

Short Term Scientific Missions

4th call for applicants – Fourth Grant Period 2024

COST Action CA19115

HyperChildNET - Network for blood pressure research in children and adolescents

On behalf of the HyperChildNET COST Action we are pleased to announce the 4th call for applicants to apply for Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM).

Purpose of STSM

Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) consists in a 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.

Short-Term Scientific Missions benefit to:

- **STSM 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;
- **STSM Host:** receives an international partner in their institution and can develop long lasting collaboration.

The Guidelines for Action Management, Monitoring and Assessment should be followed to ensure the proper implementation of this networking instrument.

The main regulation concerning STSM are governed by the COST Annotated Rules (<https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2023/11/COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V1.4-Final-.pdf>), in particular those described in Annex 2. Please read this section prior to preparing your STSM application.

The STSMs are also expected to promote the goals of the HyperChildNET Working Groups 1 to 5 for the specific period. Therefore, STSM projects should focus on the objectives of one or more of the different Working Groups (WG) during the fourth grant period:

- **WG1:** To analyse the criteria for validation of paediatric blood pressure devices and the clinical issues affecting the validation procedure.
- **WG2:** To develop reference values for blood pressure in children and adolescents using tables with European data based on age, sex and height percentiles.
- **WG3:** To define methods to assess hypertension-induced organ damage, cardiac and renal parameters in terms of sensitivity, reproducibility, predictive value, cost and potential prognostic value.
- **WG4:** To generate policy action recommendations, elaborate and propose prevention actions and review eHealth best practices regarding high BP prevention.

- WG5: To disseminate, communicate and connect with the stakeholders through all kind of communication channels.

STSM – eligibility rules

STSM can be granted to any researcher **affiliated to a legal entity in:**

- COST Full Members: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary*, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, The Netherlands, The Republic of North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and United Kingdom. (Full list: <https://www.cost.eu/about/members/>)
- Researchers and Innovators affiliated to legal entities from EU Member States Outermost Regions: French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, Reunion Island and Saint-Martin (FR), Azores and Madeira (PT), and the Canary Islands (ES).
- COST Cooperating Member: Israel. A Cooperating Member implies non-voting rights in the COST CSO. However, researchers from COST's Cooperating Member enjoy member rights in COST Action participation.

Other relevant info:

- (i) In general, the priority target group is Young Researchers, so applications of **Young Investigators and PhD students are particularly encouraged.**
- (ii) Priority will also be given to candidates moving from/to COST **Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs).**

The following countries are considered ITC: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.

- (iii) The institutions / organisation or legal entity 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.

The **Host Institution must be located in a different country** than the country of the applicant.

Calendar for this call for applicants

Deadline to send applications by researchers: **until January 31st, 2024.**

Period to **carry out the STSM:** from its official appointment **until September 20th, 2024.**

STSM – Duration and Financial Support

STSM can have a duration of between 5 days to 90 days.

Financial support covers up to a maximum of €140 per day for **accommodation and meals** expenses, and the **travel costs** will depend on the distance between the sending and host organisations.

As an average, the grant requested are up to **€2,000 approximately**. However, in special cases higher grants can be awarded, but always limited up to €4,000 per each STSM.

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.

For detailed information please see:

<https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2023/11/COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V1.4-Final-.pdf>

In case of contradiction between the current call for applicants and the official documents generated by the COST Association, the latter shall prevail.

STSM – selection process

The selection of STSM applicants will be based on the scientific scope of the application and how it can support the HyperChildNET COST Action [CA19115] in achieving its scientific objectives and will take into account the COST Policy and Rules with special attention on Inclusiveness and Excellence. The selection process will additionally evaluate the

- (i) applicant's excellence and potential;
- (ii) added value of the research results connected to the HyperChildNET Working Groups' goals (for more information, see the Memorandum of Understanding annexed to this call for applicants).
- (iii) relevance and expected benefits of the mission for the applicant, the host and all relevant institutions including possible publications, planned collaboration on research projects, new connections and networking, etc.; and
- (iv) cost-effectiveness of the proposed work.

Submitted applications will have a two-stage evaluation process with an initial review by the STSM Committee [STSM coordinator (Prof Dr Manish Sinha) + WG Leaders to whom the application is most relevant]. The Committee will assess application as per standard evaluation criteria and may request via email to the candidates to provide more information if needed on their CV, letters of interests, letters from Home/Host institutions, etc.

