



# **COST**

# **European Cooperation in Science and Technology**

**Introduction to the  
COST Framework Programme**



COST is supported  
by the EU Framework Programme



# Outline

## 1. What is COST and how does it work?

- COST Overview
- COST Structure
- COST Policies

## 2. What are the COST Actions and how to participate in them? **COST Actions: the networking instrument**

- COST Countries
- Structure and Decision Making
- Strategy Work and Budget Plan
- Networking Tools
- How to Participate

## 3. How to prepare a successful proposal?

- New Submission, Evaluation, Selection and Approval (SESA) procedure
- Proposal Preparation – Practical Aspects



# 1. What is COST and how does it work?





# What is COST?

COST (CO-operation in Science and Technology) is a **pan-European** intergovernmental framework dedicated to **networking activities** for European researchers, enabling them to **jointly** develop their **own ideas** and **new initiatives** across **all scientific disciplines** through **trans-European coordination** of nationally funded research activities.



# What is COST?

- ❑ Founded in 1971, COST is the oldest and widest European intergovernmental framework for transnational Cooperation in Science and Technology.
- ❑ COST has been supporting networking of research activities across the 37 COST countries and beyond for more than 40 years (19 COST countries in 1971).
- ❑ One instrument: the COST Action (network of researchers). Only a few Actions at the beginning to more than 350 Actions running in 2015.



# COST Strengths and Key Features

- ❑ Bottom-up: original idea/not thematic.
- ❑ Pan-European,...
- ❑ Openness
- ❑ Capacity-building
- ❑ Provide equal opportunities – remove bottlenecks
- ❑ Spreading of knowledge – dissemination of results
- ❑ Output and impact oriented
- ❑ Leverage nationally funded research
- ❑ Light structure and administration



# COST Strengths and Key Features

COST supports the networking of researchers through science and technology networks - '**COST Actions**' - open to:

- **All fields of S&T** (highlight on trans-, multi-, interdisciplinary, new and emergent fields)
- **All partners** (academia, public organisations, SME, industry, NGO, International Organisations)
- **All career stages** (young and experienced researchers)
  - Capacity building, Early Career Investigators
- **All countries**
  - COST Countries (COST Member Countries + Cooperating State (Israel))
  - Global cooperation on the basis of mutual interest (NNC, IPC)
  - Geographical balance

# COST Mission Statement

COST enables **breakthrough scientific and technological developments** leading to new concepts and products.

It thereby contributes to strengthening Europe's research and innovation capacities.

Through **trans-European networking** of nationally funded research activities.



A word cloud of keywords from the COST mission statement, arranged in a cross shape. The words include: technology, future, innovation, concepts, science, inspiration, and inclusiveness. The words are in various colors (blue, orange, purple, grey) and orientations (horizontal, vertical, diagonal).



# Agreements signed between the COST Association and the EC under Horizon 2020

## Framework Partnership Agreement, FPA:

- Duration: 7 years
- Political commitment
- Strategy and Policy objectives
- Sets the Action Plan and secures long-term perspective

## Specific Grant Agreement, SGA:

- Duration: 1 year
- Financial commitment
- Implementation objectives
- Describes the Work to be done and concrete tasks

### ***COST at a turning point:***

*A unique framework for pan-European S&T cooperation  
as clear demonstration of European values*

# COST Budget and Objectives

**EUR 300 million budget (constant prices) for 7 years drawn from two Horizon 2020 work programmes:**

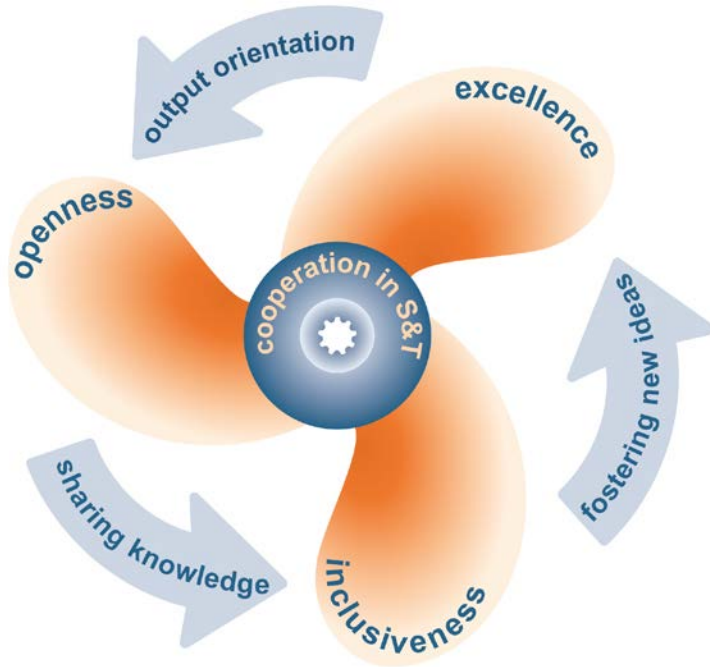
- ❑ Challenge 6 “Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective Societies”
- ❑ “Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation”

**Four specific Objectives to fulfil COST mission:**

- ❑ Joining research efforts and developing common S&T programmes
- ❑ Building capacity
- ❑ Addressing societal questions
- ❑ Strengthening COST’s Inclusiveness Policy



