



COST Action CA18229: Non-conventional Yeasts for the Production of Bioproducts (Yeast4Bio)

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)¹

- *This is the third call for applications for Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) in the framework of the COST Action CA18229 (Grant Period 2: 1st May 2020 – 30th April 2021).*
- *Deadline for applications: 21st December 2020.*
- *STSMs must be completed by 30th April 2021.*
- *The report has to be sent to the STSM coordinator within 30 days after the completion of the STSM and in any case before 15th May 2021.*

COST

The European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) is a funding organisation for the creation of research networks, called COST Actions. These networks offer an open space for collaboration among scientists across Europe (and beyond) and thereby give impetus to research advancements and innovation.

COST funding intends to complement national research funds, as they are exclusively dedicated to cover collaboration activities, such as workshops, conferences, working group meetings, training schools, short-term scientific missions, and dissemination and communication activities.

STSM

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) are institutional visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, fostering collaboration between individuals. Financial support may be provided to eligible applicants to carry out STSM that will specifically contribute to the scientific objectives of this COST Action.

STSMs must have a minimum duration of 5 calendar days that includes travel. STSM need to be carried out in their entirety within a single Grant Period and always within the Action's lifetime.

NOTE: It is possible to change the dates of a successful STSM application if both applicant and host agree. To do so the applicant must contact the STSM coordinator (Susana Marques, susana.marques@lneg.pt) and inform her about the suggested changes before the starting date of the STSM. However, the STSM duration should not be reduced as this is an integral part of the STSM. STSMs that do fall short of the originally specified duration will not be reimbursed the full amount originally allocated.

Conducting a successful STSM – hints for the organizers

The mission should benefit both parties. Therefore, it is a good idea to formulate it as a mini research project.

¹ This document summarizes the most important information. Care has been taken to do this as accurate as possible. Refer also to the [COST Vademecum](#) for up to date information.

The mission should be scheduled such that the supervisor at the host institution is available. Supervisors: keep in mind that a successful mission requires your involvement as well.

In order to make the most out of the mission, the visitor should arrive well prepared. It is therefore a good idea to assign some kind of homework that needs to be done prior to the visit.

Applicants are encouraged to plan an extended stay. As a rule of thumb: the longer the STSM, the better. It is difficult to get a meaningful project done within just a few weeks, and the host has to invest time for instruction.

It is acceptable to attend a congress during the STSM. However, this must be declared in the application and requires the written approval of the host.

Applicants

STSM applicants must be engaged in an official research programme as a PhD Student or postdoctoral fellow or can be employed by, or affiliated to, an institution, organisation or legal entity which has within its remit a clear association with performing research. The institutions / organisation or legal entity where applicants pursue their main strand of research are considered as Home Institutions. The Host Institution is the institution/organisation that will host the successful applicant.

The following table shows the scenarios available to eligible STSM applicants:

Applicant in a Home institution	To perform a STSM in a Host institution
Located in a Participating COST Full member/COST Cooperating Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Located in another Participating COST Full Member/COST Cooperating Member – Located in a Participating COST Partner Member – Action MC Observer from IPC – Action MC Observer NNC – The EU Commission or an EU Body, Office or Agency – An Approved European RTD Organisation – An Approved International Organisation
Action MC Observer from NNC	– Located in a Participating COST Full Member/COST Cooperating Member
Located in an Approved European RTD Organisation	– Located in a Participating COST Full Member/COST Cooperating Member

Note that both countries, home and host, must have joined the COST Action Yeast4Bio. The participating COST country should have accepted the memorandum of understanding of this Action (see [here](#)) and that the home institution and the host institution must be located in two different countries. The nationality of the applicant is not a bar to eligibility.

Financial Support

A STSM grant is a fixed contribution based on the budget requested by the applicant and the outcome of the evaluation of the STSM application by the selection committee. This grant will not necessarily cover all expenses; it is intended only as a contribution to the travel, accommodation and meal expenses of the Grantee.

The calculation of this contribution for a STSM must respect the following rules:

- Up to a maximum of EUR 3 500 in total can be afforded to each successful applicant;

- Up to a maximum of EUR 160 per day can be afforded for accommodation and meal expenses;

The appointed STSM Coordinator and selection committee should consider and can approve differentiated country rates to cover accommodation and meal expenses based on the perceived cost of living in the host country.

Please note the grant will only be paid to the grantee after the STSM has been completed and the STSM report, which is submitted by the grantee, has been approved by the STSM coordinator. It is encouraged that the host advances the financial resources to the applicant and receives reimbursement directly from the COST Action.

Specific provisions have been introduced to enable researchers from ITC (Inclusiveness Target Country) participating in the Yeast4Bio COST Action² to request a pre-payment of 50%³ of their STSM Grant when they complete the first day of their STSM. This is payable under 2 conditions: that the GH has sufficient funds to cover 50% of the grant in advance and that the host confirms to the GH that the mission has started. In such case, the representative of the Host Institution must confirm by e-mail to the Grant Holder that the STSM applicant has officially started the mission on day 1. Only then the Grant Holder can arrange the payment of 50% of the STSM grant. The remaining 50% of the Grant is payable once the administrative requirements have been satisfied after the STSM.

For the period of the STSM, the Grant Holder of the Action, the Management Committee or the COST Association cannot be considered as being an STSM grantee's employer. STSM grantees must make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health, taxation, social security and pension matters.

