



COST

1st MC Meeting – COST Action IS1308

Populist Political Communication in Europe: Comprehending the Challenge of Mediated Political Populism for Democratic Policies

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Agenda

- **COST Networking tools**
 - Meetings
 - Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)
 - Training Schools
 - Dissemination and Publications
- **COST Grant System**
- **Questions and answers session**

COST Funding Rules

Important links

COST Association Vademecum Part 1: COST Action

<http://www.cost.eu/participate/networking>

COST Website

<http://www.cost.eu/>

e-COST

<https://e-services.cost.eu/>

STSM On-line application

<https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>

Action Website:

- http://www.cost.eu/domains_actions/isch/Actions/IS1308?management

COST Vademecum

- ▶ COST Vademecum (Part 1) – COST Actions (PDF, 1 MB)
- ▶ COST Vademecum (Part 2) – Other COST Activities (PDF, 60 kB)

COST Action Template Centre

- ▶ Progress Report Template (PDF, 193 kB)
- ▶ Final Report Template (PDF, 81 kB)
- ▶ Grant Agreement Template (PDF, 228 kB)

Early Stage Researchers Strategy

- ▶ COST Strategy for Early Stage Researchers (COST doc. 295/09) (PDF, 53 kB)



COST Networking tools

COST Networking Tools - What can be funded?

Annual Grant Contracts with Grant Holder Institution which covers costs for:

- **Meetings** (MC, WGs, conferences, workshops)
- **STSMs** (Short Term Scientific Missions)
- **Training Schools**
- **Publications & Dissemination activities**
 - Except for the Final Action Publication = separate budget line
- **OERSA** (Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities)
 - ex. Bank fees
- **FSAC** (Financial, Scientific, Administration and Coordination task)
 - Max 15% of the actual scientific expenses (FSAC) allocated to the Grant Holder

All these expenses are included in the approved Action's Work and Budget Plan

Meetings

- Only in COST countries that accepted the Action's MoU
- Good balance of participating countries

Types of meetings:

- **Management Committee** (should not last more than 1 day)
- **Core Group** (Chair, Vice Chair, WG Chairs, Grant Holder, STSM Coordinator)
- **Working Groups**
- **Action Workshops/Conferences**
- **Dissemination Meetings**

Meetings – Eligibility Considerations

Eligibility is determined by the status of the country to where the Researchers primary affiliation is held as is registered on their e-COST Profile

The following questions will help determine eligibility:

- Is the Researchers primary affiliation held in a Participating COST Country?
- Is the Researchers primary affiliation held in a Non-Participating COST Country?
- Is the Researchers primary affiliation held in an approved institute in a Near Neighbour Country (NNC)?
- Is the Researchers primary affiliation held in an approved International Partner Country (IPC)?

Check the **COST Action webpage** (<http://www.cost.eu>) for a list of Participating COST Countries, a list of approved NNC and a list of approved IPC

Eligibility of Participants in Approved Meetings by Category

Eligibility Hierarchy	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3
	MC Members	NNC MC Observer	European RTD MC Observer	IPC MC Observer	EC and EU Agencies MC Observer	International Organisation MC Observer	WG Members	Core Group Members	STSM Grantee	Trainer	Trainee	Other / Observer	IS from participating COST Countries
Conditions	From participating (or under intention) COST Country	From participating NNC	From participating European RTD	From participating IPC	From participating EC/EU Agencies	From participating IO	From participating (or under intention) COST Country						
Country determined from	Nomination tool						Participants profile						
MC	Up to 2 per country per meeting	Up to 1 per institution and 2 per Country	Up to 1 per institution	Not eligible			Depending on MC decision					Not eligible	
Working Group Core Group Workshops/Conferences Final event Other COST relevant	Depending on MC decision			Not eligible			Depending on MC decision						
Outreach/Dissemination (2 participants maximum per Grant Period)	Depending on MC decision			Not eligible			Up to 2 participants maximum per Grant Period					Not eligible	



Dissemination Meetings

Facilitating the attendance of Action's participants at international conferences as speaker for:

1. Disseminating the COST Actions activities
2. Collecting information to be further disseminated amongst the Actions members

Conditions that apply to the Dissemination meetings:

