

# European Cooperation in Science and Technology - COST

Jornada informativa - Ikerbasque

Madrid, 15 de abril de 2026



oficina  
europea



# PROGRAMA HORIZON EUROPE 2021-2027

*WIDERA program*



# COST

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European Cooperation in Science and Technology



# EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



COST



“ *The opportunity for science lies in creating an unlimited space where crossovers between ideas and people can change the world for the better.* ”



**MISSION**  
COST provides networking opportunities for researchers and innovators in order to strengthen Europe's capacity to address scientific, technological and societal challenges

**VISION**  
*Europe's most empowering research programme*

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Promoting and spreading excellence

Fostering interdisciplinary research for breakthrough science

Empowering and retaining young researchers



# About COST & Strategic Priorities



# European Cooperation in Science & Technology

COST provides networking opportunities for researchers and innovators in order to strengthen Europe's capacity to address scientific, technological and societal challenges



## ALL FIELDS OF S&T

(mono- or interdisciplinary, new and emerging fields)



## ALL PARTNERS

(academia, public organisation, industry, NGO, International Organisations)



## BOTTOM-UP APPROACH



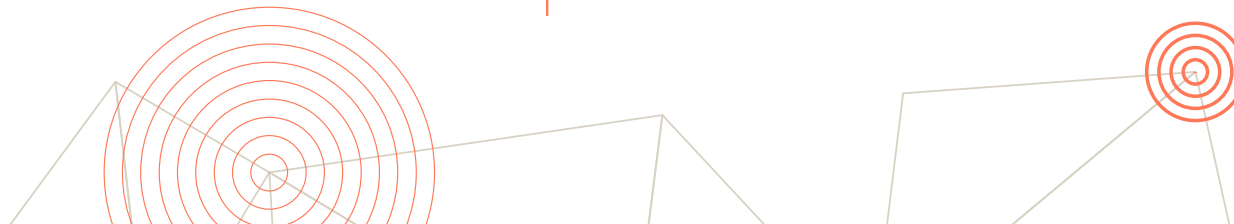
## ALL CAREER STAGES

(young and experienced researchers)



## ALL COUNTRIES

- 41 COST Members  
+ 1 Cooperating Member
- 14 Near Neighbour Countries
- Global cooperation



# COST Membership

## 41 Full COST Members

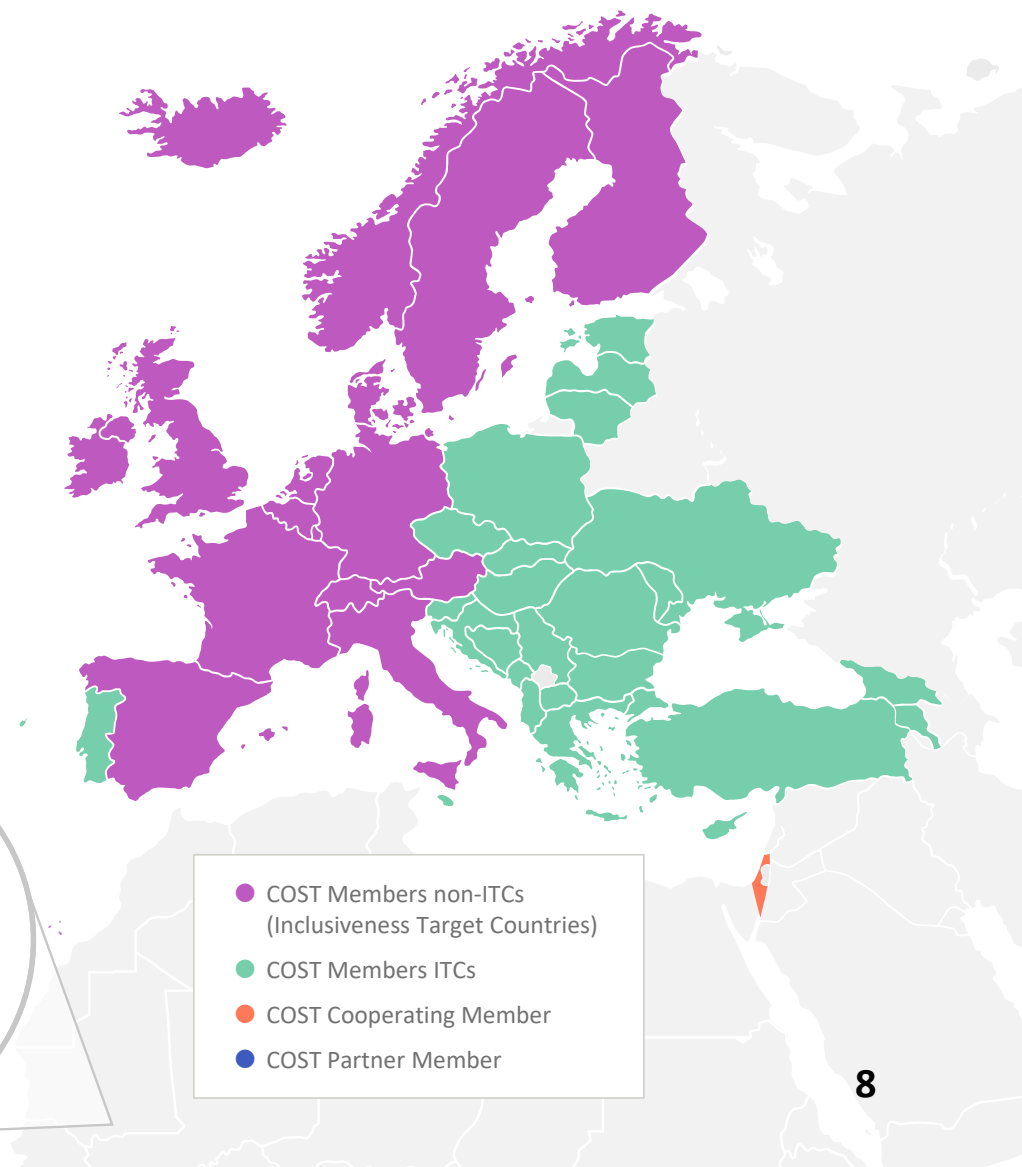
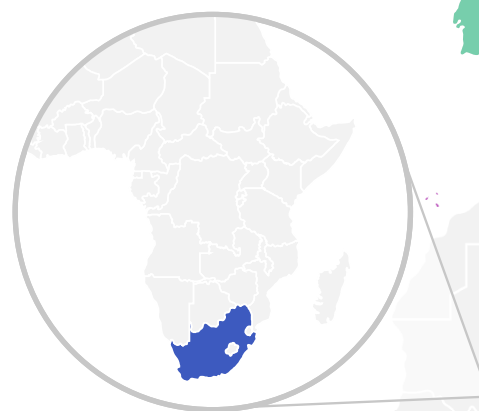
- |                          |                                   |                  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| ● Albania                | ● Germany                         | ● Norway         |
| ● Armenia                | ● Greece                          | ● Poland         |
| ● Austria                | ● Hungary*                        | ● Portugal       |
| ● Belgium                | ● Iceland                         | ● Romania        |
| ● Bosnia and Herzegovina | ● Ireland                         | ● Serbia         |
| ● Bulgaria               | ● Italy                           | ● Slovakia       |
| ● Croatia                | ● Latvia                          | ● Slovenia       |
| ● Cyprus                 | ● Lithuania                       | ● Spain          |
| ● Czech Republic         | ● Luxembourg                      | ● Sweden         |
| ● Denmark                | ● Malta                           | ● Switzerland    |
| ● Estonia                | ● The Republic of Moldova         | ● Türkiye        |
| ● Finland                | ● Montenegro                      | ● Ukraine        |
| ● France                 | ● The Netherlands                 | ● United Kingdom |
| ● Georgia                | ● The Republic of North Macedonia |                  |

