



Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) within the OneHealth drugs (CA21111) Action

3rd CALL for STSM applications (2nd Working Period of the CA2111 Action, 2023-24)

Short-Term Scientific Mission 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.

<u>Call opening</u>: the 3rd call for STSM funding will open on the 1st February and close on the 15th of March, 2024.

<u>Application evaluation process</u>: The evaluation process is performed separately for each call. It is performed by the STSM Grant Awarding Team on the basis of the established criteria.

<u>End date of the STSM activity (date of transport return to the home institution):</u> before 31/08/2024 for the date of transport return to the home institution. Payment of STSM grants must take place before October 15th, 2024.





TO BE CAREFUL OF:

- The STSM Applicant must obtain the agreement of the host institution before submitting a STSM application.
- The Applicant must use the online eCOST portal (https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm) to register its proposal.
- International cooperation involving at least 1 Country involved in this COST Action: participation of an intensive Inclusiveness target Country (ITC) or a country from Africa where parasitic diseases are endemic will be encouraged.
- Young Researcher and Innovator (YRI) are strongly encouraged to submit application for STSMs.
- The STSM grantees must make their own arrangements for all health, social, personal security, pension matters and visa process (if applicable).
- DO NOT START a STSM before sending a scan of the signed grant letter to Prof. Maria Paola COSTI (Action Chair) and to Dr. Elisabeth Davioud-Charvet (Grant Coordinator).
- The submission of the scientific report and the host approval of the report on the eCOST portal (https://e-services.cost.eu/) is mandatory. The deadline to submit the supporting documents is 30 days from the end of the STSM.
- It is the responsibility of the host and guest institutions to ensure that all measures and recommendations between the two countries (institutions) enable this exchange to take place under satisfactory sanitary and welcome conditions. The Board of the COST Action CA21111 cannot be held responsible in case of failure to meet these essential criteria.
- Participants are advised to contract a travel cancellation insurance for all their long-distance travel. Cancellation insurance is an eligible expense included in the long-distance travel expenses.
- Life and medical insurance expenses related to addressing / treating health issues of any type (PCR tests, medical consultations, etc) are not eligible.





Glossary:

STSM: Short-Term Scientific Missions. These Missions (Inter-laboratory Exchange Visits) aim at strengthening the existing COST Actions by allowing scientists to go to an institution or laboratory in another COST country to foster collaboration, to learn a new technique or to take measurements using instruments and/or methods not available in their own institution/laboratory. They are particularly intended for YRI.

STMS Coordinator: person elected by the MC that coordinates the STSM awarding process.

STSM Grant Awarding (GA) Team: scientific committee that evaluates the applications.

Grant Holder (GH): person that monitor the incoming approved applications, sends the successful Applicants their Grant Notification, makes the timely pre-payment of 50% of the grant (only for Applicants with an affiliation in an ITC Country), and ensures that all grants are paid within the deadline of 30 days.

eCOST: online COST web portal for registration and submission of STSM applications.

YRI: young researcher and innovator defines a researcher or innovator under the age of 40.

ITC: Inclusiveness targets Country (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

MC: Management Committee - For each Action a Management Committee, formed by national experts of the signatory COST Member States, is in charge of implementing, supervising and coordinating the activities of the Action.

NNC: Near Neighbour Countries (Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Jordan, Kosovo, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Russia*, Syria, and Tunisia)

Open Call: A one-stage submission process where proposals can be submitted at any time using a dedicated secured online tool (eCOST). There are two calls that are organized in the second Working period of the Action, as reported above.

WG: Working Groups - The scientific work of the Actions is organised through Working Groups.

European RTD Organisation means any intergovernmental scientific research organisation that is responsible for infrastructures and laboratories whose members are countries, and the majority of which are COST Member Countries or Cooperating State.





