Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) GUIDELINES

for COST Action TU1306 'Fostering Knowledge about the Relationship between Information and Communication Technologies and Public Spaces'

Note: These guidelines are prepared in accordance with the COST Office rules. For more information please check the **new COST Vademecum (2015)**, which can be downloaded at http://www.cost.eu/participate

1. Definition and Objectives

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) are Exchange Visits that are aimed at strengthening the existing networks by allowing individual scientists to go to an institution or laboratory in other COST country to foster collaboration, to learn new techniques or gain access to specific instruments and/or methods not available in their own institutions.

A STSM should specifically contribute to the scientific objectives of the COST Action TU1306.

2. The STSM Applicants

The selection of STSM applicants is based on the scientific scope of the STSM application that must be in line with the Cost Action TU1306 objectives. The applications from the **Early Career Investigators (ECI)** are privileged. An ECI is a researcher in the start phase of his/her career with at least the PhD and up to 8 years of experience after the PhD.

The evaluation of STSM applications is performed by the STSM Coordinator appointed by the Management Committee of the Action. The selection of successful candidates is made following the recommendations of MC Chair and Action Executive Board.

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. This particular institution should be actively participating in the COST Action TU1306and is considered as the Home institution.The Host institution is the institution / organisation that will host the successful applicant.

For the period of the STSM neither the MC, nor the COST Office nor the Grant Holder may be considered as an employer. The grantees must make their own arrangements for all health, social, personal security and pension matters.

3. Home and Host Institutions

Both, the home and the host institutions may be public or private entities. Possible scenarios of STSM are:

- from a home institution in a COST participating country to:

    - a host institution in another COST participating country, or

- to a formally approved host institution in a non-COST country (the so-called International Partners Countries (IPC), or

- to a formally approved host institution in Near Neighbours Countries (NNC)

- from a formally approved home institution in Near Neighbours Countries (NNC) to a to a participating COST Country institution

The applicant has to obtain the agreement of a host institution before submitting his / her proposal.

4. Duration

The minimum duration of STSM is 5 working days and a maximum is 90 days. The ECI may extend their STSM up to 180 days. All STSMs must be carried as a single grant period and within the Action's lifetime.

5. Financial support

The STSM grant will not necessarily cover all expenses and is intended to support the costs associated with the exchange visit, only as a contribution to travel and subsistence costs of the participants.

The STSM grant is a fixed contribution based on the budget requested by the applicant and the evaluation of the application by the STSM Coordinator and the MC Core Group. A standard amount of EUR 60 to 90 for the daily allowance and EUR 300 for the travel is recommended but not obligatory. In all cases the MC can approve differentiated country rates for subsistence per day, based on the cost of living in each respective countries. The fixed grant means no receipts are collected.

The total STSM grant should not exceed a maximum EUR 2500 (for missions up to 3 months) and a maximum EUR 3500 in total for ESR missions (longer than 91 days).

6. STSM process

The STSMs is addressed primarily to ECI and offer a possibility to:

- either follow own research ideas connected with the objectives and goals of the Cost Action TU1306 CyberParks and work on these issues / research questions in a host institution of own choice (according to rules described in point 3),

- or to apply for one of the STSM research opportunities proposed by the MC and Working Groups of the Cost Action TU1306 CyberParks published as Open Calls. During the first year of the action 8 STSMs are planned.

In order to use of synergies the STSMs will be primarily organised in the cities where the Cost Action TU1306 have case studies. In this way especially the ECI will be directly involved in the research activities of the host organisations.

6.1 Application (first steps before the STSM)

In order to receive the grant, the applicants must use the on-line tool to register their request for an STSM. The steps that must be taken:

- obtain the written agreement of the host institution;

- complete the on-line application form (see https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm);
- download the formal application and send it as an e-mail attachment together with the necessary supporting documents (CV, full work plan, list of publications, motivation letter, letter of support from the home institution etc.) to the future STSM host institution and the STSM coordinator.

The following information has to be encoded in the on-line registration form:

- the Action number,
- the title of the planned STSM,
- the start and end dates,
- the key academic details of applicant,
- the work plan,
- the bank details of applicant,
- the host institution,
- requested grant (amount for travel and subsistence).

6.2 Assessment and Grant Letter

The STSM Coordinator performs the scientific and budgetary assessment of the applications taking into consideration the Cost Action TU1306 CyberParks objectives and goals. The STSM Coordinator defines the applicable funding level. In all decisions the STSM Coordinator follows the recommendations of Action MC Executive Board.

The STSM Coordinator informs the Grant Holder about successful candidate and then the Grant Holder sends a grant letter generated from e-COST to the approved applicant. The grant letter must be signed by the applicant and returned to the Grant Holder.

6.3 After the STSM

The grantee is obliged to submit a short scientific report to the host institution (for information) and to the STSM Coordinator or MC Executive Board (for approval) within 30 days after the end date of the STSM. The report must contain the following information:

- purpose of the STSM;
- description of the work carried during the STSM;
- description of the main results obtained;
- future collaboration with the host institution (if applicable);
- foreseen publications / articles resulting from the STSM (if applicable)
- confirmation by the host institution of the successful execution of the STSM;
- other comment (if any).

The template format of the STSM report is provided at:
http://cyberparks-project.eu/stsm

The failure to submit the scientific report on time will effectively cancel the grant. The STSM Coordinator will inform the Grant Holder about the acceptance of the report via e-mail. Afterwards, the Grant Holder will execute the payment of the fixed grant directly to the grantee or to home institution as stated in the application form.