

CA20111 EuroProofNet COST action Management Committee meeting on 24 October 2022

The meeting is hold online.

Frédéric Blanqui started the meeting at 14:05 asking for volunteers to take notes and collect the list of participants.

Sandra Alves volunteered to take notes.

Christophe Scholliers volunteered to note the list of participants:

- COST: Ralph Stübner (science officer)
- COST: Milena Stoyanova (administrative officer)

- Frédéric Blanqui (chair)

- DE: Chuangjie Xu
- PL: Aleksy Schubert
- AT: Cezary Kaliszyk (WG5 leader)
- SI: Andrej Bauer
- RS: Silvia Ghilezan
- CZ: David Cerna
- ES: Alicia Villanueva (WG3 leader)
- BE: Pascal Fontaine (WG2 leader)
- IS: Dylan McDermott
- HU: Ambrus Kaposi (grant coordinator)
- PL: Adam Naumowicz
- NL: Jesper Cockx (WG1 leader)
- PT: Sandra Alves (vice chair)
- SI: Anja Petković Komel (gender balance coordinator)
- ES: Montserrat Herno
- FR: Catherine dubois (WG1 co-leader)
- AT: Laura Kovacs
- UK: Benedikt Ahrens (WG6 leader)
- IT: Claudio Sacerdoti Coen (WG4 leader)
- UK: Angeliki Koutsoukou-Argyraki
- SE: Robin Adams
- BG: Roussanka Loukanova (WG6 co-leader)
- SE: Anders Mörtberg
- DE: Erika Abraham
- BE: Christophe Scholliers
- AT: Cezary Kaliszyk (WG5 leader)
- TR: Ümit Ertuğrul

- invited: Madalina Erascu

Ralph Stübner (COST) reminded that quorum was necessary to be checked. Frédéric said this would only be necessary to take vote. Milena Stoyanova (COST) informed that an official list of participants should be obtained from the virtual platform.

Frédéric asked Ralph and Milena to present themselves. Both stated their role in the COST action and informed that they were participating to discuss a serious issue.

Frédéric started reporting on the first year of the action.

The first slides address statistics on the composition of the action. Regarding the ITC countries that are not yet represented, Frédéric asked the MC to encourage possible contracts in those countries as well as to increase the participation in WGs of countries with fewer members.

The next reported point was regarding the communication actions (website with all the information, resources, zulip chat, social media, press)

Frédéric then reported on STSMs, stating that only one of the missions was not eligible for reimbursement, due to lack of final report.

The next point concerned the organised events and the corresponding budget, with information about the planned school that was cancelled and how that budget was reallocated.

At this point Ralph enquired about the status of reimbursements and Frédéric replied that this issue would be addressed later.

Frédéric revised the goals of the action, which actions were taken to fulfill those goals, and which goals were postponed.

After this, Frédéric started the discussion on the problem concerning the delay in reimbursements, informing that no reimbursement has yet taken place. INRIA had issues to address in order to adapt to the COST rules, which were in conflict with their own and national regulation in France. Frédéric informed that the reimbursements would start soon and that INRIA asked COST to extend the period of the current grant.

Ralph thanked for the update and said that it would have been good to be warned about this issue before. Ralph also mentioned that he did not think the extension would be feasible. He also said that this issue should be sorted very quickly and that the MC and/or COST can ask for a new Grant Holder Institution (GHI).

Milena said that this is a serious issue and informed that a formal complaint was received by COST at the beginning of October. She also informed that the extension will be denied since the report deadline is connected to report to the EU. Milena said that reimbursements can be done later, but every claim needs to be checked for the financial report to COST, so that the report can be generated, which is not the case yet. Milena hopes these issues are solved for the next grant period. Frédéric said that he believes the report can be generated in time.

Ralph said that regardless of the report, the reimbursements should be done quickly.

Frédéric said that this kind of delay is not expected to happen again, once the procedures are fixed.

Andrej Bauer complained about some extra procedures being imposed by INRIA that are not complying with COST regulations. Frédéric said that in the meantime this will be simplified.

Ambrus Kaposi also raised the issue of INRIA insisting on reimbursing STSMs to institutions and not individuals. Milena informed that COST does not fix this and that GHI cannot impose that in principle.

Silvia Ghilezan stated that this would also be an issue for her. Anja Petković Komel said that she agrees that this is an issue and that at least this should have been known upfront.

Ralph said that the GHI needs to rebuild the confidence of the MC, and be reminded that the MC can choose a new GHI. He also said that COST will monitor very closely this issue and intervene if necessary.

Andrej hopes that the issue is solved but suggests a deadline to decide what to do, if the issue persists.

Milena said that COST can recommend or impose the change of GHI, however it is not advisable to change GHI in the middle of a period. She also reinforces that COST will keep this issue on its radar.

Ralph mentions that the budget for the next grant period has been approved by COST and if the MC approves the budget and the grant agreement is signed then INRIA will be the GHI for the next period.

Frédéric says he will communicate everything to INRIA and he understands that if the issues persist then INRIA will lose GHI.

