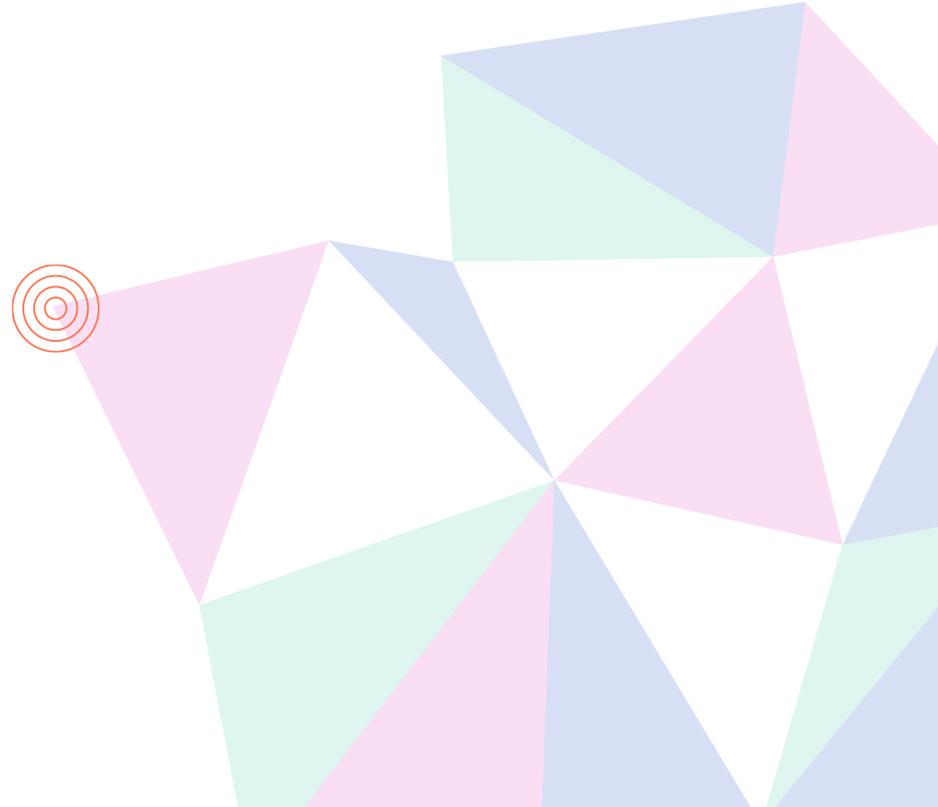


# COST Info Day

Dr Ronald de Bruin – COST Director  
Bart Veys – Head of Policy



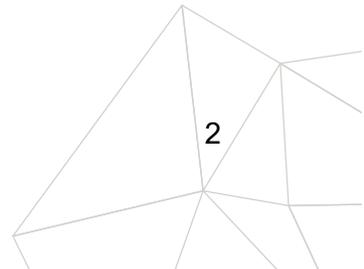
17 March 2026 – Brussels



# Overview Presentation



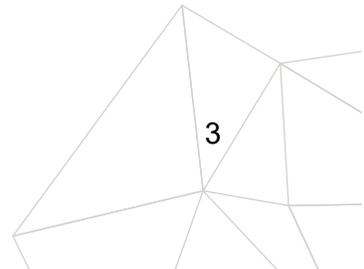
- COST: A General Introduction
- What are COST Actions?
- What is funded?
- How to get involved?



# Overview Presentation



- **COST: A General Introduction**
- What are COST Actions?
- What is funded?
- How to get involved?



# European Cooperation in Science & Technology

COST provides networking opportunities for researchers and innovators in order to strengthen Europe's capacity to address scientific, technological and societal challenges



## ALL FIELDS OF S&T

(mono- or interdisciplinary, new and emerging fields)



## ALL PARTNERS

(academia, public organisation, industry, NGO, International Organisations)



## BOTTOM-UP APPROACH



## ALL CAREER STAGES

(young and experienced researchers)