# To achieve these Objectives



## COST Key Principles

- Supporting excellence
- Being open
- Being inclusive

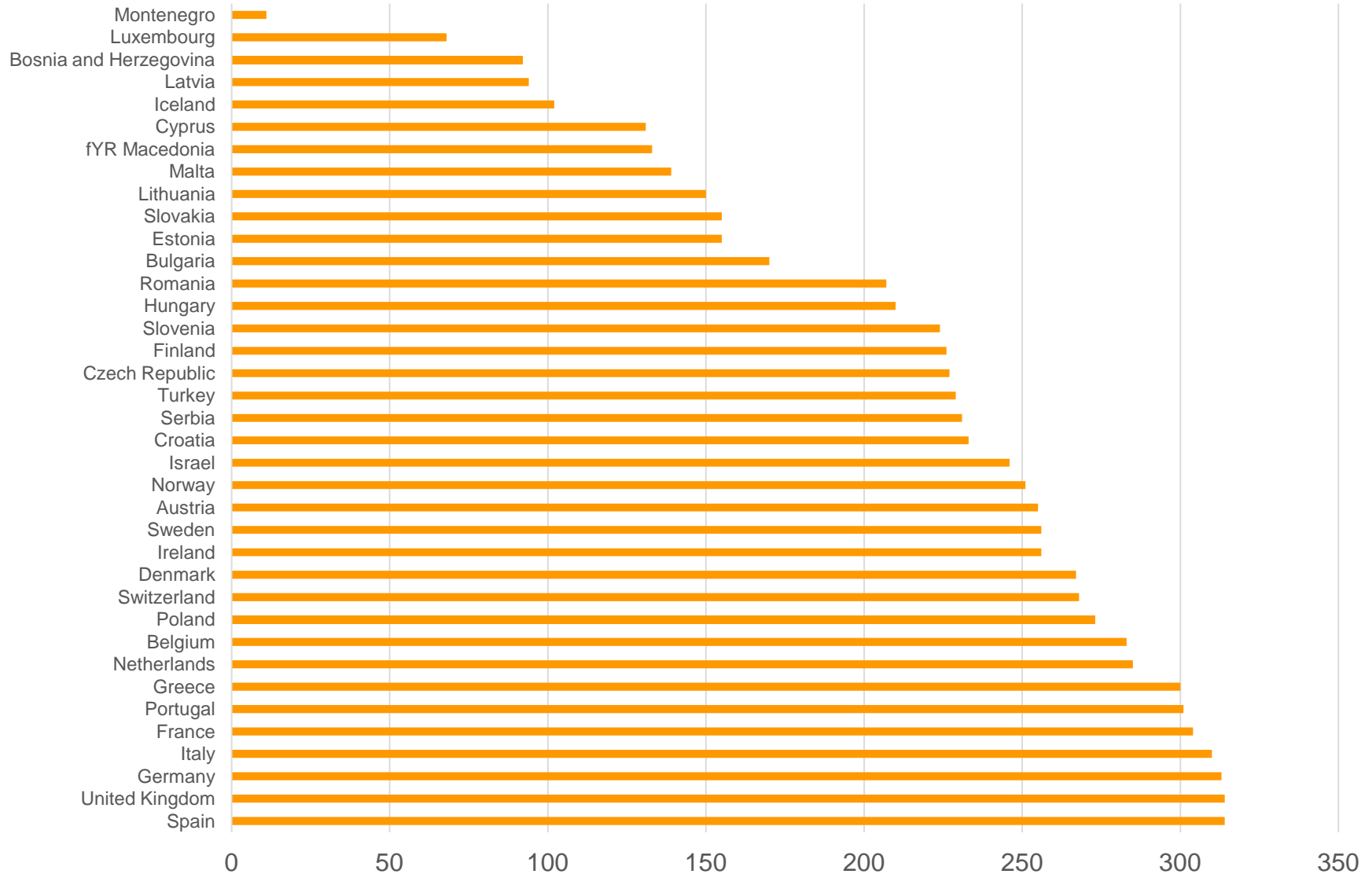
## COST Driving Forces

- Fostering new ideas
- Sharing knowledge
- Output orientation

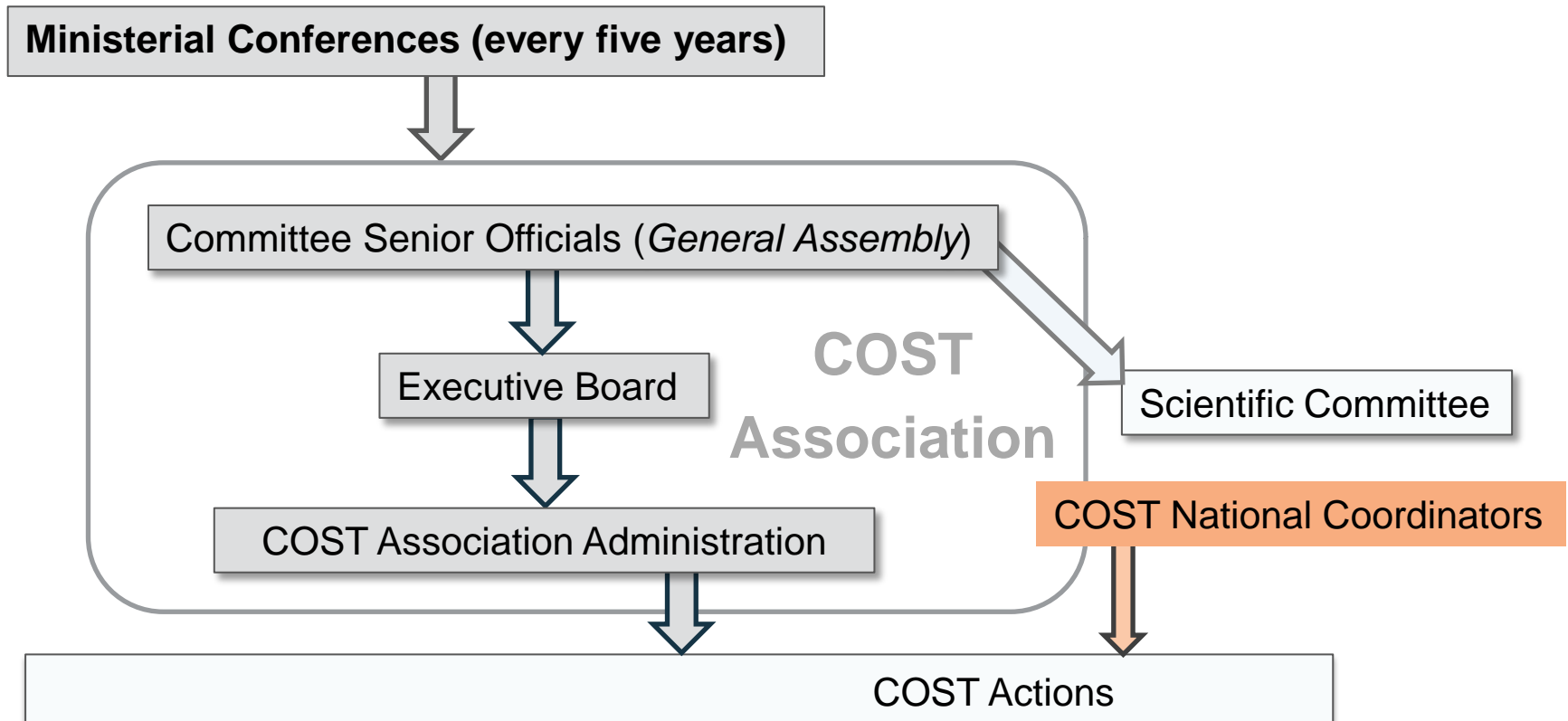
# COST in key figures (2015)

- ❑ 347 Running Actions
- ❑ +/- 45.000 European researchers involved in COST Actions' activities
- ❑ 18.000 participations in COST activities involving Early-Career Investigators (<PhD 8 years)
- ❑ 2550 Short-term Scientific Missions
- ❑ 4000 Trainees involved in training schools

# COST Action participation



# COST Association organisation and relation with other actors



See: [http://www.cost.eu/about\\_cost/who](http://www.cost.eu/about_cost/who)

# COST Policies

aiming at

## Excellence & Inclusiveness

- Geographical coverage
- Early Career Investigators (ECI)
- Gender balance

## Openness

- All fields of S&T
- All kind of participation
  - Academia, SME/Industry, ...
- All countries



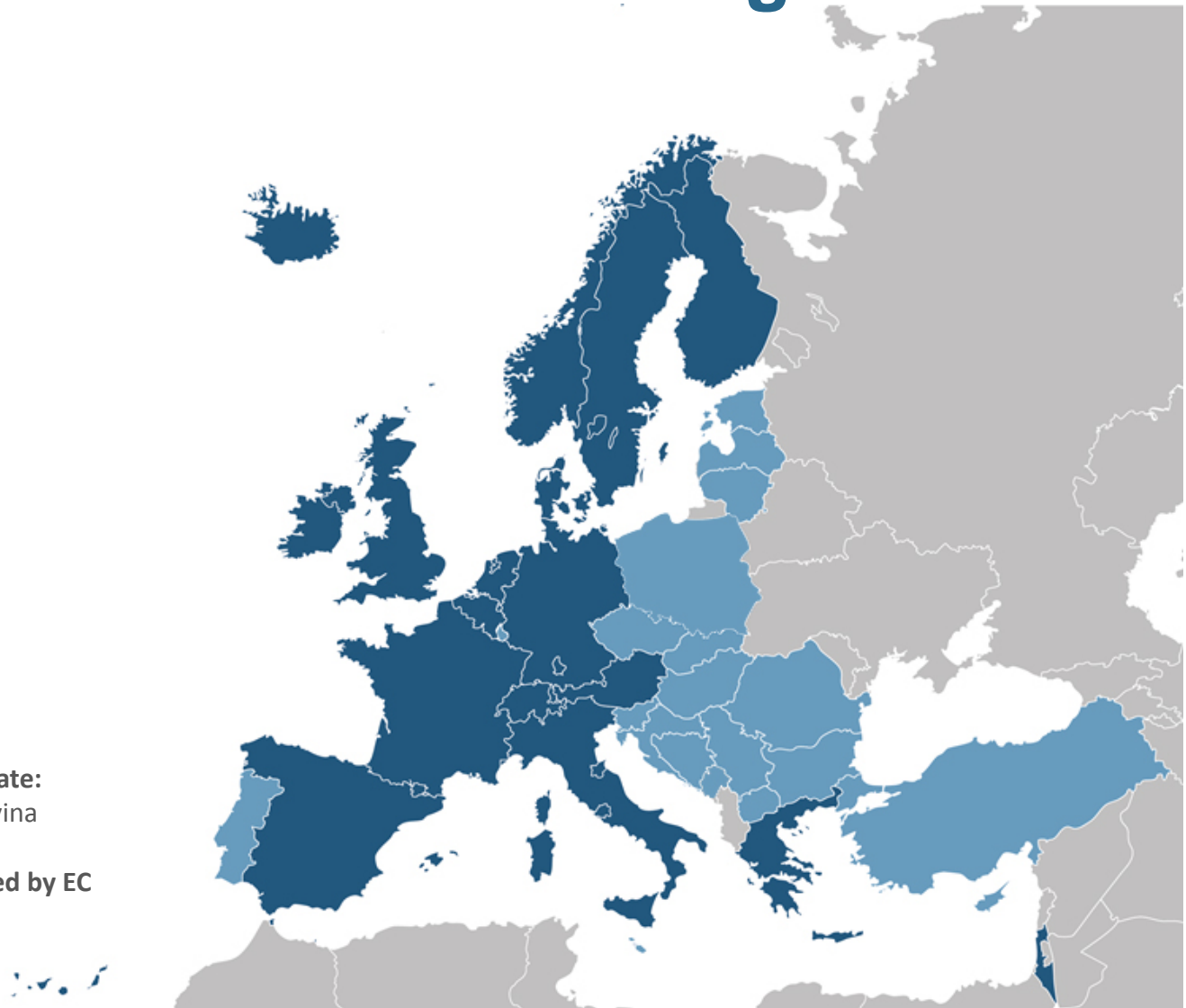


# Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy

- ❑ Encouraging and enabling **excellent researchers** from less research-intensive countries across Europe to **set up, lead or join COST Actions**
- ❑ **Counterbalancing** research communities' unequal **access to knowledge infrastructures, funding and resources distribution**
- ❑ Contributing to the realization of Horizon 2020 Widening Pillar objectives through **COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy**

# COST Inclusiveness Target Countries

- **EU 13:**  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Cyprus  
Czech Republic  
Estonia  
Hungary  
Latvia  
Lithuania  
Malta  
Poland  
Romania  
Slovakia  
Slovenia
- **EU Candidates:**  
fYR Macedonia  
Montenegro  
Serbia  
Turkey
- **EU Potential Candidate:**  
Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **EU Countries targeted by EC**  
Luxembourg  
Portugal



# COST Inclusiveness Target Countries

COST Member Countries	
EU Member States	Associated Countries to Horizon 2020
Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia	the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Serbia, Turkey, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro

# Inclusiveness

## Implementation Strategy by the Action

**The Action should have a plan towards inclusiveness that is revised and updated at every MC meeting and develop a strategy to attract researchers and stakeholders.**

### **SOME EXAMPLES:**

- ❑ Leadership roles in the Action structure (ex: Grant Holders, WG leaders, ...)
- ❑ Organising and locating Action meetings and events.
- ❑ Promoting STSM tool in these countries.
- ❑ Benefiting from COST networking tools.