The aims of a Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) of the OneHealth drugs Action are:

- Contribute to the scientific objectives of a COST Action (see Memorandum of Understanding, https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA21111/).
- Help creating a platform for joint research
- Strengthen the existing network by allowing scientists to go to an institution or laboratory of any Action member in either another COST or a non-COST country member of the Action
- Foster new or existing cooperations and collaborative work between the partners of the Action within a WG or between different WGs
- Learn a new technique and/or ensure access to new technique instruments to produce high level research.
- Take measurements using instruments and/or methods not available in their own institution/laboratory.
- Allow young researcher to present their collaborative research activities (seminar, oral communications, scientific discussions...). Priority will be given to Young Researcher and Innovator that are willing to contribute to the scheduled COST meetings of this present Action.
- Ensure high level short term training of young researchers such as PhD students or postdoctoral research fellows (under the age of 40). Young Researcher and Innovator will be indeed strongly encouraged to apply and their mobility prioritized.
- Promote exchanges and subsequent cooperations and researchers exchange from and to less research intensive Inclusiveness Targets Countries (ITCs).





MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION Specific information concerning STSM

The APPLICANT

The STSM Grant applicant(s) are Action participants with a primary affiliation to a legal entity located in a COST Full or Cooperating Member country, a COST Near Neighbour Country or a European RTD Organisation.

- IPC Action Participants will not be eligible for STSM grants.

All OneHealth*drugs* members and their students/colleagues involved in WG activities are invited to submit one (or more) STSM application(s). The Applicant could be a PhD student, a Post-doc or a staff member in an institution located in a COST Country of our Action, which has been formally accepted to be part of our Action. The STSM Applicant 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, organisation or legal entity, which has within its remit a clear association with performing research.

The HOME and HOST INSTITUTIONS

The Home and Host institution should be located in different countries. STSMs within the same country are not allowed.

STSM exchange with an intensive Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC) or a country from Africa among Cameroon, Togo and Gabon (IPC) will be encouraged. However, the African Partners from Cameroon, Togo and Gabon (IPC) can host STSM but are not eligible for STSM grants.

The following table shows scenarios available to eligible STSM applicants:

Applicant in a Home Institution	To perform a STSM in a Host Institution
	In another Participating COST Full or Cooperating Member
	In a Participating COST Partner Member
Located in a Participating COST Full or Cooperating Member	Action MC Observer from IPC
	Action MC Observer from NNC
	In EU Commission, Bodies, Offices and Agencies
	In an Approved European RTD Organisation
	In an Approved International Organisation
An NNC Action MC Observer	In a Participating COST Full / COST Cooperating Member
Located in an Approved European RTD Organisation	In a Participating COST Full / COST Cooperating Member





DURATION

The mission "STSM" must have a minimum duration of 5 calendar days and a maximum of 180 calendar days.

All travels due to STSM exchanges must be completed by August 31, 2024.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The financial support on offer is a contribution to the overall expenses incurred during the STSM (cover travel and subsistence expenses and is paid as a grant) and may not necessarily cover all of the associated outgoings. The financial contribution for a STSM will be a fixed grant based on the Applicant's budget request and the evaluation of the application by the STSM assessment panel. The grant should cover only travel and subsistence (lodging and meals). The total of a STSM shall normally not exceed EUR 4000. The amounts granted for each individual STSM will be determined during the evaluation process by the nominally appointed persons (see below). The selection of Applicants is based on the scientific scope of the STSM application which must clearly compliment the overall objectives of the Action (see below).

Any exception needs special justification and prior approval from the COST Office.

The following table shows the STSM grants approved by the Action 21111 OneHealth drugs' MC:

	STSM GRANT			
	mission duration			
Hosting Lab Country	days <30	30< days <60	60< days <120	120< days <180
Member and Cooperating Country	1.200€	2.400€	3.400€	4.000€
African and Caribbean Country	2.000€	3.000€	4.000€	4.000€

Until 31th of August 2024, we are expecting to offer 10-11 STSMs with an average of 2500-3000 EUR each, or 4-5 STSMs + 2 STSMs to go to an African lab with exceptionally 4000 EUR each.

