

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: SHORT-TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS (STSMs)

COST ACTION CA21129 OPINION

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OPINION offers a limited number of grants to individual applicants for Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs). STSMs are intended to support physical mobility aiming at capacity building and transfer of knowledge through bilateral or multilateral collaborations during a research stay in a different country.

Applicants must be OPINION members with a primary affiliation with a legal entity located in a COST Full or Cooperating Member country, a Near Neighbour Country or a European RTD Organisation.

Grants envisaged in OPINION's current Grant Period (GP4)

- Total dedicated budget: € 8,000

Terms and conditions

- Envisioned activities:
 - Research collaborations within the missions of OPINION and its WGs
 - Training activities either by or of the grantee, either within the missions of OPINION and its WGs, or in relation to capacity building and skill development (e.g., in methods, managerial/communication skills)
 - Mentoring schemes with special focus on activities and exchanges that can advance capacity building and skill development particularly for Early Career Scholars
- Minimum duration of 5 calendar days, including travel
- Must be carried out within grant period and within OPINION's lifetime
- STSM grantees make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health, taxation, social security and pension matters
- Fixed financial contribution to the overall travel, accommodation and other expenses, up to € 160 per day, up to € 3,500 in total per applicant.
- Multiple applications by the same person to different COST Actions for the same STSM are forbidden and may lead to the cancellation of the Grant.
- The grant is paid out after the completion of the STSM, once the scientific report is approved.

Application

→ Via e-COST: Grant Applications tab (<https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants>)³

- Documents to be provided to the Grant Coordination Office in English (grants@opinion-network.eu):
 - Filled-in STSM Grant application form on e-COST
 - Invitation letter from host institution (must cover the entire duration of the STSM stay)
 - Work plan (800-1200 words), addressing contribution to OPINION's objectives and justifying the budget request. Please make sure to follow COST guidelines: <https://www.cost.eu/cost-actions/annotated-rules-qa/>
 - Budget overview to justify the requested amount of financial support.
 - CV

Evaluation and selection criteria

- Applications will be evaluated on 15 Dec 2025, 15 Feb 2026, 15 April 2026, 15 June 2026 (and, if funds are still left, on 1 October 2026) by the Grand Coordination Office, in consultation with the Core Group
- Evaluation criteria:
 - Application quality and contribution to OPINION's overall objectives
 - Priority will be given to Early Career Investigators (less than 8 years after PhD)
 - Priority will be given to STSM that involve ITCs (either because the applicant is from an ITC, or because the applicant is going to an ITC)
 - Priority will be given to first-time applicants
 - Gender balance and geographical inclusiveness will be taken into account

After completion: Scientific report

- Every grantee must submit a scientific report (1200-1800 words) to the Grant Coordination Office and to a senior researcher affiliated with the host institution within 30 calendar days after the end of the STSM. The report shall describe the work carried out, outcomes (incl. future collaboration), and how outcomes are relevant to OPINION. This report will be published and shall demonstrate the academic strength and quality of the project undertaken.
- Disbursement of the Grant is subject to the STSM scientific report being approved by the Grant Coordination Office and by the senior researcher affiliated to the Host Institution.
- Please use the report template: https://www.cost.eu/STSM_Report

More Information

- <https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2025/01/COST-Grant-Awarding-user-guide.pdf>