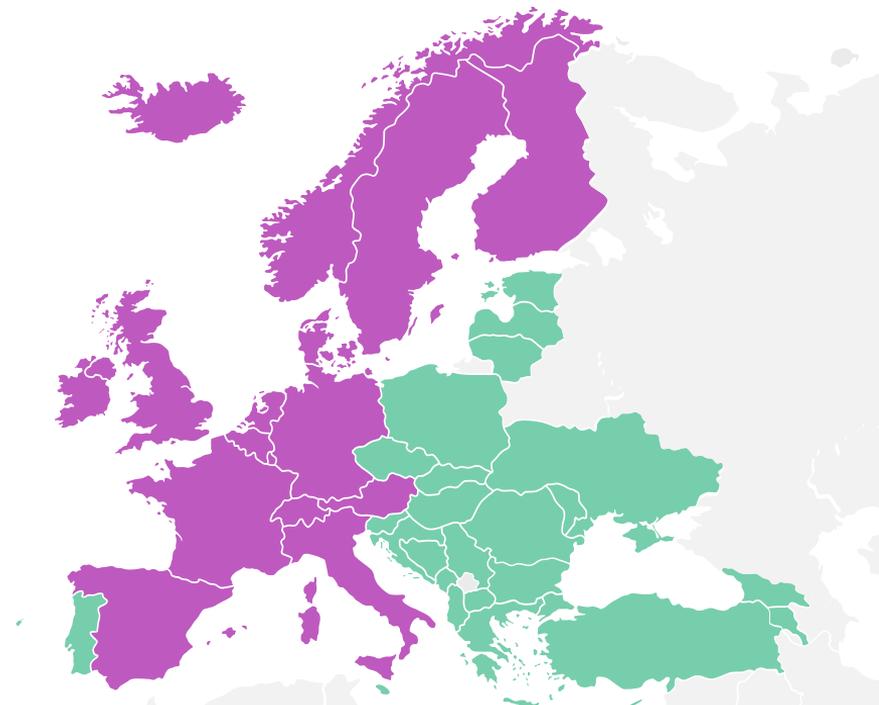
## ALL COUNTRIES

- 41 COST Members  
+ 1 Cooperating Member
- 14 Near Neighbour Countries
- Global cooperation

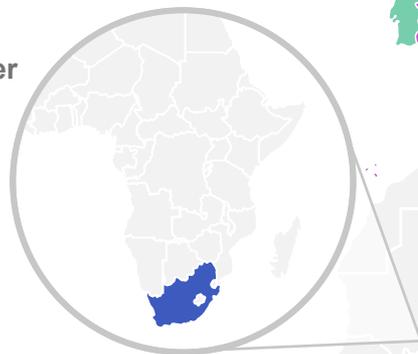
# COST Membership

## 41 Full COST Members

- |                          |                           |                                   |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ● Albania                | ● Germany                 | ● The Republic of North Macedonia |
| ● Armenia                | ● Greece                  | ● Norway                          |
| ● Austria                | ● Hungary*                | ● Poland                          |
| ● Belgium                | ● Iceland                 | ● Portugal                        |
| ● Bosnia and Herzegovina | ● Ireland                 | ● Romania                         |
| ● Bulgaria               | ● Italy                   | ● Serbia                          |
| ● Croatia                | ● Latvia                  | ● Slovakia                        |
| ● Cyprus                 | ● Lithuania               | ● Slovenia                        |
| ● Czech Republic         | ● Luxembourg              | ● Spain                           |
| ● Denmark                | ● Malta                   | ● Sweden                          |
| ● Estonia                | ● The Republic of Moldova | ● Switzerland                     |
| ● Finland                | ● Montenegro              | ● Türkiye                         |
| ● France                 | ● The Netherlands         | ● Ukraine                         |
| ● Georgia                |                           | ● United Kingdom                  |

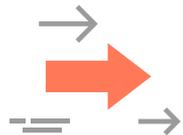


- |                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>1</b> Cooperating Member | <b>1</b> Partner Member |
| ● Israel                    | ● South Africa          |



- COST Members non-ITCs (Inclusiveness Target Countries)
- COST Members ITCs
- COST Cooperating Member
- COST Partner Member

# Key figures



**277**  
Running  
Actions



**60,000**  
Researchers involved  
in COST Actions



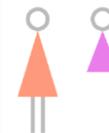
**200+**  
Average number of  
researchers per Action



**42%**  
Share of young  
researchers in COST  
Actions



**19**  
Average number of widening  
countries per COST Action



**52%**  
Leadership positions  
occupied by female  
researchers



**€ 700.000**  
Average budget  
of a COST Action (4 years)





# COST in Horizon Europe



## Horizon Europe

Widening participation  
and strengthening the  
European Research  
Area pillar



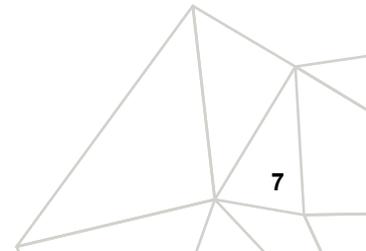
## COST activities

are implemented by the  
COST Association,  
under a Framework  
Partnership Agreement  
and Specific Grant  
Agreements with the  
European Commission



## COST Actions

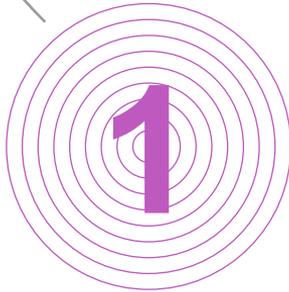
receive budget under  
Third Party Funding





# Role of COST in the ERA

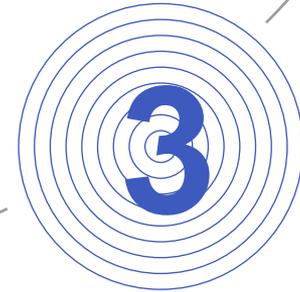
## 3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



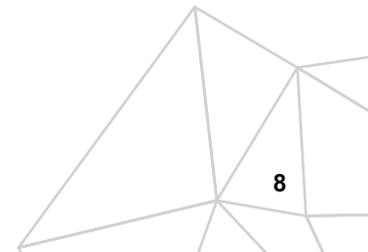
Promoting and spreading **excellence**



Fostering **interdisciplinary** research for breakthrough science



Empowering and retaining **young researchers**

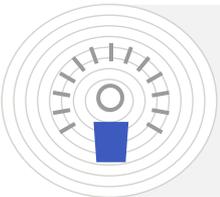


# COST Actions and their Impact



## Scientific and societal impact

- Scientific discoveries and breakthroughs, development of new research infrastructures, adoption of common standards, technological applications in the form of products and services, etc.