## 1 Cooperating Member

- Israel

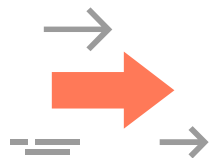
## 1 Partner Member

- South Africa



- COST Members non-ITCs (Inclusiveness Target Countries)
- COST Members ITCs
- COST Cooperating Member
- COST Partner Member

# Key figures



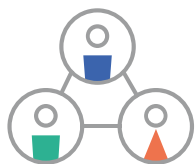
**292**  
Running Actions



**262**  
Training schools



**€170,000**  
estimate annual budget  
of a COST Action



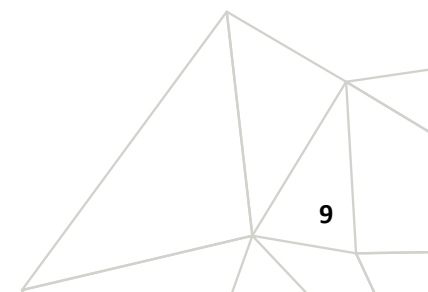
**2,150**  
Short-term  
scientific missions



**60,000**  
Researchers involved  
in COST Actions

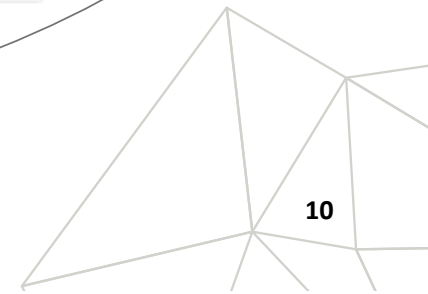
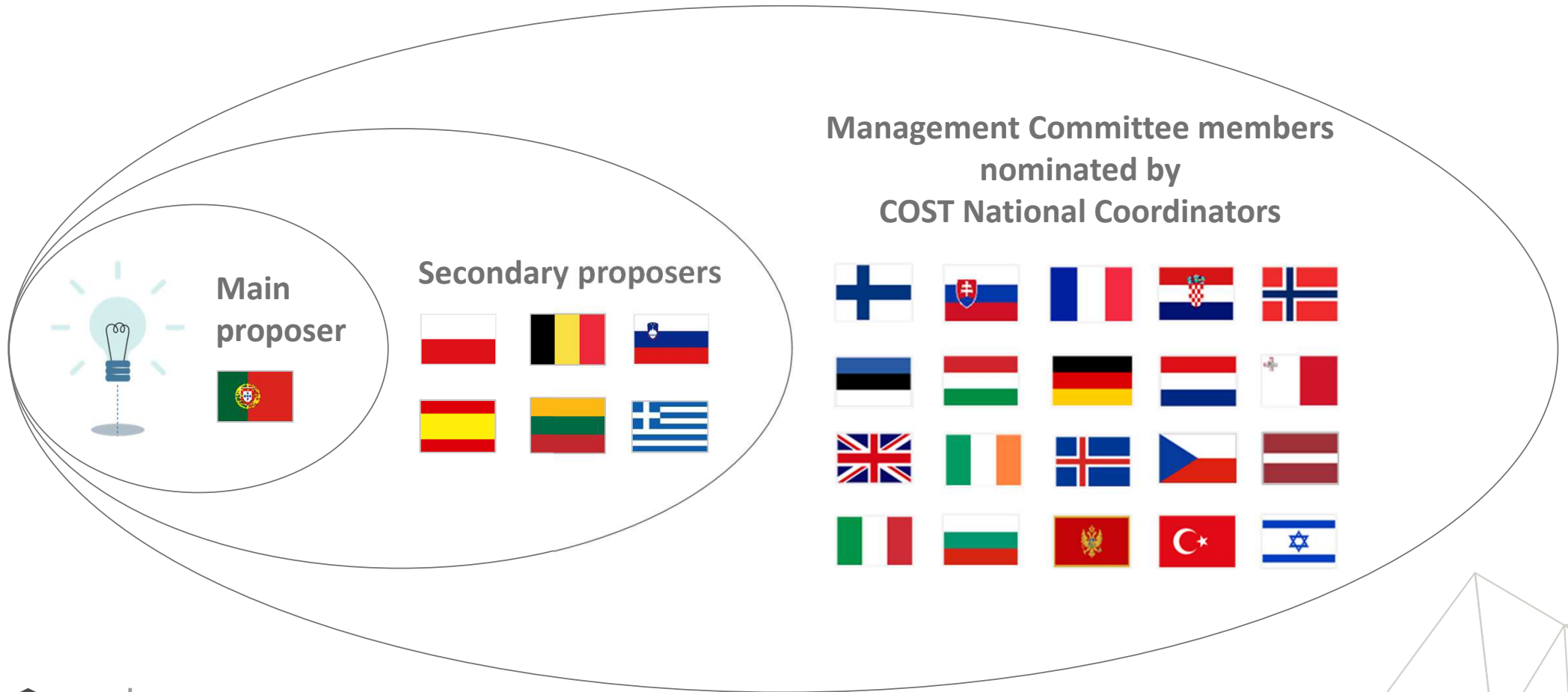