# Early Career Investigators

PhD + up to 8 years

- Address the difficulty in gaining visibility and recognition European-wide
- Entrusting young investigators with leader roles under their own responsibility



**COST Inclusiveness  
Policy supports  
ECIs**

\*PhD or equivalent experience

# Gender Balance

male/female

- Encourage and enable under-represented gender to be intensively involved in all COST activities
- Networking the way to gender equality in science and technology



**COST Inclusiveness  
Policy supports  
Gender balance**

# Early Career Investigators and Gender Balance

## Implementation Strategy by the Action

**Encourage and enable under represented gender to be intensively involved in all COST activities by the Action.**

### **SOME EXAMPLES:**

- ❑ Leadership roles in the Action structure (ex: Grant Holders, WG leaders, ...)
- ❑ Benefiting from COST networking tools (STSM and Training Schools in particular).

**ECI = PhD + up to 8 years**

# SMEs & Industry

## Implementation Strategy by the Action

Aiming to facilitate/ encourage industry participation

### SOME EXAMPLES:

- ❑ STSMs with industry acting as home/ host institution
- ❑ Participation in networking activities
- ❑ Session dedicated to industrial participation at Action events
- ❑ Roundtable discussions with industrial partners at Action events

# International Cooperation

## Implementation Strategy by the Action

Aiming to support the involvement of researchers from **Near Neighbour** and **International Partner Countries** in COST Actions on the basis of **mutual benefit**.

### SOME EXAMPLES:

- ❑ Approved IPC and NNC Institutions can host STSMs
- ❑ Researchers from approved NNC Institutions can:
  - ❑ Apply for STSMs
  - ❑ Attend Training Schools
- ❑ Researchers from approved IPC and NNC Institutions can be Trainers when Training Schools are organised



## **2. What are the COST Actions and how to participate in them?**



# COST ACTION

**The COST pan-European networking instrument that allows researchers, engineers or scholars from COST Member Countries and Cooperating State to jointly develop their own ideas and new initiatives in a field or topic of common interest**

# COST Actions – characteristics (1/2)

- ❑ A network of researchers, engineers and scholars with nationally funded research
- ❑ Collaborating in S&T fields of common interest to at least five COST Countries
- ❑ Answering to the COST Open Call for proposals
- ❑ Evaluated and selected via a tailored procedure
- ❑ Based on a 4 years joint work programme

**COST DOES NOT FUND RESEARCH**

## COST Action – characteristics (2/2)

- ❑ Expandable to new participants
- ❑ Implemented through networking activities: Meetings, Working Groups, Conferences, Workshops, Short Term Scientific Missions, Training Schools and Dissemination Activities
- ❑ Average Annual COST Budget EUR 130 000
- ❑ Pursuing the fulfilment of the objectives and deliverables described in the approved proposal (Memorandum of Understanding)

**COST DOES NOT FUND RESEARCH**



# **COST Actions**

## **How to Participate?**



# Join an Action

- ✓ **As a Management Committee (MC) member taking part in the management of the Action:**

Contact your CNC and apply to become a MC members representing your Country.

- ✓ **As a Working Group (WG) participant taking part in the Scientific activities of the Action:**

Contact the Action Chair and/or the national MC representative

# Participate in Action activities

- ✓ **Short Term Scientific Mission:**

Contact the Action Chair

- ✓ **Training school on specific topics:**

Contact the Action Chair

- ✓ **Workshops...**

# Which countries can participate?



# 37 COST countries

- **EU 28**

- **EU Candidates and EU Potential Candidates:**

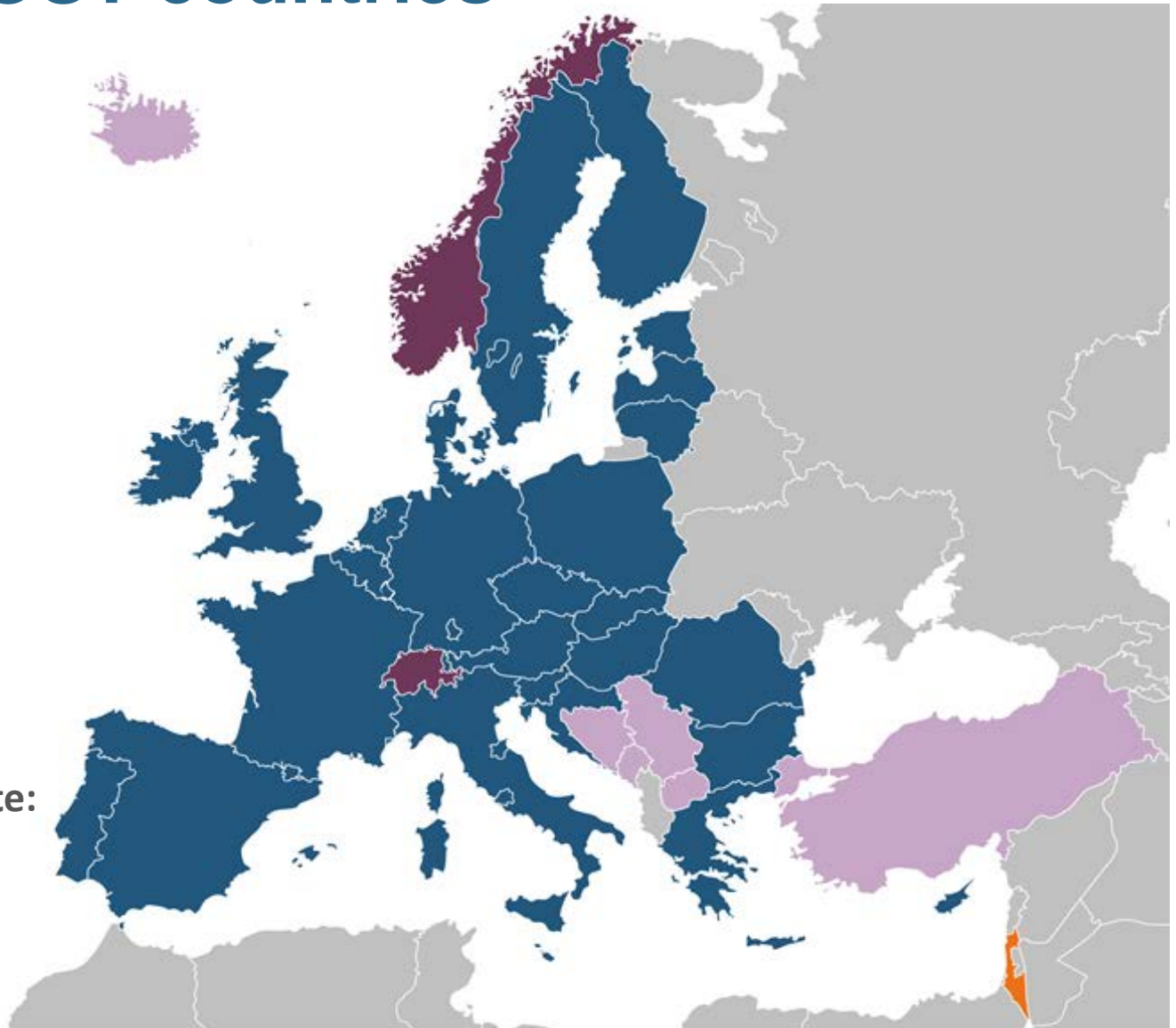
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
fYR Macedonia  
Montenegro  
Serbia  
Turkey

- **Other Countries:**

Norway  
Switzerland

- **COST Cooperating State:**

Israel



# COST Near Neighbour Countries

273 participations in running COST Actions across 16 countries

- Albania (31)
- Algeria (8)
- Armenia (15)
- Azerbaijan (1)
- Belarus (8)
- Egypt (9)
- Georgia (8)
- Jordan (4)
- Lebanon (5)
- Moldova (8)
- Morocco (16)
- Palestinian Authority (6)
- Syrian Arab Republic (2)
- Russia (68)
- Tunisia (22)
- Ukraine (62)