Frédéric asked for Ralph's advice on how to proceed. Ralph said that this issue should not be delayed and should be discussed within the next few days. It is understood that a delay in signing of the agreement will affect mostly the STSMs that could take place before the end of the year.

Milena informs that she will have to leave the meeting, and says that she hopes that the issues will be solved. She will discuss the issue internally within COST and will contact Frédéric after.

Anja calls the attention to Andrej's suggestion about having an alternative plan.

Frédéric says that given that INRIA asked for a two-month extension then he suggests the same deadline. Pascal Fontaine gives an alternative suggestion based on the first reimbursement. Frédéric mentions that INRIA has sent a plan to COST regarding reimbursements and says that he will check the progress and inform the MC.

Andrej suggests according to Frédéric's updates on the progress, if the issues are not solved, then Frédéric should schedule a new meeting.

Ralph says that waiting for two months will compromise the progress of the action for the second grant period and also suggests a closer deadline. Andrej asks Ralph for a proposed deadline. Ralph says that the grant agreement should be signed by December.

Silvia also suggests that we wait for two weeks to see if the first reimbursement is done, and Pascal calls the attention to the priority that should be given to the report.

Frédéric asks for suggestions for dates. Pascal suggests that we meet in three weeks if the first payment is not done.

The issue of COST not reimbursing INRIA is raised and Silvia says that in this case, maybe INRIA will not want to remain as GHI.

Ambrus asks again if people can be reimbursed directly for grants. Frédéric will inform INRIA that this is a strong point.

Since this seems to be an important issue for many people, Andrej asks Ralph about COST regulation regarding this. Ralph says he is not sure.

Christophe Scholliers asks if the list of reimbursements can be made available, to which Frédéric answers positively.

Frédéric suggests to give INRIA three weeks to start processing reimbursements, after which we will meet again. He will warn INRIA about the possibility of losing GHI and also about the point regarding direct reimbursement of grants.

Angeliki Koutsoukou-Argyraiki asked about the reasons on why INRIA is having issues with the reimbursements. Frédéric recalls his previous statement regarding this, and reinforces that this is a complicated issue that is being dealt with by many people at INRIA.

Ralph asks for a vote on the deadline, Frédéric's updates and the direct reimbursements. For that quorum is checked and not reached. Frédéric will organise the voting online through COST's platform.

Silvia reiterates that it should be guaranteed that reimbursements can be done to a personal account.

Frédéric suggests the deadline of 18th of November.

Alicia Villanueva asks if this issue has to do with national regulation constraints. Frédéric explains that the issue concerns grants which can be seen as extra income that might need to be taxed.

Frédéric asks if we should vote separately on the issue of the direct reimbursements. Andrej mentions that this is a deal breaker for several people.

Ralph suggests that INRIA is asked to provide an answer regarding this. Several people say it should be made very clear to INRIA that this is a critical point. Ralph recalls that so far the action only executed STSMs, but there are other types of grants that will have the same issue.

Jesper Cockx says we should already vote on what to do if INRIA answers negatively on the issue of direct reimbursements. Alicia thinks we should wait, to understand the reasons behind INRIA's possible refusal.

Ambrus and Andrej suggest formulations for the motions.

Ralph says that, if the MC decides to change the GHI, then the new one should be made aware of COST rules to avoid similar issues in the future.

Angeliki asks if reimbursements could be made by COST and Ralph replies negatively.

Frédéric asks if we agree on the motions, giving conclusion to the issue and moving to more positive issues.

Roussanka Loukanova informs that she will organise an event whose topic fits the action, and asks if participants can apply for COST to attend. Frédéric says that events for next year should already be part of the work plan.

Frédéric started presenting the work plan and budget for next year.

The first issue concerns changes in the core group: in WG2 the leader and co-leader will swap; in WG3 Alicia will move to co-leader and Madalina Erascu will become leader; WG4, Claudio will move to co-leader and Angeliki will become leader. Again, due to lack of quorum, these changes will be voted online.

Ralph has to leave the meeting so Pascal takes the opportunity to point that, regardless of the issues with INRIA, the scientific part of the action is going very well.

Frédéric asks to increase the amount of budget that can be reallocated from 5000 to 10000, which will also be voted online.

Frédéric recalls the objectives and planned deliverables and presents the goals and actions for next year that aim at achieving these goals and include WGs meetings, schools, STSMs, Dedukti dev meetings, conference grants, WEPN, workshops, etc.

Frédéric mentioned the increase on the budget and presented all the planned events and corresponding budget.

Angeliki asked about the location of the WG meeting that appears in the slides as taking place in Bologna, but which should be in Cambridge. Frédéric mentions that the information in the slides is merely indicative and can be adjusted by the organisers.

Ambrus reported on STSM grant selections and results for 2022. He also presented some statistics about STSMs.

Then, each WG leader or co-leader (except Cezary for WG5 who had to leave at 4 pm) reported on the activities done in 2022 and the ones planned for 2023: Jesper for WG1, Pascal for WG2, Madalina for WG3, Claudio for WG4, Roussanka for WG6.

Finally, Anja reported on the actions done in 2022 and planned for 2023 towards gender balance.