**€273 million**  
COST budget  
(in Horizon Europe for a 5-year period)





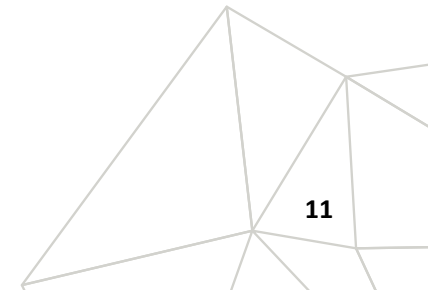
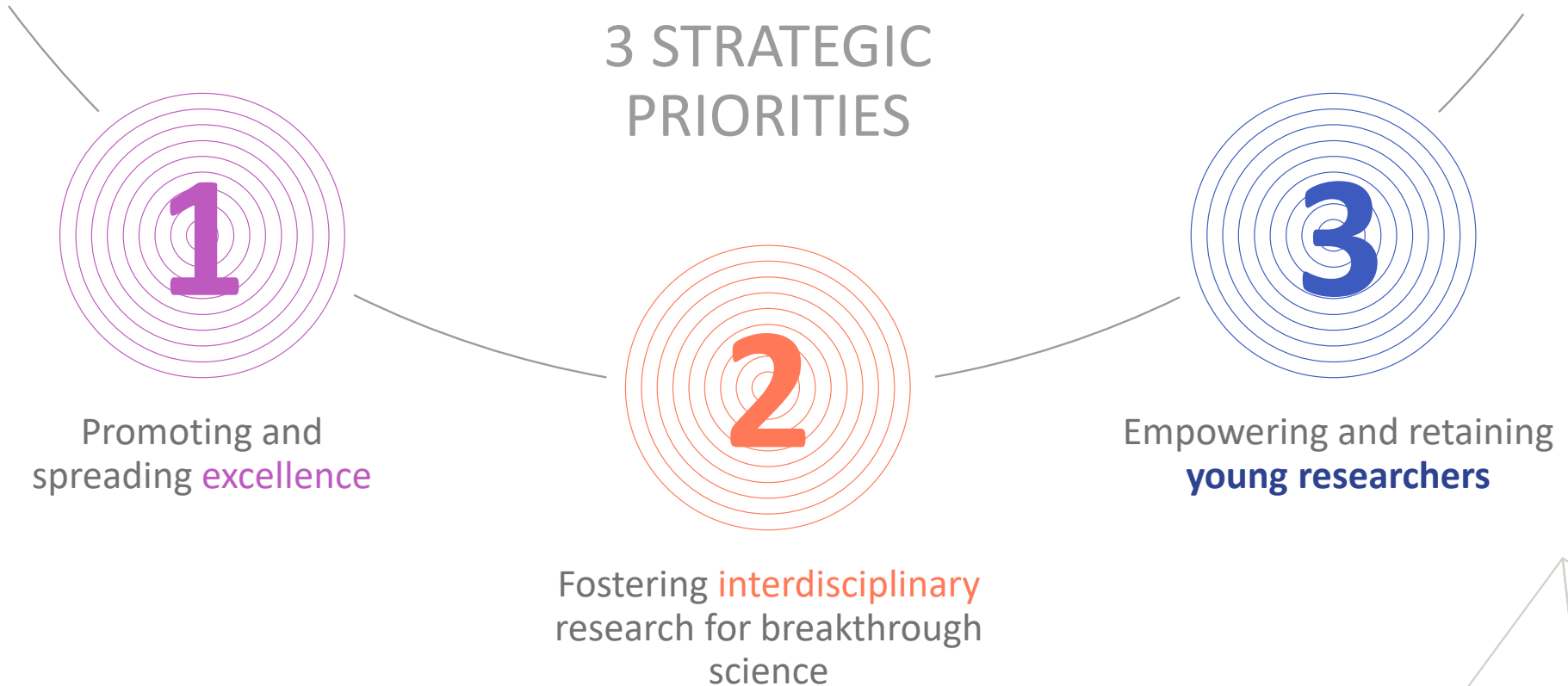
# How it works?



# Role of COST in the ERA



## 3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



# COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy

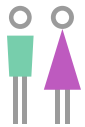
## PROMOTING



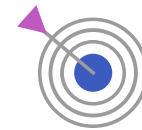
**GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD** (ITC)



**CAREER STAGE:** involving young researchers (YRI)



**GENDER BALANCE** throughout its activities

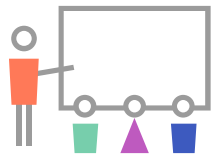


## OBJECTIVES

- 1.** Identifying excellence in science and technology across Europe
- 2.** Increasing research communities' access to funding and infrastructures
- 3.** Triggering structural changes in COST Members' national research systems



# Dedicated measures for active Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) participation



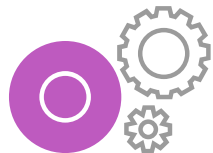
## COST Info Days

- Targeted to ITC
- Combined with high-level meeting ITC government, including CNC



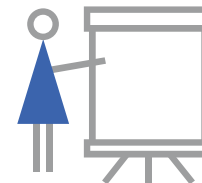
## Proposals

- Eligibility
- External experts
- Inclusiveness policy



## COST Actions

- COST Action leadership
- Conference grant for researchers and innovators
- Pre-payment for short-term scientific missions



## COST Academy

- Leadership programme
- COST Action Chairs' forum
- Science communication workshops and trainings
- Grant Holder workshop, seminar, and forum



## COST Academy

- **New** Young Researchers module
- **More** leadership training sessions

## COST Actions, communication, impact and monitoring

- New rule: **one YRI leadership position**
- **Promotion** within the Actions of the importance of engaging YRIs across all Action activities
- New **monitoring** of YRIs by networking tool
- **Impact assessment** focused on career development for YRIs
- **External communication activities** will have an increased focus on COST opportunities for young talents and next generation of leaders



Boost opportunities  
for Young  
Researchers and  
Innovators (YRI)

## Dedicated events

- Develop a **Cross-Cutting Activity** on career development for YRIs
- Organise specific **COST Connect** events for YRIs

## Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

- **New KPI** to have at least one YRI in a leadership position
- **Increased target for share of YRI in:**
  - **COST Actions** (40% ↗ 45%)
  - **Leadership positions** (20% ↗ 25%)

## COST Actions networking tools

- **New** Young Researcher conference grants
- **Refocused** Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) conference grant

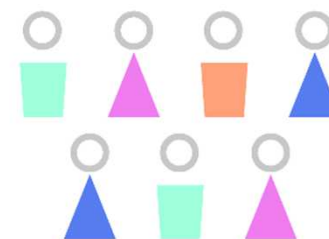
# Gender Equality Plan for COST Activities

## This GEP outlines guiding targets that help to promote gender balance in:

- Participation in COST Actions for both ITC and non-ITC participants and young researchers;
- COST Action leadership positions

## What is expected from a COST Action?

- Monitor gender balance in the research networks;
- Identify and invite participants from the under-represented groups;
- Nominate a Gender Equality Advisor;
- Develop a COST Action Gender Equality Plan;
- Organise Action events with a gender focus;
- Use gender inclusive language in all network communications;
- Participate in gender equality events organised by COST e.g. COST Academy and COST Connect.



