Lobular Breast Cancer: Discovery Science, Translational Goals, Clinical Impact
LOBSTERPOT **COST CA19138 Action**

Call for STSM Applications

Grant Period: 1 November 2021 – 31 October 2022

STSM regulations and procedures are governed by the **COST [Annotated](#) Rules:** [COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-2022-02-15.pdf](#)

Given the special situation with the pandemic that makes any planning difficult, there are not official collection dates, but allow them at any time. However, please consider a review-evaluation process of at least 15 days, and consider the recommended and latest start date for the given STSM (the mission should be executed within de defined Grant Period).

STSM and COVID19 considerations
* Applicants must obey heath care policy regulations of their Home and Host countries prior, during and after their missions.
* Applicants must check official travel guidelines both at their home and host countries to ensure that the mission can be carried out as proposed and approved.
* Applicants are encouraged to take actions that guarantee reimbursement of travel expenses in case the mission must be cancelled due to outbreak and/or lockdown in the home or host country.

What is a STSM?
- **Short-Term Scientific Missions** (STSM) are exchange visits between researchers involved in a COST Action, allowing scientists to visit an institution or laboratory in another COST Member state/Cooperating Member or Near-Neighbor Country joining the Action. Their aim is to foster collaboration towards the defined goals of **LOBSTERPOT**.
- The institution, organization or legal entity where applicants pursue their main strand of research is considered as **Home** institution. The **Host** institution is the institution, organization or legal entity that will *host* the successful applicant.
- The mission should be executed within a Grant Period.

Who can apply?
- STSMs are open for **applicant PhD students**, **postdocs**, and **advanced career researchers** employed at institutions/organizations or legal entities of: a COST Full/Cooperating Member; a European RTD Organization; and a NNC (Near Neighbor Countries).
- **Grantee can perform the STSM anywhere in the world**. But for Specific Organizations: rules applicable to the territory where it is vested.
- **Priority will be given to Early Career Investigators** (individual who is within a time span of up to 8 years from the date they obtained their PhD/doctorate (full-time equivalent)) and PhD students working on the central Aims of LOBSTERPOT. However, this should not discourage more experienced researchers from applying.
- Particular consideration will also be given to candidates moving from/to **COST Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs)**.

- Awards will be made to **support scientific excellence and to support diversity**. All qualified applicants will receive consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation or identity, origin, disability status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

What can you apply for?
You can apply for a **STSM with no minimum number of days required**. The STSM will be a fixed grant to cover travelling, accommodation and subsistence expenses, implementation of the project, delivery of the report to the COST Action MC and overall effort.

The calculation of the financial contribution for each STSM shall respect the following criteria:
  • Up to a maximum of EUR 4000 in total can be afforded to each successful applicant.

STSM grantees must make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health, taxation, social security and pension matters. STSM awards may be combined with other funding sources, but these must be acknowledged in the application. **The awarded grant will be paid only after the mission is completed and a report is submitted and approved (subsequent sections).**

How to apply?
The application overview is provided in the Userguide:
https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2018/11/STSM-userguide-for-website-Oct-2018.pdf

The application process is as follows:
1. Applicants must submit their application using e-COST (https://e-services.cost.eu/user/login/STSM). If the applicant do not already has an e-COST account, she/he will first need to 'create an account' - which will include providing the details of the bank account where the grant will be lodged if the application is approved and the mission successfully completed.
2. Applicants must obtain a **letter of invitation from the Host Institution** confirming that they can undertake the STSM on the given dates should their application be approved. The letter should be from a Senior Researcher (e.g., Host research group leader, head of unit, program, etc)
3. Applicants must complete, submit and download their STSM application online at: https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm.
4. Applicants must also send their application form and the relevant supporting documents for evaluation to Grant Awarding Coordinator and Grant Holder Manager (see below).

Required documents
1. An invitation letter from the Host relevant researcher.
2. A letter including an overview of the proposed activities that will be performed, a workplan for the visit, a description of the proposed contributions to the scientific objectives, an outline of the host's scientific expertise/resources in support of the STSM. The letter should be maximum 8 pages, the font should correspond to Times New Roman size 12 pt with single line spacing and standard margins of 2 cm.
3. A short CV (max 5 pages) of the applicant including a list of academic publications, if applicable.
4. Please also indicate in your e-mail which of the Working Group(s) your STSM may be included.

The applications should describe the goal of the proposed STSM, how it contributes to the aims of LOBSTERPOT, as well the objectives, expected results and outcomes, and planned expenses.

How is evaluated?
The selection of successful STSM applicants will be based on scientific scope of the proposed mission and how the mission can support **LOBSTERPOT** in achieving its scientific objectives, pondering diversity and inclusiveness. A STSM Committee will assess each application within the defined grant period.

The evaluation panel is comprised by:
- **Grant Awarding Coordinator**
- **Chair or Vice Chair or Grant Holder Scientific Representative**
- **Involved WP leaders**

The panel may require external expert and impartial advice to inform their decision. The committee will make a list of approved applications and perform the budgetary assessment of the applications according to the COST Vademecum. If approved, the STSM coordinator sends application and approval to Grant Holder & Action Chair for final check. Then, the Grant Holder sends the applicant a grant letter to sign and return. The STSM should not be started until this letter has been signed and returned.

Criteria for evaluation:
- The relevance and application of the research to the field of the Action, and the quality and clarity of the proposed research. A detailed work plan, timeline and methodology will help determine if the scientific aims of the work will be relevant and applicable to the Action's aims.
- Consideration of the number of applications from each institution to ensure a fair spread of researches across the network. Involvement of ITC countries will be a plus.
- The profile of the researcher considering the background and potential of successfully completing the STSM on the basis of their previous work and achievements commensurate to their career stage.
- The letters of support provided by Home and Host researchers.
- The publication/output potential of the research carried out, which will be based on the STSM work plan and detailed outcome plan.

Applicants will be notified of the result of their evaluation within 15 days after submission.

After the STSM
The beneficiary should submit a short scientific report (http://www.cost.eu/STSM_report_template) to the Host, Home and STSM coordinator within 30 days of completing the mission. This must include: the purpose of the mission; description of work carried out; description of main results/outputs; plan of future collaborations with Host (if applicable); planned publications resulting from STSM (if applicable); confirmation of successful STSM by Host. STSM Coordinator and Action Chair should approve the final report, and then Grant Holder executes payment to STSM Applicant. The submission of the supporting documents is mandatory or the Grant is cancelled.

Questions & Contact
Grant Awarding Coordinator: Miquel Angel Pujana (mapujana@iconcologia.net)
Grant Holder Manager: Nikki Giron (N.Giron@umcutrecht.nl)