STSM Applicants with an affiliation in an institution in an ITC country can request a prepayment of 50% of grant. This is payable under 2 conditions: (*i*) that the Grant Holder has sufficient funds to cover 50% of the grant in advance and (*ii*) that the host confirms to the Grant Holder that the mission has started.





APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- 1. Before planning the mission, the Applicant obtains the agreement from the Host institution and provides a signed letter/certification from the Host Institution that the Applicant is welcome to the Host institution for the mission (use template 1 at the end of this document).
- 2. The Applicant registers online at eCOST (https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm) and fills the STSM registration forms (please use the template for application). For already registered Applicants, if the profile is incomplete, the missing information has to be filled. The application page contains the following sections:
 - **STSM details** (the application must start and end during the same Grant Period (GP). If a GP is not active, the Applicant will not be able to submit an application.
 - Bank details
 - Host details (must be located in a different country than the country of the Applicant)
 - Financial support
 - Motivation and Work Plan summary (2000 words maximum)
 - Supporting documents (see below)

3. The Applicant uploads the following supporting documents:

- **3.1 STSM grant application** (based on eCOST template)
- **3.2 Agreement from the Host Institution** that the STSM Applicant can perform the activities detailed in the STSM work plan on the agreed dates (renamed using the following format: Agreement-COST-STSM-CA21111-OneHealthdrugs FirstName LastName.pdf)
- 3.3 Other documents required by the Action:
 - **3.3a. Letter of support from the Home Institution** (on paper head, renamed using the following format: Letter Support-COST-STSM-CA21111-OneHealthdrugs FirstName LastName.pdf)
 - 3.3b. A single file named using the following format: Proposal-COST-STSM-CA21111-OneHealthdrugs FirstName LastName.pdf and including the CV, Extended Research Proposal, Signed Statement and Estimated Budget, written as follows:
 - CV (maximum 1 page), including:
 - A list of academic publications if applicable;
 - The date of birth; the number of years since obtaining PhD Degree if applicable;
 - Current position: *e.g.* PhD student, Post Doc (date of PhD), Assistant Professor, Employee, Research fellow...;
 - Extended Research Proposal of the research during the expected STSM (4 pages maximum). with the following structure (see template https://www.onehealthdrugs.com/stsm/rules-and-templates-for-stsm/): background and research questions of the current project; summary; Specific goals of STMS. Working Plan & methods used: Expected outputs and contribution to the Action MoU objectives and deliverable, including the relevance to the Action and WGs; references including 3 references from the Applicant or Home Institution and 3 references from the Host Institution that are relevant to the proposed project, Hosting lab selection motivation, Dissemination plans, Benefits of the STSM.





- Signed Statement including the following aspects: She/he must agree to present results at a scheduled WG meeting and to provide a written report; - She/he must agree to acknowledge funding in publications and conferences arising from the STSM Cost Action (according to the acknowledgment rules of COST dissemination available on https://www.onehealthdrugs.com/stsm/rules-and-templates-for-stsm/).
- Estimated Budget for the STSM.
- 4. If the application is complete, the Applicant submits its request.
- 5. The STSM coordinator, Dr. Elisabeth Davioud-Charvet (elisabeth.davioud@unistra.fr), and the Grant Awarding Team: Dr. Stéphanie Blandin (sblandin@unistra.fr), Daniel Sojka (sojkadan@gmail.com), Mindaugas Lesanavičius (mindaugas.lesanavicius@gmail.com) are notified of the submission. The Applicant also receives a copy of the notification.
- 6. After the evaluation process:
 - If the application is rejected, the STSM coordinator informs the Applicant and provides a justification. The STSM coordinators will guide the Applicant in her/his resubmission. It will be considered for the next funding period and will be treated as a new application.
 - If the application is accepted, the GH is notified to send the Grant Letter notification to the Applicant.
- 7. If the STSM Applicant from an ITC requests is granted a pre-payment of 50% of the grant, the STSM host receives a notification requesting to confirm to the GH that the STSM started on schedule. Without the STSM host confirmation, the pre-payment will not be done. The actual transfer of 50% of the grant can take several days after the receipt of the STSM Host email confirmation.