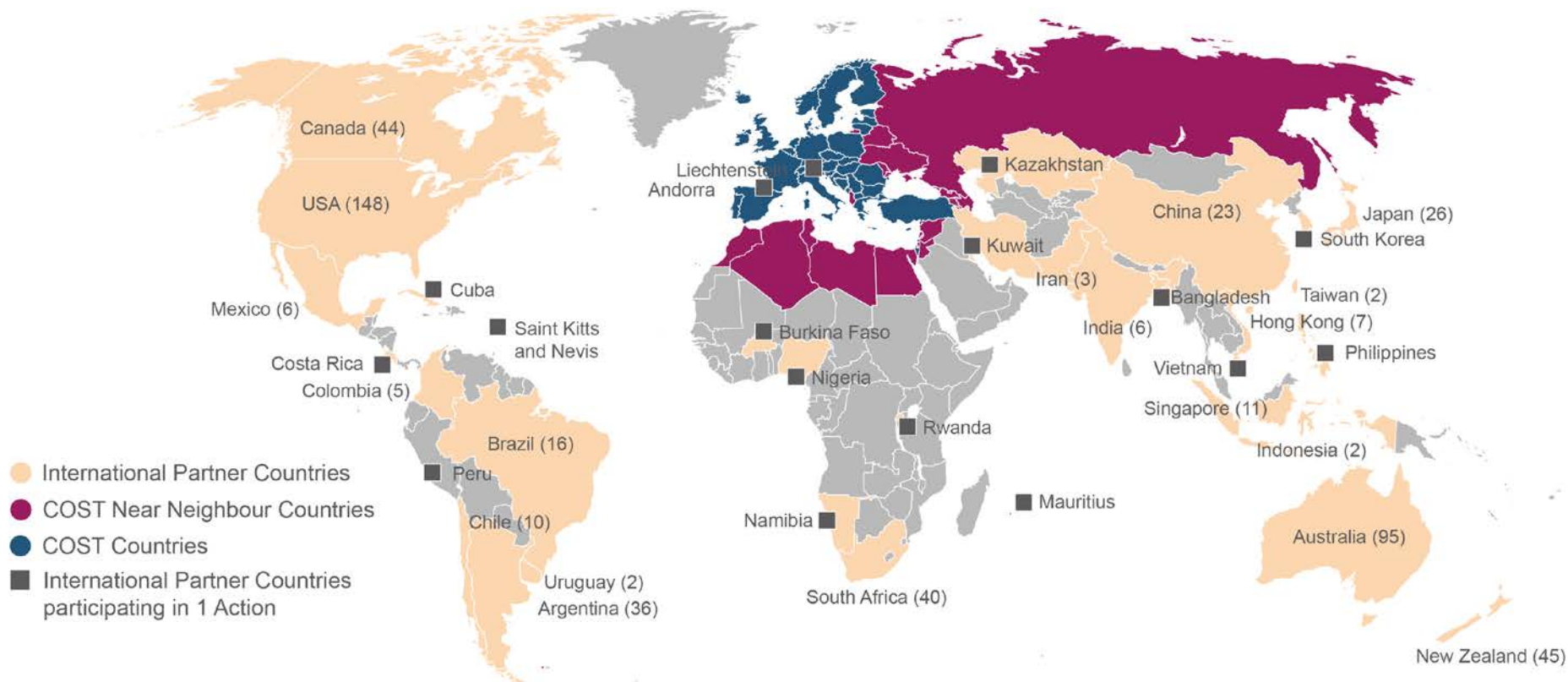
● COST Countries  
● Near Neighbour Countries



*Status January 2016*

# International Partner Countries

546 participations in running Actions across 37 countries



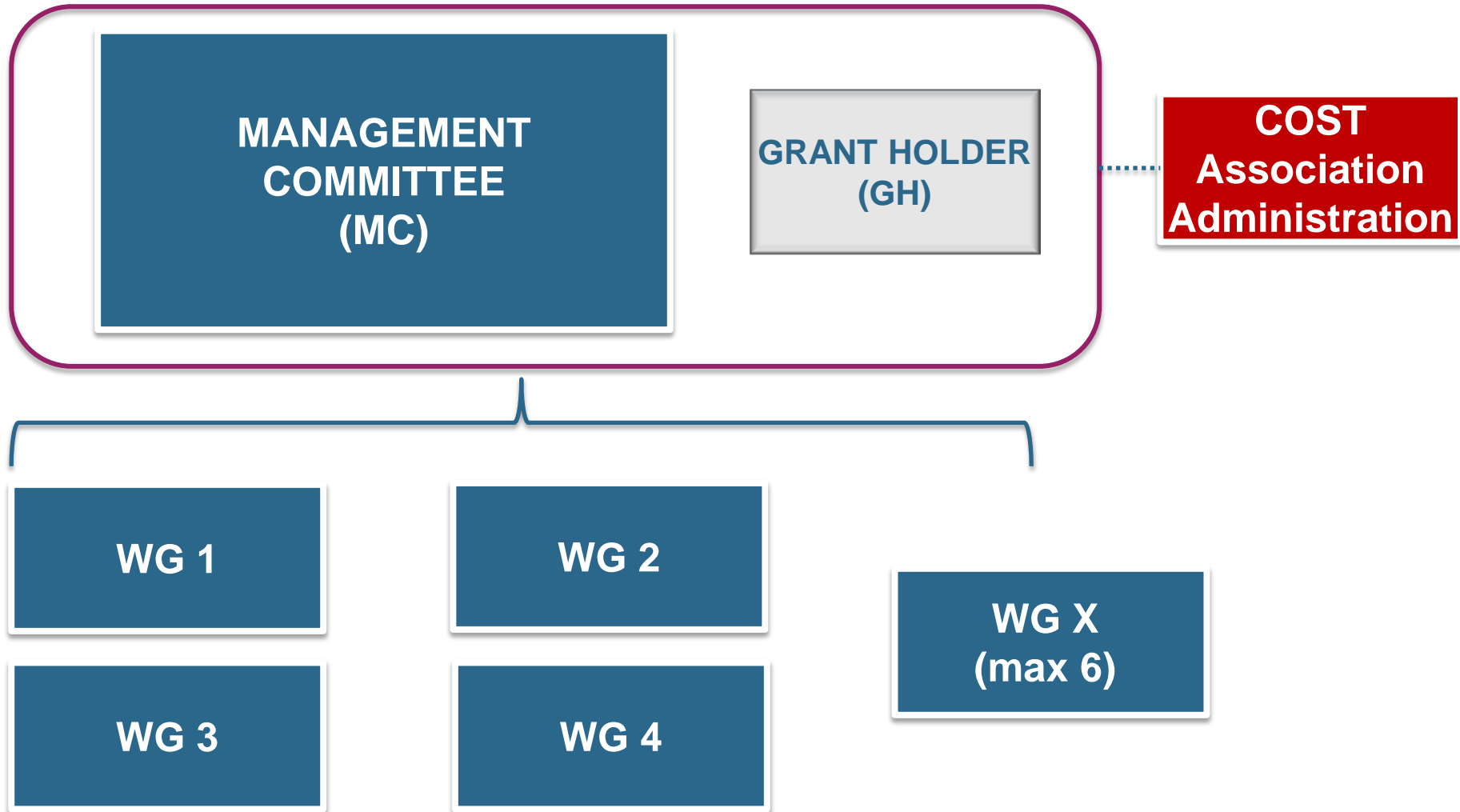
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# **COST Action Structure and Decision Making**



# COST Action Structure



# Management Committee

## DECISION MAKING BODY

- ❑ Coordination, Implementation and Management of an Action
- ❑ Achievement of the Action's objectives (MoU)
- ❑ Define the Action Strategy
- ❑ Supervise the appropriate allocation and use of funds
- ❑ Implement COST mission and policies

# Management Committee

## COMPOSED OF

- ❑ Up to 2 members nominated by their respective COST National Coordinator (CNC)
- ❑ MC Chair(/Vice-Chair) – responsible for coordinating the MC activities
- ❑ WG leaders – reporting on WG activities
- ❑ Grant Holder (Scientific Repr.) – relay to the Grant Holder institution
- ❑ Other roles defined by MC (STSM, dissemination leader...)
- ❑ MC Observers (NNC, IPC, Eur. RTD Org., Internat.Org.)



### CORE GROUP:

**Prepare MC  
decisions  
(Core group  
meetings)**



# Management Committee

## MAIN TASKS

- ❑ Set the Action Strategy (Science and Networking) as defined in the MoU
- ❑ Agree on the Action Structure
  - ❑ Election of the Action Chair, Vice-chair, Grant Holder and other relevant COST Action positions needed to achieve Actions Objectives.
  - ❑ Working Group structure and membership.
- ❑ Approval of the Annual Work & Budget Plan (COST Networking tools)
- ❑ Define Dissemination & Exploitation Strategy
- ❑ Approval of new Countries and Organizations
- ❑ Reporting



# Management Committee

## DECISION TAKING PROCEDURE

### MC MEETINGS

Minimum once a year in a participating COST Country.

Typical duration ½ day.

Decisions only valid if at least 2/3 of the Participating COST Countries are represented.