- A **maximum of two participants** per grant period are eligible to be reimbursed at dissemination meetings
- The **Speaker(s)** must be **listed in the official programme** of the conference representing the respective COST Action
- Participants must have their primary affiliation in institutions located in **Participating COST Countries, approved European RTD Organisations** or **approved institutions located in Near Neighbour Countries**
- Up to EUR 500 can be claimed by eligible participants for conference fees



STSM (Short Term Scientific Mission)

- Objective: Promote exchange within Action's scientific objectives
- Modality: Allow researchers from a COST participating country to visit an institution based in another COST participating country or to a formally approved NNC or IPC institution
- Selection: direct responsibility of the Action
- Duration: minimum 5 working days, maximum 3 months
 - All STSM activities must occur in their entirety within one Grant Period
- Financial support is only a contribution:
 - Allowance per day: maximum of EUR 160
 - Travel costs: maximum of EUR 500
 - In total a maximum of **EUR 2500** for up to three months

Exception:

Early Stage Researchers (PhD + 8 years) can claim up to maximum **EUR 3500** between 91 days and maximum 6 months

STSM – from where to where?

Home Institution	Host Institution
From a Participating COST Country or Cooperation State	To another Participating COST Country or Cooperation State
	To an approved NNC institution
	To an approved IPC institution
From an approved NNC institution	To an approved Specific organisation
	To a Participating COST Country or Cooperation State
From an approved European RTD Organisation	To a Participating COST Country or Cooperation State

**RSTSM = STSM with Reciprocal Agreement Country =
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Training Schools

- **Objective:** Provide dissemination of Action activities and intensive training, especially for young researchers
- **Location:** COST Country that accepted the MoU or an approved NNC Institution
- **Duration:** normally between 3 days and 2 weeks
- **Support for:**
 - Organisation: local organiser support (**LOS**) can be claimed
 - **Trainers:** regular COST reimbursement rules (travel, accommodation and meals reimbursement), no honoraria
 - **Trainees:** fixed grants – maximum grant EUR 1500



Training Schools- Eligibility

- **Trainers eligible for reimbursement**
 - From participating COST Countries
 - From approved NNC Institutions
 - From approved IPC Institutions
 - From approved European RTD Organisation
 - Up to a Maximum of 4 invited speakers can be invited as Trainers for any individual Training School

- **Trainees eligible for reimbursement:**
 - From COST Countries
 - From approved NNC Institutions
 - From approved European RTD Organisations

Dissemination and publications

Action's budget support for:

- production of dissemination tools and publications
 - books, special journal issues, conference proceedings, CDs (..)
- Action Website

Out of the Action's own budget (financed by the COST Office in the last Grant Period):

- Final Action Publication
 - up to 10.000 EUR (net of VAT)
 - two offers if above EUR 3.000
 - to be inserted in the narrative part of the Work & Budget Plan and requested by Email to the Science Officer 6 months before the end of the Action

Graphic design, translation costs are non eligible

VAT non eligible



Bank Charges

- Bank charges incurred when grant payments are received by the Grant Holder Institution are absorbed by the Grant Holder Institution
- Bank charges incurred due to currency transfers made to eligible participants are eligible and can be claimed under the budget line: Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities (OERSA) – Such charges should be encoded as bank fees
- Bank charges incurred due to eligible participants providing incorrect bank account information must be deducted from the responsible participants claim



FSAC – Financial, Scientific, Administration and Coordination

- FSAC budget line is a **fixed percentage contribution** afforded by the Grant Holder to support the administrative tasks relating to coordinating approved scientific activities during a given grant period
- The fixed percentage contribution is **up to maximum 15% of the incurred eligible scientific expenditures** and is defined in the approved Work and Budget Plan
- At the end of each grant period, the final FSAC amount is calculated by applying the initially defined and approved FSAC percentage to the actual eligible scientific expenses



Reimbursement Policy – Assumptions

Participants eligible for reimbursement should:

- Choose the most economical means of transportation
- Make their travel arrangements as early as possible upon receipt of the official invitation to the meeting
- Arrive and depart as close as possible to the beginning/end dates of the meeting

Reimbursement policy- What can be claimed?

- ***Flight expenses***

Economy class flight tickets can be reimbursed up to the value of **EUR 1200**

- ***Train or Bus expenses***

First and second class train tickets are eligible to be reimbursed (Supplements for fast trains and sleepers are eligible expenses)

- ***Car travel expenses***

Up to a maximum distance of 2 000 km at EUR 0.20 per km can be claimed by eligible participants

EUR 0.30 per km can be claimed when 2 or more eligible participants are travelling to the approved COST activity - Only the driver can be reimbursed

Reimbursement policy- What can be claimed?

