



Growing **ideas** through **networks**



What is the COST Programme?

COST is an EU-funded programme which enables researchers and innovators to set up their interdisciplinary research networks in Europe and beyond. We provide funds for organising conferences, meetings, training schools, short scientific exchanges and other networking activities in a wide range of scientific topics. By creating open spaces where people and ideas can grow, we are unlocking the full potential of science.

COST does not fund research, but provides support for networking activities carried out within COST Actions. COST invites researchers in Europe and beyond to submit proposals for Actions through a continuous open call, no matter what their field of interest.



“We got very good ideas from the Action. What we achieved in several three-day meetings was better than from months of sending emails.”

Liviu Gabriel Părău, Institute of Pharmacy and Molecular Biotechnology, Heidelberg University, PhD researcher in avian genomics, M.Sc. Animal personality

What is a COST Action?

Since its inception, COST has operated according to one main instrument, the COST Action.

A COST Action is a network:

- open to researchers and innovators;
- collaborating in a field of science and technology of common interest to at least seven COST Members/Cooperating Member*;
- based on a joint work programme lasting four years;
- answering to the COST open call for proposals.

A COST Action is open to:

- all fields of science and technology (including interdisciplinary and new and emerging fields);
- all types of institutions (academia, public institutions, SME/industry, NGO, European/international organisations, etc.);
- all career stages (both young and experienced);
- all countries (based on mutual benefit). Non-COST countries are spread across the Near Neighbour Countries* and International Partner Countries*. Participants in those countries can take part in all networking activities. For further information visit <https://www.cost.eu/who-we-are/cost-strategy/international-cooperation/>

*See map on page 7.

COST Action yearly funding

The average COST Action support is EUR 134,500 per annum for participation by typically 30 COST Members. The funds are provided via an annual grant agreement over a four-year period.

Top-up funding is available for COST Actions with participants from Near Neighbour Countries.

Networking tools



Meetings, workshops and conferences – These are organised by the COST Action management committees in any COST country participating in the network and are open to the entire scientific community.



Short-term scientific missions (STSMs) – These are exchange visits between researchers in the network which enable scientists to visit an institution or laboratory in another COST Member.



Training schools – They offer training in a relevant or new subject at one of the Action's laboratories which provides unique equipment and/or know-how.



Dissemination activities – COST encourages and supports Action participants to disseminate the outcome of their research to other COST science and technology networks, the wider scientific community, policymakers, the media, and society at large, through publications, electronic media, news releases, events, success story releases, etc.

Who can participate?

Researchers and innovators from universities, public and private institutions, NGOs, industry and SMEs. Particular emphasis is placed on activities involving researchers from less-research-intensive COST countries* (ITCs) with a view to increasing their participation.

Researchers from Near Neighbour Countries and International Partner Countries can also take part in a COST Action on the basis of mutual benefit.

For more information on international cooperation, please see: http://www.cost.eu/global_networking

How do I join?

There are two options:

- **Join an existing Action.** Download our COST Action's booklet here http://www.cost.eu/about_cost (under useful links), find the network that better matches your scientific expertise and get in touch with the chair of the network that you would like to join.
- **Create your own network.** Submit a COST Action proposal at any time of the year. Proposals are collected up to twice a year. The submission, evaluation, selection and approval (SESA) procedure ensures a simple, transparent and competitive evaluation and selection process, in line with COST's bottom-up, open¹ and inclusive² principles.

Proposers benefit from a **one-stage submission** via the e-COST online tool. The proposal requires filling in a few sections online and uploading a technical annex of up to 15 pages.

A proposal evaluation comprises:

- a remote peer-review evaluation by three independent external experts;
- a review and validation of the evaluation reports by ad-hoc review panels. Their composition is tailored to the topics and aims of the proposals received during the open calls. Their members are selected from a pool of researchers from each COST Member who have been nominated by the COST National Coordinator.

Finally, the Scientific Committee, whose members are appointed by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) – one per COST Member – selects the final proposals to be submitted to the CSO for approval.

Guidelines for the SESA procedure and evaluation criteria, as well as the technical annex template, are available on the open call page: www.cost.eu/opencall.

1. Participation in COST Actions is open to all types of participants (e.g. from academia, industry, international research organisations, relevant civic groups, etc., wherever they are located and at all career levels).

2. COST aims to support the inclusion of excellent researchers who, due to their age, gender or geographical location, experience difficulties in networking internationally.

*See pages 6-7.

Programme outreach

38 COST Members:

Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The countries in green are the less-research-intensive COST Members, also known as inclusiveness targeted countries (ITCs).