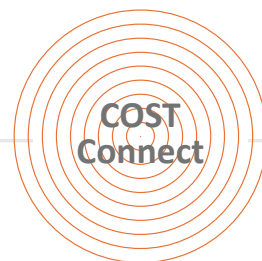
[GEP for COST activities](#)

Visit the [COST web page on gender equality](#) to learn more about gender equality at COST

# Implementing COST's strategic priorities



## COST ACTIONS



# COST Impact Model



# COST in Horizon Europe

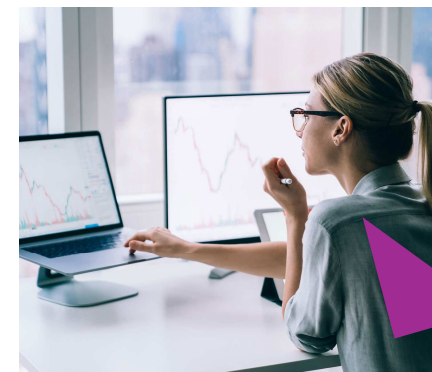


## Horizon Europe

Widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area pillar

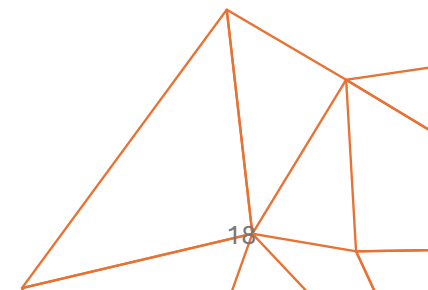


**COST activities** are implemented by the COST Association, under a Framework Partnership Agreement and Specific Grant Agreements with the European Commission



## COST Actions

receive budget under Third Party Funding

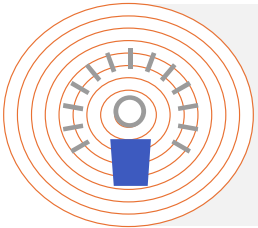


# Impact



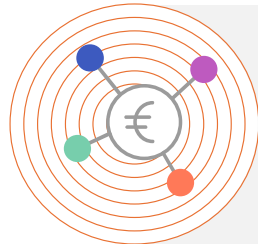
## Scientific and societal impact

- Scientific discoveries and breakthroughs, development of new research infrastructures, adoption of common standards, technological applications in the form of products and services, etc.



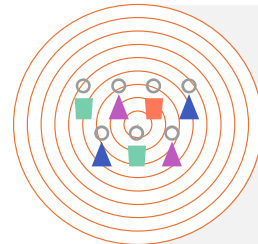
## Research careers

- 85% of researchers participating in COST Actions indicate that participation has led to career advancement



## Follow-up funding

- Horizon 2020 reported success rate: 39% (on a yearly basis, around €450 million of approved common research projects spin off from ending Actions)



## Co-Publications

- Co-publications between active COST Action participants see an increase of about 55% compared to general co-publications



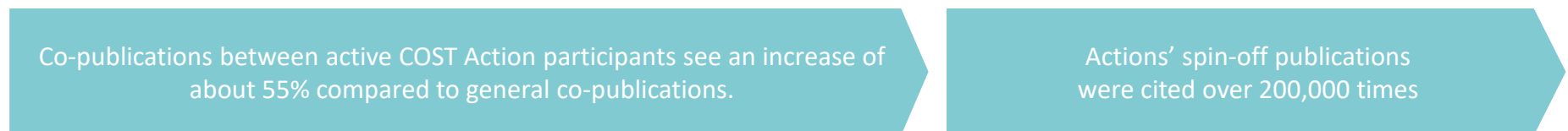
## ✓ COST promotes brain circulation



## ✓ COST boosts careers



## ✓ COST increases scientific productivity



## ✓ COST is a pre-portal to follow-up funding





**COST Actions**

# An efficient networking tool

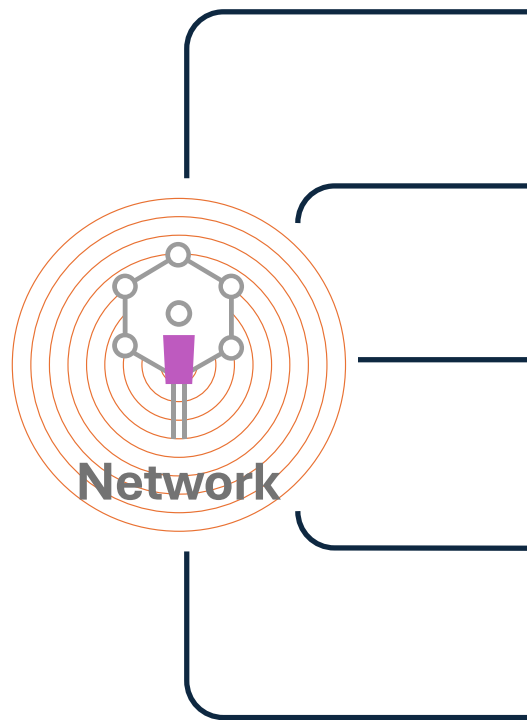


# COST Actions

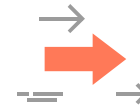
*AN EFFICIENT NETWORKING TOOL*

**COST provides funding** for research coordination and capacity building activities

COST is not funding research itself, but pooling resources and research results by networking



Memorandum of Understanding



4 years



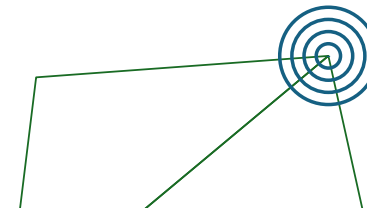
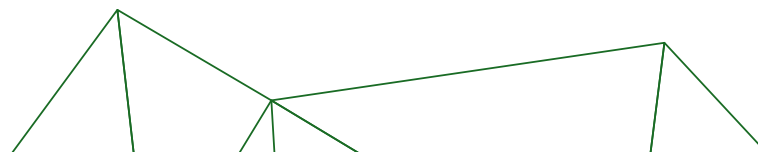
Min 7 countries, average participation 34 countries



