



# Short Term Scientific Mission Guidelines

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) aim to support individual mobility and strengthen the existing networks and fostering collaborations by allowing scientists to visit an institution in another participating COST country or an approved NNC or IPC institution.

STSMs in burden-eu should **contribute to the scientific objectives of the COST Action**. The main aim and objective of the Action is to integrate and strengthen capacity in burden of disease assessment across Europe and beyond. This will be achieved through the following specific objectives:

## Research Coordination

- *To bring together experts and expertise across different domains, transforming the currently scattered burden of disease landscape into one transnational team.*
- *To compare and harmonize methods and approaches for burden of disease assessment.*
- *To identify critical knowledge and data gaps, and set up studies for which international coordination is needed.*
- *To serve as an advocacy group for the burden of disease approach in Europe.*

## Capacity Building

- *To build and increase capacity in burden of disease assessment across Europe. The Action will have an explicit focus on the involvement of specific target groups, including Early Career Investigators, the underrepresented gender, and teams and countries with less capacity in the field of burden of disease.*
- *To serve as a technical platform where knowledge and expertise can be shared among established and emerging researchers.*
- *To promote an interdisciplinary approach that integrates knowledge translation in the classical burden of disease framework.*

STSMs in general aim to be a focus for researchers wishing to contribute to the tasks of Working Groups (WGs). For more information on the work of WGs, please contact the WG Leaders:

WG1	NCDs and injuries	Juanita Haagsma ( <a href="mailto:j.haagsma@erasmusmc.nl">j.haagsma@erasmusmc.nl</a> )	Marek Majdan ( <a href="mailto:mmajdan@truni.sk">mmajdan@truni.sk</a> )
WG2	Communicable diseases	Sara Pires ( <a href="mailto:smpi@food.dtu.dk">smpi@food.dtu.dk</a> )	Ricardo Assunção ( <a href="mailto:ricardo.assuncao@insa.min-saude.pt">ricardo.assuncao@insa.min-saude.pt</a> )
WG3	Risk factors	Dietrich Plass ( <a href="mailto:dietrich.plass@uba.de">dietrich.plass@uba.de</a> )	Jane Idavain ( <a href="mailto:jane.idavain@tai.ee">jane.idavain@tai.ee</a> )
WG4	Methods	Elena von der Lippe ( <a href="mailto:vonderLippeE@rki.de">vonderLippeE@rki.de</a> )	Ian Grant ( <a href="mailto:ian.grant@nhs.net">ian.grant@nhs.net</a> )
WG5	Knowledge translation	Henk Hilderink ( <a href="mailto:henk.hilderink@rivm.nl">henk.hilderink@rivm.nl</a> )	Pallari, Elena ( <a href="mailto:elena.pallari@kcl.ac.uk">elena.pallari@kcl.ac.uk</a> )

## 1. Eligibility criteria

All applications will be assessed the STSM coordinator. STSMs need to take place according to the following rules:

- Be a minimum duration of 5 days and a maximum duration of 90 days; however, exceptions can be made for ECIs wishing to stay for 91-180 days.
- Carried out in their entirety within a single grant period and within the Action's lifetime.
- The applicant's home institution and the STSM host institution have to be participants of the burden-eu Action.

Eligibility of grantees will be based on the following criteria:

- Scientists (who have preferably not previously received a grant for a STSM) involved in the burden-eu Action, and either a) located in a Participating COST Full/Cooperating Member, b) Action MC Observer from a Near-Neighbor Country, or c) located in an approved European RTD organization.
- Inclusiveness criteria (geography, gender, age) may be taken into consideration when evaluating STSM applications.
- **Highest priority will be given to encouragement of Early Career Investigators (ECI) participation in the COST Action activities.** An applicant can be considered as being an ECI when the time that has elapsed between the award date of their PhD does not exceed 8 years.
- **Priority will also be given to applicants coming from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC).** The list of COST ITCs is available via <https://www.cost.eu/who-we-are/cost-strategy/excellence-and-inclusiveness/>.

For more details regarding the regulations related to STSM, please refer to the COST Vademecum and "Guidelines for the communication, dissemination and exploitation of COST Action results and outcomes" (<https://www.cost.eu/funding/how-to-get-funding/documents-and-guidelines/#Key%20documents>).

## 2. Financial support

Financial support is limited to cover travel, accommodation and meal expenses and is paid in the form of a grant.

The following restrictions apply:

- A maximum of 300 EUR for covering travel expenses.
- A maximum of 160 EUR per day for covering subsistence costs.
- A maximum total requested amount of 3500 EUR.

## 3. Final report of the STSM

After the STSM is finished, the grantee is required to submit a short scientific report to the host institution and to the STSM Coordinator **no later than 30 days** after the end date of the STSM for approval.

For the specific content of this report, please refer to the COST Vademecum (<https://www.cost.eu/funding/how-to-get-funding/documents-and-guidelines/#Key%20documents>).

Failure to submit the scientific report within 30 days will effectively cancel the grant. The STSM Coordinator is responsible for approving the scientific report and informing the Grant Holder that the STSM has been successfully accomplished. After receipt of the approval by email, the Grant Holder will execute the payment of the grant.

Please note that the reimbursement of STSM grantees will be done **after the mission is over and the final report is submitted** by the STSM grantee. Exceptions to this rule cannot be granted.

The final report will be uploaded to the burden-eu webpage (<https://www.burden-eu.net>).

#### 4. How to apply for an STSM

1. All applicants must **carefully read the funding rules** detailed in the COST Vademecum and “Guidelines for the communication, dissemination and exploitation of COST Action results and outcomes” (<https://www.cost.eu/funding/how-to-get-funding/documents-and-guidelines/#Key%20documents>).
2. All applicants must register for an **e-COST profile** at <https://e-services.cost.eu/> - adding their bank account details to their profile.
3. All applicants must obtain a **letter of invitation or email** from the Host institution confirming that they can undertake the STSM on the given dates prior to submitting an application.
4. All applicants must send their **STSM application form and the relevant supporting documents** to the STSM Coordinator (Tina Lesnik: [tina.lesnik@nijz.si](mailto:tina.lesnik@nijz.si)) copying the Action Chair (Brecht Devleeschauwer: [brecht.devleeschauwer@sciensano.be](mailto:brecht.devleeschauwer@sciensano.be)), for evaluation before the application submission deadline expires.

The list of supporting documents to be submitted for the evaluation are:

- The STSM application form
  - Recent CV of the applicant
  - Letter of invitation or email from the STSM supervisor affiliated to the Host Institution
  - A letter of support from the Home Institution including any coverage of expenses not covered by the Grant during the planned STSM
5. The application will be **assessed by the STSM coordinator** against the perceived contribution that the proposed visit will make against the scientific objectives outlined in the Action’s Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
  6. The applicant will be **formally notified** of the outcome of their STSM application by the STSM Coordinator no more than 4 weeks after the application was received.
  7. Upon approval, applicants must **complete and submit their STSM application online** at: <https://www.cost.eu/stsm>
  8. Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM, the successful applicant must submit a **scientific report** to the Host institution and STSM coordinator. The applicant is also responsible for acquiring an official acceptance letter or email confirmation from the STSM supervisor formally accepting the scientific report. This formal acceptance of the scientific report has to be sent to the Grant Holder and the STSM coordinator for archiving purposes.

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

## 5. STSM Coordinator

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