



## COST Action CA18102 The European Aquatic Animal Tracking Network (ETN)

### **Call for Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) Applications**

This is a second Call for applications of the COST Action CA18102 and will be open **from 15<sup>th</sup> January till 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020**. The **OPEN** STSM Call for proposals will follow a bottom-up approach, having no predefined target topics. In addition, the applications will be evaluated on a first come first served basis until funds are available or until 15<sup>th</sup> March, whichever comes first.

All STSM activities included in this call must occur in their entirety (including reporting) within the time frame of Grant Period 1 of the Action: **1 May 2019 - 30 April 2020**.

#### **Purpose of short-Term Scientific Missions (STSM)**

STSM facilitates Researchers whose home institution is located in a Participating COST Full Member or COST Cooperating Member Country to go to an institution, organisation or research centre in another participating COST Country to foster collaboration and to perform empirical research. Participation of “Early Career Investigators” (ECI) in STSM is particularly encouraged. An applicant can be considered as being ECI when the time that has elapsed between the award date of the applicant’s PhD and the date of the applicant’s first involvement in the COST Action CA18102 does not exceed 8 years. PhD students are also eligible to partake in STSMs.

#### **Specific information concerning STSM**

STSMs can have a duration of minimum 5 days (no upper limit). The financial support is a contribution to the overall expenses incurred during the STSM and may not necessarily cover all of the associated outgoings. Financial support is limited to cover travel, accommodation and meal expenses and is paid in the form of a Grant.

#### **The following funding conditions apply and must be respected:**

1. STSM must have a minimum duration of 5 calendar days that includes travel.
2. Up to a maximum of EUR 3,500 in total can be afforded to each successful STSM applicant.
3. Up to a maximum of EUR 160 per day can be afforded for accommodation and meal expenses ([Eligible funding rates](#)).
4. Up to a maximum of EUR 300 can be afforded to travel expenses. Grant amounts requested should be in line with actual and reasonable costs.
5. STSM activities must occur in their entirety within the current Grant Period (1 May 2019 - 30 April 2020, i.e. need to be finalised by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020).

Specific provisions have been introduced to enable researchers from ITC countries to request a pre-payment of 50% of their STSM Grant when they complete the first day of their STSM. 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 this call, the Management Committee of COST Action CA18102 The European Aquatic Animal Tracking Network has allocated a total budget of 8,837 EUR for up to **three** STSMs. Preference will be given to applicants from ITC countries. The amounts granted for each individual STSM will be determined during the evaluation process by the STSM Committee.

### Application deadline

All applications received **before 15<sup>th</sup> March at 12.00** will be evaluated on a first come first served basis to give the applicants as much time for implementation of the STSM as possible.

### How to apply

The application process in details is as follows:

1. All applicants must carefully read the funding rules detailed in Section 7 of the *COST Vademecum*. This document is available at: <http://www.cost.eu/participate/guidelines>.
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. The applicant must obtain a letter of invitation from the Host institution confirming that they can undertake the STSM on the given dates prior to submitting an application.
4. The applicant must complete, submit and download their STSM applications online at: [www.cost.eu/STSM](http://www.cost.eu/STSM).
5. The applicant must send their STSM application form submitted to e-COST (PDF format) and the relevant supporting documents to **Dr. Polona Pengal**, STSM Coordinator to the address [etn-stsm@lifewatch.be](mailto:etn-stsm@lifewatch.be) using the [downloaded e-form](#) for evaluation before the application submission deadline expires.

The list of supporting documents to be submitted in PDF format for the evaluation are:

1. The submitted STSM **application form** (downloadable when the online application is submitted – see point 4 above);
2. 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 (including WGs) of the COST Action CA18102 and your own career as well as justifying the duration of stay, selection of the Host institution and costs. In addition, declare other sources of funding or confirm that no other sources of funding are available.
3. A **letter of support** from the Home Institution including contact details of applicant's own affiliation.
4. **Letter of invitation** to the applicant from a senior researcher affiliated to the Host Institution including name, postal address and e-mail address of STSM host;
5. A **full CV** (including a list of academic publications – if applicable).



## Evaluation

The selection of applicants is based on the scientific scope of the STSM application which must clearly complement the overall objectives of the Action and be related to a specific Working Group. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact the WG leaders before applying to see if their STSM fits the goals of the WG/Action and to discuss the potential work plan.

