

Fifth call for CardioRNA STSM fellowships

The COST Action CardioRNA CA17129 (<https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA17129>) is launching the fifth call for Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) fellowships. STSMs are exchange visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, strengthening existing networks, fostering collaboration between COST Action Participants. STSMs should specifically contribute to the scientific objectives of the Action, whilst at the same time allowing those partaking in the missions to learn new techniques, gain access to specific data, instruments and/or methods not available in their own institutions/ organisations.

This fifth STSM call will be open for application through e-COST from the 1st of August 2020 until the 15th of September 2020. Please start preparing your visit and your application as soon as possible.

Exchange visits for this fourth call **can start from the 1st of October 2020 and must be completed by the 31st of March 2021** or otherwise, the Action will not be able to reimburse them. According to the Work and Budget Plan of our COST Action for **Grant Period 3 (01 May 2020 – 30 Apr 2021)**, we are able to allocate **4 STSMs for this period**.

Applications must be sent using the online registration tool available at the following website: <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>

Rules and eligibility criteria

For full information on COST STSM rules see [COST Vademecum](#) Section 8 and the [COST STSM User Guide](#).

- **The applicant is either a PhD student or an Early Career Investigator (ECI).** An ECI is an individual who is within a time span of up to 8 years from the date s(he) obtained his/her PhD (full-time equivalent).
- **The applicant must be an Action Participant engaged in an official research program as a PhD Student or postdoctoral fellow or can be employed by, or affiliated to, an institution, organisation or legal entity which has within its remit a clear association with performing research, and which is located in a COST Full or Cooperating Member having accepted the MoU of the CardioRNA Action and must go to an approved institution or laboratory actively participating in the Action CardioRNA.**
- **The Home Institutions (where applicants pursue their main strand of research) and the Host Institution (that will host the successful applicant) must be located in different countries.**
- The financial support is limited to travel and accommodation expenses and is **not intended to cover experimental costs.**
- The maximal financial support is 3.500 EUR, and the mission duration should be **minimum one week to maximum three months.**
- Due to the limited number of fellowships, only one person per home institution and host lab can apply.
- **The Home Institutions and the Host Institution must send recommendation letters** with the application and agree to cover the rest of the expenses related to the travel and project if necessary.
- The grantee is required to submit a short **scientific report within four weeks after his/her stay.**

The table below illustrates the possible scenarios for eligible STSM applicants:

Applicant's Home institution	STSM Host Institution
Located in a Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member	Located in another Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member
	Located in a Participating COST Partner Member
	Action MC Observer from IPC
	Action MC Observer from NNC
	The EU Commission or a EU Body, Office or Agency
Action MC Observer from NNC	An Approved European RTD Organisation
	An Approved International Organisation
Located in an Approved European RTD Organisation	Located in a Participating COST Full Member / COST Cooperating Member

How to apply

Applicants must read carefully the rules detailed in the [COST Vademecum](#) (Section 8).

To apply for an STSM within the CardioRNA COST Action, please follow the following steps:

1. The applicant must have a profile on e-COST at <https://e-services.cost.eu/>;
2. Submit an **STSM application on e-COST** (<https://e-services.cost.eu/conferencegrant/apply/new/>);

The online application form contains the following sections:

- Applicant details
 - STSM details (the application must start and end during the same Grant Period (GP)).
 - Bank details
 - Host details
 - Financial support
 - Supporting documents:
 - ✓ STSM Application in PDF
 - ✓ CV (including a list of academic publications – if applicable)
 - ✓ Letter of support from the Home Institution
 - ✓ Written agreement from the Host Institution that the STSM applicant can perform the activities detailed in the STSM work plan on the agreed dates
3. Send the following supporting documents as a single pdf file, to the CardioRNA STSM Coordinator, Dr Dimitris Beis, at dbeis@bioacademy.gr:
 - 3.1. Short CV, with list of academic publications if applicable;
 - 3.2. Recommendation letter from a senior researcher affiliated to the Home Institution agreeing to cover the rest of the expenses related to the travel and project if necessary (see template attached);
 - 3.3. Letter of invitation from a senior researcher affiliated to the Host Institution confirming that the applicant can undertake the STSM on the given dates (see template attached).

Selection criteria

The applications will be assessed by the STSM Committee based on:

- Scientific quality of the proposal;
- The relevance of the proposed visit to the objectives of the Action CardioRNA (see MoU);
- Technical feasibility (is the host lab equipment or technical knowledge required for the completion of a project, length of the STSM);
- Diversity and representativeness of contributions concerning the COST Action;
- Gender balance and country.

Post-STSM obligations

The grantee must submit a short **scientific report within four weeks after his/her stay to dbeis@bioacademy.gr, yvan.devaux@lih.lu, and the Host Institution**. The scientific report should cover a statement of achieving the project aims, description of the work carried out and the outcome/results, and expected publications or abstract presentation that may arise from the STSM (if applicable).

The applicant is also responsible for acquiring an official acceptance letter or email confirmation of acceptance from a senior researcher affiliated to the Host Institution formally **accepting the scientific report**. This formal acceptance is necessary for approving STSM for payment.

The grantee will also present a poster or an abstract describing the activities and achievements of the mission in the next CardioRNA scientific meeting.

The STSM grantee must email a summary and a copy of his/her scientific report to the **Science Communication Manager of the Action**, Dr Emma Robinson (e.robinson@maastrichtuniversity.nl). It will be then disseminated using the official CardioRNA website, social media, etc.

Photos from the STSM (e.g. the grantee with the team at the Host Institution) with tacit approval to use the picture in the web page and other dissemination materials from the CardioRNA Action will be greatly appreciated.

Pre-payment of 50% of the Grant (if applicable and requested) and reimbursement

If the applicant is affiliated with an institute from an Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC), (s)he can apply for a pre-payment of 50% of the Grant. The applicant must keep in mind that the transfer of the 50% of the Grant can only take place after the mission has started (upon receipt of host's confirmation of applicant's presence at the Host Institute) and as such, requesting a pre-payment is more effective for STSMs longer than 1 month.

The actual transfer of 50% of the grant can take several days after the receipt of the STSM host email confirmation.

1 day and 15 days after the end of the STSM, the grantee receives a reminder to upload the scientific report and the host approval of the report. The host approval of the report can be an email confirming that the STSM took place and the goals outlined in the work plan were reached.

The Grantee has **30 calendar days** from the end date of his/her STSM to **submit a scientific report and the host approval of the report through e-COST**. The submission of the supporting documents is mandatory or the Grant is cancelled. Late submission, beyond the deadline, can also lead to the cancellation of the Grant and, in cases when a pre-payment was done, the obligatory reimbursement of the amount received.

A scientific report template is available on the Supporting documents page or on-line here: http://www.cost.eu/STSM_report_template.

The STSM grantee must complete this template and save it in pdf before uploading it in e-COST.

Contact persons

- Dr. Yvan Devaux (yvan.devaux@lih.lu)
Action Management Committee Chair
- Dr. Emma Robinson
(e.robinson@maastrichtuniversity.nl)
Science Communications Manager of the Action and Working Group 4 leader
- Dr. Dimitris Beis (dbeis@bioacademy.gr)
STSM Grant Coordinator
- Dr. Ines Potočnjak
(ines.potocnjak@yahoo.com)
Grant Holder Scientific Representative