Research coordination and capacity building activities

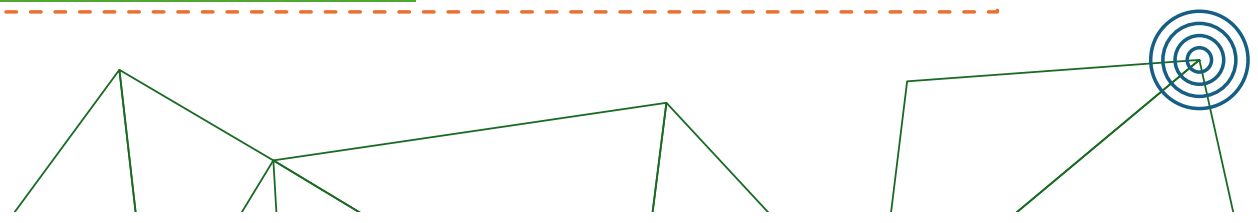
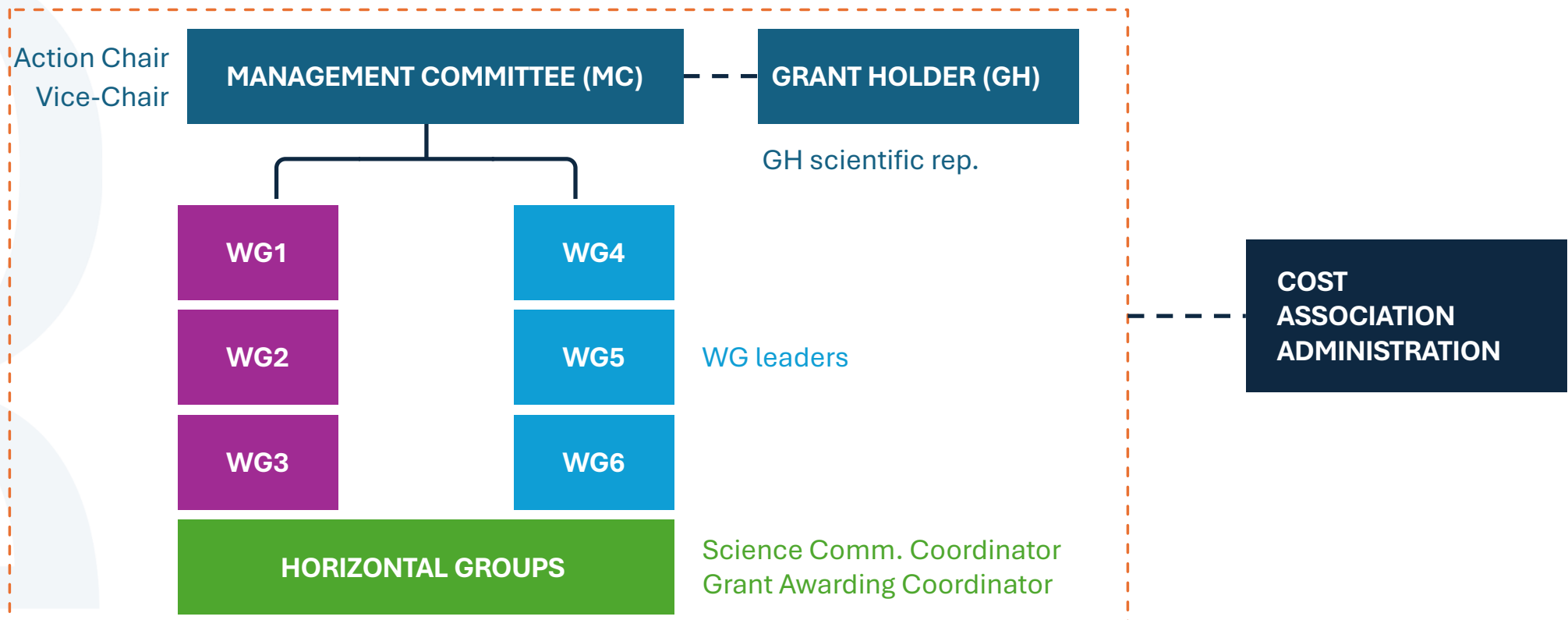