**Simple majority vote** of MC Members with **one vote per Participating COST Country**.

**MC decision must be minuted and minutes sent to COST Association.**

### E-VOTE

Initiated and managed by the MC Chair.

All MC members are in the e-mail list.

Vote open (7 days).

**Simple majority vote** of MC Members with **one vote per Participating COST Country**.

**MC decision must be minuted and should be included in the official MC minutes of the following MC Meeting.**

# Working Groups

## CHARACTERISTICS AND ROLE

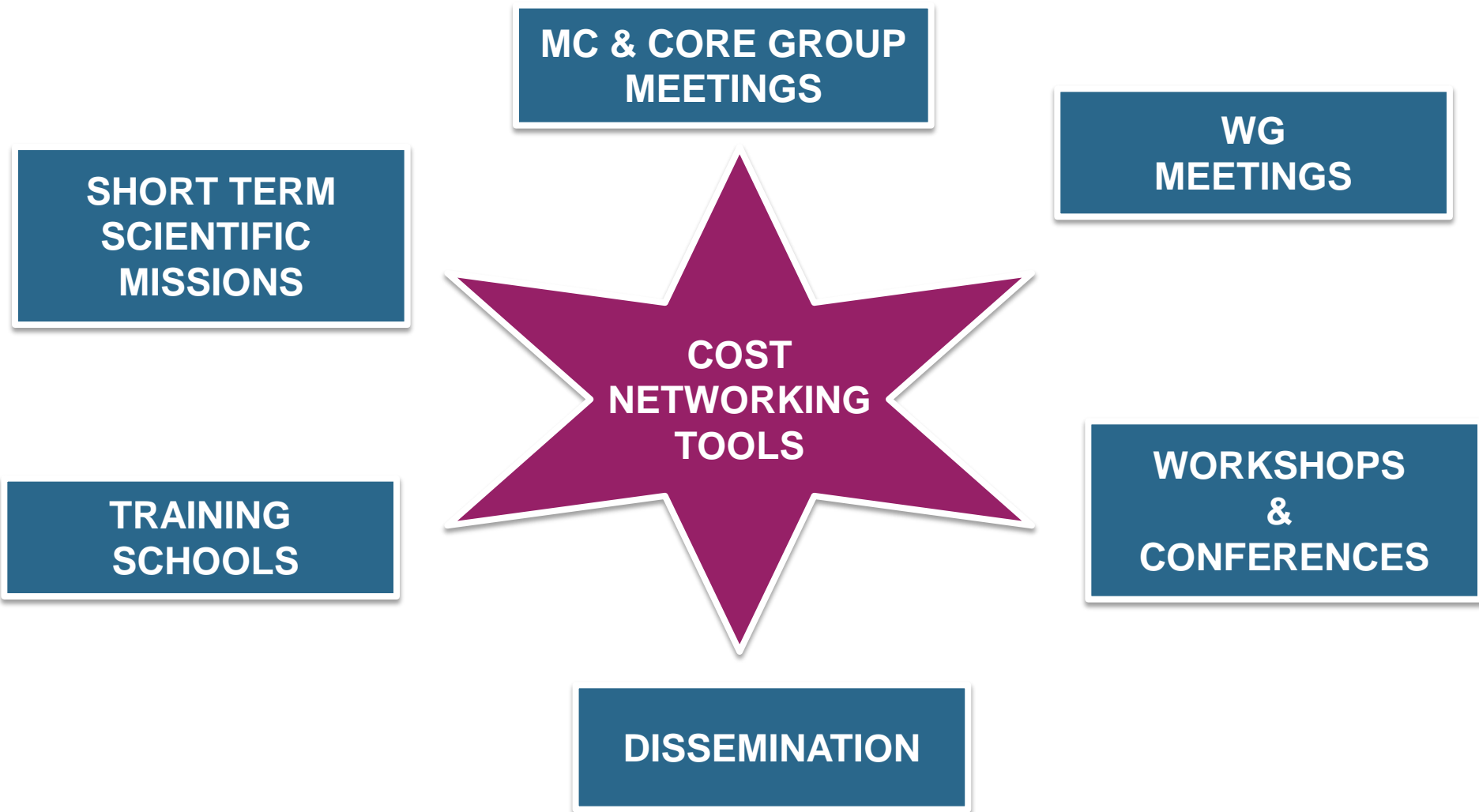
- ❑ From 3 to 6 WG – as set in the MoU
- ❑ Perform the necessary tasks required for the Action to fulfil its scientific objectives as defined in the MoU
- ❑ Coordinate the research work, production and exchange of research, prepare reports to MC (WG meetings)

## COMPOSED OF

- ❑ All MC Members (WG Leaders must be MC Members)
- ❑ MC Observers (NNC, IPC, Eur. RTD Org., International Org.)
- ❑ Any researcher from Participating COST Member Countries



# COST Networking Tools





# COST Networking Tools: **Meetings**

## TYPES

- ❑ **Internal Meetings:** Management Committee (MC), Core Group and Working Group (WG) Meetings
- ❑ **Workshops and Conference:** serve the scientific Action objectives and acts as a showcase for the activities of the Action

## SPECIFIC

- ❑ Location: Participating COST country (except Dissemination meetings)
- ❑ Approved by the MC (in the Work and Budget plan)
- ❑ MC determines among participants who are entitled for reimbursement



# COST Networking Tools: Meetings

## COST SUPPORT

- ❑ Participant (1)
  - ❑ Eligible category: MC, WG, NNC, Eur.RTD Org, Invited Speakers (only Workshops/Conferences)
  - ❑ Prerequisite: invitation/confirmation via eCOST, signed attendance list and Travel Reimbursement request returned to Grant Holder
  - ❑ reimbursement of participations to COST activities (claim submitted <30 days after the activity, payment <30 days after submission of claim)
  - ❑ Accommodation: flat rate (max. EUR 120/night)
  - ❑ Meals: flat rate (max. EUR 20/meal) – lunch and dinner





# COST Networking Tools: Meetings

## COST SUPPORT

- ❑ Participant (2)
  - ❑ Long distance travel expenses: face value/receipts
    - ❑ air: economy, up to EUR 1200
    - ❑ Train/bus: all class
  - ❑ Local transport: up to EUR 25 (flat rate), > EUR 25 (receipts)
  - ❑ Taxi: before 7am (departure) or after 10pm (return), max EUR 80 (receipts)
- ❑ Local organiser: COST contribution
  - ❑ Lump sum of EUR 20/participant/day (max EUR 5000)
  - ❑ up to EUR 10000 (justifications)





# COST Networking Tools: Dissemination Meeting

- ❑ showcase an Action at relevant conference in the field (oral presentation)

## SPECIFIC

- ❑ Eligible: MC members
- ❑ 2 participations per Grant period

## SUPPORT

- ❑ see meetings + up to EUR 500 conference fee



# COST Networking Tools:

## Training Schools

- Provide intensive training on a subject that contributes to the aim of the Action (new or emerging subject)
- If applicable, offer familiarization with unique equipment or know-how in one of the laboratories of the Action

### SPECIFIC

- Duration: 2 to 15 days
- Location: participating COST country or approved NNC institution
- Broadly advertised, it must respect a country balance among trainees and target Early-Career Investigators/PhD students
- Eligible: Trainees from all COST countries and approved NNC institutions/Eur. RTD Organisations
- Trainee Grant: max. EUR 1500





# COST Networking Tools:

## Short Term Scientific Missions

- ❑ Exchange visits fostering collaboration, contributing to the scientific objectives of the Actions and allowing participant to learn new techniques, to have access to data/instruments/methods not available in their own institution

### SPECIFIC

- ❑ all researchers from participating countries, but preference for Early Career Investigator (PhD + up to 8 years), PhD students...
- ❑ From a participating COST Country to another participating COST Country or approved NNC/IPC institution/Organisation
- ❑ From an NNC country to a participating COST Country
- ❑ Duration: 5 to 90 days (180 days for ECI)
- ❑ Applications: [www.cost.eu/stsm](http://www.cost.eu/stsm)





# COST Networking Tools:

## Short Term Scientific Missions

### SUPPORT

- ❑ Grant:
  - ❑ Up to EUR 2500 (for a period up to 90 days)
  - ❑ Up to EUR 3500 (for a period between 91 and 180 days) – Early Career Investigators only



# COST Networking Tools:

## Dissemination material

- ❑ Website, material for display or distribution (flyers, posters,...), publications (journal, books,...), Open access licenses, Multimedia content, distribution costs,...

