



Introduction on COST instruments and procedures

Jacob Riambau Santacana

Administrative Officer

Kick Off Meeting for COST Action MP1106

**“Smart and green interfaces - from single bubbles and drops to industrial,
environmental and biomedical applications (SGI)”**

11th May 2012 from 10:00 to 16:00

COST OFFICE, Brussels (Belgium)



Instruments and Procedures

- Meetings
- Travel reimbursement form: how to download and fill
- Meeting support/ local organizer support
- Short Term Scientific Missions
- Training Schools
- Dissemination
- Other Activities funded by other budget



COST Activity: Meetings

- Only in COST countries that accepted MoU of the Action
- Management Committee (1 meeting/year obligatory)
- Core Group (Chair, Vice Chair, WG Chair, Grantholder, webmaster, STSM coordinator/manager)
- Working Group
- Scientific Workshop/Conferences
 - recommended to be organised in conjunction with MC meeting to save budget
- COST reimbursement normally restricted to COST members
- Good balance of participating countries



Meetings (cont)

- **Eligible Participants:**
 - Chair
 - MC members (up to 2/country during MC meetings)
 - MC substitutes: during MC meetings. Confirmation of COST National Coordinators needed to replace
 - WG members (if WG meetings)
 - External experts limited to 4/meeting
 - DC Rapporteur: obligatory for MC meetings



Travel Reimbursement Form

- On-line registration for personal and bank details: <https://e-services.cost.eu>
- Individually downloaded at their e-cost invitation link before the meeting
- Original form with signature submitted during/after the meeting along with copies of travel proofs
- Deadline of form submission = 60 days. No reimbursement after this date
- Non eligible costs: registration fees, health related expenses; life, luggage and cancellation insurances, telephone calls, internet/wifi, minibar consumption

Any deviation from the rules requires explicit prior written agreement from COST Office



Travel Reimbursement Form

- 120 Euro/night for accommodation and breakfast (meeting days + 1 night before) – same flat rate for all participants
- 20 Euro/meal (lunch or dinner, when not offered by LO)
- Travel expenses (most economical):
 - home – meeting place – home; please book early
 - Air travel: economy fare, up to Euro 1200 (valid also for invited experts)
 - Train and bus (1st class); seat reservations/sleepers eligible expense
 - Car: reimbursed by km (0,2 Euro/km, attach Google map) up to 2000 km (non-eligible: additional accommodation, gas, toll fee, rental)
 - Local transport < 25 no receipts, >25 with receipts
 - Taxi: basically not reimbursed. Exceptions: no public transport is available and between 22:00 until 07:00. Justification & receipts always required.



COST Activity: Local Organizer's Support (LOS)

- Costs of organisation is supported by the institution of Local Organizer (to an institution account)
- contribution to the total budget, other sources of funding should appear on the request form
- 30 Euro/participant/duration of meeting as fixed grant (for all participants signed attendance list)
- > 30 Euro: invoices and final breakdown of expenses required
- COST contribution <10000 Euro/meeting or joint meetings



LOS (cont.)

■ Eligible costs

- Room & technical equipment rental
- Photocopying, phone, fax, mailing costs
- Personnel – staff involvement (max. 15% of the total request)
- Local transport
- Coffee breaks
- Only one conference meal (to be deducted from TRF)

■ NON Eligible costs

- VAT and any other indirect taxes



COST Activity: STSM (Short Term Scientific Mission)

- At least 4 STSMs per year – more intended for young scientists
- To an institution in another COST participating country or formally approved host institution in a non-COST country
- From a formally approved home institution in a Near Neighbour country to another COST participating country
- Selection responsibility of Action
- Duration: minimum one week (5 working days), maximum 3 months
- Financial Support: contribution
 - Daily allowance: 60 – 90 Euro, Travel cost: 300 Euro
 - max 2500 Euro up to three months
- Exception: Early Stage Researchers (ESR : PhD + < 8 years : max 3500 Euro 91 days up to 6 months



STSM (cont.)

- **Important steps BEFORE the mission:**
 - On-line registration of applicant
 - <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>
 - Send **application** by e-mail to STSM Coordinator, MC Chair, Grant Holder
 - Assessment by the MC / selection / send info to Grant Holder
 - Grant Holder sends “grant letter” to applicant

- **Important steps AFTER the mission:**
 - Applicant sends signed grant letter and **report** to STSM responsible, MC Chair, Grant Holder
 - Evaluation by MC / approval / send info to Grant Holder
 - Payment of the applicant by Grant Holder



COST Activity: Training School

- Duration: between 3 working days and two weeks
- Location: in one of the COST countries that accepted MoU of this Action
- Eligible Costs
 - Local Organiser Support
 - Trainers: same rule as meeting participants – no lecture fee
 - Trainees: only COST participating countries. Grants similar to STSM applicants. Amount decided by MC, suggested Euro 600 per attendee. Usually 2 fixed amounts