This **assessment report** will be discussed afterwards with the Chair (Professor Dr Empar Lurbe) and Vice-Chair (Professor Dr Elke Wühl) of the COST Action [CA19115] to reach the final decision about the candidates selected.

STSM – how to apply

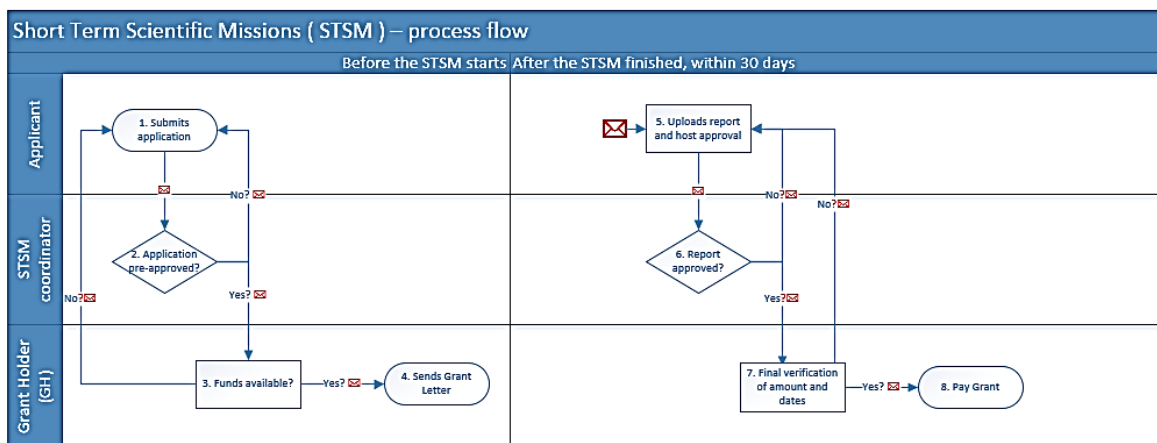
1. The applicant must obtain a **letter of invitation** from the Host institution confirming that he/she can undertake the STSM on the given dates prior to submitting an application (templates for the Home and Host institutions are annexed to this call for applicants)

2. Application **sent via eCOST platform**. All applicants must carefully read the funding rules detailed in Annex 2 of the [COST Annotated Rules](#).
3. The applicant must complete and submit his/her **STSM application online** at: www.cost.eu/STSM
4. Applicants can be requested to send more detailed information via email if needed.
5. In case a STSM candidate is accepted, this will be notified to the researcher who will receive a Grant Letter.

The application should contain:

- Applicant details
- STSM details
 - A Motivation and Workplan Summary explaining the scientific and/or other motivation for the STSM and what scientific and/or other outcomes the applicant aims to accomplish with the STSM
 - Proposed contribution to the scientific objectives of the Action
 - Details on the techniques or equipment the applicant may learn to use
 - Details on the steps to be undertaken to achieve the proposed aim of the STSM
- Information on the planned duration of the STSM and the grant sum requested
- Host organisation details
- Supporting documents (Application form, Home and Host institutions letters and full CV)

STSM Process Flow



What is required after the completion of the STSM?

Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM, the successful applicant must submit a **scientific report** (based on the template annexed to this call for applicants) to the Host institution and through the eCOST system.

The scientific report should cover statement of achieving the STSM objectives, description of the work carried out and the outcome/results, expected publications that may arise from the STSM where applicable or show evidence of dissemination of results at scientific meetings, patient engagement meetings or via scientific societies.

A description of network activities that result in further projects (even if not directly funded by this COST action) should be included.

The applicant is also responsible for acquiring an **official acceptance letter / email** confirmation

of acceptance from a **senior researcher affiliated to the Host institution** formally accepting the scientific report.

Failure to submit the scientific report within 30 days from the end date of the STSM will effectively cancel the Grant.

(Please note that the COST Association can request additional information to substantiate the information contained within the documents submitted by STSM applicants).

STSM HyperChildNET contacts

- Prof Dr Manish Sinha. HyperChildNET STSM Coordinator - manish.sinha@nhs.net
- Prof Dr Empar Lurbe. Chair of the Management Committee of the HyperChildNET COST Action – Empar.Lurbe@uv.es

Annexes to the call for applicants

- Annex 1. Detailed description of the COST Action ([Memorandum of Understanding](#))
- Annex 2. Letter of the Host institution ([template](#))
- Annex 3. Letter of the Home institution ([template](#))
- Annex 4. Scientific Report STSM, ex post ([template](#))