

ICT COST Action IC1406

High-Performance Modelling and Simulation for Big Data Applications (cHiPSet)

STSM Manual

1. What is a Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM)?

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) are exchange visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, strengthening existing networks and fostering collaboration between researchers.

A STSM should specifically contribute to the scientific objectives of the COST 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.

2. Who is eligible to apply for a STSM?

STSM applicants must be engaged in an official research programme as a PhD Student or postdoctoral fellow or can be employed by, or affiliated to, an Institution or legal entity which has within its remit a clear association with performing research. The institutions / organisations where applicants pursue their main strand of research are considered as Home institutions. The Host institution is the institution / organisation that will host the successful applicant.

Eligible STSM applicants must submit their applications online at: <http://www.cost.eu/STSM>

3. What are the Home and Host Institutions?

Institutions may be public or private entities. Possible STSM scenarios are:

Home Institution	Host Institution
From a Participating COST Country	To another Participating COST Country
	To an approved NNC institution
	To an approved IPC institution
	To an approved EC / EU Agency / approved European RTD Organisation or approved Internat. Organisation
From an approved NNC institution	To a Participating COST Country
From an approved European RTD Organisation	To a Participating COST Country

4. What are the Minimum and Maximum durations of an STSM?

STSMs need to take place according to a set of rules, which vary for Early Career Investigators (ECI) as specific provisions had been adopted by the Cost Scientific Officer (CSO) to foster the participation of ECI:

Standard STSMs	ECI STSMs (extended)
minimum duration of 5 days	minimum duration of 91 days
maximum duration of 90 days	maximum duration of 180 days
Needs to be carried out in their entirety within a single grant period	Needs to be carried out in their entirety within a single grant period

5. What is the Financial Support?

An STSM grant is a fixed financial contribution, which takes into consideration the budget request of the applicant and the outcome of the evaluation of the STSM application. STSM Grants do not necessarily cover all expenses related to undertaking a given mission. A STSM Grant is a contribution to the overall travel, accommodation and meal expenses of the Grantee.

The calculation of the financial contribution for each STSM must respect the following criteria:

Rules	Standard STSMs	ECI STSMs (extended)
Maximum reimbursement rate per day for accommodation and meal expenses	160 €	160 €
Maximum amount to be afforded to the grantee	2,500 €	3,500 €

Grantees must make their own arrangements for all health, social, personal security and pension matters.

6. Prerequisites, criteria and evaluation

Every year there will be two calls for STSM grants. The evaluation of STSM applications must avoid any potential conflict of interest, and it is performed by the STSM Committee, coordinated by the STSM coordinator. The STSM Committee is composed by the core group of the COST Action.

The number of available STSM grants per call will be decided for each period by the STSM Committee based on the available budget for this activity.

The selection of applicants in each call is based on **the scientific scope of the STSM application that must be in line with the Action objectives. Necessary geographical and gender balance issues** are to be taken into consideration and **applications from Early Career Investigator (ECI) should be privileged.**

The evaluation criteria, values and weights are depicted in the table, below:

CRITERIA	POINTS			WEIGHT
	low	medium	high	
STSM relevance with WGs action objectives and results exploitable by action	0	5	10	0,35
Applicant is ECI or PhD candidate	0		10	0,25
Budget proposal adequate for the grant	0	5	10	0,15
Minority of STSMs with same gender	0		10	0,15
STSMs from / to target country	0		10	0,1

This evaluation takes into account the criteria for excellence and inclusiveness promoted by all COST actions (see http://www.cost.eu/about_cost/strategy/excellence-inclusiveness). The STSM committee will also take into account the EU Country Correction Coefficients (see <http://www.grantinfo.org/files/EC%20country%20coeffircinet%20list%202014-2015.pdf>) for evaluating the adequacy of budget proposals, depending on the host country price level.

Applications will be evaluated in less than a month after their submission and the evaluation outcome will be communicated to the applicants.

7. Calendar of Actions for the Applicant

7.1 Before the call deadline the applicant must:

- Obtain an invitation letter from the host institution and a support letter from the home institution.
- Complete the online application form (see <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>);
- Send the registration pdf file, as an e-mail attachment, together with the necessary documents specified in the call to the STSM coordinator.

7.2 STSM evaluation

The STSM Committee will perform the scientific and budgetary assessment of the applications considering the criteria described in point 5, define an acceptable funding level and approve the STSM.

7.3 After performing the STSM grant

Within 30 days after the end date of the STSM, the grant holder must send an email to the STSM coordinator (keeping the STSM host institution in copy) including:

- a) A scientific report (2-5 pages) available from <http://chipset-cost.eu>
- b) A letter by the host institution confirming of the successful execution of the STSM.
- c) A copy of the boarding passes / travelling tickets to justify the trip to perform the grant.
- d) A five-minutes presentation (in PowerPoint or equivalent) to be given in the next action meeting, stating all the contents of the short scientific report, summarizing the scope and outcomes of the STSM in terms of scientific breakthroughs, impacts and future actions.

8. STSM Grant holder Duties and Final Payment

After finishing the grant and sending the appropriate documentation to the STSM coordinator:

1. The STSM Committee is responsible for approving the scientific report, and informing the Grant Holder if the STSM has been successfully accomplished.
2. After the STSM is approved, the Action Chair will execute the payment of the grant.

Failure to submit the scientific report and the confirmation letter within 30 days after finishing the STSM allows the STSM committee to cancel the grant.

Based on the text from COST Vademecum from July 2016