

CA16122 - BIONECA

Call Number 15 for Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) Applications

15th Call for STSM Applications for Missions Occurring between **08/04/21 and the 15/09/21**

All STSM activities must occur in their entirety within the dates specified above

Purpose of a Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSM)

STSM facilitates Researchers from COST Countries participating in COST Action **CA16122** to go to an institution, organisation or research centre in another participating COST Country to foster collaboration and to perform empirical research. Participation of “Early Career Investigators” (ECI) in STSM is particularly encouraged. An applicant can be considered as being an ECI when the time that has elapsed between the award date of the applicants PhD and the date of the applicants first involvement in the COST Action **CA16122** does not exceed 8 years. PhD students are also eligible to partake in STSMs.

Information concerning Covid-19:

Due to the Covid-19 situation, it is suggested that the STSM application contains the engagement of the applicant to provide to the Host (before starting the mission and with copy to the STSM Chairman and to the Action Chairman), **a Covid-19 IgG antibodies quantitative report, demonstrating the immunization, made at least in the last two months.** (The immunization can be obtained either by a previous infection or by vaccination.) Moreover, the application **must contain a declaration that, due to the voluntary character of the STSM, any accident or infection contracted during the mission will be the responsibility of the applicant and not of the STSM Chairman, the Action Chairman, the Grant Holder, or the COST Association.**

Confirmations issued by both, the home **AND** the host institution, have to be included in the application confirming that the STSM is approved and in accordance with the corresponding local and institutional Covid-19 safety requirements.

Further information and regulations by COST related to Covid-19 can be found [here](#). Please carefully check the document „[derogation procedure](#)“, especially pages 15/16 relating to STSMs).

Specific information concerning STSM

STSMs can have a duration of between 5 days and 90 days (and up to 180 days if the applicant is an ECI – see definition of ECI above).

The financial support on offer is a contribution to the overall expenses incurred during the STSM and may not necessarily cover all of the associated outgoings.

The following funding conditions apply and must be respected:

1. up to a maximum of EUR 2,500 in total can be afforded to each successful STSM applicant;
2. up to a maximum of EUR 160 per day can be afforded for accommodation and meal expenses;
3. for ECIs, a maximum amount of EUR 3,500 can be afforded to the Grantee for STSMs with a duration of between 91 and 180 days – for ECIs partaking STSMs with a duration of between 5 and 90 days, the limit of EUR 2,500 must be respected;
4. STSM activities must occur in their entirety within the dates specified in this call.

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

For this call, the Management Committee of COST Action **CA16122 “Biomaterials and advanced physical techniques for regenerative cardiology and neurology”** has allocated a total budget of **EUR 10,000**. The amounts granted for each individual STSM will be determined during the evaluation process by the formally appointed person.

The STSM committee will peer review the application, soliciting opinions where necessary. These selection criteria should be addressed in the application:

- Scientific quality
- Training benefit for the applicant
- Benefit for the BIONECA Network
- Young investigator (defined as less than 8 years since obtaining PhD degree).

Priority will be given to first applications, special attention will be provided to **ECI** but all applications will be considered (junior and senior researchers). Applications from Participating **Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC)*** are especially encouraged. Researchers from Participating ITC can receive 50 % of the grant upon completion of the first day of the STSM.

* ITC: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Serbia and Turkey.
Only participating ITC will be considered.

The requested budget may be adjusted by the STSM committee.

How to apply for an STSM:

Interested researchers can apply by following the directions provided below and submitting their application and supporting documents to [Prof. Christian Hellmich](#) by the deadline of the **17/03/21**.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. All applicants must carefully read the funding rules detailed in Section 7 of the *COST Vademecum*. This document is available at: <https://www.cost.eu/funding/how-to-get-funding/documents-and-guidelines/> in “Key documents”.
2. All applicants must register for an e-COST profile at <https://e-services.cost.eu/> - adding their bank account details to their profile.
Two solutions are proposed for the grant payment:
1/ the grant is delivered to the bank account of the home institution of the applicant
2/ the grant is delivered to the personal bank account of the applicant
In case 1:
the applicant should enter the bank account data of the institution that has agreed to formally receive the grant and transfer it to her/him. It is important that the applicant does NOT use her/his own bank account information. The bank account data entered during online registration must be identical to that in the letter of commitment (Annex 1).
In case 2:
the applicant should enter his/her personal bank account data.
3. All applicants must obtain a letter of invitation from the Host institution confirming that they can undertake the STSM on the given dates prior to submitting an application.
4. All applicants must complete, submit and download their STSM applications online at: www.cost.eu/STSM.
5. **All applicants must send their submitted STSM application form and the relevant supporting documents to [Prof. Christian Hellmich](#) for evaluation before the application submission deadline expires. The list of supporting documents to be submitted for the evaluation are:**
 - Letter of invitation to the applicant from a senior researcher affiliated to the Host institution (template in Annex 2) including a confirmation issued by the Host Institution, confirming that the STSM is approved and in accordance with the corresponding local Covid-19 safety requirements;
 - The submitted STSM application form (downloadable when the online application is submitted - see point 4 above)
 - A motivation letter including an overview of the proposed activities that will be performed which must contain a plan of work for the visit highlighting the proposed contribution to the scientific objectives of the respective

