

FP1305 STSM application guideline

The purpose of a Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) is to support **individual mobility**, to strengthen existing networks and to foster collaborations by allowing scientists to visit an institution or laboratory in another Participating COST Country. Eligible candidates are Ph.D. students or early stage researchers (ESR) with less than 10 years from getting the Ph.D. degree.

This document is intended as a guide to application writing and submission, but also contains an indication of the evaluation criteria applied by the STSM selection committee of FP1305. Please do read the entire document before starting an application, whilst paying close attention to evaluation criteria.

Document requirements

- The application must include the following 5 documents, submitted as a single pdf document:
 - Motivation letter (1 page max, see below)
 - Detailed work plan (2 page max, see below)
 - Curriculum Vitae including the list of publications (2 page max)
 - Letter of support from the home institution (1 page max)
 - Invitation letter from the host institution, including budget details (1 page max)
- The Motivation letter should explain how will the Applicant benefit from the STSM, how does the proposed work contribute to FP1305 or its Working Groups, and why an STSM is the best tool to achieve expected outcomes
- The detailed work plan should contain the following information:
 - a) Description of applicant's current research project(s)
 - b) The objective of the STSM
 - c) Work plan of the STSM
 - d) An indication of how does the STSM support the current and future research of the applicant?
 - e) Description of the STSM fit to the topic and objectives of BioLink action?
 - f) Justification of the budget. Special attention must be paid to preparing a realistic budget reflecting living expenses in the host country and the duration of the visit.

Evaluation criteria:

All applications will be assessed by the members of the STSM committee (Miglena Zhiyanski (coordinator), Mark Bakker, Mauro Gamboni, Stela Lazarova, Tarja Lehto, Elena Vanguelova). Every member of the committee will evaluate the applications according to the criteria listed below. The STSM coordinator then summarizes the scores and ranks the applications according to mean score. Funding is then allocated to the best ranked proposals until it runs out. In case of a tie, applicants who have not previously received an STSM grant from BioLink will have priority.

(Marking scale 1-5; 1 lowest, 5 highest)

1 Science

The aims of the STSM correspond to the scientific objectives of the WG1, 2, 3 of the COST Action

Technique/methodology is new to the applicant

2 Collaboration and Impact

Potential for publications resulting from the STSM

Likely good impact on future career of the applicant

3 Value for money

Workplan corresponds with the proposed duration

The budget request and the duration of the STSM are in good agreement

4 Application

The application is well written and presented

Clearly shown motivation and desire to learn

Average score

comments

Step-by-step application process:

Step 1 – Application initiation

The Applicant must apply through the [on-line registration tool](#) by 31st August 2016. After encoding the information and pressing the “submit” button, the on-line registration tool will issue a formal **STSM application**. The application must be downloaded to complete the process.

Step 2 – Application submission

The applicant must compile the 5 documents detailed above to a **single PDF file** and submit it by email the STSM coordinator, Miglena Zhiyanski (zhiyanski@abv.bg). And Biolink (fp1305-biolink@reading.ac.uk) by 31st August 2016. The subject line of the email should have the format “STSM application Lastname Firstname”.

Step 3 – Assessment of the STSM

The STSM committee will assess all received applications by the deadline taking into account the fulfillment of the requirement above criteria outlined above and recommend

proposals for funding by the Action.

Step 4 – Cost Office Acceptance Letter (Grant Letter)

The Grant Holder will send an **acceptance letter** to the Applicant, in which s/he is informed about:

- a) the approval of the STSM and;
- b) the level of the financial grant given.

The Applicant has to download a copy of the letter from e-Cost to indicate acceptance and to initiate the grant.

Step 5 - After the STSM

After completion of the STSM, the Applicant is required to submit to the host institution and the STSM coordinator a **scientific report** on the visit within 30 days of completion of the STSM.

The report will contain the following information:

- Purpose of the STSM;
- Description of the work carried out during the STSM;
- Description of the main results obtained;
- Future collaboration with host institution (if applicable);
- Foreseen publications/articles resulting or to result from the STSM (if applicable);
- Feedback and suggestions for future improvement if the STSM programme (if any).

Step 6 – Completion of the Grant

The Applicant must ensure that the host supervisor has reviewed the report and confirmed its acceptance with the STSM coordinator. Once the host supervisor has accepted the report, the MC Chair will send a notice of completion of the STSM to the Grant Holder, with the confirmation that the STSM has been successfully accomplished and that **the Grant can be paid.**

COST Rules regulating STSM proposals:

They are particularly intended for young scientists; however there is no restriction on who can apply. The list of COST countries currently participating in FP1305 can be found [here](#). Any individual or institution within a participating COST country can be party to an STSM.

The Applicant would normally be engaged in a programme of research as a post graduate student or postdoctoral fellow or be employed by or officially affiliated to an institution in a participating COST country which has accepted the MoU of FP1305. This institution is considered the **Home institution**. Similarly, the **Host institution** where the applicant aims to visit must reside in a participating COST country. Home or Host institutions may be public or private entities. The Applicant is responsible for obtaining the agreement of the host institution before submitting his/her application.

The BioLink management committee has approved a **maximum STSM grant of €2,000** for Grant Period 3 to which this call relates to.



Important dates:

This call will remain open until **31st August 2016**, when all applications will be collected and reviewed.

The STSM committee will assess the applications by **16th September 2016** and notify the applicants shortly thereafter.

All STSMs approved in this call must be completed no later than **15th April 2017** to allow for the Grant to be processed and paid to the applicant.

Key contacts

STSM Coordinator: Miglena Zhiyanski, email: zhiyanski@abv.bg

Action Chair: Martin Lukac, email: fp1305-biolink@reading.ac.uk

Publications resulting from STSM activities should acknowledge COST FP1305 support.

The COST Vademecum which details all rules governing STSMs can be found [here](#).