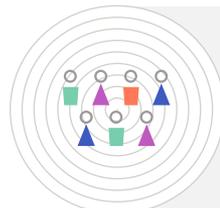
## Research careers

- 85% of researchers participating in COST Actions indicate that participation has led to career advancement



## Follow-up funding

- Horizon 2020 reported success rate: 39% (on a yearly basis, around €450 million of approved common research projects spin off from ending Actions)



## Co-Publications

- Co-publications between active COST Action participants see an increase of about 55% compared to general co-publications

# Overview Presentation



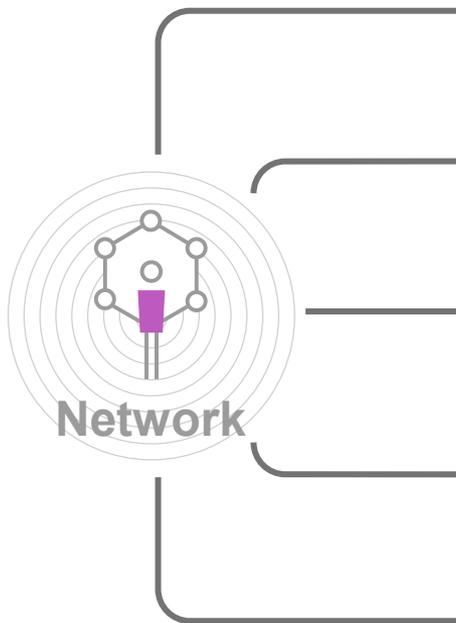
- COST: A General Introduction
- **What are COST Actions?**
- What is funded?
- How to get involved?

# COST Actions

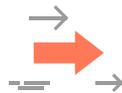
AN EFFICIENT NETWORKING TOOL

**COST provides funding**  
for research coordination  
and capacity building  
activities

COST is not funding  
research itself,  
but pooling resources  
and research results  
by networking



Memorandum  
of Understanding



4 years



Min 7 countries, average  
participation 34 countries



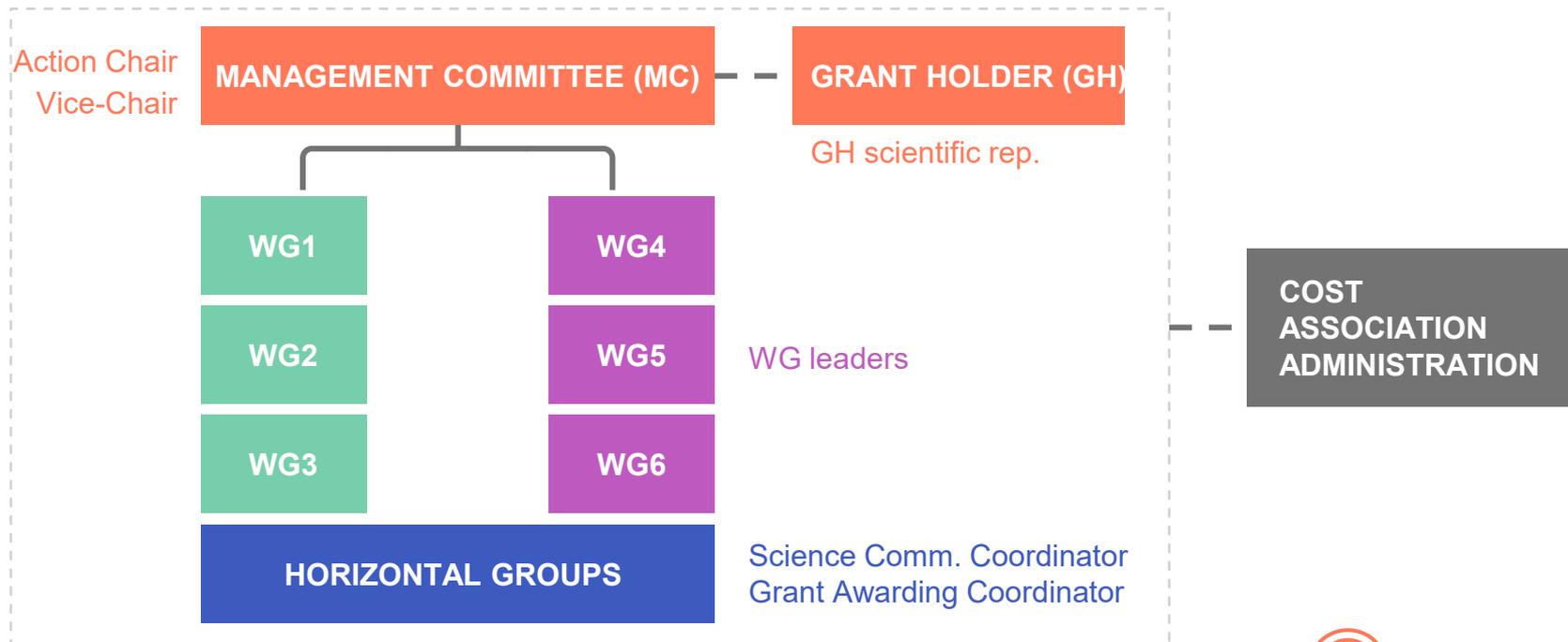
Research coordination  
and capacity building activities