### SPECIFIC

- ❑ must reflect the Action's objective
- ❑ should be made available to the widest audience (Open access)

# **COST ACTION STRATEGY AND WORK AND BUDGET PLAN**



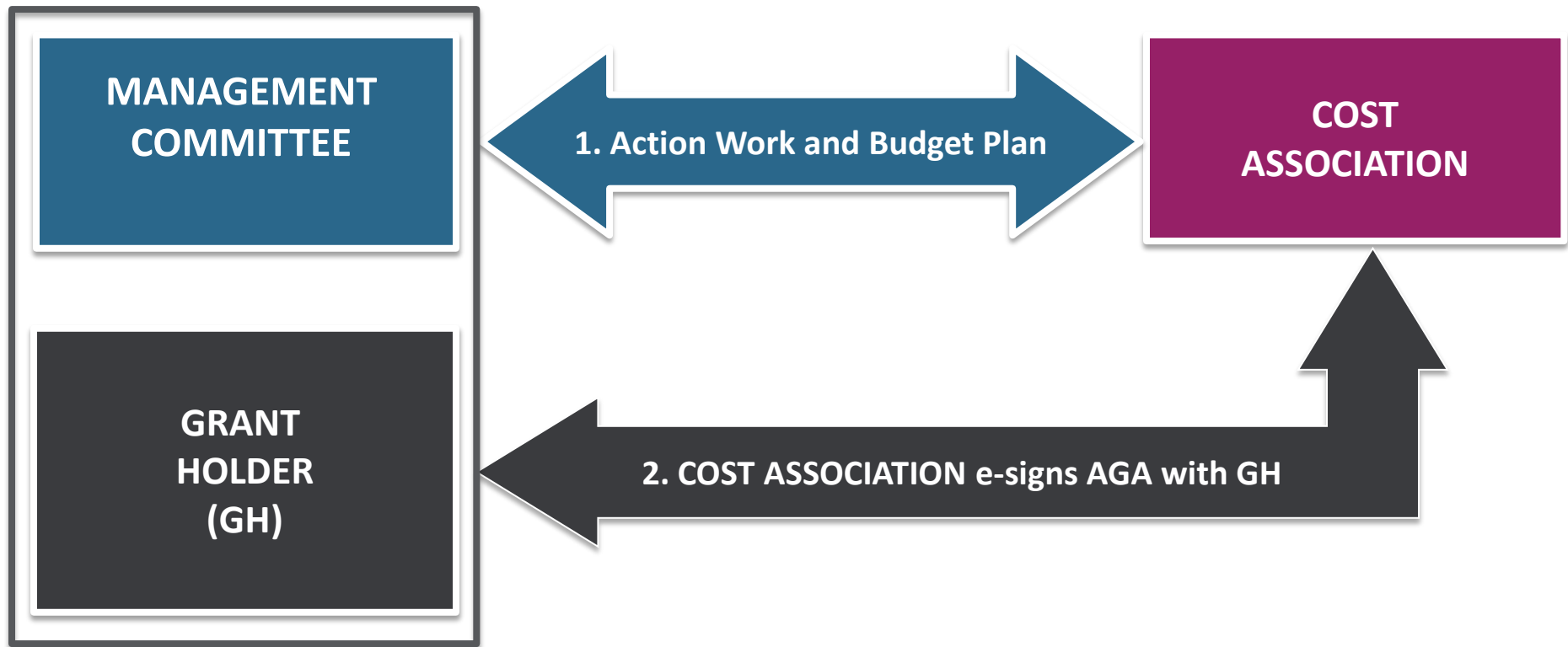
# COST Action strategy

- ❑ The Memorandum of Understanding provides the Action's objectives, tasks, activities, milestones and deliverables over 4 years
- ❑ At the start of the Action and every year, the Management Committee will establish a yearly Work and Budget Plans with the assistance of the COST Association administration within the available budget frame
- ❑ A Grant Agreement is signed yearly between the COST Association and the Grant Holder institution (one of the participating institutions in the Action)



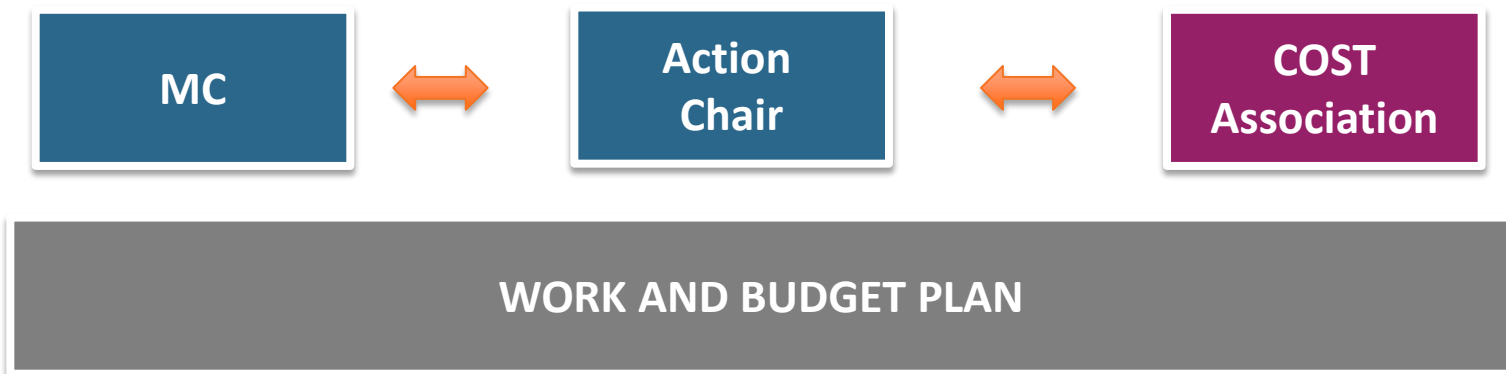
# What is the Action Grant Agreement?

COST Actions are funded through an Action Grant Agreement (AGA) between the selected Grant Holder and the COST Association



# What is the Work & Budget Plan?

- ❑ Based on the MoU objectives
- ❑ It is the document upon which the Action Grant Agreement is established
- ❑ It details the **COST Networking tools** to be used during the Grant Period in order to achieve the objectives including an estimate of the budget for each activity (following COST rules - Vademecum)
- ❑ **Needs to be approved by the MC and the COST Association**
- ❑ The budget level will primarily depend on the number of approved COST countries participating in the Action, based on current average (EUR 130.000) and subject to availability of funds





# COST Grant System – key features

- ❑ Grant Holder institution elected at the first MC meeting
- ❑ Among the institutions represented at the MC
- ❑ GH signs a yearly Grant Agreement with the COST Association
- ❑ Receives the Grant in two instalments (65% after signature of the AGA and 35% after 6-8 month based on an intermediary report)
- ❑ GH administers the Grant according to the work and budget plan via eCOST/eCAMT
- ❑ Administration of activities
- ❑ Submits intermediate and yearly financial reports
- ❑ Administrative support (FSAC) to the GH: up to 15% of the yearly expenses
- ❑ Average Grant: EUR 130000
- ❑ More: see Vademecum [www.cost.eu/participate/networking](http://www.cost.eu/participate/networking)



# How to estimate your Budget?

COST Networking Tools	
(1) MEETINGS	- €
(2) TRAINING SCHOOLS	- €
(3) SHORT-TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS	- €
(4) DISSEMINATION, PUBLICATIONS	- €
(5) OERSA	- €
B - TOTAL SCIENCE EXPENDITURE (sum of (1) to (5))	- €
C - FSAC (max. of 15% of B.)	- €
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (B+C)	- €



# How to estimate your Budget?

Budget Item	Average Amount (€)	Average Duration (days)
Meetings (average 42 participants)		
Reimbursement of Meeting Participant	701	2
Local Organiser Support	1891	2
Training Schools (average 29 participants)		
Trainee Grant	645	5
Reimbursement of Trainer	788	5
Training School Organiser	2464	4
STSM Grant	1634	26

# How to estimate your Budget?

## Science Expenditure vs FSAC

**Budget for the Grant Period = 100.000 €**

**% FSAC agreed by the MC = 15% (max)**

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**Science Expenditure =  $100.000 / 1,15 = 86\,956,52\text{€}$**

**FSAC amount =  $86\,956,52\text{€} \times 0,15 = 13\,043,48\text{€}$**

**Financial Scientific and Administrative Coordination tasks (FSAC)**



# How to Participate in an Action

<http://www.cost.eu/participate>



# OPTION 1

**Would you like to join an existing  
COST Action?**

**[http://www.cost.eu/participate/join\\_action](http://www.cost.eu/participate/join_action)**

# COST Actions are Open!

**You can join any Action that is running:**

✓ **As a Management Committee (MC) member taking part in the management of the Action:**

Contact your CNC and apply to become a MC members representing your Country.

✓ **As a Working Group (WG) participant taking part in the Scientific activities of the Action:**

Contact the Action Chair and/or the national MC representative

# How to Find a running Action?

## ► All Actions

- Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences (BMBS)
- Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies (CMST)
- Earth System Science and Environmental Management (ESSEM)
- Food and Agriculture (FA)
- Forests, their Products and Services (FPS)
- Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health (ISCH)
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- Materials, Physics and Nanosciences (MPNS)
- Transport and Urban Development (TUD)
- Trans-Domain Proposals

## All Actions

This section gives an overview of all past and running Actions with descriptions provided by the Actions directly. Click on the Action of your interest. Alternatively, use the detailed search option in the top right corner of your screen or visit the Domain pages below.

