2nd Call for STSM Applications for Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSM) occurring between 15 September 2019 and 31 March 2020. All STSM activities must occur in their entirety within this period.

CONTEXT

COST and COST Actions

COST is an intergovernmental framework for European Cooperation in Science and Technology established to initiate networking and coordination of nationally funded research activities on a European level. It was established in 1971 by 19 member countries and currently includes 35 member countries across Europe, and Israel as a cooperating state. It facilitates bringing scientists together under light strategic guidance based on networks, called COST Actions, centred on research projects in fields that are of interest to both COST and cooperating countries.

1. Purpose of a Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) under MOBILISE

The scope of the COST Action MOBILISE Mobilising Data, Policies and Experts in Scientific Collections (CA-17106) is to build up a cooperative, inclusive, bottom-up and responsive network with active involvement of European stakeholders to support research for biodiversity informatics. MOBILISE will facilitate knowledge and technology transfer across stakeholders, bridging the gap between biodiversity and geoscience research and information technology best practices.

The focus on the current Call, which aims to be widely inclusive, is on early career scientists, collection and data managers, collection curators and stewards from smaller institutions and institutions in countries that do not have extensive facilities and/or well-developed policies for data mobilisation, digitisation of biodiversity collections, data practices and curation. Proposals must be in line with the objectives of one or various of the 6 work packages of MOBILISE for the current period of the Action (April 2019-April 2020). The objectives of each WG for the current period can be found at:

WG1: https://www.mobilise-action.eu/wg-1/

WG2: https://www.mobilise-action.eu/wg-2/

WG3: https://www.mobilise-action.eu/wg-3/

WG4: https://www.mobilise-action.eu/wg-4/

WG5: https://www.mobilise-action.eu/wg-5/

WG6: https://www.mobilise-action.eu/wg-6/

The overall objectives of the action can be found here:

https://www.mobilise-action.eu/objectives/

2. Specific information concerning STSMs under MOBILISE

STSMs can have a duration of between 7 days (at least 5 full working days) and 14 days.

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. Up to a maximum of 2000 € in total can be awarded to each successful STSM applicant;

2. From among the total amount of 2000 €, up to a maximum of 160 € per day can be used for accommodation and meal expenses;

Financial support is paid in the form of a Grant after the submission of a STSM report, once the STMS is completed and in accordance to the provisions stated in Section 7 below. Researchers from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs) participating in the COST Action may request a pre-payment of 50% of their STSM Grant when they complete the first day of their STSM.

For this Call, the Management Committee of MOBILISE has allocated a total budget of 20,000 € for awarding approximately 11-12 STSMs with two deadlines for applications. The amounts granted for each individual STSM will be determined during the evaluation process by the Core Group of the MOBILISE. The selection of applicants is based on the scientific scope of the STSM application, which must clearly compliment the overall objectives of the Action as well as be aligned to the objectives of the WG(s) it refers to, as identified for the current period.

3. Deadline for Applications

Interested individuals (researchers, curators, collection managers) can apply by following the instructions provided below and submitting their application and supporting documents by the two deadlines of **15 August 2019 and 15 October 2019**.

4. Who can apply

Individuals, including researchers and especially early career investigators, collection curators and managers, (bio-)informaticians and data scientists with a focus on collections' data mobilisation employed by, or affiliated to, an organisation which has within its remit a clear association with performing research around collections. They should come from any of the COST Full Member countries or from COST Near Neighbour countries <u>which are members of the Mobilise COST Action</u> (for explanation of terms see *COST Vademecum*, available at: https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/COSTVademecum.pdf). The institutions / organisations or legal entities, where applicants pursue their main professional activities, are considered as Home Institutions. The Host Institution is the institution / organisation that will host the successful applicant. The scenarios available to eligible STSM applicants are given in detail in Section 8 of the *COST Vademecum*.

Preference will be given to Early Career Investigators (ECI, for explanation see *COST Vademecum*) and to those and other scientists from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC, for explanation see *COST Vademecum*).

5. How to apply

The application process in details is as follows:

1. All applicants must carefully read the rules detailed in Section 8 of the *COST Vademecum* (https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Vademecum-20062019-Clean.pdf).

2. All applicants must register for an e-COST profile at https://e-services.cost.eu/ - adding their bank account details to their profile, as requested.

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 application online at: https://e-services.cost.eu/STSM. This will generate a PDF file that must be submitted by email to stsm.CA17106@savba.sk (see point 5, below). The information required to fill out

the form includes title, dates, applicant's details and bank details, financial data for travel and subsistence expenses and a Work plan Summary (including planned outcomes).

5. The applicant must send their STSM application form submitted to e-COST (pdf) and the relevant supporting documents (see below) to Prof. Karol Marhold, STSM Coordinator (stsm.CA17106@savba.sk) and in copy to the Vice-Chair of the Management Committee of CA17106, Ms. Ana Casino (ana.casino@cetaf.org), for evaluation before the application submission deadline expires.

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

(a) The submitted STSM application form (downloadable when the online application is submitted – see point 4 above);

(b) A motivation letter including an overview of the proposed activities that will be performed, which must contain a plan of work for the visit, highlighting the proposed contribution to the scientific objectives of MOBILISE (proposed plan of work should be consulted with the Host Institution in advance), and the description of what exactly will be carried on and why it is important for the applicant and their scientific work;

(c) A letter of support from the Home Institution;

(d) Letter of invitation to the applicant from a senior researcher affiliated to the Host Institution;

(e) A Full C.V. (including a list of academic publications – if applicable).

6. Evaluation

The applications will then be assessed by MOBILISE Core Group, 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 MOBILISE's objectives as indicated in Section 1 above (see https://www.mobilise-action.eu/objectives/).

Evaluation criteria:

- Scientific quality of the proposal (scientific level of the project and how it is correlated to the aims of the Action) – weight 2;

- Technical feasibility (is the host equipment or technical knowledge required for the completion of a project, length of the STSM) – weight 1.

The applicant will be formally notified of the outcome of their STSM application by Prof. Karol Marhold before 5th September 2019 (first round of applications) and 5th November

(second round of applications). Those not successful in the first application deadline may revise and resubmit their applications for the second round.

7. What is required after completing the STSM

Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM, the successful applicant must submit a scientific report to the Host institution and to Prof. Karol Marhold (stsm.CA17106@savba.sk) and in copy to the Vice-Chair of the Management Committee of CA17106 MOBILISE, Ms. Ana Casino (ana.casino@cetaf.org).

The scientific report should contain: STSM title; STSM Applicant name; Host institution and responsible host person; Period; Working group of the COST action; Purpose of the STSM; Description of the work carried out during the STSM; Description of the main research results obtained; An evaluation of the stay at the host institute; Future collaboration with the Host institution (if applicable); Foreseen publications/articles resulting from the STSM (if applicable); Other comments (if any).

The applicant is also responsible for acquiring an official acceptance letter / e-mail 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 within that same period of 30 days after STSM is over, to the Grant Holder (Mil de Reus, mil.dereus@naturalis.nl) and Prof. Karol Marhold (stsm.CA17106@savba.sk) for archiving and dissemination 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 the COST Association can request additional information to substantiate the information contained within the documents submitted by STSM applicants).*

8. Timeframe for this STSM Call

- Deadlines for applications to be submitted: **15 August 2019, 15 October 2019**
- Notification of applications outcomes: **5 September 2019, 5 November 2019**
- Period of STSM: **between 15 September 2019 and 31 March 2020**
- Report submitted: **30 days after STSM completion**