~ €700.000 over lifetime

# COST Action structure

## LEADERSHIP POSITIONS





Success stories

Long read: shaping the future of lab animal monitoring

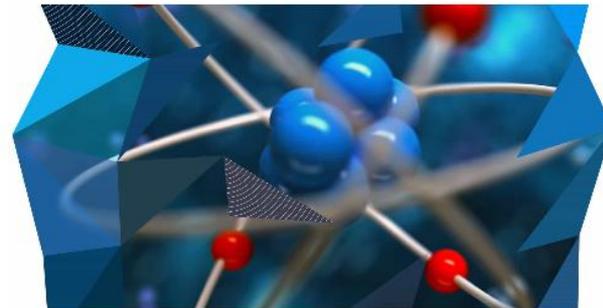
September 29, 2025



Success stories

Advancing cancer treatment with COST Actions

September 18, 2025



Success stories

The COST Action TIPICQA is trapping the future

September 1, 2025



Success stories

COST Actions: green solutions for a hot problem

August 26, 2025



Success stories

Shaping sustainable cities

August 19, 2025



Success stories

Supporting minority rights without borders

July 22, 2025

# Belgium in COST

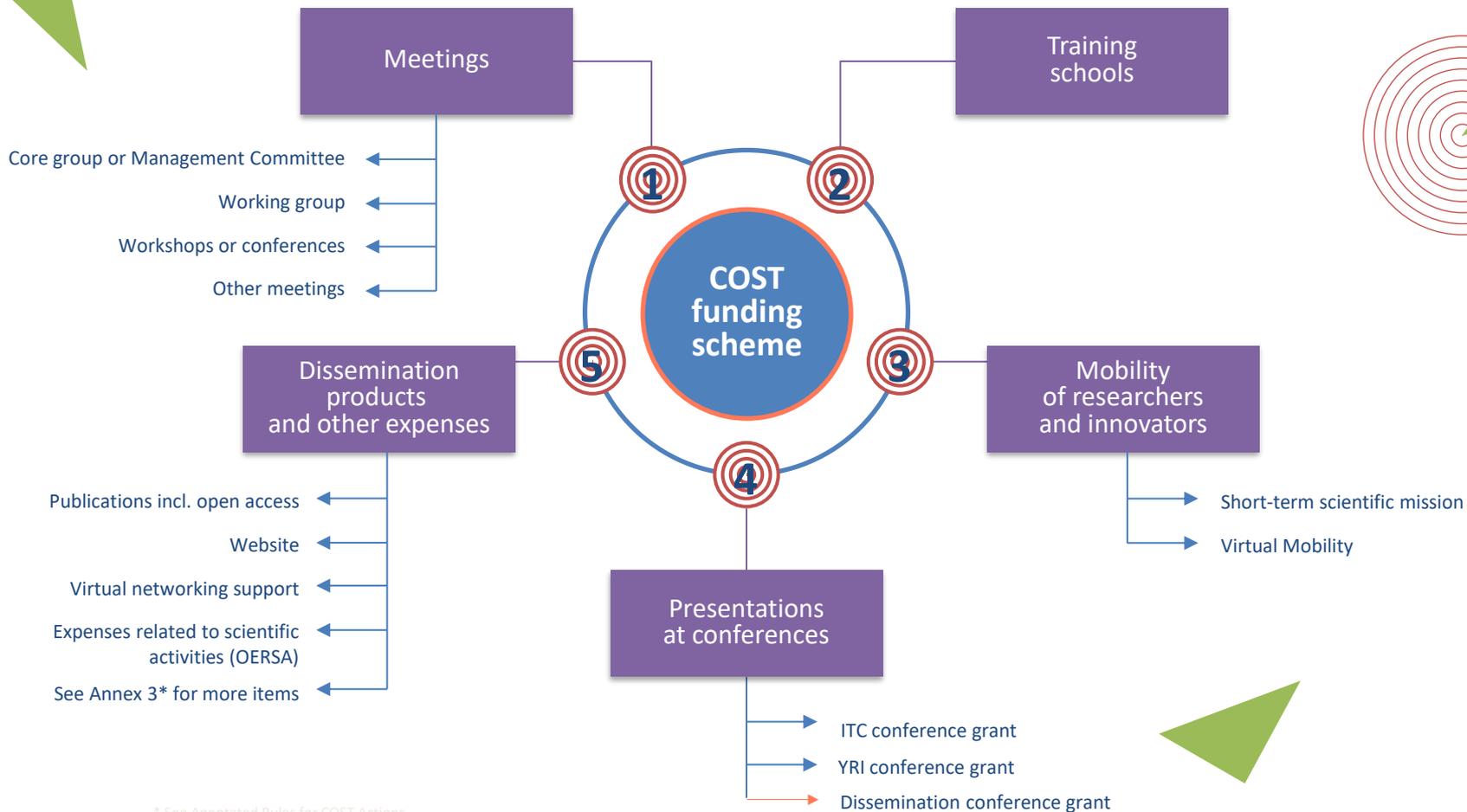


- Founding member of COST (1971)
- Country representation in 90% of the COST Actions
- More than 670 researchers affiliated with Belgian institutions participated in COST Action activities (2025)
  - 94 of those hold leadership positions
  - 60% are young researchers
- In 2025, 29 proposals were led by Belgian affiliated researchers

# Overview Presentation



- COST: A General Introduction
- What are COST Actions?
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\* See Annotated Rules for COST Actions