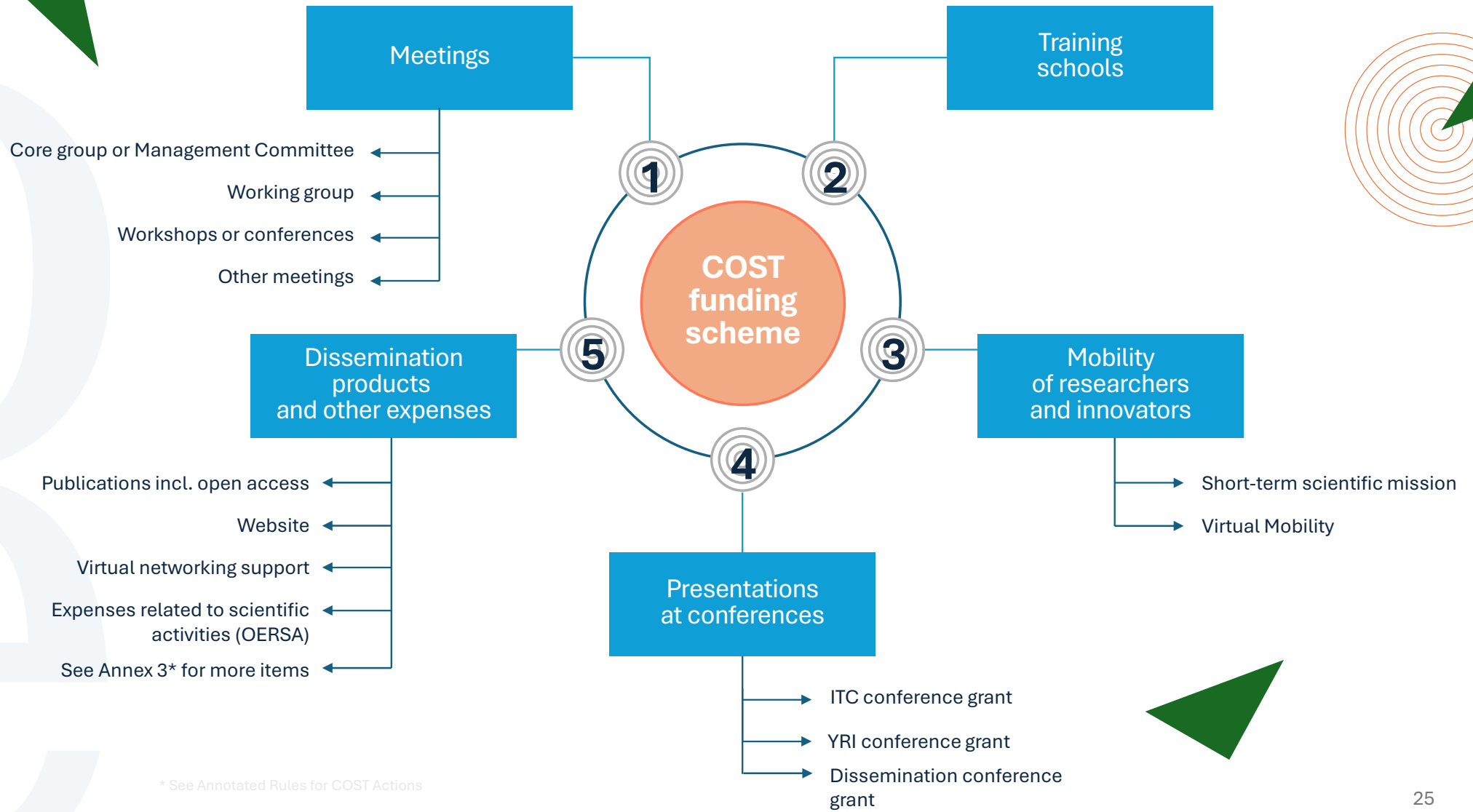
~ €650,000 over lifetime



# COST Action structure

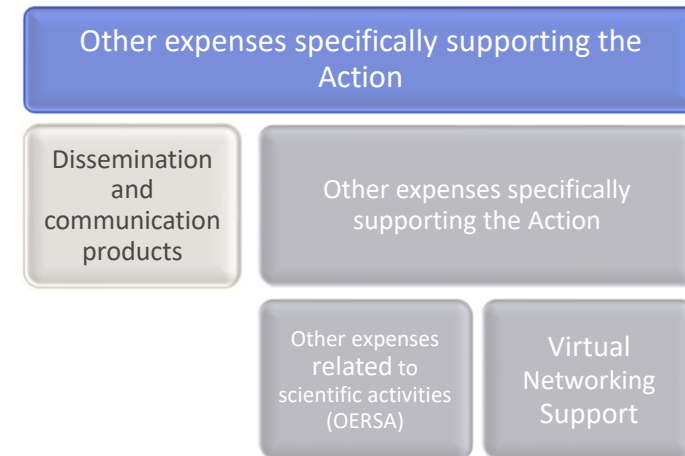
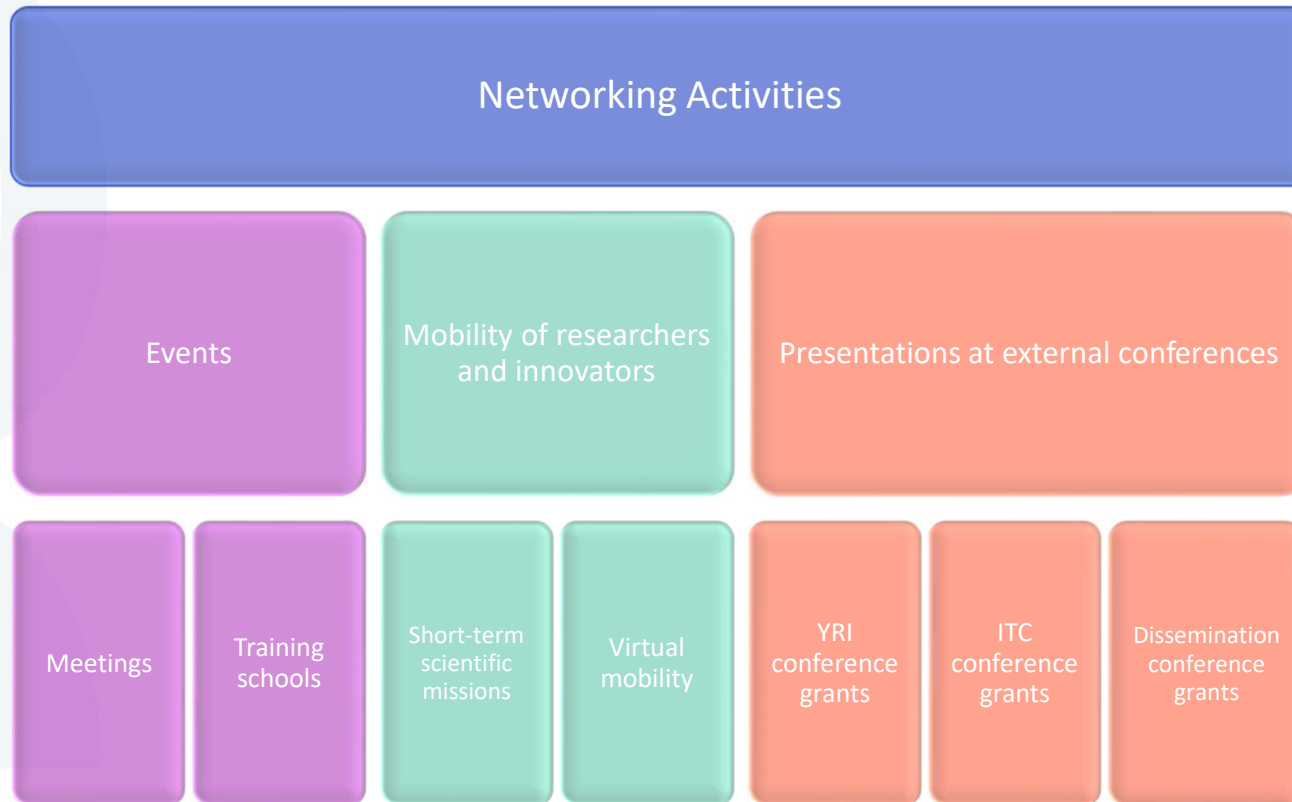
## LEADERSHIP POSITIONS







# What can be funded by COST



# Open Research Europe

- ORE is the European Commission's Open Access publishing platform for research results stemming from EU funding;
- COST Actions can submit directly to ORE, free of charge. Many article types are possible from all fields of science;
- Must be original content (not be submitted anywhere else) and stem from a COST Action;
- ORE offers rapid publication, open peer review, and indexing in databases such as Scopus and PubMed;
- COST Actions can create Collections (a compilation of content relating to a specific community) and there is no deadline;
- Complementary to the existing Open Access expenses covered by the COST rules.

**For more info visit:** <https://open-research-europe.ec.europa.eu/>

# How to engage with COST?



As a **participant** of a running Action



As a **proposer** of a new COST Action



As **expert** to evaluate submitted proposals



# 1. As a participant in a running Action (2/2)



## **AS A MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (MC) MEMBER**

(contact the COST National Coordinator)



## **AS A WORKING GROUP (WG) PARTICIPANT**

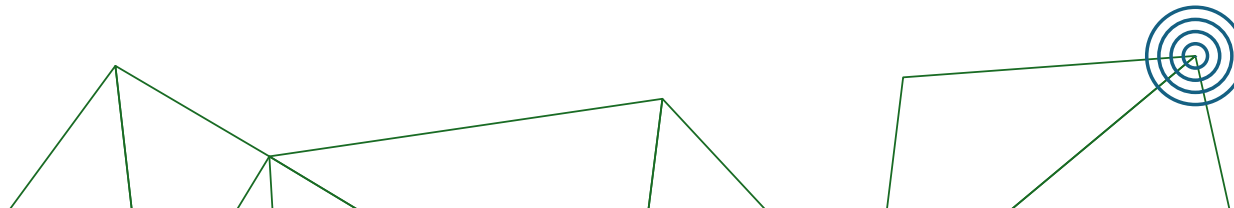
(contact the working group leader)



## **AS A PARTICIPANT IN ACTION ACTIVITIES**

Short-term scientific mission, conference grant, training school, workshop/conference,...