Local transport expenses

transport costs (including public transport expenses) incurred travelling between the following points:

- Home to Airport / train station
- Airport / train station to meeting venue / hotel
- Hotel to meeting venue
- Meeting venue to hotel
- Meeting venue / hotel to airport / train station
- Airport/train station back to home

If the claimed amount is **less than EUR 25** no receipts are **required** to be submitted for reimbursement.

If the claimed amount exceeds EUR 25, receipts justifying the total amount claimed are required

Reimbursement policy- What can be claimed?

- ***Taxi Expenses***

- The use of taxi is allowed when no other means of public transport is available and only when travel is required between 10pm and 7am on the dates of travel
- Up to a **maximum of EUR 80** is eligible for the entire journey when the above conditions have been met

- ***Other eligible expense***

- visa fees relevant to attending the approved Action meetings

Reimbursement policy – Accommodation Expenses

- Accommodation expenses based on **flat rates** only = **maximum of EUR 120** per person per night, breakfast included
- maximum number of nights can be claimed = the number of attended meeting days as confirmed by **the daily signed attendance list** plus 1 night in case the participant arrives the day before the start date of the meeting
- The Management Committee (MC) can decide to reduce the accommodation flat rate for any given meeting. All eligible participants must receive the same flat rate allowance



Reimbursement policy - Meal allowance

- Meals expenses based on flat rates only = maximum of **EUR 20** per person per meal
- A **maximum of 2 meals per day (lunch and dinner)** can be claimed
- Meal allowance depends on the participants travel times
- Meals provided by the Local Organizer (or by a meeting sponsor) have to be deducted by the participant's meal allowance
- The Management Committee (MC) can decide to reduce the meal allowance flat rate for each given meeting. All eligible participants must receive the same flat rate allowance



Meeting Participation - Non-eligible expenses

- Registration, honorarium or lecture fees (Except for approved Dissemination meetings – conference fees are eligible)
- Transportation expenses associated with travelling to an embassy or consulate to obtain a visa
- Life and medical insurance
- Travel cancelation insurance
- Luggage insurance
- Overnight stay during a trip by car, fuel costs, road tolls and car rental costs
- Wi-Fi, telephone, internet and minibar consumption
- Printing costs, postage expenses
- Regional or national taxation fees, stamp duty expenses

Meetings - Reimbursement Procedure

1st MC Meeting

- Reimbursements will be processed directly by COST Office (no impact on the Action's budget)

After 1st MC Meeting:

- Reimbursements linked to approved COST activities set up in the signed Work and Budget Plan will be processed by the **Grant Holder** via our online management tool (e-COST), **subject to the MC Chair approval and in compliance with** the COST rules for reimbursement set up in **the COST Vademecum – Part 1**
- **MC Chair** (or Vice Chair only if the Chair and Grant Holder are of the same institution) on behalf of the MC must approve the final list of participants and their eligibility status for each approved meeting
- After each meeting, the MC Chair (or Vice Chair only if the Chair and Grant Holder are of the same institution) must approve the list of participants to be reimbursed



Travel Reimbursement Form

- On-line registration for personal and bank details:
<https://e-services.cost.eu>
- Accept the invitation sent out via e-COST and sign the relevant **attendance list** during the meeting – No signature means no reimbursement
- Complete online all expenses and download the Travel Reimbursement Form (TRR) **after** the meeting (claim available through the link in the invitation e-mail)
- Signed original claim submitted to the grant holder after the meeting along with readable copies of travel tickets
- Deadline for form submission = **30 days** from end date of meeting

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



Local Organizer Support (LOS)

- LOS is a contribution to the overall expenses for conferences and workshops organisation
- LOS is only paid to an institution account (no personal account)
- LOS is based on the Signed Attendance list, regardless of the eligibility status

Local Organizer Support (LOS)

Two modalities to claim the LOS

- ✓ You can claim a **lump sum of 20 EUR** per participant/per each day as evidenced by the daily signed attendance list
 - Up to a maximum of EUR 5 000
 - No invoices are required
- ✓ You can submit an **LOS claim based on actual eligible expenses (VAT cannot be claimed)**
 - Up to a maximum of EUR 10 000
 - Invoices must be uploaded in e-COST
 - A final breakdown of expenses is required
 - Only to be considered if the eligible expenses cannot be covered by the lump sum modality or if the claimable amount is above EUR 5000

Local Organizer Support (LOS) - Eligibility

LOS non-eligible expenses

VAT and any other indirect taxes

Any meal exceeding the single meal limit

Hotel group reservations

Translation and editing costs

Transportation expenses without relevant scientific justification

Purchase of technical equipment and IT devices (e.g. Mobile phones, computers, printers...)

