

Tips and tricks for the preparation of COST action

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First, let me be honest : There is unfortunately no magic recipe to prepare a successful application, except perhaps: follow the guidelines as closely as possible...

The selection is organised in three steps

- Step 1: Evaluation by Independent External Experts
- Step 2: Revision and Quality Check of Consensus
Reports by ad hoc Review Panels
- Step 3: Establishment of a shortlist of selected
proposals by COST Scientific Committee (SC)

Step 0 : Before submission

Read carefully the documents on the page:

<https://www.cost.eu/funding/how-to-get-funding/documents-and-guidelines/>

Especially, the documents in the section “COST
implementation rules”

Step 0: You will find the eligibility criteria: Language, Anonymous application, Minimal number of partners, Minimal number of partner from Inclusiveness Target Countries, Ethical principles, word and page limits, ...

The non-respect of these eligibility criteria will kick your application out of the selection process even before step 1!

Step 1: Evaluation by Independent External Experts

The IEE are asked to give a mark (0-5) for 10 criteria.

S&T EXCELLENCE	NETWORKING EXCELLENCE	IMPACT	IMPLEMENTATION
Total marks for the section = 15 points	Total marks for the section = 15 points	Total marks for the section = 15 points	Total marks for the section = 5 points
TOTAL MARKS AWARDED = 0 - 50 points OVERALL THRESHOLD = 34 points			

Step 1: It is however usually not enough to care about the S&T excellence, the network excellence, the impact and the implementation!

You really should have a very close look to the 10 criteria in the file (Q1-Q10).

Step 1: Building your proposal in such a way that these 10 questions are explicitly answered is probably the trick to improve your marks from the IEE.

Step 2: There is no much you can do there... It is mostly a quality and consistency check of the evaluations by the IEE.

Step 3: In the framework of the selection, the Scientific Committee mainly analyses if the proposals respond to COST Mission and Policy.

The best ranked (above a cut-off mark) proposals are automatically selected but their number is less than the number of financeable proposals.

Step 3: Proposals with a mark equal to the cut-off mark, one point less than the cut-off mark or two points less than the cut-off mark are analysed in details by the SC in order to select those which best respond to COST Mission and Policy

Step 3: The mark is then “forgotten” at this stage.

Only the best response to COST Mission and Policy matters:

Promoting geographical (Integrated Target Countries), age (Early Career Investigators) and gender balance throughout its activities and operations.

Of course, some IEE may be sensitive to the response to the COST Mission and Policy. So, caring about them might also be useful at step 1.

Thank you for your attention

Spare slides Q1-Q10

Q1: Does the proposal demonstrate a comprehensive command of the state of the art in the field and present a relevant and timely challenge?

Q2: Does the proposal describe an innovative approach to the challenge that advances the state of the art in the field?

Q3: Are the objectives presented relevant to the challenge, clear and ambitious?

Spare slides Q1-Q10

Q4: Does networking bring added value in tackling the challenge in relation to existing efforts at the European and/or international level?

Q5: Does the proposed network contain, or present a credible plan for securing, the critical mass and expertise for achieving the objectives and thus addressing the challenge?

Q6: Does the proposal identify the most relevant stakeholders and present a clear plan to involve them as Action participants?

Spare slides Q1-Q10

Q7: Does the proposal clearly identify relevant and realistic impacts for science, society and/or competitiveness (including potential innovations and/or breakthroughs)

Q8: Does the proposed networking clearly contribute to knowledge creation, transfer of knowledge and career development?

Q9: Is the plan for dissemination and/or exploitation of results clear and attainable and does it contribute to the dialogue between science and the general public or policy?

Q10: Is the work plan (WGs, tasks, activities, timeframe, deliverables and risk analysis) appropriate to ensure the achievement of the objectives?