COST Activity: Dissemination

- Support: the production of dissemination tools and publications such as books (hard copy or electronic), brochures, flyers and electronic devices such as DVDs and CD-ROMs, printing of conference/workshop proceedings
- Action Website
- Non-eligible costs: Related costs such as graphic design, proofreading, translation and editing not covered

All requests net of VAT



COST Activity: Other budget I

■ Final Publication

- financed by COST Office in the last year of the Action (max EUR10,000 net of VAT) – 2 offers if above EUR3 000

■ Reciprocal STSM

- 3000 Euro for AU & NZ, 2500 Euro for Argentina & South Africa
- Similar to STSM but Chair forwards request to COST Office for approval

http://www.cost.eu/about_cost/reciprocal_agreements



Other Budget II

Early Stage Researcher Conference Grants

- MPNS domain offers 3 grants per year of @ max Euro 3000 (to cover travel, subsistence and conference fees) for ESRs to participate in an International Conference
- Deadline: **31 May 2012**
- Chair forward application to COST Office. Selection of grants by MPNS Domain Committee



Early Stage Researcher Conference Grants (cont.)

- ESR required, post-doc or PhD preferably
- Applicant strongly involved in **COST Action** required, evidenced by at least 2 Action related publications with at least 1 in a peer review journal
- Applicant started with the Action in a **new field** preferred, plans to use conference to establish contacts in the new field
- Description of the conference required, **European** conference preferred
- Conference with contributions from **industry** preferred
- **Oral contribution** from the applicant required, mentioning COST Action
- *Apply as soon as oral contribution accepted
- With MC approval of the application send to SO/grant holder:
- CV, letter of motivation addressing above and including financial breakdown of expected main expenses (flight, accommodation, conference fees), description of the conference with web link, proof of abstract acceptance for oral contribution
- AO sends letter of acceptance, applicant completes before conference and payment request form submitted with report (see previous slide)

***You can apply before oral contribution accepted by the conference.**

DC can approve the application on condition that it will be accepted for oral contribution



Other Budget III

- COST Office **does not reimburse participants from approved non-COST** country institutions. Participating institution will reimburse its scientist for his/her travel and subsistence costs.
- Participants from formally approved institutions from **Near Neighbour** countries are eligible for reimbursement of their travel and subsistence costs **subject to available funds**. A sum of EUR 100 000 has been set aside for this sub-instrument. The Near Neighbour countries are: Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Lebanon, Lybia, Moldova, Morocco, The Palestinian Authority, Russian Federation, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.
- Participants from institutions from countries which have a **reciprocal arrangement** with the COST Office must **apply within AU, AR, NZ, SA. Individual agencies**



6th MPNS Annual Progress Conference (APC) **(APC) 11-12th Sept. 2012 in Dublin (IE)**

- Representation of Action by the Chair
- APC template - presentation (according to COST template) & questions, discussion
- Informal evaluation & networking during poster sessions & social events
- Presentation & poster content will focus on science & technology of the Action
- Closed DC evaluation session based on:
 - Latest Annual Progress Report (APR)
 - Rapporteur report
 - SO report
 - Presentation & poster
- **Deadlines: 1st JUNE 2012 – template will be sent by the COST Office**
- **1st AUGUST 2012 – presentation & e-poster to be sent to the COST Office**
- **Registration of DC members & Action Chairs**
- **Chair presentation & poster files available to DC members**
- **Rapporteur Reports**
- **Comment from the COST Office**

**Posters to be printed by
The Action Chair**



COST Grant System

- Objectives
- The Grantholder
- Procedures & payments
- Financial Reporting & Control/audits
- Financial Rapporteurs
- Grant management tool – e-COST
- Highlights



Grant - Objectives

- Provide more flexibility within each COST Action
- Strengthen the role of the MC and the Action Chair
- Speed decisions / reimbursements
- Provide a better overview on the financial situation for each COST Action



Process

- During Kick-off meeting (or MC meeting) of the COST Action
 - Selection of Action Chair, V. Chair, Grant Holder and Web Master, from one of the institutions of the MC members
 - Selection of two Financial Rapporteurs
 - COST presentation about Work and Budget Plan
- After the Kick-off meeting (or MC meeting)
 - COST receives the MC approved Work and Budget Plan
 - COST approves the Work and Budget Plan
 - Grant Agreement prepared by COST for signatures
 - Grant Manager from the Grant Holder's institution comes to COST for a training on e-cost



Grant – The Grantholder

Legal entity appointed by the MC

- from one of the institutions of the MC members
- competent in administrative and financial matters
- EURO account
- Comply with the COST fixed rate reimbursement rule
- In case the institution of the Action Chair becomes the Grant Holder, the related COST Action should be represented by the Vice Chair from a financial point of view

Tasks :

- Fund Action's activities following COST rules
- Manage the grant
- Report

Contribution of up to 15% of the actual science expenditures of the COST Action



Grant – Procedures & payments

- Four years rolling contract with the Grant holder
 - Grant Agreement and Work and Budget Plan for each grant period
- Annual instalments
 - 65%
 - 35% on request & if needed



