

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) Applications

**CA15137**

**European Network for Research Evaluation in the Social Sciences and the Humanities  
(ENRESSH)**

Call Number 4\_3

for Grant period 4 (01/05/2019 to 7/04/2020)

**implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

**What is the purpose of an STSM?**

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) are aimed at strengthening existing networks and fostering collaborations by facilitating Researchers participating in a given COST Action to visit an institution or laboratory **in another Participating COST Country / an approved NNC institution or an approved IPC institution**. A STSM should specifically contribute to the overall scientific objectives of the COST Action\*, whilst at the same time enable eligible researchers to learn new techniques or gain access to specific expertise, instruments and/or methods not available in their own institutions.

**\*CA15137 – ENRESSH**

**ENRESSH - European Network for Research Evaluation in the Social Sciences and the Humanities**

The challenge of the Action is to enable the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) to better demonstrate their true place in academia and society. To do so, the Action proposes to bring together different strands of work consecrated to SSH research evaluation, currently under development in different parts of Europe, in order to gain momentum, to exchange best practices and results, and to avoid unnecessary duplication.

**A call for the following topic has been opened:**

Topic 2.1: Theory-informed policy guidelines for *ex ante* impact evaluation

**Topic 2.1: Theory-informed policy guidelines for ex ante impact evaluation (WG2)**

*Host institution:* Norwegian Research Council (Forskningsrådet) + remote supervision via Høgskulen på Vestlandet.

*Description of the topic:* Much of the focus on evaluation lies in ex post evaluation of the quality of research whether through published outputs or completed projects, and ensuring that evaluation provides a strong steering effect towards delivering quality research. But

another key element of the research steering cycle played by evaluation is in the ex ante evaluation of research proposals, deciding which proposals will be funded. Research proposal evaluation has become a highly professionalised business in which many competing proposals are assessed on the basis of a set of criteria such as scientific excellence and quality of project management. Funding is awarded to those which score the highest against those criteria, in anticipation that it will correlate with the highest ex post quality of project.

A number of research councils have in recent years introduced specific criteria for 'societal impact', with proposals being evaluated in terms of how they will contribute to creating impact in society as well as generating scientific excellence. But it is widely understood that creating this societal impact from research is an uncertain business, highly dependent upon partners outside the scientific production system (societal partners). There can be no guarantee that those proposals that make claims that their research will create impact ex ante will in practice live up to those claims in creating impact in society (ex post).

Policy-makers create guidelines for evaluators in order to help steer their funding towards their overall goals, and as creating societal impact has become more important for research councils, policy-makers have also set out guidelines for evaluating impact in assessing research proposals. But this process has tended to be pragmatic and intuitive rather than based upon a deep understanding of what the characteristics are of research proposals that have the best chances of this ex post success.

In this Short-term science mission, the candidate will work with the Norwegian Research Council (Forskingsrådet) and the Working Group Leader to develop a conceptual framework and developing guidelines to assist evaluators in evaluating ex ante evaluation.

*Objectives:* The STSM aims to create a set of guidelines for the ex ante evaluation of research impact in research proposals that is strongly rooted in a conceptual understandings of the creation of research impact. The STSM seeks to support policy-makers to better stimulate the contributions that SSH research makes in society, and to stimulate the flow of that knowledge to society at large (WG2 task 3). The Guidelines represent a clear set of measures for valuing SSH (Task 5), by ensuring that SSH research that is better committed to creating societal impact is funded. By undertaking the work jointly between the WG leader and a user (policy-maker), and creating a concrete set of guidelines of use to policy-makers for evaluating impact, the STSM contributes to the overall goals of the Action to create policy impact.

*Special criteria for this STSM:* The applicant should have a broad knowledge of science studies and scientific evaluation processes, ideally with some knowledge about ex ante evaluation of research proposals (either academic or practical).

*Results:* The proposed STSM will provide guidelines for the ex ante evaluation of societal impact in research proposal evaluation which are sensitive to the specific needs of SSH research. As far as possible, the guidelines will be formulated in such a way that they may be used as a conceptual framework for the ex ante evaluation of societal impact in research proposals more generally, not limited to projects within SSH.

