

China in Europe Research Network (CHERN) - CA 18215

## **Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) BASIC FACTS**

**(Updated December 2021)**

### What is an STSM?

STSMs aims to strengthen scientific networks and collaborations, increase knowledge exchange through access to specific expertise or methods related to the key theme of [one of CHERN's Working Groups](#), and especially support junior researchers in their professional development. CHERN STSMs should also specifically contribute to the Action's scientific objectives by yielding new data, scientific outputs or policy recommendations related to China's deepening economic, social and political engagements with Europe.

### Why become an STSM applicant?

With financial support for an STSM from CHERN, you will be able to upgrade or expand your research, work on scientific or policy-relevant outputs or collaborate on joint funding applications with established host researchers from renowned research institutions engaged in research on China's presence in Europe. The STSM also gives opportunities to highlight your research through CHERN communication and dissemination channels and to network through its large network of experts.

### What does the financial support include?

The financial support is a contribution to the overall expenses incurred during the STSM and may not necessarily cover all of the associated costs. The following funding conditions apply (see also the [Annotated Rules for COST Actions, Annex 2, pp. 91- 97](#)):

- A maximum of EUR 4000 in total can be afforded to the grantee (the amount is based on the location and duration of STSM);
- STSM activities must occur in their entirety within the dates specified in the relevant call.

Financial support is limited to cover travel and subsistence expenses and is paid as a grant. Payment of the grant is subject to the scientific report (**after the completion of the STSM**) being approved by the CHERN STSM Committee and a researcher affiliated with the Host institution. The Grant holder or the COST Association cannot be considered the grantee's employer. Grantees must take care of their own health care, social security, safety provisions, taxation, etc.

## Who is eligible to be an STSM Applicant?

An applicant needs to be **affiliated** to a legal entity in a full COST member or Cooperating member<sup>1</sup>, a Near Neighbouring country (NNC)<sup>2</sup>, or from an Approved European RTD organization<sup>3</sup>. The proposed research plan and the applicant's research field should be aligned with [CHERN's aims](#) and with the relevant STSM call.

The selection is based on the alignment of the proposed work plan and the applicant's research background and – if applicable – their publication track record with the call's aims. In line with COST rules, the STSM committee also ensures geographical and gender balance and preferentially awards STSMs to **Young Researchers and Innovators (YRI)** (< 40 years old). However, this should not discourage more experienced researchers from applying.

## How does it work?

1. All applicants must carefully read the funding rules detailed in [Annotated Rules for COST Actions, Annex 2. pp. 91- 97](#). For information on how to fill in the online application form, the candidates should consult the [Grant Awarding user guide](#).
2. All applicants must register for an e-COST profile at <https://e-services.cost.eu/>, adding their bank account details to their profile.
3. All applicants must complete, submit and download their STSM application online at <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm> before the application submission deadline expires.

**The list of supporting documents** to be submitted for the evaluation includes:

- The submitted **STSM application form** (downloadable when the online application is submitted – see point 3 above) **including the motivation and work plan summary** highlighting the proposed contribution to the call and the scientific objectives of the CHERN COST Action;

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<sup>1</sup> See the [COST website](#) for the overview of COST members or Cooperating member

<sup>2</sup> See the [COST website](#) for the list of Near Neighbouring Countries

<sup>3</sup> The intergovernmental scientific research organisations whose members are States, the majority of which are COST members

- **A letter of support** from the Home institution and **a written agreement** from the Host institution (the applicant should thus contact the Host institution prior to submitting the application form);
4. The applications are then assessed by the CHERN STSM Committee and researchers affiliated with the Host institutions.
  5. Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM, the successful applicant must **submit a scientific report** to the Host institution and to the STSM Coordinator. The template for the scientific report is accessible in the e-COST application for the STSM. The applicant is also responsible for acquiring **an official acceptance letter/email confirmation of acceptance** from a senior Researcher affiliated with the Host institution formally accepting the scientific report. This formal acceptance of the scientific report has to be sent to the Grant Holder and STSM Coordinator for archiving purposes. Failure to submit the scientific report within 30 days from the end date of the STSM will effectively cancel the grant.
  6. In addition to the above requirements of the COST Association and the requirements of the specific call, the grantee is required to contribute one blog post to the CHERN blog and provide basic information on the STSM for the CHERN website (short abstract and bio, a short quote and link to the publications resulting from STSM).
  7. Applicants may request up to 50 % pre-payment of the approved grant. The amount is subject to the availability of funds and approval by the Grant Holder institution.

### Note on STSMs during the Covid-19 pandemic

As different countries are implementing different measures regarding border-crossing within Europe, STSMs applicants are advised to check individual country stipulations when applying to the present call as well as to be in regular contact with the Host institution prior to the STSM commencement. CHERN and the Host institution will do their best to accommodate applicants to fulfil their STSM through face-to-face visits at the Host institution.

CHERN cannot be held responsible for any country limitation that would prevent effective participation in the STSM. It also cannot be liable for any costs incurred due to host and/or home country-imposed quarantine due to COVID-19.

### MORE INFORMATION

More information on STSMs are available in the [Annotated Rules for COST Actions, Annex 2. pp. 91- 97](#) and by contacting the STSM Coordinator:

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