Grant – Financial Reporting & Audit

- European Commission Report by 15 January
- Interim report to request a second instalment
- Final financial reporting max 1 month after end-date
- Application of the ‘four eyes’ principle
 - Grant Holder’s Financial Officer
 - Action Financial Rapporteurs
 - COST Office
 - ESF
- Controls and Audits
 - COST/ESF, EC, Court of Auditors
 - 5 years after the end of the ESF-EC grant agreement (June 2019)



Grant – Financial Rapporteurs

Two MC members appointed by the MC

TASKS:

- Verify that the expenditures are in line with the Work Plan
- Send a short statement on the outcome of the financial review
- 1 month after the end of each Grant Period



Grant Management Tool (e-COST)

Web-based IT platform

- Secured data base (easy way to build list of participants and send invitations)
- Controls deviations
- Financial status of Action
- Allows COST staff to monitor Action activities on line
- Provides help (+ online user guides)

Highlights

- No carry forward from last grant period under spent budget.
- In case of any change of work/budget plan: MC approval and COST notification are needed.
- Minutes for each meeting to be sent to COST Office.
- A lump sum of up to EUR 30 per attended participant per meeting regardless of the eligibility for reimbursement will be approved as a fixed grant for the Local Organizer. Justification of expenses is not required in this case. VAT is non-eligible cost. In case the Local Organizer requests a contribution above 30 EUR per participant, supporting documents for the justification of expenses are required.
- No back to back meeting claiming for local organizational support.
- One meal per whole meeting/conference to be reimbursed by Local Organizer.

All activities must be **approved** by the MC and must **conform** to the COST Guidelines (see official COST Vademecum on the website <http://www.cost.eu/participate/guidelines>)

Actions can only enter into binding financial commitments for activities taking place in the year covered by the running Grant Agreement



Grant – Annual Work & Budget Plan

- approved by MC and COST Office
 - Action information
 - Objectives
 - Activities (as detailed as possible, with dates, locations, nr of participants)

Any changes must have the MC approval and COST notification

- COST MP1106 Budget: 02.06.2012 – 01.06.2013
 - Total: Euro 172 500 Euro
 - Scientific Activities: Euro 150 000
 - FSAC: up to 15% of SA: Euro 22 500



COST Grant workplan

I. ACTION PROFILE

Domain:

Action no. and title:

Chair:

START date:

END date:

Number of signatories:

Number of non-COST members:

Number of COST country entities (institutes, etc.) currently participating:

Number of non-COST entities (institutes, etc.) currently participating:

Number of MC Members:

Working Groups with numbers, titles and approximate number of members:

II. DETAILED BUDGET

(1) MEETINGS

Management Committee Meetings

Location:

Date:

Number of participants to be reimbursed:

Travel costs:

Organisational support:

(Repeat as many times as needed)

Working Group Meetings

WG no. and title:

Location:



Date:
Number of participants to be reimbursed:
Travel costs:
Organisational support:

(Repeat as many times as needed)

Other meetings

Title:
Location:
Date:
Number of participants to be reimbursed:
Travel costs:
Organisational support:

(Repeat as many times as needed)

Workshops and Conferences

Title:
Location:
Date:
Number of participants to be reimbursed:
Travel costs:
Organisational support:

(Repeat as many times as needed)

(2) SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS (STSMs)

Number:
Cost:

(3) TRAINING SCHOOLS

Location:
Date:
Number of Trainees to be reimbursed:
Trainees Grants:
Number of Trainers to be reimbursed:
Travel costs:
Organisational support:

(Repeat as many times as needed)



(4) **PUBLICATIONS, DISSEMINATION, OUTREACH, WEBSITE**

Title:

Cost:

(Repeat as many times as needed)

(5) **OTHERS (e.g. bank charges)**

III. WORK PLAN

(1) **OBJECTIVES**

Please describe the objectives to be achieved during the grant period and their relationship to the goals of the Action as laid down in the MoU or as modified by the Management Committee.

(2) **ACTIVITIES**

Please describe the contents of the activities listed in the budget, their relationship to each other (if any) and to the objectives stated above.

(3) **OUTPUTS PLANNED FOR YEAR**

(Including final reports, technical documents, publications and other forms of output.)



COST Grant budget plan

Action no. and title:

Grant period:

Allocated budget:

A. SUMMARY BUDGET

(1) MEETINGS €.....

(2) SHORT-TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS €.....

(3) TRAINING SCHOOLS €.....

(4) PUBLICATIONS, DISSEMINATION, OUTREACH €.....

(5) OTHERS €.....

B. TOTAL SCIENCE EXPENDITURE (sum of (1) to (5)) €.....

C. Financial & Scientific Administration and Coordination
(max. of 15% of B.) €.....

D. TOTAL EXPENDITURE (B+C) €.....