# Events



## Meetings

- Management Committee and Working Group members, Invited Speakers, ad hoc members

## Training Schools

- Trainers / Trainees

Travel reimbursement of the expenses incurred for attending COST events + support for the local organiser

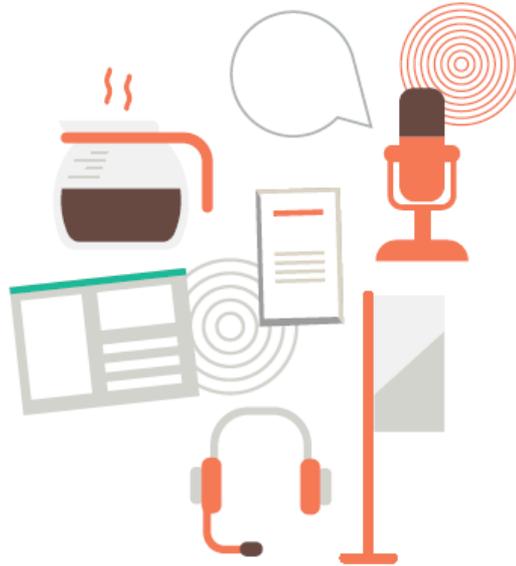


# Local organiser Support (LOS)

LOS is the financial contribution for the organisation of COST Action meetings and training schools, whether face-to-face, on-line or hybrid

## What does LOS cover? (Non-exhaustive list)

- ▶ Room rental, audio-visual materials, and poster stands
- ▶ Refreshments
- ▶ Event materials
- ▶ Admin and technical support



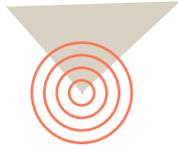
## USEFUL TO KNOW



- ▶ LOS grant depends on the number of participants and the duration of the event
- ▶ The LOS grant is paid AFTER the event and ONLY to the institutional bank account
- ▶ The LOS does not cover the VAT

[Annotated Rules](#)  
[Step-by-Step LOS in e-COST](#)  
[FAQ on LOS](#)

# Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM)



## WHAT:

- Exchange visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, strengthening existing networks, fostering collaboration between COST Action participants
- Build capacity
- More than 90% of STSMs take place in COST countries, but can take place anywhere in the world

## WHERE:

To a host organisation located in a **different** country than the country of affiliation

## Grant AMOUNT:

**Up to 4000 EUR,**  
paid after report approval  
(after the STSM)

# Young Researcher and Innovator Conference Grants



## WHAT:

- Poster or oral Presentation of their own work within the scope of the Action given by a Young Researcher (age below 40)
- Conference Grants support Young Researchers, establish a strong network and increase the visibility of the Action

## WHERE:

To a high-level conference **not organised by the Action itself** anywhere in the world.

## Grant AMOUNT:

Up to 2500 EUR or 500 EUR (virtual), paid after report approval

# Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC) Conference Grants



## WHAT:

- Oral Presentation of the own work by a Researcher **affiliated in an Inclusiveness Target Country / Near Neighbour Country** for their participation in high-level **conferences as Invited Speaker**
- ITC Conference Grants supports Researchers, establish a strong network and increase the visibility of the Action

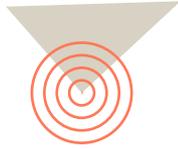
## WHERE:

To a high-level conference **not organised by the Action itself** anywhere in the world.

## Grant AMOUNT:

Up to **2500 EUR** or **500 EUR (virtual)**, paid after report approval

# Dissemination Conference Grants



## WHAT:

- Oral Presentation of the **results of the Action** in high-level conferences as **Invited Speaker**
- To increase the visibility of the Action

## WHERE:

To a high-level conference not organised by the Action itself anywhere in the world

## Grant AMOUNT:

Up to 2500 EUR or 500 EUR (virtual), paid after report approval

# Virtual Mobility (VM) Grant

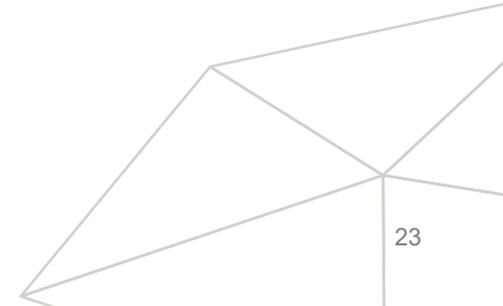


## WHAT:

A collaboration in a virtual setting among Action researchers or innovators to exchange knowledge, learn new techniques, etc.

