ulisboa.pt) and to the Action Chair Dr. Rocio Macias; rociorm@usal.es) at latest on July 20th, 2024.



COST Action	Type	Title	Status	Created on	Amount [EUR]
DCG			Submitted	28/10/2021	1000.00

7. Intellectual Property Rights concerns

In case of potential intellectual property concern requested by the host and/or sending institutions, this must be mentioned in the application and managed by IP teams from host and/or sending institutions. In this case the reviewers of the application may be requested to sign a confidential agreement.

8. Selection committee

The selection of applicants is based on the scientific scope of the STSM application, which must be coherent with the overall objectives of the Action. The STSM Committee will select the successful applications.

The STSM Selection Committee is composed of the Grant Awarding Coordinator (Dr. Marta Afonso, mbafonso@ff.ulisboa.pt, Dr. Rocio IR Macias, rociorm@usal.es) and representatives of the working groups. The evaluation will be made in priority by representatives of the working groups the application is related to.

In case of conflict of interest (e.g., applicant belonging to a representative’s research group), the member will be replaced by the Action Vice-Chair.

9. Evaluation criteria and communication of the results

The STSM Committee will carry out the scientific evaluation of applications taking into account the scope and objectives of the Action Precision-BTC-Network, as well as the potential for enhancing the research interaction between the parties involved, measured by the impact of the exchange expected by the applicants and institutions involved.

General criteria for evaluation of STSM proposals are:

- Priority to PhD students/residents and post-docs until 2 years after the completion of the PhD.
- Priority to applicants from ITCs.
- Gender balance.

- Clarity of activity planning (Working plan) and complementarity of resources between home and host institutions/research groups (resources are intended as: technical expertise, infrastructure, or instrumentation).
- Main expected results and their contribution to the progress towards the Action objectives and deliverables.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) of applicant.

Applications will be evaluated every two weeks, until the entire budget allocation is fully utilized. Each applicant will be formally notified of the outcome of their VM Grant application by the Grant Awarding Coordinator no more than 4 weeks after the application was received.

The Grant Awarding Coordinator (or the Action Chair/Vice-Chair, in case of conflict of interest) will inform the Grant Holder of the approved STSMs. The Grant Holder will inform each approved applicant by sending a Grant Letter generated from e-COST. The applicant must return this letter of acceptance with his/her signature.

10. STSM reporting and payment

Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM (or 15 days after the end of the Grant Period, whichever date comes first), the successful applicant must submit the scientific report (A), the dissemination materials (B) and the approval letter of the scientific report from the Host institution (C). These documents must be uploaded on e-COST to proceed with the request for payment.

A) Scientific reports on e-COST:

- A template for the report can be found in e-COST (https://www.cost.eu/STSM_Report) (max 4 pages).

When preparing the scientific report please consider the following:

- The scientific report for COST is a **public document**. Please take this into account in terms of Intellectual Property Rights.
- The scientific report does not need to contain specific and detailed results of the research. Rather, it should focus on the aspects that are the aim of STSM, in particular how the collaborative research during STSM has strengthened the scientific relationship between Home and Hosting institutions within the framework of COST.

A copy of the scientific report in PDF format must be sent, by email, to the Grant Awarding Coordinator Dr. Marta Afonso: mbafonso@ff.ulisboa.pt). The STSM Coordinator will be responsible for approving the scientific report and informing the Action Chair and the Grant Holder that the STSM has been successfully accomplished.

(Please note that the COST Association can request additional information to substantiate the information contained within the documents submitted by STSM applicants).

B) Dissemination materials to Science Communication Team:

- A poster/short video/success story describing the subject of your collaborative STSM activities.
- A strong, short advertising sentence summarizing your STSM experience that will be used for promotion of the above material.
- Your credentials in social media (if you have such) to tag you in publication of your post.

Please remember to present Home and Host institutions and your passion for science. Use pictures showing you at work but also after-work. Do not sound too abstract, avoid scientific jargon, use short

sentences. The material is to advertise Precision-BTC-Network research, promote you, and will be shown in social media for public audience.

The materials have to be sent directly to the Science Communication Manager Dr. Constantinos Athanassopoulos (kath@upatras.gr) and Management Holder (samuel.kocsis21@gmail.com).

C) Host approval of scientific report:

An official letter/email from a senior Researcher affiliated to the Host institution formally stating the acceptance of the scientific report.

Failure to submit the scientific report & dissemination materials, and Host approval of report within the above specified timeframe will effectively cancel the Grant. The grantee shall be aware that the COST Association reserves the right to postpone or cancel all payments and to recover the amounts paid to the grantee in case the grantee does not fulfil their obligations.

11. STSM contacts

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