- COST Action;
- A letter of support from the Home Institution including a confirmation that the STSM is approved and in accordance with the corresponding local and institutional Covid-19 safety requirements;
 - A Full C.V. (including a list of academic publications – if applicable).
6. The application will then be assessed by the formally delegated person **Prof. Christian Hellmich** against the perceived contribution that the proposed visit will make against the scientific objectives outlined in the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
 7. The applicant will be formally notified of the outcome of their STSM application by Prof. Christian Hellmich on the **24/03/21**.
 8. Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM, the successful applicant must submit a scientific report to the Host institution and to the **STSM Coordinator Prof. Christian Hellmich**. The applicant is also responsible for acquiring an official acceptance letter / Email confirmation of acceptance from a senior Researcher affiliated to the Host institution formally accepting the scientific report. This formal acceptance of the scientific report has to be sent to the [Grant Holder](#) and the **STSM Coordinator Prof. Christian Hellmich** for archiving purposes.

Failure to submit the scientific report within 30 days from the end date of the STSM will effectively cancel the Grant.

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

Deadline for applications to be submitted: 17/03/21

Notification of application outcome: 24/03/21

Period of STSM: between 08/04/21 and 15/09/21

ANNEX 1

1. The financial support will be in the form of a fixed grant. The grant will be transferred after the completion of the STSM, by the COST Action Grant Holder to the applicant's Home Institution. Alternatively, the grant might exceptionally be transferred to the Host Institution, in case of demonstrated impossibility of proceeding with the Home Institution. Then, the Home/Host Institution will pay/reimburse the applicant, according to its internal rules. The grant comes without overhead, and is a lump sum payment towards eligible costs.

2. The transfer of the grant from the COST Action Grant Holder to the applicant's Home/Host Institution will not require any contract, as both of the Institutions are members of the COST Action. Nevertheless, the applicant must attach to the application a letter, signed by the Home/Host Institution, containing the following:

- a statement that, in case of acceptance of the STSM, the applicant's Home/Host Institution accepts to receive the STSM grant from the COST Action Grant Holder, and to use it to pay/reimburse the applicant, according to its internal rules;
- the following data of the Home/Host Institution's bank account to be used for the money transfer:
 - Bank name
 - Bank address
 - Bank account owner
 - International bank account number (IBAN)
 - Bank BIC-SWIFT

A template for the letter is available below.

Template:

You MUST submit this letter using the letterhead of your Institution!

Commitment of the STSM Institution Receiving the Grant Payment to transfer it to the Applicant

To the Grant Holder of the COST Action CA16122 - BIONECA

Place, date:

COST STSM Reference Number: _____

STSM Applicant (first name and last name): _____

Home Institution: _____

Host Institution: _____

STSM Period: from _____ to _____

As an authorized representative person of the (*please chose*)

Home Institution

Host Institution

of the STSM specified above, I hereby state that:

1. This Institution agrees that, in case of acceptance of the STSM, the STSM grant will be transferred, after the completion of the STSM, by the COST Action Grant Holder to this Institution, which, then, will pay/reimburse the Applicant.
2. This Institution is aware that the financial support for the STSM will be in the form of a fixed grant, according to COST rules. The STSM grant will come without overheads, and will be a lump sum payment towards eligible costs.
3. The bank account coordinates to be used by the COST Action Grant Holder to transfer the STSM grant to this Institution are the following:
 - Bank name: _____
 - Bank address: _____
 - Bank account owner: _____
 - International bank account number (IBAN): _____

- Bank BIC-SWIFT: _____

Yours sincerely,

First name and last name: _____

Position in the Institution: _____

Signature: _____

ANNEX 2

A suggested template for the expression of interest. You may devise your own.
However:
You MUST write the expression of interest using the letterhead of your Institution!

Expression of intention to host a Short-Term Scientific Mission

To the Grant Holder of the COST Action CA16122 - BIONECA

Place, date:

STSM Applicant (first name and last name): _____

Home Institution: _____

Host Institution: _____

hereby inform that we welcome the visit that Mr/Ms/Dr _____ plans to perform in our lab at _____ in _____ (*month*) _____ (*year*), within the framework of the BIONECA Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) programme.

The STSM will be scientifically based on the work plan described by Mr/Ms/Dr _____ in the STSM Application. The STSM will have a mutual benefit for the applicant and our group, in consideration of both the specific activities to be performed and the expected strengthening of cooperation between the Home and Host institutions.

[Please also include a statement that the STSM does not contradict any local and institutional Covid-19 regulations.]

Yours sincerely,

First name and last name: _____

Signature: _____