Application procedure for an STSM

1. It is essential that the STSM relates to the Action's objectives. The initiative for an STSM can come from either the host or the visiting scientist.
2. The applicant must obtain the written agreement of the host scientist before submitting the application. It is important that the host and the applicant mutually agree on the content of the planned STSM.
3. The applicant then completes an online application: STSM applications can be made by clicking on the following link <https://e-services.cost.eu/STSM> or by logging in e-COST and clicking on "STSM Application" on the menu available on the left. The application page contains:
 - a. Applicant details
 - b. STSM details (work plan) -the application must start and end during the same Grant Period (GP)
 - c. Bank details
 - d. Host details (must be located in a different country than the country of the applicant)
 - e. Financial support (indicate if you are applying for a pre-payment of 50% of the Grant – only for applicants from Inclusiveness Target Countries)

² Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey

³ The applicant must keep in mind that the transfer of the 50% of the Grant can only take place after the mission has started and as such, requesting a pre-payment is more effective for STSMs **longer than 1 month**

- f. Supporting documents: i) letter of support from the Home institution; ii) written agreement from the Host institution that the STSM applicant can perform the activities detailed in the STSM work plan on the agreed dates; iii) CV, including a list of academic publications – if applicable

The online registration tool will create a formal STSM application file, which the applicant can download.

Evaluation process and result announcement

The applications will be pre-processed by the STSM coordinator who will then propose a ranked list of applications to the selection committee.

Evaluation will be based on the scientific excellence of the applicant, the research proposal, and the relevance of the work plan for the achievement of Yeast4Bio objectives. There should be special considerations with respect to supporting COST policies on promoting gender balance, enabling Early Career Investigators (ECI) and broadening geographical inclusiveness.

The selection committee will evaluate the STSMs proposals within a week after the STSMs call deadline and will inform the Grant Holder of the successful evaluated proposals. The successful applicants will then receive a grant letter from the Grant Holder, stating the official approval of the STSM application, the granted budget. *The applicant has to notify acceptance of the grant by returning the letter, with his/her signature, a week after receiving the grant letter.*

If the amount of funding by all applications within a call does not exceed the available budget, the applications are can be handled by the STMS coordinator only. She then presents the list to the selection committee which must accept the funding of every application.

Criterion	max. points
a) Before any further criteria are considered	
Application is complete and fulfils all formal requirements	pass/no pass
b) Evaluation of the proposal	
Research plan is relevant for the action's aims	3
Research plan is of high quality	3
The proposal presents a novel/innovative/original idea	3
Applicant has an outstanding CV (considering his/her position)	1
Topic of the proposal relates to the applicant's field of research	1
c) Criteria that can be used if a decision is not reached	
Applicant is from an inclusiveness target country (ITC)	1
Applicant is a PhD student or an ECI	1
Gender of the applicant balances the gender ratio of all applicants of the current call	1

If three points can be awarded, numbers mean the following:

0: no

1: somewhat

2: yes

3: very much

If one point can be awarded, numbers mean the following:

0: no

1: yes

1. The evaluators report their evaluations to the STSM coordinator.
2. The STSM coordinator ranks all evaluations and applies further criteria (c) if necessary. He then reports the final result to the core group to be accepted.
3. The applicants are informed about the decision reached.

After the STSM

The STSM Grantee has 30 calendar days from the end date of the mission to submit a scientific report to the appointed STSM Coordinator and to a senior researcher affiliated to the Host Institution.*

Payment of the Grant is subject to a STSM scientific report being approved on behalf of the Action's MC by the appointed STSM Coordinator and by a senior researcher affiliated to the Host Institution. Written approval of the STSM scientific report by the aforementioned persons must be uploaded in e-COST for archiving purposes. The submission of the supporting documents is mandatory or the Grant is cancelled. Late submission beyond the deadline, can also lead to the cancellation of the Grant and, in cases when a pre-payment was done, the obligatory reimbursement by the grantee of the amount received.

A scientific report template is available on the Supporting documents page or on-line here: http://www.cost.eu/STSM_report_template

The STSM grantee must complete this template and save it in pdf before uploading it in eCOST.

The host approval of the report can be an email confirming that the STSM took place and the goals outlined in the Work plan were reached.

The STSM coordinator is responsible for approving the scientific report. Once approved, payment of the STSM grant will be made by bank-to-bank transfer to either the host institution or the applicant, as requested in the application.

*NOTE: For STSM ending close to the end of the grant period, the completion report must be returned by 15th May 2021 so that the reimbursement procedure can be completed within the budget period.

Acknowledgement of CA18229 in publications

If work resulting from an STSM visit is published in a journal, please add the following acknowledgement: *This article/publication is based upon work from COST Action CA18229 "Yeast4Bio - Non-Conventional Yeasts for the Production of Bioproducts", supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology); www.cost.eu.*

If the work is presented in a conference or event, the COST logo must be displayed and the Action CA18229 must be acknowledged.

More information

- Websites: <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA18229/#tabs|Name:overview>
- Online application form: <https://e-services.cost.eu/STSM>

- COST Vademecum: <https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Vademecum-V8-1-May-20202.pdf>
- Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) – User Guide: <https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/STSM-userguide.pdf>

For further information, you may contact the STSM coordinator Susana Marques, susana.marques@lneg.pt

November 24th 2020

Susana Marques (STSM coordinator of COST Action CA18229)