(check the Action's website, contact the chair or the national Management Committee member)





# 2. As a proposer of a new COST Action

## COST OPEN CALL

One-stage **online submission** of proposals (e-COST)

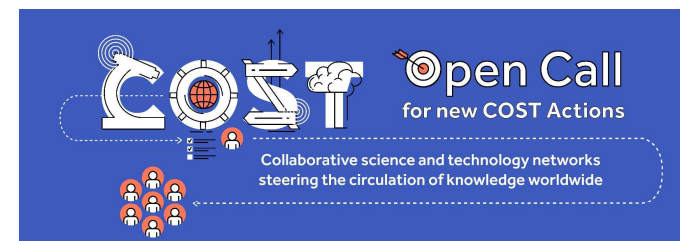
Proposal should focus on Excellence in S&T and Networking, Impact and Implementation

Up to **80** COST Actions approved per collection

Main Proposer + secondary proposer

Collection date:  
**28 October 2026, 12:00 CET**

[www.COST.eu](http://www.COST.eu)  
[opencall@cost.eu](mailto:opencall@cost.eu)



### 1. Idea & Team

Bottom-up approach: build your innovative idea on a specific challenge leading to an S&T breakthrough

The network must include at least seven proposers from seven COST Full or Cooperating Members of which at least 50% Inclusiveness Target Countries, and at least 40% of proposers must be Young Researchers and Innovators

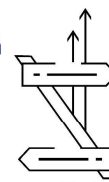
In each Open Call, an individual may participate either as Main or Secondary Proposer in one proposal only



### 2. Proposal & Submission

Submit online your anonymous proposal via the e-COST platform, open from 31 July 2026 at 12:00 noon CEST

Info and guidelines:  
[www.cost.eu/opencall](http://www.cost.eu/opencall)



Watch our video 'Tips for submitting a winning COST Action proposal!'

[www.cost.eu/video-tips](http://www.cost.eu/video-tips)

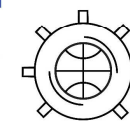


Collection date 2026



### 3. Evaluation & Selection

Independent External Experts carry out the evaluations of proposals, a consensus and quality check is performed, and the COST Scientific Committee makes the selection of proposals



### 4. Approval & Launch

The decision of approval and four-year funding for new Actions relies on the COST Committee of Senior Officials

New COST Actions kick off in the following Autumn with the first meeting of each Management Committee





# Open Call: How to apply?



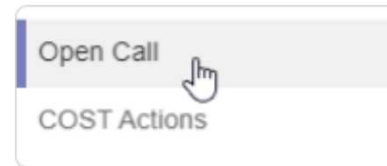
E-COST

1

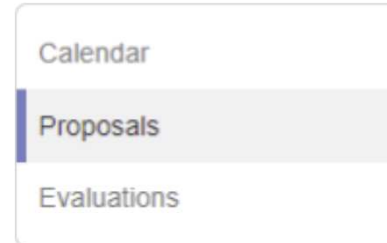
Create a COST account:  
<https://www.cost.eu/ecost>

2

> Open Call



> Proposals

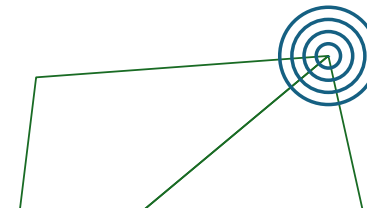


> Create new proposal



3

Online registration  
and submission:  
General information  
+ online Technical Annex

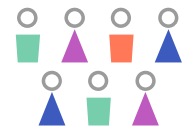




# Proposals



**GENERAL FEATURES**



**NETWORK OF PROPOSERS**



## TECHNICAL ANNEX (E-COST)



1. Excellence in S&T and Networking
2. Impact
3. Implementation



# Open Call for proposals

TECHNICAL ANNEX - ONLINE SUBMISSION TOOL (e-COST)

## SECTIONS

---

**1.** EXCELLENCE in  
S&T and  
NETWORKING

---

**2.** IMPACT

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**3.** IMPLEMENTATION

## SUB-SECTIONS

---

- A. Main challenge
  - B. Objectives
  - C. State-of-the-art
  - D. Rationale for choosing networking to address the main challenge
  - E. Critical mass of the network
- 

- A. Impact related to objectives
  - B. Involvement of stakeholders
  - C. Communication, dissemination and valorisation
- 

- A. Action Structure
- B. Work plan (tasks, activities and timeframe)
- C. Deliverables
- D. Gantt chart

- Technical Annex
- Max. 15 pages
- Diagrams and figures accepted

- SESA



## ELIGIBILITY!

- At least 50% Inclusiveness Target Countries
- At least 40% Young Researchers and Innovators
- Peaceful purpose
- Anonymous
- One proposer one role per Open Call
- English

1

### EXTERNAL REMOTE EVALUATION

- 3 Independent External Experts
- Technical Annex

2

### CONSENSUS REPORT AND QUALITY CHECK

- Appointment of a rapporteur

3

### SELECTION BY THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

- Assessment of acceptability
- Shortlist

4

### APPROVAL BY COST COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS

- Results 7-8 months after submission



## EXCELLENCE IN S&T AND NETWORKING

- Soundness of the challenge
- Research coordination and capacity-building objectives.
- Progress beyond the state-of-the-art
- Added value of networking in S&T excellence
- Critical mass of the network



## IMPACT

- Impact on science, society, policy, or any other relevant area, and short-, medium- or long-term.
- Involvement of stakeholders, their role and added-value.
- Plans for communication, dissemination and valorisation of results and target audience



## IMPLEMENTATION

- Coherence of the Action structure and effectiveness of the work plan



### 5 QUESTIONS

Range of marks: **0 – 5**  
Threshold: 3



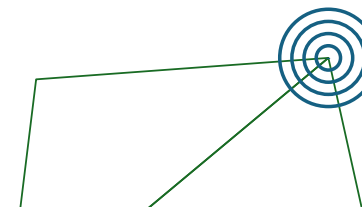
### 3 QUESTIONS

Range of marks: **0 – 5**  
Threshold: 3



### 1 QUESTION

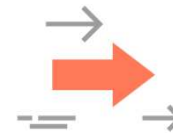
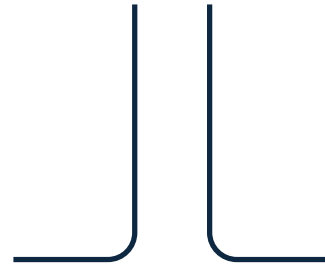
Range of marks: **0 – 3**