*Practical details:*

Working group: WG2 (Societal impact and relevance of SSH Research)

Duration and timing: between 2 weeks and 2 months from 1st September to 30th November 2019.

Location:

Forskningsrådet, Drammensveien 288, 1327 Lysaker, Norway

Contact:

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## Formalities

### Financial support

The financial support is a contribution to the overall expenses incurred during the STSM and may not necessarily cover all of the associated outgoings. The following funding conditions apply and must be respected:

1. Travel expenses cannot exceed EUR 300;
2. For accommodation and meal expenses, a maximum amount of EUR 160 per day can be considered;
3. A maximum of EUR 2500 in total can be afforded to the grantee.
4. The final amount of the grant is dependent on the duration of the STSM and the level of prices at the host country.
4. STSM activities must occur in their entirety within the dates specified in this call.

Financial support is limited to cover travel and subsistence expenses and is paid as a grant. Payment of the Grant is subject to the scientific report (**after the completion of STMS**) being approved by the Action Chair, STSM Coordinator and a researcher affiliated to the Host institution.

### Selection criteria

- **The application of the research to the field of the Action** – a detailed work plan will help determine if the scientific aims of the work will be applicable to the Action's aims.
- **The home institution of the researcher** – We will take into account the number of applications from each institution to ensure a fair spread of researches across the network.
- **The experience of the researcher** – in line with COST Office rules, we will preferentially award STSMs to early stage researchers (PhD + <8 years). This should not discourage more experienced researchers from applying but their chances of being selected are slightly reduced.
- **The publication potential of the research carried out** – a short publication plan as part of the workplan, including intended journal, aim/working title and timescale for submission, will help to identify the most promising research.
- **Geographical and gender balance** issues will be taken into consideration;
- **The research should fit into the host institutions' research profile.**

### How to apply for an STSM

Interested Researchers are advised to follow the directions provided below and submit their application and supporting documents to Mimi Urbanc (mimi.urbanc@zrc-sazu.si) by the deadline, ie 25/08/2019.

### THE APPLICATION PROCESS

1. All applicants must carefully read the funding rules detailed in section 8 of the *COST*

Vademecum: <https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Vademecum-May-2019.pdf> (pages 34–35).

2. All applicants must register for an e-COST profile at <https://e-services.cost.eu/> - adding their bank account details to their profile.
3. All applicants must complete, submit and download their STSM application online at: <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>.
4. All applicants must send their submitted STSM application form and the relevant supporting documents to Mimi Urbanc [mimi.urbanc@zrc-sazu.si](mailto:mimi.urbanc@zrc-sazu.si) for evaluation before the application submission deadline expires.

**The list of supporting documents** to be submitted for the evaluation includes:

- The submitted **STSM application form** (downloadable when the online application is submitted - see point 3 above)
- **A motivation letter** including an overview of the proposed activities that will be performed which must contain a **work plan** for the visit highlighting the proposed contribution to the scientific objectives of the ENRESSH COST Action and the general activities of the host institution;
- **A letter of support** from the home Institution;
- **A written agreement** of the host institution
- **A Full CV** (including a list of academic publications – if applicable). The CV must include the award date of the applicants PhD and their current position.

The applications will then be assessed by the Action Steering Committee and researchers affiliated to the Host institutions.

7. The applicant will be formally notified of the outcome of their STSM application by Mimi Urbanc by 25/08/2019.

8. Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM, the successful applicant must submit a scientific report to the Host institution and to Mimi Urbanc. The applicant is also responsible for acquiring an official acceptance letter / 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 sent to the Grant Holder and Mimi Urbanc for archiving purposes.

Failure to submit the scientific report within 30 days from the end date of the STSM will effectively cancel the grant.

(Please note that COST can request additional information to substantiate the information contained within the documents submitted by STSM applicants).

#### Dates to remember

Deadline for applications to be submitted: 25/08/2019

Notification of application outcome: 01/09/2019

Period of STSM: between 01/09/2019 and 30/11/2019

Submitting the reports: within 30 days from the end date

Accepting/ rejecting the reports: within 2 weeks after submission of the report

Execution the payment of the grant: within 4 weeks after submission of the report.