EVALUATION PROCESS

To ensure fairness and impartiality of the evaluation process, the proposals for STSMs will be evaluated by an Assessment Panel that involves the STSMs coordinator and at least one of the <u>STSM Grant Awarding Team Members</u>.

STSM Coordinator

Dr Elisabeth Davioud-Charvet, Univ. Strasbourg, France

E-mail: elisabeth.davioud@unistra.fr

Tel: +33 (0)368852620

STSM Grant Awarding Team Members

- 1. Dr Elisabeth Davioud-Charvet, Univ. Strasbourg, France, elisabeth.davioud@unistra.fr
- 2. Dr Stéphanie Blandin, Univ. Strasbourg, France, sblandin@unistra.fr
- 3. Dr Daniel Sojka, Budejovice, CZECH REP, North Macedonia, sojkadan@gmail.com
- 4. Dr Mindaugas Lesanavičius, University of Vilnius, LITUANIA, mindaugas.lesanavicius@gmail.com

The proposals collected by the STSM coordinator and the Grant Awarding Team will be evaluated, together with an up-to-date summary of "the statistics", *i.e.*, the budget available, and a list of the STSMs funded in the Action. Each member of the assessment panel shall respond, in accordance with the following aspects, within three weeks:

- a) Applications to be funded ("priority list"),
- b) Applications not fundable (for reasons other than "no funds available"). Should an application be categorized "not fundable for other reasons", then a reason must be indicated.

To elaborate a list of the STSM proposals that have to be funded in the Action, the STSM Committee has established **a set of criteria** to be applied in the evaluation of STSM proposals. These criteria are defined to respond to the main aim of the COST Action STSMs, namely:

- Contribution to the scientific objectives of the COST Action,
- Contribution to learn new techniques/methodologies, gain access to specific data, instruments and/or methods not available in their own institutions / organisations.

Proposals will be evaluated using the **following criteria** (Each criterion will be scored out of 4 and they will all be weighted equally. The maximum overall score is therefore 20):

I Research

- 1. Research/technological quality (objectives of the proposed research clearly defined; timeliness and relevance)
- 2. Appropriateness of research methodology and approach (for the goals of the project as well as for the objectives of the action (state of the art; see MoA))
- 3. Host scientific expertise in the field

II Training

1. Clarity and quality of the research training objectives for the researcher

III Researcher

1. Research experience,





2. Potential to acquire new skills and knowledge during the mission

IV Implementation

- 1. Feasibility and credibility of the proposed work, including work plan
- 2. Quality of infrastructures/facilities of host (on-site training and support)

V Impact

- 1. Contribution to Actions objectives (successful implementation and the outputs of the mission would likely contribute to produce knowledge that can be used to underpin the future work within the Action)
- 2. Impact of competencies acquired (*in line* with the Actions objectives, see MoU of CA21111)
- 3. Contribution to the scientific career of the Applicant
- 4. Proposals in terms of dissemination of results or skills transfer.

TO BE CAREFUL OF:

Submitted material (supporting documents containing the CV and the project/work plan) should therefore contain information that enables evaluation against the defined criteria and aspects described above.

Additional criteria applied:

Priority given to the proposals submitted by Young Researcher and Innovators.

This additional criterion will be applied as part of the evaluation by scores given to the Researcher (criterion III) without an influence on scoring against other criteria

✓ Priority given to the proposals involving ITC or Africa countries (among Cameroon, Togo and Gabon).

This additional criterion will be applied as part of the evaluation by scores given to the Researcher (criterion III) without an influence on scoring against other criteria.