The applications will then be assessed by the STSM/ITC-CG Committee, which will perform the scientific and budgetary assessment of the applications against the perceived contribution that the proposed visit will make against the scientific objectives outlined in the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Applicants should expect to receive a response **within 6 weeks** after submission of their application.

Unless specifically requested by the applicant, all received materials or parts of them, including personal information and the final report (or parts of it) of the STSM may be published on the Action website. Applicants can ask for (and justify) an embargo on information linked to their application if they wish.

The evaluation is based on a 25 points scale (25 = highest evaluation, 0 lowest evaluation) divided among 4 different criteria, as detailed below. The applicant must achieve the minimum score of no less than 60% of the maximum score (**15 points**) to be eligible for funding in COST Action CA18102.

### 1. Motivation letter

Evaluation of the motivation letter includes an overview of the proposed activities that will be performed, relevance of the topic to be researched to the COST Action CA18102, proposed methodological approach, benefit for the applicant institution and host institution, and expertise of the proposed Host Institution. The letter must contain a work plan for the visit, highlighting the proposed contribution to the scientific objectives of the relevant WG (see the Memorandum of Understanding for a description of each WG goal). The proposed STSM should fit the goals expressed in each call.

**Score:** 1-12 points (12 points = highest evaluation, 1 point = lowest evaluation)

### 2. Curriculum vitae

Evaluation of track record, publication list, experience of participation in other research projects and/or organisations specific to the COST Action CA18102.

**Score:** 1-3 points (3 points = highest evaluation, 1 point = lowest evaluation)

### 3. Research career level

Researchers belonging to the following two categories can receive additional **5 points** in the evaluation in order to foster their participation:

- ✓ PhD Student: researchers enrolled in a relevant PhD program in a university or college  
... **5 points**



- ✓ Early-Career Investigator (ECI): researchers with PhD plus a maximum of 8 years of working experience... **5 points**

The award date of the applicant's PhD and the current position should be included in the CV.

#### 4. Inclusiveness target countries

Applicants associated to institutions located in an ITC will receive additional **5 points** in the evaluation. ITC are: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Serbia and Turkey.

#### Funding rules

The funding rate will be calculated depending on the location of the Host Institution where the STSM will take place by applying a country correction coefficient to the flat rate of 105.61 € per day ([Eligible funding rates](#)). This rate includes accommodation and meal expenses and cannot exceed 160 € per day. In addition, up to 300 € can be granted for travel costs.

#### Approval of the application and grant amount.

Based on the outcome of the evaluation and the proposal of the STSM/ITC-CG Committee, the CORE Group of ETN (COST Action CA18102) will approve the application and the grant amount.

#### Requirements after completing the STSM

Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM, the successful applicant must submit a [scientific report](#) to the COST Action CA18102 to the address [etn-stsm@lifewatch.be](mailto:etn-stsm@lifewatch.be). The scientific report should cover statement of achieving the project aims, description of the work carried out and the outcome/results, expected publications that may arise from the STSM (if applicable). A report template will be made available from the Communication Officer of the Action.

All data procured with support of STSM must be upload to the ETN database before the end of the STSM by the successful applicants. Please contact Jan Reubens at [jan.reubens@vliz.be](mailto:jan.reubens@vliz.be) for support.

The successful 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 address [etn-stsm@lifewatch.be](mailto:etn-stsm@lifewatch.be) for archiving purposes.

In addition, the applicant will have to collaborate with the Action dissemination effort by submitting a video piece and a brief text summarizing their stay. Specifics about the video piece will be shared in due course with the successful applicant. For any information regarding the video piece please contact [etn-comm@lifewatch.be](mailto:etn-comm@lifewatch.be).

Failure to submit the scientific report and data within 30 days from the end date of the STSM will effectively cancel the Grant. **Please note that the COST Association can request additional information to substantiate the information contained within the documents submitted by STSM applicants.**

For any questions about the STSM, please write to [etn-stsm@lifewatch.be](mailto:etn-stsm@lifewatch.be)



**List of supporting documents:**

1. Memorandum of Understanding of the COST Action CA18102
2. COST Vademecum
3. STSM Step by step
4. Template for reporting
5. Eligible funding rates