## Grant AMOUNT:

Up to 1500 EUR,  
paid after report approval (after the VM)





# Dissemination and Communication Products

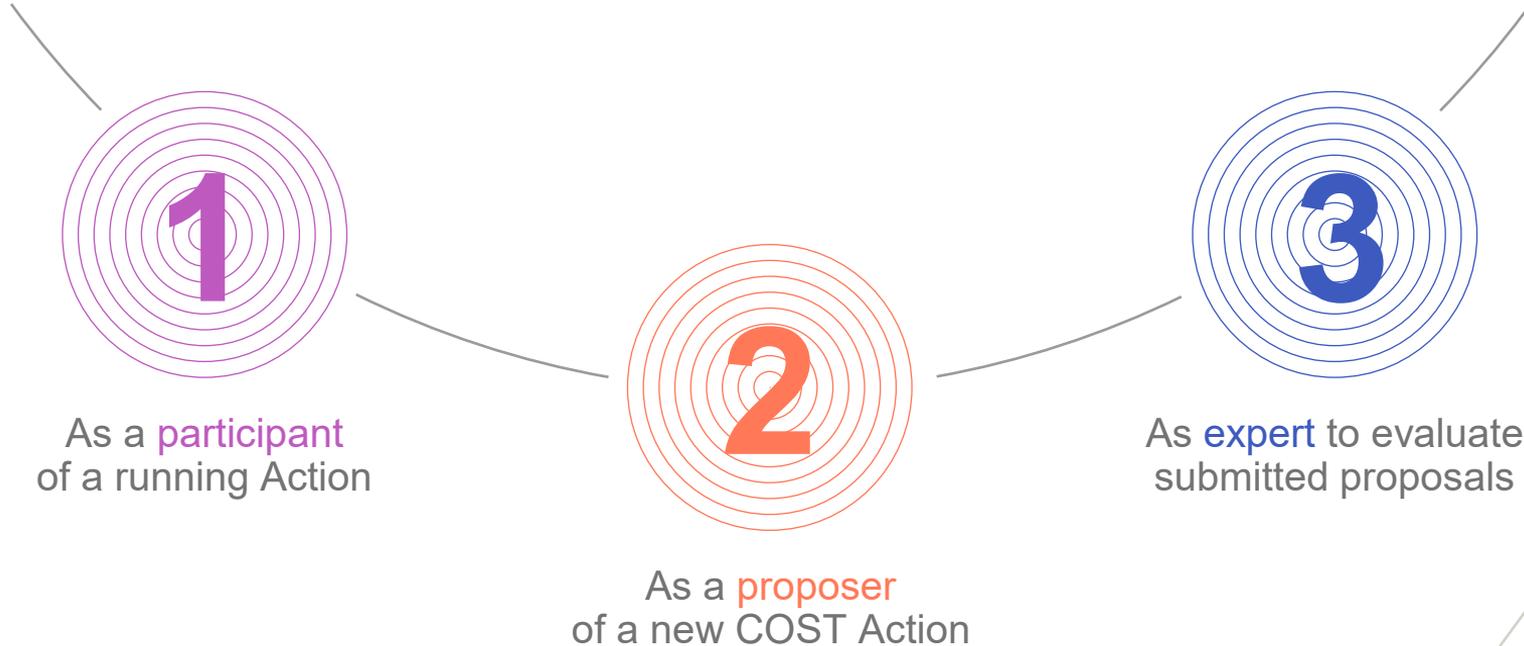
- Scientific publication in Open Access
- Action website
- Action Logo
- Dissemination Materials
- Information materials for external events
- Multimedia Content
- Conference booth in a conference (3<sup>rd</sup> party)

# Overview Presentation



- COST: A General Introduction
- What are COST Actions?
- What is funded?
- **How to get involved?**

# How to get involved?



# 1. As a participant in a running Action (1/2)



## **FIND THE ACTION IN YOUR FIELD**

of interest on the COST website



**READ THE PROJECT PLAN (MoU)** – identify your potential contribution



**BROWSE THE ACTION'S WEBSITE** – check their activities



**IDENTIFY THE OPPORTUNITIES** to join the Action and your contact person



# 1. As a participant in a running Action (2/2)



## **AS A MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (MC) MEMBER**

(contact the COST National Coordinator)



## **AS A WORKING GROUP (WG) PARTICIPANT**

(contact the working group leader)



## **AS A PARTICIPANT IN ACTION ACTIVITIES**

Short-term scientific mission, conference grant, training school, workshop/conference,...

(check the Action's website, contact the chair or the national Management Committee member)

> What are COST Actions?

> **Browse Actions**

> Action Networking tools

Additional Activities for Actions  
COST Connect

> COST Innovators Grant

> Become an external expert

260+ ACTIONS AND 5000+ EXPERTS

# Find your network

Browse Actions

01 02 03 04 05 06



Action or Innovators Grant number or text

Search

Search in Title Only

More filters 

Show: 10 

Order by: Approval Date  

 **CA23157** | 28/10/2024 - 27/10/2028  
European Network for Multiple View Life Cycle Sustainability Assessment (MultiViewLCSA)

 **CA23128** | 28/10/2024 - 27/10/2028  
Connecting Landscape Architecture Archives to enhance European landscape practice, research and education (ConnectLAA)

 **CA23156** | 25/10/2024 - 24/10/2028  
European Network for Sigma-1 Receptor as a Therapeutic Opportunity (SIGMA-1EUROPE)

 **CA23104** | 25/10/2024 - 24/10/2028  
Mainstreaming water reuse into the circular economy paradigm (Water4Reuse)

## Description

Mental health problems are a major issue in Europe and climate change is a force majeure that poses a tangible risk with unforeseeable consequences. Yet, the link between climate change and mental health remains largely unexplored, especially with respect to impact assessment at individual and societal level, and treatment possibilities. *CliMent* aims: a) to better understand how climate change affects mental health in Europe; b) to explore the coping strategies and further develop them; c) to implement short-term behavioural interventions to instigate societal action; and d) to implement long-term ways to promote sustainability. This will be achieved through four working groups (WGs) working in coordination to conduct systematic and scoping reviews, produce surveys and reports, and organise knowledge dissemination activities. WG1 will assess mental health impacts of climate change; WG2 will identify adaptive strategies and treatment possibilities; WG3 will map out short-term behavioural interventions to instigate societal actions; while WG4 will assess long-term strategies to enable sustainability. *CliMent* will harness the potential of the European network and will bridge multiple disciplines to tackle climate change-related mental health challenges. The expected outcomes are manifold and multifaceted including (but not limited to): accumulation and consolidation of scientific evidence; career support for mental health scientists and care providers; empowerment of citizens, educators, and policymakers via Communities of Practice specialised in dealing with the effects of climate change on mental health. As such, *CliMent* will help Europe maintain its individual and societal well-being amidst the challenges posed by climate change.