Any additional expenses not listed in the list of eligible expenses

LOS eligible expenses

Rental of room & technical equipment;

Photocopying, printing of programmes, book of abstracts, proceedings, etc.;

Phone, fax, mailing for announcements;

Support of administrative cost - up to a maximum 15% of the total LOS amount claimed;

Field trips if relevant to the topic of the meeting and scientifically justified;

Coffee breaks and light refreshments including light lunches (such as sandwiches), which will have to be deducted from the daily allowance of the reimbursed participants;

One single networking meal (lunch or dinner) for the entire meeting duration, which will have to be deducted from the daily allowance of the reimbursed participants;

Consumables purchased for Training Schools such as laboratory materials, rental of scientific equipment. The quantity purchased shall be coherent with the number of participants.



COST Grant System



COST Grant System

- Assumptions
- The Grant holder
- Procedures & payments
- Financial Reporting
- Grant management tool – e-COST
- COST Grant workplan

COST Grant System (CGS) - Assumptions

COST Actions are administered under the framework of the COST Grant system (CGS) driven by the following principles:

- The **Action Grant Agreement** between COST and the Grant Holder determines the obligations of the Grant Holder to COST
- **Annex A** of the Action Grant Agreement is drawn from a **Work and Budget plan** detailing the nature and the estimated expenses of the scientific activities to be performed during the Grant Period
- Funds are administered by an **elected Grant Holder**
- Strict adherence to the administrative rules and guidelines set out in the **COST Vademecum Part 1: COST Action**
- Use of **e-COST** is mandatory

CGS - Process

- **During the 1st MC Meeting**
 - Election of the Action Chair and the Vice Chair (not from the same institution)
 - Election of the Grant Holder, from one of the institutions of the MC members
 - Election of the STSM coordinator (if needed)
 - COST presentation of Work and Budget Plan
- **After the 1st 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 how to use the e-COST management platform



CGS - Grant Holder

- The Grant Holder must be an institution to which one of the Management Committee (MC) members holds an affiliation
- The Grant Holder must be a legal entity. It cannot be an individual
- The Grant Holder must be solvent and financially stable
- The Grant Holder must have the capacity to support the coordination of the Action in line with MC decisions and the administrative rules and guidelines set out in COST Vademecum Part 1: COST Action
- The Grant Holder must be able to comply with local taxation schemes and COST flat rates reimbursing rule
- The Grant Holder must ensure 3 positions:
 - **Legal representative** = legal authority to sign the Grant Agreement
 - **Financial Representative** = legal authority to approve and sign off financial reports
 - **Grant Manager** = in charge of the administrative management of the Action

CGS - Grant Holder tasks

- **Scientific Coordination tasks:** Support the Action Chair and vice Chair when coordinating meetings: distributing agendas, sending invitations, drafting Management Committee (MC) meeting minutes (if appointed to do so), collecting signed attendance lists.
- **Administrative and Financial tasks:** Collecting, verifying and archiving administrative documents required to processing reimbursements and payments linked to approved COST activities in line with the rules specified in the COST Vademecum Part 1: COST Action
- **Ensure separation of powers:** in cases when the Action Chair is affiliated to the Grant Holder, the task of committing funds for approved activities should be performed by the Action vice-Chair



CGS – Procedures & payments

- Four years rolling contract with the Grant holder
 - Grant Agreement and Work and Budget Plan for each grant period specify the **maximum** financial contribution provided by COST (the Grant Amount)
 - No carry forward from last grant period underspent budget

- Annual instalments
 - **First Grant Payment:** 65% of the grant minus the underspend from the previous Grant Period
 - **Second Grant payment:** up to 35% on request



CGS – Financial Reporting

Intermediate Financial Report (IFR):