1 Cooperating Member:

Israel

1 International Partner Member:

South Africa

COST Near Neighbour Countries

Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Kosovo*, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestine**, Russia, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

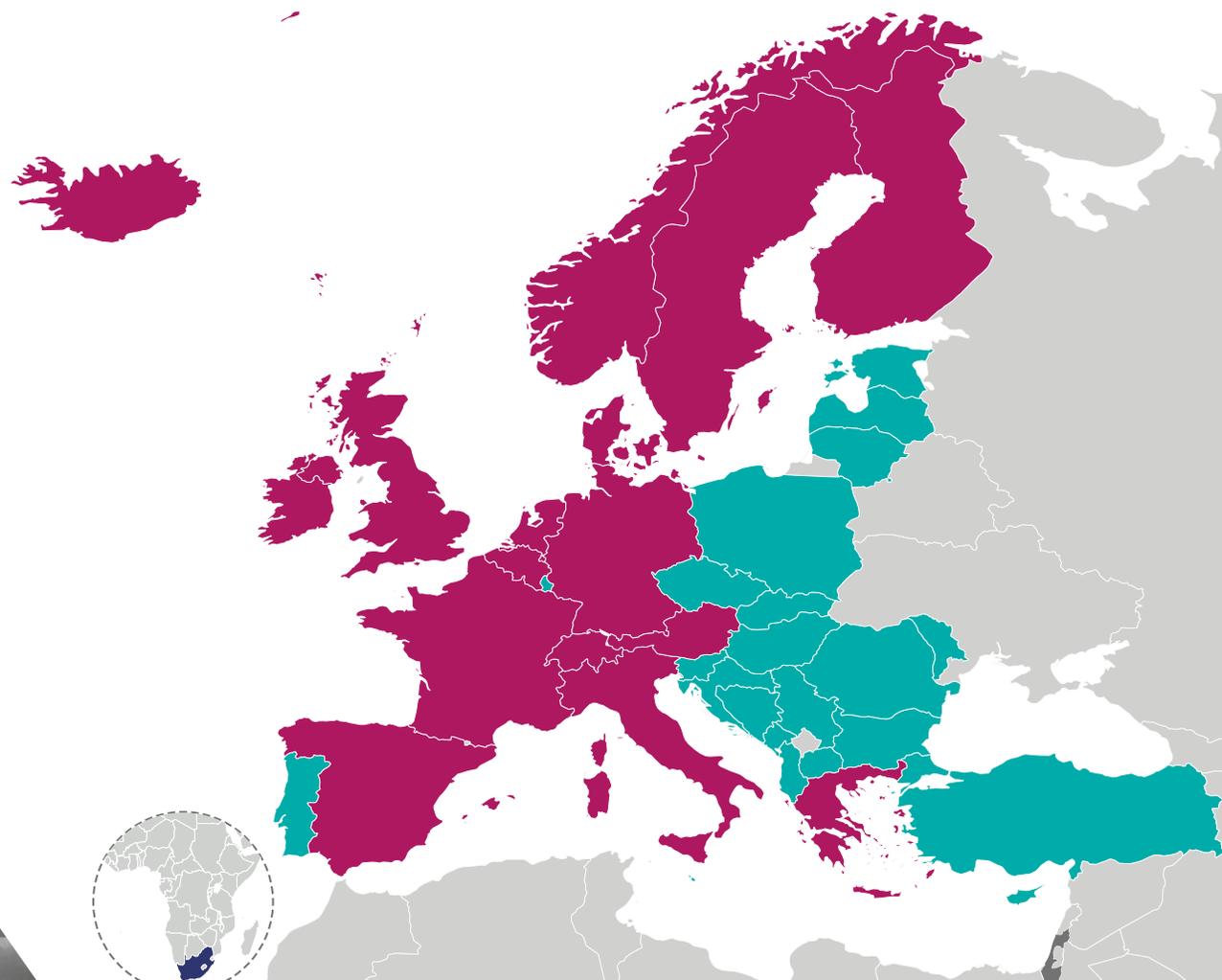
** This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the EU Member States on this issue.

COST International Partner Countries

Any other country (worldwide) that it is not included in the previous list.

Excellence and inclusiveness policy

This policy is tailored to foster scientific excellence throughout Europe by providing cooperation opportunities for researchers and innovators in 22 ITCs. They are also known as inclusiveness target countries, which COST helps to connect to knowledge hubs in the European Research Area.



“ PARSEME COST Action is one of the best things that happened to me in my academic career. ”

Dr Carla Parra Escartín, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow, Dublin City University

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