### Action keywords

Climate Change - Mental Health - Public Health - Europe -

### Action Details

- 📄 MoU - 026/24
- 🏛️ CSO Approval date - 17/05/2024
- 📅 Start date - 29/10/2024
- 📅 End date - 28/10/2028

### How can I participate?

- Read the Action Description [MoU](#)
- Inform the Main Proposer/Chair of your interest ([email](#))
- [Apply](#) to join your Working Groups of interest
- Please note, Management Committee nominations are carried out through the [COST National Coordinators](#)



# Working group member

Working Group members are individuals with an affiliation to a legal entity anywhere in the world.

- The objectives of Working Groups (WG) are to perform the tasks required for a COST Action to fulfil its scientific objectives in line with those objectives defined in the MoU.
- **WG members shall actively participate to the WG activities and coordination of research efforts.**



# Participant in Action Grants

- Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM)
- ITC Conference Grant\*
- Young Researcher and Innovator Conference Grant\*
- Dissemination Conference Grant
- Virtual mobility

The screenshot displays the 'Apply for new Grant' page. On the left is a navigation menu with 'COST Actions', 'My Grant Applications', and 'Grant Applications Monitoring'. The main content area is titled 'Apply for new Grant' and 'Mobility of researchers and innovators'. It features several grant categories, each with a description and a 'Continue' button:

- Short-Term Scientific Mission:** Visit of a host organization located in a different country than the country of affiliation by a Researcher or Innovator for the specific work to be carried out and for a determined period of time. The grantee receives funding for implementing a project with an international team and gains new knowledge or access to equipment or techniques not available in the home institution.
- Virtual Mobility:** Financial support for Researchers or Innovators (with a primary affiliation to an institution located in a COST Full or Cooperating Member country or from a COST Near Neighbour Country) to foster collaboration in a virtual setting, to exchange knowledge, learn new techniques, etc.
- Presentations at conferences organised by third parties:**
  - Young Researcher and Innovator Conference:** Financial support for Young Researchers and Innovators for their participation in high-level conferences fully organised by a third party. The grantee receives support for attending and presenting their work (poster/oral presentation) and can establish new contacts for future collaborations.
  - Inclusiveness Target Countries Conference:** Financial support to applicants affiliated in an Inclusiveness Target Country / Near Neighbour Country for their participation in high-level conferences fully organised by a third party. The grantee receives support for attending and presenting their work (oral presentation) and can establish new contacts for future collaborations.
  - Dissemination Conference:** Financial support to Action participants for their participation in high-level conferences fully organised by a third party, to present the Action, their activities, and results (oral presentation) and for developing new contacts and potential future collaborations.
- Virtual Networking Support:** Assessing and supporting the new forms of collaboration in a virtual and hybrid settings. This aims to be a complement to traditional ways of collaboration within the research and innovation communities and among the members of a given Action.

# 2. As a proposer of a new COST Action

COST OPEN CALL



One-stage **online submission** of proposals (e-COST)

Proposal should focus on S&T Excellence, Networking Excellence, Impact and Implementation

Up to 70 COST Actions approved per collection

**Main** Proposer + **secondary** proposer

Collection date:  
28 October 2026  
12:00 CET (tbc)

[www.COST.eu](http://www.COST.eu)  
[opencall@cost.eu](mailto:opencall@cost.eu)



# Open Call for proposals

TECHNICAL ANNEX



## SECTIONS

### 1. EXCELLENCE in S&T and NETWORKING

## SUB-SECTIONS

- A. Main challenge
- B. Objectives
- C. State-of-the-art
- D. Rationale for choosing networking to address the main challenge
- E. Critical mass of the network

### 2. IMPACT

- A. Impact related to objectives
- B. Involvement of stakeholders
- C. Communication, dissemination and valorisation

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION

- A. Action Structure
- B. Work plan (tasks, activities and timeframe)
- C. Deliverables
- D. Gantt chart