- To be submitted between month 6 and 8 of the grant period
- Linked to the request for the second grant payment
- Must also contain an updated forecast which requires the Grant Manager to include all of remaining approved scientific activities up to the end date of the respective grant period

Yearly Financial Report (YFR):

- To be submitted within 60 days from the end date of the respective grant period
- Must contain only Actuals (recorded payments) not pending claims (Accruals)
- Payments linked to the subsequent grant periods cannot be processed unless the YFR from the previous grant period is finalised and approved by COST

Grant Management Tool (e-COST)

- e-COST is an online platform which allows the Grant Holder to manage the COST Action's activities
- e-COST is not a payment tool in itself
- e-COST is used to encode approved activities – sending out invitations, grant letters, preparation of MC agendas, preparation of participant to be reimbursed lists
- e-COST allows to control deviations
- e-COST gives an up-to –date financial status of Action
- e-COST provides automatic generation of Financial Reporting

CGS – Annual Work & Budget Plan

Approved by MC and COST Office

- Action objectives for the running Grant Period
- List of the COST Networking tools (as detailed as possible, with dates, locations, nr of participants)
- Estimation of the budget for each activities

In case of any change of work/budget plan: MC approval and COST notification are needed

COST IS1308 Tentative Budget

Tentative Budget IS1308

- **Up to maximum EUR 151,000.00** for 12 months (based on 24 countries) (now increased to 162.00, based on 25 Countries)
- Tentative Start of the Grant Period: **1.07.2014 - 30.06.2015**
- ***The provisional budget of EUR 151,000.00 is subject to the ongoing negotiation on COST H2020 Grant Agreement between the European Commission and the COST Association and may be subject to modifications at a later stage by the COST Association (in principle before the Action Grant Agreement can be signed)***

Final considerations: Maximise your Budget

When choosing meeting locations:

- Assess where the Action can avail of low cost accommodation so that the Management Committee (MC) can reduce the accommodation flat rate for the given meeting
- Consider the availability of cheap public transport in the locality of the meeting and the availability of low cost airlines that service the meeting venue
- Seek to avail of research institutions linked to MC Members that can avoid meeting room expenses and expensive coffee breaks and lunches

For MC Meetings be aware that usually only 80% of the MC attends

Subject to rooms being available, meetings can also in theory be held at the COST premises

Send Invitations to eligible participants as early as possible

Final Considerations: action's management

- Spend your entire grant on approved scientific activities
- Unspent funds cannot be carried forward to the subsequent grant period and will be reclaimed by COST and utilised by other COST Actions
- Always send the minutes of the MC meetings to COST and upload on e-COST
- Additional activities (meetings, Training Schools) not detailed in the Work and Budget plan need approval from the Action Science Officer
- Derogation from the eligibility rules require COST approval prior to the expenses being incurred

ACRONYMS (1/2)

AO	Administrative Officer
APC	Annual Progress Conference
BMBS	Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences (Domain)
CGA	COST Grant Agreement
CGS	COST Grant System
CG	Core Group
CMST	Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies (Domain)
CNC	COST National Coordinator
CSO	Committee of Senior Officials
DC	Domain Committee
DCCCCM	Domain Committee Chairs Cluster Consensus Meeting
EEP	External Experts Panel
ESF	European Science Foundation
ESR	Early Stage Researcher
ESSEM	Earth System Science and Environmental Management (Domain)
FA	Food and Agriculture (Domain)
FPS	Forests, their Products and Services (Domain)
GH	Grant Holder
HOSO	Head Of Science Operations

ACRONYMS (2/2)

ICT	Information and Communication Technologies (Domain)
IE	Interdisciplinary Exploratoria
ISCH	Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health (Domain)
JAF	Judiciaire, Administratif, Financière, Working party of Legal, Administrative and Financial Affairs within COST (CSO Executive Group)
JSO	Junior Science Officer
MC	Management Committee
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPNS	Materials, Physical and Nanosciences (Domain)
SAO	Senior Administration Officer
SO	Science Officer
SSO	Senior Science Officer
STSM	Short-Term Scientific Mission
TD	Trans-Domain
TDP	Trans-Domain Proposal
TDP-SAB	Trans-Domain Proposal Standing Assessment Body
ToR	Terms of Reference
TUD	Transport and Urban Development (Domain)
WG	Working Group

Thank you for your attention!

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