Short Term Scientific Mission

Eligibility Rules: Who can apply?

STSM applicants must be researchers or innovators

STSM Hosts
- any legal entity anywhere in the world (academy, institutes, industry, private companies, etc) across disciplines and sectors

Application

To be filled in e-COST:

- Title
- Start and end date (within the active Grant Period). Minimum duration of 5 days
- Budget requested by the applicant
- Information about the host institution and contact person

- To be uploaded to e-COST:
  - Application form (template available on e-COST) describing: Goals, description of the work to be carried out by the applicant, expected outcomes and description of the contribution to the Action MoU objectives
  - Letter of Confirmation of the host on the agreement from the host institution in receiving the applicant
  - Other documents required by the Action (recommendation letter from home institution, CV with bibliography)

STSM financial contribution

- An STSM grant is **a fixed financial contribution** that takes into consideration
  - the budget request of the applicant
  - the outcome of the evaluation of the STSM application
- STSM Grants do not necessarily cover all expenses related to undertaking a given mission (**travel, accommodation and meal expenses should be covered**)
- The COST Association and the Grant Holder of the Action are not to be considered as being an STSM Grantee's employer.
- STSM Grantees must make their own arrangements for all provisions related to visas, personal security, health, taxation, social security and pension matters.
- The STSM Committee can approve differentiated country rates to cover accommodation and meal expenses based on the perceived cost of living in the host country.

STSM financial contribution

STSMs and financial contribution follow the following criteria:

- STSM need to be carried out in their entirety **within a single Grant Period** and **always within the Action's lifetime**
- Max total contribution per grant: **4000 €**

- Amount granted

Decided by the Action MC or Core Group on proposal of the evaluators, based on the request of the applicant and should reflect the duration and location of the STSM

Upon approval of the application, the Grantee receives **a Grant Letter** from the Grant Holder stating the approved amount and the conditions for receiving the grant

STSM financial contribution

- ITC (Inclusiveness target countries) candidates can request a pre-payment of 50% of their STSM Grant. This amount is subject to availability of the funds and approval by the Grant holder institution.

- If the prepayment is approved, the amount is paid by the Grant Holder at any moment before or during the STSM. The Grant holder needs to ensure adequate tracking of any amount pre-paid and record in the e-COST the total final grant after the mission has been fulfilled.

- Grant holder supports the grantee in case of force majeure by informing the applicant about the necessary documents (invoices, tickets, etc) that may be exceptionally required for the reimbursement of the grant or actual expenses

SELECTION and EVALUATION criteria

- <u>Grant Awarding Committee</u>: organises Open Calls for applications, coordinates the collection and evaluation of the applications, guides the applicants, and communicates with the Grant Holder

- <u>Grant Holder:</u> verify the funds availability, check against the approved grant application and issue the grant letter

- <u>Grant Awarding Committee</u> takes into the consideration the quality and **the scientific scope** of the proposed participation and **how it will support the Action** in achieving its scientific objectives

How to Apply

- Register to https://e-services.cost.eu

- Go to cost.eu/STSM and provide:
  - Support letter from a senior researcher affiliated to the Home Institution
  - Letter of invitation from a senior researcher affiliated to the Host institution
  - STSM application form
  - Motivation letter including a work plan detailing the proposed activities
  - Applicant's full C.V. (including a list of academic publications – if applicable)

How to Apply

- **Please note:** it is very important to specify in the workplan and in the motivation letter why and how your mission will contribute to the ML4Microbiome objectives, and, in details, which WGs will benefit from your mission.

- <u>**Before**</u> STSM initiation the Applicant need to receive:
  - MC pre-approval (email from delegated ML4Microbiome person). At least two weeks from the application submission to the pre-approval are necessary.
  - The formal Grant Notification letter

Required documents for claiming the STSM Grant

- Once the STMS has ended, the grantee submits the required reports and relevant documentation in e-COST within **30 days after the end date of the activity or 15 days after the end of the Grant Period whichever comes first**.

- The required documentation for claiming a **STSM Grant** is:
  - A scientific report (max five-pages)
    detailing the activities undertaken, why and how your mission has contributed to the ML4Microbiome objectives and which WGs has benefited from your mission and how
  - An official letter from a senior researcher affiliated to the Host institution formally approving the Scientific Report
  - A short report ca. up to 300 word for the Action website on the work developed (Action requirement).

OUTPUTS

- Following the completion of tasks as in the previous slide and the approval of the scientific report by the STSM Committee, applicants will receive:
  - MC post-approval (email from delegated ML4Microbiome person) – before STSM payment
  - STSM payment

- In case of publication of the results partly coming from the mission work, acknowledge to ML4Microbiome is mandatory as follow: "…supported by a STSM Grant from EU COST Action 18131 - Statistical and machine learning techniques in human microbiome studies (ML4Microbiome)"