- Downloadable Word template
- Max. 15 pages
- Diagrams and figures accepted



# COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy

## PROMOTING



**GEOGRAPHICAL  
BALANCE** (ITC)



**AGE BALANCE**  
(young researchers)



**GENDER BALANCE**  
throughout its activities



## OBJECTIVES

**1.**

Identifying excellence  
in science and  
technology across  
Europe

**2.**

Increasing research  
communities' access  
to funding and  
infrastructures

**3.**

Triggering structural  
changes in COST Members'  
national research systems



# 3. As external expert

**As a COST Expert,**  
you will have the opportunity to

**Contribute** to the  
evaluation of COST  
Open Call proposals



**Participate** in the  
assessment of Action  
results and outcomes

# 95% of the non-eligible proposals: anonymity



<b>Statements resulting in ineligibility</b>	<b>Eligible statements</b>
"Prof. Smith" will coordinate the Action activities within WG5 (direct reference)	"The coordinator of WG5 activities will be appointed by the Action's Management Committee."
"Several members of the proposers' network have been involved in previous FP7 projects, like ATTPS and ADAPTIWALL, and institutions/organisations/networks/COST Actions, such as FP0901" (indirect reference)	"The Action will seek contact with / reach out to / draw on the expertise of / build on / ... previous FP7 projects, like ATTPS and ADAPTIWALL, and institutions/organisations/networks/COST Actions/..., such as FP0901."
"Among government-run public services we have the Department of Health of Catalonia on board" (direct reference)	"The Network of Proposers already includes a / several government-run public service(s)."
"The Network of Proposers has already generated some output", with in the footnote a link to a YouTube video or webpage in which Secondary Proposers can be identified (indirect reference, potentially identifiable)	"The Network of Proposers has already generated some output", without links to a YouTube video or webpage in which Secondary Proposers can be identified



# Main and secondary proposers

✓ Only one Main Proposer

✓ At least 7 different COST Full or Cooperating Countries (minimum 50% ITC)

**Table 1:** Eligibility to participate in the Network of Proposers by Affiliation

Proposers affiliated in	Eligible as	
	Main Proposer	Secondary Proposer
A legal entity in a COST Full/Cooperating member	✓	✓
A legal entity in a COST Partner Member	✗	✓
A legal entity in a Near Neighbour Country (NNC)	✗	✓
A legal entity in a Third State (IPC)	✗	✓
EU Institutions, Bodies, Offices and Agencies (EC/EU)	✓	✓
European RTD	✓	✓
International Organisations	✗	✓

✓ = Yes

✗ = No

Independent workers are ineligible as Main or Secondary Proposer.

**Table 9:** Required minimum number of COST Inclusiveness Target Countries per number of COST Full or Cooperating Members represented in a proposal.

Number of COST Full or Cooperating Members	Minimum number of ITC
7	4
8	4
9	5
10	5
11	6
12	6
13	7
14	7
15	8
16	8
17	9
18	9
19	10
20	10
21	11
22	11
23	12
24	12
25	13
26	13
27	14
28	14
29	15
30	15
31	16
32	16
33	17
34	17
35	18
36	18
37	19
38	19
39	20
40	20
41	21
42	21

# Budget

## Proposal stage:

- No budget draft/information is needed in the proposal

## After approval:

- Start of the Action = **MC1**
- Grant Periods:

GP	Duration	Budget
1	1 November 2026 - 30 October 2027	140,000 EUR (tbc)
2	1 November 2027- 30 October 2028	Depending on <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- COST countries in the WG's</li><li>- Action performance</li><li>- Availability of budget</li></ul>
3	1 November 2028- 30 October 2029	
4	1 November 2029- 30 October 2030	

# Use of AI

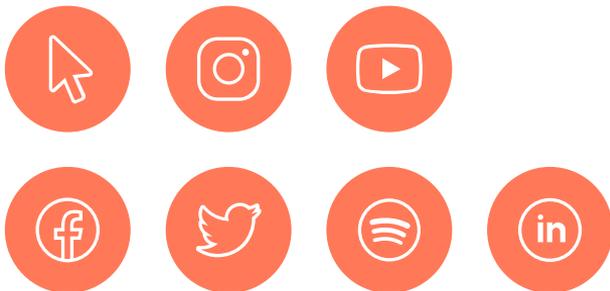
- Proposers must be human beings
- Proposers are fully and solely responsible for all content in the submitted proposal independently of how it was authored



Criteria	Good Evaluation	Poor Evaluation
Clarity of objectives	Well-defined, SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).	Objectives are <b>vague</b> , lack specificity, and are not measurable.
Understanding of the field	Demonstrates a strong grasp of the state of the art, incorporating interdisciplinary collaboration.	Shows <b>outdated</b> references and lacks proper engagement with current research.
Innovative approach	Introduces new methodologies and interdisciplinary solutions with measurable outcomes.	Claims innovation but <b>lacks concrete examples</b> and differentiation from existing research.
Stakeholder engagement	Identifies relevant stakeholders and presents a clear plan for engagement and collaboration.	<b>Fails to specify key stakeholders</b> or outline their roles in the project.
Networking strategy	Effectively integrates international collaboration with a structured networking approach.	<b>Weak networking plan</b> , lacks clarity on how collaborations will be established.
Impact on society & research	Clearly outlines short-term and long-term impacts on academia, industry, and policy.	<b>Generalized claims</b> without concrete impact assessment or real-world application.
Feasibility & work plan	Structured timeline, well-defined tasks, and deliverables with risk mitigation strategies.	<b>Lacks coherence</b> , with unrealistic goals and no clear methodology for execution.
Risk analysis & mitigation	Includes a strong risk assessment and mitigation strategy.	<b>Fails to address potential risks</b> and does not present a backup plan.
Dissemination strategy	Provides a clear, detailed plan for dissemination and knowledge transfer.	Weak dissemination plan, <b>lacks focus</b> on outreach and impact measurement.



# THANK YOU!



Contact and engage with us!