### Search for COST Action

Full text search

☐ search in title only

all Domains ▼

Submit

Action number

Submit

Start date from

e.g. 28/04/2010

End date until

Submit

Page 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11



Action 1 to 30 of 1172

► show all Actions on one page

Sort by Action No Name of Action Start date End date

- MP1406 | Multiscale in modelling and validation for solar photovoltaics (MultiscaleSolar) | 07 May 2015 - 07 May 2019
- MP1404 | Simulation and pharmaceutical technologies for advanced patient-tailored inhaled medicines (SimInhale) | 04 May 2015 - 04 May 2019
- MP1405 | Quantum structure of spacetime (QSPACE) | 30 April 2015 - 30 April 2019
- IS1408 | Industrially Contaminated Sites and Health Network (ICSHNet) | 29 April 2015 - 29 April 2019
- IS1410 | The digital literacy and multimodal practices of young children (DigiLitEY) | 24 April 2015 - 24 April 2019
- MP1407 | Electrochemical processing methodologies and corrosion protection for device and systems miniaturization (e-MINDS) | 23 April 2015 - 23 April 2019
- TD1407 | Network on technology-critical elements - from environmental processes to human health threats | 15 April 2015 - 15 April 2019
- IS1407 | Ancient European languages and writings (AELAW) | 13 April 2015 - 13 April 2019
- FA1408 | A European Network for Foodborne Parasites (Euro-FBP) | 30 March 2015 - 30 March 2019

[http://www.cost.eu/COST\\_Actions/all\\_actions](http://www.cost.eu/COST_Actions/all_actions)



EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

# How to Find a running Action?

## MPNS COST Action MP1401

### Advanced fibre laser and coherent source as tools for society, manufacturing and lifescience

Descriptions are provided by the Actions directly via e-COST.

Among the different types of Lasers, fibre lasers are, both as research and commercially, the youngest, yet the fast growing type of laser due to several factors. This Action will be the first arena where experts in fundamental material science, established laser and component groups, fibre laser manufacturers and end-users will be able to actively interact, share know-how and focus on common goals. We do expect to boost a series of innovations in the field. Among them we aim to cover the 3-6 micron wavelength interval, and beyond, to support mid-infrared applications and to enhance fibre performance to cover more efficiently visible and ultra-violet wavelength generation for biophotonics and healthcare. The Action will also investigate glass material and fibre design to overcome the actual limitation in output power. The improvements will mainly boost healthcare to benefit wide society and EU manufacturing to retain and increase manufacturing workforce within EU. The Action will mentor a new generation of researchers by providing Early Stage Researchers an opportunity to develop both scientific and management skills. At the same time the Action will actively promote gender balance and women researchers to management positions.

## Materials, Physical and Nanosciences COST Action MP1401

### Description

### Parties

### Management Committee



## General Information\*

### Chair of the Action:

[Prof Stefano TACCHEO](#) (UK)

### Vice Chair of the Action:

[Prof Roberta RAMPONI](#) (IT)

### Science officer of the Action:

[Dr Fatima BOUCHAMA](#)

### Administrative officer of the Action:

[Ms Milena STOYANOVA](#)

## Downloads\*

### Action Fact Sheet

[Download AFS as .RTF](#)

### Memorandum of Understanding

[Download MoU as PDF](#)

## Websites\*

### Domain website:

<http://www.cost.eu/mpns>

\* content provided by e-COST.  
Data is synchronised once per night.

Description of the Action, Participants, MoU, MC Chair, Science Officer, Administrative Officer

# OPTION 2

**Become a COST EXPERT**

# Become a COST Expert!

As a COST Expert, you will have the opportunity to:

- Contribute to the evaluation of COST Open Call proposals;
- Participate in the assessment of Action results and outcomes;
- Be invited to take part in the assessment of COST strategic activities

New experts can express their interest via the COST Expert online registration form ([www.cost.eu/experts](http://www.cost.eu/experts))

An updated Curriculum Vitae with a list of publications is required to demonstrate competence in specific areas of expertise.

More on COST Experts:  
[www.cost.eu/participate/experts](http://www.cost.eu/participate/experts).



# OPTION 3

**Are you already in contact with other researchers and you would like to submit a COST Action proposal?**



# Collection Dates

- ❑ COST New Open Call for proposals – published on 15 December 2014
- ❑ As of mid-February 2015 researchers, engineers or scholars were able to submit proposals anytime throughout the year via the **new e-COST online submission tool**
- ❑ The COST Open Call will continue having the **spring and autumn Collection Dates**, when all submitted proposals are gathered and evaluated
- ❑ The first Collection Date was on 24 March 2015
- ❑ **The next Collection Date will be 25 April 2016 - 12 noon (CET)**
- ❑ Some 25 to 40 new Actions are approved in each collection, subject to budget availability

# The new COST Open Call – for whom?

- ❑ Open to **all S&T fields**
- ❑ Those aiming at contributing to the **scientific, technological, economic, cultural or societal knowledge advancement and development of Europe**
- ❑ Closing the gap between **science, policy makers and society** throughout Europe and beyond
- ❑ Reflecting the main characteristics of COST Actions
  - ❑ providing for **knowledge share**
  - ❑ **knowledge creation and application**
  - ❑ being **open and output oriented** while aiming at strengthening the S&T basis of the proposed topic(s)
- ❑ Responding to **COST Excellence and Inclusiveness**



### **3. How to prepare a successful proposal?**



# COST Open Call

- Official publication (incl. the collection date)
- Online submission tool (e-COST)
- COST 133/14 B.1. “COST Action Proposal Submission, Evaluation, Selection and Approval”
- COST Open Call: Submission, Evaluation, Selection and Approval (SESA) guidelines
- COST Action Technical Annex Template

**e-COST**

e-COST is a portal for COST Action participants' registration and financial reporting  
▶ [Link to e-COST portal](#)

**Key Documents**

- ▶ [Open Call for Proposals \(PDF, 162 kB\)](#)
- ▶ [Technical Annex \(DOCX, 113 kB\)](#)
- ▶ [SESA explained \(PDF, 3 MB\)](#)
- ▶ [SESA Guidelines \(PDF, 1 MB\)](#)

**COST Implementation Rules**

- ▶ [A. Rules for Participation in and Implementation of COST Activities \(132/14\) \(PDF, 335 kB\)](#)
- ▶ [B.1. COST Action Proposal Submission Evaluation and Approval \(133/14\) \(PDF, 267 kB\)](#)
- ▶ [B.2. COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment \(134/14\) \(PDF, 341 kB\)](#)
- ▶ [B.3. COST International Cooperation and Specific Organisations Participation \(135/14\) \(PDF, 214 kB\)](#)

**Stay tuned for COST updates:**

**<http://www.cost.eu/opencall>**



# COST OPEN CALL

**One-stage submission process** (on line tool)

New **S**ubmission, **E**valuation, **S**election and **A**pproval (SESA) procedure follows the subsequent phases:

- **SUBMISSION:** by a **Main Proposer** on behalf of a network of proposers
- **EVALUATION :**
  - ❑ External Remote Evaluation by **Individual External Experts**
  - ❑ Revision and Quality Check by *Ad hoc* **Review Panels**
- **SELECTION: COST Scientific Committee (SC)**
- **APPROVAL: COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)**

# Step 1: External Remote Evaluation

- ❑ **3 Independent External Experts**
  - ❑ COST Expert data base
  - ❑ Fields and sub-fields of Science and Technology and, if needed, Key Words
  - ❑ Validated by Scientific Committee
- ❑ **Remote peer-review evaluation**
- ❑ **Remote consensus** shall be sought between the independent External Experts
- ❑ **The consensus shall not be imposed**; independent External Experts may maintain their views on the proposal
- ❑ Eventual differences in opinion of the experts resulting in a non-consensual decision will be **handled and arbitrated by the Review Panel**

# Step 1: External Remote Evaluation

- Proposals are evaluated **only** on the basis of the **evaluation criteria**

S&T EXCELLENCE	IMPACT	IMPLEMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Soundness of the challenge</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Scientific, technological and/or socio-economic impact</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Progress beyond the state-of-the-art and innovation potential</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Measures to maximise impact</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Appropriateness of management structures and procedures</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Added value of networking</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Level of risk and level of potential innovation/breakthroughs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Network as a whole</li></ul>
Total Mark for the section: 25 points	Total Mark for the section: 20 points	Total Marks for the section: 20 points
TOTAL MARK AWARDED: 65 points		
OVERALL THRESHOLD: 45 points		

## Step 2: Revision and Quality check

### ❑ By *ad hoc* Review Panels

- ❑ Review Panels - active researchers, engineers or scholars
- ❑ Appointed by COST National Coordinators
  - Up to 3 per OECD field of S&T
- ❑ *Ad hoc* Review Panels set by the COST Association
  - Depending on number and S&T topics of proposals submitted by the Collection Date
- ❑ Validated by the COST Scientific Committee

### ❑ **Reviewing and validating** all the Consensus Reports and marks

### ❑ **Resolving the differences** in opinions among the Independent External Experts

### ❑ After validation of consensus reports and marks, **rank the proposals above the threshold**

### ❑ For the proposals above the threshold, identify those that indicate **emerging issues or potentially important future developments**

# Step 3 - Selection by the Scientific Committee

## ❑ Scientific Committee

- ❑ 37 high-level experts representing the 36 COST Member Country and 1 Cooperating state
- ❑ Appointed by and reports to CSO
- ❑ Shall select among the ranked list of proposals received from the Review Panels by discriminating among proposals with the same marks, taking into account the **COST mission and policies**
- ❑ **Balanced COST Action portfolio**, by ensuring the coverage of all S&T fields
- ❑ Shall submit the final ranked list of selected proposals to the CSO for approval.

