

HAPLO-iPS

Guidelines for Short Term Scientific Missions

November 2025

Mission

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) are institutional visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, fostering collaboration between individuals and strengthening existing networks by contributing to the scientific objectives of the COST Action.

Eligibility

- Applicants must be part of PhD programmes, be postdoctoral fellows or otherwise employed by institutions or organizations performing research.
- The Home institution of the applicant should be in a Participating COST Full Member/COST Cooperating Member country or be an Approved Near Neighbour country (NNC) Institution.
- The host institution must be a legal entity located anywhere in the world (except Russia). The Host can be from any relevant sector, including industry. The Host does not have to be a Management Committee or Working Group member.
- STSM must be performed in another country other than the applicant's home country

Submission of applications

- The applicant encodes a grant application by logging into e-COST and clicking on the Grant Applications tab. The applicant can select the grant from the page 'Apply for new grant'.
- After encoding the Grant application form by filling all requested sections, the applicant will need to upload additional supporting documentation:
 - STSM grant Application (based on e-COST template)
 - Letter of willingness to host and facilitate work and training on the topic of the application.
 - Other documents required by the Action:
 - Letter of motivation and expectations
 - Curriculum vitae ([EUROPASS CV](#))
 - Letter of support from the applicant's supervisor or host institution explaining the kind of training required for the nominee and benefits to the institute that will follow from the training.

Evaluation committee

As approved by the Management Committee (MC), the evaluation will be performed by an expert selection committee for transparency and inclusivity reasons. The committee will include the Grant Awarding Coordinators, the Chair, the Vice Chair, the leader and co-leader of WG6 (Training and Dissemination) and the Scientific Communication Coordinator.

Participants will be selected on the basis of an evaluation-criteria score (see below) and the committee's evaluation will support them in the development of stem cell banking and manufacture of cell-based medicines. The committee will also seek an acceptable gender balance in successful applicants.

Evaluation Criteria Score

- Relevance of the proposal: the degree to which the work plan is detailed in its scientific goals of the work and how these goals are applicable to the Action's tasks (1-5 points).
- Feasibility of the mission: the degree to which the time spend in the Host Institution will be effective to reach the scientific goals planned for the mission (1-5 points).

In case of decision making between candidates identical scores, applications will be prioritised as follows:

- Member of an ITC country and meet the general TS eligibility criteria (see above)
- Gender Balance
- 1 student/applicant per centre

Duration of the STSM

- There are no time restrictions for the duration of the STSM.
- STSM need to be carried out in their entirety within a single Grant Period and always within the Action's lifetime.
- The COST Association and the Grant Holder of the Action cannot be considered as being an STSM grantee's employer.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation criteria defined by the Action's MC are communicated to all potential applicants on the website of the Action and via other means including partner institutions and social media.

Deadlines for applications and for evaluation are clearly set and communicated via the website of the Action.

For each STSM call:

The Grant Award Coordinators evaluate applications for compliance with the criteria for eligibility, and to confirm that the requested supporting documents have been submitted.

The Grant Award Coordinators send the eligible applications to the Evaluation committee members by email, highlighting non-eligible candidates (if applicable).

The Evaluation committee scores each applicant's proposal (1 to 10).

The Grant Award Coordinators list the applicants ranking from the highest to the lowest score and arrange a selection committee meeting.

The selection committee meets to finalise the selection of successful candidates.

COST policies on excellence and inclusiveness and available budget are considered by the Evaluation committee for final decision.

STSM Financial Support

A STSM Grant will cover (but not necessary cover all) costs for economy travel, accommodation, and meal expenses for the selected candidates. STSM grantees must make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health, taxation, social security, travel insurance and pension matters.

- The calculation of the financial contribution for each STSM will be up to a maximum of EUR 3500 in total or up to a maximum of the daily allowance per day in the specific country and travel costs.
- Participants from ITCs can request a pre-payment of 50% of their STSM Grant when they complete the first day of their STSM. For that purpose, the representative of the Host Institution must confirm by e-mail to the Grant Holder that the first day of the mission has officially started, and then the Grant Holder can arrange the payment of 50% of the STSM grant; the remaining 50% of the Grant is payable once administrative requirements have been satisfied after the STSM.

Further details can be consulted at the [COST Annotated Rules](#).

Approving STSM for Payment

The grantee within 30 calendar days from the end date of the mission, or within 15 days after the end of the Grant Period, will submit via e-cost the following documents:

- A short scientific report, including the following sections: (a) Aims/goals of the STSM; (b) Summary of the work activities and method(s); (c) The main results (what was expected and what turned out, the relevance of the results taken); (d) Future possible opportunities to collaborate with the host institution and future possible plans; and (e) Possible outputs (articles, policy briefs, summary reports, review papers, etcetera).
- A letter or an email from the senior researcher of the Host institution confirming that the applicant has successfully completed the mission.
- A short summary (maximum 500 words) for the website page including: affiliation, field of research interest, a short summary of the research completed in STSM, benefits of the STSM for building skills to the participant, outputs, and possibly including a photo with collaborators, a short video and a short quote describing the experience.

The Grant Award Coordinators and the Vice Chair are responsible for approving the scientific report and informing the Grant Holder that the mission has been successfully completed.

Publication of STSM Opportunities

The announcement of COST STSMs will be made as required per year with submission

Further information on applications can be obtained from haploips@idibell.cat

Appendix 1. STSM Grant application (see attached document)

Appendix 2. STSM Report (see attached document)