√ Geographical and gender balance issues will be taken into consideration

If more than one proposal comes from the same country, all of them will be evaluated (scored) and included in the final rank list. However, if the budget for the call does not allow all submitted proposals to be granted, geographical balance will be obtained by selecting one proposal from each country with the highest final score.

Gender and geographical balance will be evaluated periodically (at the end of each granting period) and if appropriate should be considered for the following calls.

The STSM coordinator then summarize the votes. An excellent application will have an average 20 points score.

Proposals which score below 10 score points cannot be funded without resubmission in the next call for proposals. The STSM Coordinator will notify the Applicant of this decision.

If there are more fundable proposals than available funding, the STSM Coordinator will prepare a priority list ensuring a balance between WGs, and taking into account the priority given by the MC: gender balance and promotion of proposals from Young Researcher and Innovator and ITC. Applications that exceed current funds are moved to a waiting list. In addition, they will be considered for the next funding period (treated as new applications with the same score,





unless the proposal is resubmitted). In the case that a WG has received more funding (nominal value) than others, it will be considered for the next calls.

The preliminary decision will be sent by the STSM coordinator to the Chair/Vice-Chair for final acceptance. Then, the STSM coordinator will inform the GH. All Applicants will be notified 4 to 8 weeks after the deadline of proposal submission (Grant letter) by the GH. The Grantee accepts the grant by sending back a signed version of the grant letter to the Grant Holder Manager and to Prof. Maria Paola Costi (OneHealth*drugs* Action chair).

Applications for STSMs must follow the pre-defined deadlines.

OneHealthdrugs STSM Application Deadlines for Working Period 2 of OneHealthdrugs COST Action:

2nd STSM CALL: Opening 1 October 2023 - closure is November 15, 2023, 3rd STSM CALL Opening 1 February 2024 - closure March 15, 2024.





DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED AFTER THE STSM IS COMPLETED

1 day and 15 days after the end of the STSM, the grantee receives a reminder to upload the scientific report and the host approval of the report. The deadline to submit the last supporting documents is 30 days from the end of the STSM on the eCOST portal - https://eservices.cost.eu/activity/grants. This is mandatory. Late submission, beyond the deadline, can lead to the cancellation of the Grant and, in cases when a pre-payment was done, the obligatory reimbursement by the grantee of the amount received.

A scientific report template is available herein (Template 2). The STSM grantee must complete this template and save it in pdf before uploading it in the e-COST portal (https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants).

Note

The scientific report file should be renamed using the following format: Report-COST-STSM-CA21111-OneHealthdrugs FirstName LastName.pdf

The grantee is also responsible for acquiring a host approval of the report (official acceptance letter or Email confirmation of acceptance from a senior Researcher affiliated to the Host institution formally accepting the scientific report). This formal acceptance of the scientific report has to be uploaded in the e-COST portal (https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm) and sent as well to the Action Chair (mariapaola.costi@unimore.it) and the STSM coordinator (elisabeth.davioud@unistra.fr) and the Grant Awarding team members for archiving purposes.

Note

The Host Acceptance file should be renamed using the following format:

Host Acceptance-COST-STSM-CA21111-OneHealthdrugs FirstName LastName.pdf

The grantee is also asked to fill and send by Email to the STSM coordinators (elisabeth.davioud@unistra.fr and the Grant Awarding team members) an STSM outcome (see Template 3 in this document) as a doc file.

Note

The STSM outcome file should be renamed using the following format: Outcome-COST-STSM-CA21111-OneHealthdrugs FirstName LastName.doc

The STSM coordinators have to verify the validity of the report (completeness of the information and files and good quality scientific report). The STSM coordinators refer to the WG leaders in case they do not possess the appropriate expertise to evaluate the report. In case of the Applicant fails to provide the requested documents, the report might be rejected. To sum up, the following documents are mandatory required:

- 1. The STSM scientific report.
- 2. A signed confirmation letter from the Host Institution, stating the successful execution of the STSM (free format either as an official acceptance letter or an Email confirmation of acceptance from a senior Researcher).
- 3. The STSM outcome form.