# PROPOSAL PREPARATION

## - PRACTICAL ASPECTS -

# Eligibility Criteria

- ❑ Represent a network of proposers from at **least 5** COST Member Countries or Cooperating State with researchers, engineers or scholars having a **registered e-COST profile**
- ❑ **Be coordinated by a Main Proposer in a COST Member Country or Cooperating State**
- ❑ Be **anonymous**, hence not contain any reference to the names and/or institutions of the participants in the network of proposers
- ❑ Address science and technology challenges destined only for **peaceful purposes**
- ❑ **Respect word or page limits** as described in the SESA Guidelines (in preparation)
- ❑ Be written in **English**, the working language of the COST Association
- ❑ **Not be identical with another submitted proposal**



# Network of Proposers

- ❑ **At least 5 proposers** (one Main Proposer plus at least 4 Secondary Proposers)
  - ❑ affiliated to legal entities based in at least 5 different COST Countries and/or Cooperating State
- ❑ Main Proposer acts as **coordinator and contact point** for the COST Association
  - ❑ also in charge of inviting and accepting Secondary Proposers to the Network
- ❑ All proposers must have a registered and updated **e-COST profile** and specify their scientific expertise
  - ❑ <http://www.cost.eu/ecost>

# Proposal Sections

SECTION		
GENERAL FEATURES	Online tool Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key Expertise needed for Evaluation</li> <li>OECD Fields / Subfields of Science and Technology plus Research Areas</li> </ul>
TECHNICAL ANNEX	PDF Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MAX 15 Pages</li> <li>Anonymity</li> <li>Figures and Pictures - Copyright</li> </ul>
REFERENCES	Online tool Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>500 words</li> <li>Anonymity</li> </ul>
COST MISSION & POLICIES	Online tool Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>500 words</li> <li>Excellence and Inclusiveness</li> <li>International Cooperation</li> <li>Industrial Dimension</li> </ul>
NETWORK of PROPOSERS	Online tool Mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 5 researchers from 5 COST Member Countries and/or Cooperating State</li> <li>Statistical Information that will be used for evaluation</li> </ul>

# Technical Annex

SECTIONS	SUB-SECTIONS
<b>S&amp;T EXCELLENCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Challenge</li><li>▪ Objectives</li><li>▪ Progress beyond the State-of-the-art and Innovation Potential</li><li>▪ Added value of networking</li></ul>
<b>IMPACT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Expected Impact</li><li>▪ Measures to Maximise Impact</li><li>▪ Potential for Innovation versus Risk Level</li></ul>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Description of the Work Plan</li><li>▪ Management Structures &amp; Procedures</li><li>▪ Network as a whole</li></ul>



# 1 S&T Excellence

## 1.1 Challenge

- 1.1.1 Description of the Challenge (Main Aim )
- 1.1.2 Relevance and timeliness

*Describe the research question(s) your proposal aims to address. You should make a case for the relevance and timeliness of the proposed challenge(s)*

### KEY CONCEPT: Challenges of COST Actions

*Challenges are the **research questions** addressed by a COST Action, targeting S&T and / or socio-economic problems*



# 1 S&T Excellence

## 1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 Research Coordination Objectives
- 1.2.2 Capacity-building Objectives

*Provide a clear and specific description of the **project objectives** against the background of the state-of-the-art, **showing their pertinence to tackle the proposed challenge**. Make sure the proposed objectives are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)*

**KEY CONCEPTS: Objectives in COST Actions** *are the results that an Action needs to achieve in order to respond to its challenge*

**Research Coordination Objectives:** distribution of tasks, sharing of knowledge and know-how, and the creation of synergies among Action participants to achieve specific outputs.

**Capacity-building Objectives:** building critical mass to drive scientific progress, thereby strengthening the European Research Area. They can be achieved by the delivery of specific outputs and/or through network features or types and levels of participation.



# 1 S&T Excellence

## 1.3 Progress beyond the state-of-the-art and Innovation Potential

- 1.3.1 Description of the state-of-the-art
- 1.3.2 Progress beyond the state-of-the-art
- 1.3.3 Innovation in tackling the challenge

*Describe briefly the state-of-the art in the field related to the challenge, as well as the advance that the COST Action will bring about*

*Highlight the **innovation potential** anticipated by the proposed COST Action in order to tackle the challenge. **Innovation is to be intended as the creation and / or development of new or improved concepts, products, processes, services, and / or technologies that are made available to markets, governments and society***



# 1 S&T Excellence

## 1.4 Added value of networking

- 1.4.1 In relation to the Challenge
- 1.4.2 In relation to existing efforts at European and/or international level

*Describe the added value of networking in relation to the challenge by highlighting why networking is the best approach to tackle the challenge*

*Describe the added value of the proposed COST Action in relation to former and existing efforts (research projects, other networks, etc.) at the European and/or international level*



# 2 Impact

## 2.1 Expected Impact

- 2.1.1 Short-term and long-term scientific, technological, and/or socio economic impacts

*Describe in a clear and realistic way the S&T and socio-economic impact envisaged by the proposed COST Action in the short- and long-term perspective*

### KEY CONCEPT: **COST Action impact**

*Impact is the effect or influence on short-term to long-term scientific, technological, and/or socio-economic changes produced by a COST Action, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.*



## 2 Impact

### 2.2 Measures to Maximise Impact

- 2.2.1 Plan for involving the most relevant stakeholders
- 2.2.2 Dissemination and/or Exploitation Plan

*Identify the most relevant stakeholders and present a clear plan to involve them as Action's participants*

*Present a clear and attainable plan for dissemination and/or exploitation of results, including IPR, if relevant*

### 2.3 Potential for Innovation versus Risk Level

- 2.3.1 Potential for scientific, technological and/or socioeconomic breakthroughs

*Make a case on how well the proposal succeeds in putting forward potential innovation/ breakthroughs with a convincing risk/return trade-off*



# 3 Implementation

## 3.1 Description of the Work Plan

- 3.1.1 Description of Working Groups

*Provide a detailed description of the different Working Groups. For each WG provide objectives, tasks, activities, milestones and list of major deliverables*

- 3.1.2 GANTT Chart

*Provide a graphical illustration of a schedule offering the project management overview of the different WGs, tasks, activities, and deliverables of your proposal*

- 3.1.3 PERT - Program (Project) Evaluation and Review Technique (optional)

*Provide a graphical representation of the different WGs showing their inter-relation. If needed, the same can be provide to show the inter-relation among the different tasks within each WG*

- 3.1.4 Risk and Contingency Plans

*Identify the main risks related to the Work Plan and present a credible contingency plan.*



# 3 Implementation

## 3.2 Management Structures and Procedures

*Describe the Action organisation in terms of management structure that would help the Action meet the proposed challenge. It is required that the proposed Action organisation and management structure respect COST rules*

*More detailed information at:*

COST Implementation Rules - B.2 COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment (134/14)

<http://www.cost.eu/participate>



# 3 Implementation

## 3.3 Network as a whole

*Describe how well the features of your Network of Proposers can achieve the objectives of the proposed COST Action. Make a case for the critical mass, expertise and geographical distribution needed for addressing the challenge and the objectives*

*If your Network misses any of these features, present a clear plan for overcoming the identified gaps. Note that COST Policies should not be addressed here*

*If you plan to include International Partner Countries (IPCs) or Near Neighbour Countries (NNCs) institutions in your proposal, give a brief description of the mutual benefits deriving from their participation*

*More detailed information concerning IPCs and NNCs at:*

COST Implementation Rules - B.3 COST International Cooperation and Specific Organisation Participation (135/14)

<http://www.cost.eu/participate>

# LAST RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Strong competition: be ambitious
- ❑ Start: start early – a proposal needs time and evolution
- ❑ Become acquainted with the **COST Open Call: Submission, Evaluation, Selection and Approval (SESA) guidelines** (in preparation)
- ❑ Have a clear view over the Action structure and 4 year strategy (WG)
- ❑ Present a clear strategy on the integration of researchers from inclusiveness countries (ex: Grant Holder, STSM,...)
- ❑ If you have the chance, have a **native speaker check the English**
- ❑ BUT - Perfect English is not necessary, it is the **clarity + consistency** which counts and increases your chances
- ❑ .....



COST – European Cooperation  
in Science and Technology  
Avenue Louise 149  
1050 Brussels, Belgium  
[opencall@cost.eu](mailto:opencall@cost.eu)

[www.cost.eu](http://www.cost.eu)

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