

STSM GRANTS, 2025-26 CALL

International network for harmonization of atmospheric aerosol retrievals from ground based photometers (Harmonia, COST Action CA21119) is opening the 4th year Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) Call.

OBJECTIVES / DESCRIPTION

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) are institutional visits aimed at supporting individual mobility of researchers or Innovators for the specific work to be carried out and for a determined period of time, fostering collaboration between individuals. A STSM should:

- specifically contribute to the Harmonia objectives.
- can have a minimum duration of 5 days and
- need to be carried out entirely within a single Grant Period.

Relevant dates:

Deadline for applications: **opens in November 2025 and remains open until the capacity is filled**

Outcomes: **Every month starting November 10th, 2025**

STSM dates: must take place before October 15th 2026

After the STSM: The successful applicant must submit a scientific report and relevant documentation within 30 days of the end of the STSM and before 15 October 2026, whichever takes place earlier.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

STSM applicants must be a researcher or innovator affiliated to an institution, organisation or legal entity that has within its remit a clear association with performing research. The institution, organisation or legal entity where applicants pursue their main strand of research is considered as Home institutions. The Host institution is the institution / organisation that will host the successful applicant. Eligibility can be determined by adhering to the stipulations in the following 3 categories depending on **Applicant in a Home Institution:**

Researchers holding their primary affiliation at an institution located in a Participating COST Country (i.e. COST Full Member and COST Cooperating Member countries) that signed the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) are eligible.

Researchers holding their primary affiliation in a Near Neighbour Country (NNC) institution formally approved on the Action are eligible.

Researchers holding their primary affiliation at a European RTD Organisation formally approved onto the Action are eligible.

A list of COST Countries and approved NNC and European RTD Organisation institutions within Harmonia can be found at <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA21119/>.

SELECTION OF APPLICANTS

The evaluation of each received STSM application is performed by the Core Group, on behalf of the Management Committee. The selection of applicants is based on the following criteria:

The scientific scope of the proposed contribution must be coherent and contribute to the overall objectives of Harmonia, as well as linked to specific deliverables of the Action (feel free to ask if your subject is within the Action's objective/deliverable).

Outputs and benefits foreseen for Harmonia as a result of the STSM (scientific publication)

There should be special considerations with respect to supporting COST policies on promoting gender balance, enabling Young Researchers and Innovators, broadening geographical inclusiveness, and involving ITC countries.

In case of even scoring, the number of applications from each institution will be considered to ensure a fair spread across the network.

The resolution of the call will be communicated to the applicants after the final decision.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The financial support on offer is a fixed financial contribution to the overall expenses incurred during the STSM and may not necessarily cover all the associated expenses. A STSM Grant is a contribution to the overall travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses, as well as overall effort of the Grantee related with the project.

Applicants should provide an estimated budget that includes: travel expenses and daily allowance (altogether accommodation, meals, and short-distance transport expenses; table for The Daily Allowance rate available at http://www.cost.eu/daily_allowance, based on the country where the event takes place). The estimated budget should be included in the first part of the E-COST Application Form.

It takes into consideration the budget request of the applicant and the outcome of the evaluation of the application. The following funding conditions apply and must be respected:

Up to a maximum of 4000 EUR in total can be afforded to each successful applicant.

For this call, the Harmonia Management Committee has allocated a total budget of max 14000 EUR. The amount granted will be determined during the evaluation process. Annotated rules for COST actions (<https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2025/11/COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V3.0-25-IX-2025.pdf>).

HOW TO APPLY

Interested researchers should:

- Eligible STSM applicants must submit their STSM applications online at the following web address: <https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants>
- Carefully read the funding rules detailed in the annotated rules for COST actions (pages 96-100, <https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2025/11/COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V3.0-25-IX-2025.pdf>)
- **! Must** fill the information also in the following link: <https://forms.gle/vQfKbbUPb3vPiFfx8>
- In order to complete the application, applicants are required to upload in the online system the following documents:

- Short work plan (1-2 pages, including contact details; a project title; proposed start and end of the STSM; contribution to the objectives of Harmonia COST Action, working plan, expected outputs and contribution to the Action MoU objectives and deliverables, and clear justification for choosing the hosting institution, using the [e-COST template](#));
- Written agreement from the host institution (stating name of applicant, time period of the STSM, and acceptance of the work plan, which has to be performed on the agreed dates);
- Letter of support from the home institution;
- CV (1-page), including publications and previous visiting fellowships.

NOTE: Remember that STSM dates must take place before 30 September 2026.

BEFORE THE STSM

Please note that you can start your STSM after:

- The STSM coordinators assessed your request,
- The STSM coordinator informed the Grant Holder that the proposed STSM has been approved,
- The Grant Holder sent you a formal Grant Notification letter.

AFTER THE STSM

The Grantee must submit the supporting documentation through the e-COST system (<https://e-services.cost.eu/>) within 30 calendar days from the end date of the STSM in question and **before 15 October 2026, whichever takes place earlier**. It is expected:

A short report, based on [e-cost template](#), which should include the following:

- Aims of the STSM; work undertaken; main results; future plans (e.g. further cooperation with the host-institution, potential future publications etc.), and how the results are linked to HARMONIA specific deliverables;
- Outputs (e.g. academic paper, funding application, new dataset etc.);

A more extensive scientific report on the achievements within the STSM.

Payment of the Grant is subject to the submitted scientific report being approved by the Action Chair and Vice-Chair.

If the results from a STSM are published in a journal or conference, please add the following acknowledgement in your paper/presentation:

"Part of this work was supported by the COST Action Harmonia (CA21119) supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology)."

It would be highly appreciated that a copy of the paper/article, abstract or other flyer is sent to the STSM Coordinator and the Action Chair and Vice-Chair.

CONTACT PERSONS

STMS Coordinators:

Dr Pavla Dagsson-Waldhauserova (pavla@lbhi.is)

Dr Maria João Costa (mjcosta@uevora.pt)

Grant Holder Manager: Eliane Tobler (eliane.tobler@pmodwrc.ch)