Report Submission deadline within 30 days after completion of the mission

Please note that successful Applicants will be invited to prepare, in the month following the completion of the STSM, a short cover story (with photos preferably) for dissemination (including the COST Action Website). This short cover story has to be sent to the Dissemination Group (alfonsog@ut.ee) and the Transfer of Knowledge Group (clara.lima@ibmc.up.pt) of the OneHealthdrugs COST Action.

NOTICE OF COMPLETION

The STSM coordinator and the Grant Awarding team members are notified when the Applicant submitted the scientific report and host approval and have to verify the validity of the report. If the report is rejected, the STSM coordinator must provide a justification to guide the STSM grantee in her/his resubmission.

If the STSM coordinator approves the report, a "notice of completion" of the STSM, together with the short scientific report is sent to the Grant Holder. The Grant Holder will then execute the payment of the fixed grant directly to the grantee or the host institute, as requested in the application.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Finally, if the results from a STSM visit are publishable in a journal, please add the following acknowledgement in your manuscript: "Part of this work was supported by the COST Action CA21111 "OneHealth drugs: One Health drugs against parasitic vector borne diseases in Europe and beyond".

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT STSM APPLICATIONS

Questions may be sent to the STSM coordinator and/or co-coordinator

Dr. Elisabeth Davioud-Charvet: elisabeth.davioud@unistra.fr

Dr. Stéphanie Blandin: sblandin@unistra.fr





TEMPLATE 1

Use Institutional letterhead

Expression of intention to host

a Short-Term Scientific Mission

To the Grant Holder of the COST Action CA21111 - OneHealthdrugs

Place, date:
ΓSM Applicant (first name and last name):
ome Institution:
ost Institution:
nereby inform that we welcome the visit that Mr/Ms/Dr plans to erform in our lab at in in (month) (year), within e framework of the OneHealthdrugs Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) programme.
ne STSM will be scientifically based on the work plan described by Mr/Ms/Dr
e Applicant and our group, in consideration of both the specific activities to be performed and the spected strengthening of cooperation between the Home and Host institutions.
ours sincerely,
rst name and last name:
gnature:





TEMPLATE 2

STSM REPORT

STSM Application number:
STSM Grantee Name:
Young Researcher and Innovator? (Yes or No - Young Researcher and Innovator = <40 years old)
STSM title:
Home Institution:
Host Institution:
STSM start and end date: DD/MM/YYYY to DD/MM/YYYY
Working Group: (Within which Working Group WG1-4) does this research fit best?)
Purposes of the STSM (max 200 words):
Description of the week coming out during the CTCM (many 500 wounds).
Description of the work carried out during the STSM (max 500 words):
Description of the main results obtained:
Mutual benefits for the Home and Host institutions:
Future collaboration with the Host institution (if applicable):
Foreseen publications or conference presentations expected to result from the STSM (if
applicable):





TEMPLATE 3

STSM outcome form

STSM application number	Home institution & country	Host institution & country	OneHealthdrugs WG	Objective of the collaboration	Results of the collaboration and related GAPG
COST-STSM- CA21111			WG n°X		

Notes:

- **OneHealthdrugs WG**: please write the number of the WG within which the cooperation is meant to be established.
- **Objective of the collaboration**: you can report even the STSM title and maybe expand it a little bit to make it clearer, if necessary.
- Results of the collaboration: please write a very concise synthesis. We need just a few lines that convey the essence of the outcomes. You can write one or two sentences (no more), or make a list of key outcomes (just a few words for each item). Be aware that this information is meant to be presented as a record of a big table for the whole STSM programme: we don't need extended descriptions (as they are already reported in your STSM scientific report). GAPG = Grant Agreement Period Goals