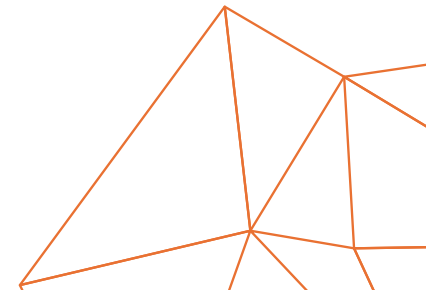
### 3. As external expert

**As a COST Expert,**  
you will have the opportunity to

**Contribute** to the  
evaluation of COST Open  
Call proposals

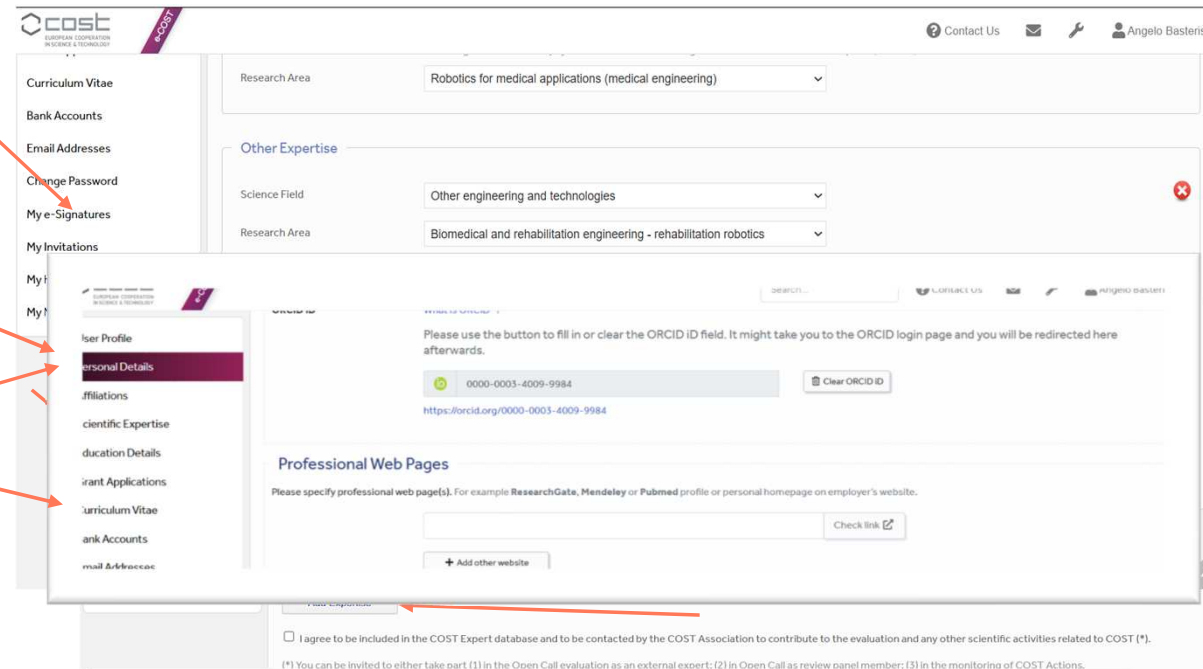


**Participate** in the  
assessment of Action  
results and outcomes



# Please update your e-COST profile

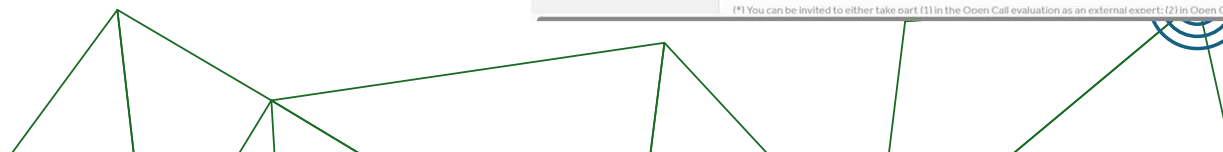
1. Visit the [COST Expert](#) section on your Profile
2. Verify that all your *Core* and *Other Expertise* are listed
3. Mark your availability to be included in the COST Expert database and save your profile
4. If available, add:
  - ORCID ID
  - professional webpage(s)
  - Curriculum Vitae



The screenshot shows the e-COST user profile page. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Curriculum Vitae, Bank Accounts, Email Addresses, Change Password, My e-Signatures, My Invitations, My Profile, and My Account. The main content area includes:

- Research Area:** Robotics for medical applications (medical engineering)
- Other Expertise:**
  - Science Field: Other engineering and technologies
  - Research Area: Biomedical and rehabilitation engineering - rehabilitation robotics
- User Profile:**
  - Personal Details: Includes a field for ORCID ID (0000-0003-4009-9984) and a 'Clear ORCID ID' button.
  - Professional Web Pages: A section for adding professional web pages with a 'Check link' button and an '+ Add other website' button.
- Agreement:** A checkbox labeled 'I agree to be included in the COST Expert database and to be contacted by the COST Association to contribute to the evaluation and any other scientific activities related to COST (\*).'

Red arrows from the text on the left point to the 'Research Area' dropdown, the 'Other Expertise' section, the ORCID ID field, the 'Professional Web Pages' section, and the agreement checkbox.



# Casos de éxito COST

<https://www.cost.eu/working-together-to-better-protect-children-in-europe/>

## Continuing the work beyond the Action

Although the formal COST Action has ended, the impact of Euro-CAN continues through new collaborations and initiatives. Many members are involved in the Horizon Europe project SERENA, which is based on Euro-CAN's work of strengthening multi-sector data systems to improve access to health and social care for children affected by abuse.

Current initiatives include the development and evaluation of clinical protocols in hospitals and outpatient settings across Europe, with a focus on trauma-informed care. Euro-CAN alumni contribute to a learning network in which clinicians and academics share data, experience and best practice. Collaborative education continues via the International Course on Child Abuse Paediatrics ([InterCAP](#)), promoting professional development and standardising training across Europe.

Furthermore, Andreas Jud also co-leads the Child Maltreatment Data Collection Working Group of [ISPCAN](#), ensuring the network maintains an international presence and visibility through co-located congress activities.



*I would never had imagined that the spark of a proposal I was drafting with the support of a few colleagues would ever lead to a widely recognizable beacon lit by 130+ members network with academics and professionals from different disciplines, an output of an edited book, a large list of papers, policy impact, ... and lasting friendships – particularly among early-career researchers – that would not have existed without this proposal's spark. The close bonds that emerged were essential to transfer the network's flame onto new projects.*



**Prof. Andreas Jud**  
Zurich University of Applied Sciences  
Chair of Euro-CAN Action



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<https://www.serena-horizon.eu/>

For Laura Cowley and Eva Mora-Theuer, the COST Action was more than just a network; it was a stepping stone to leadership roles and a prestigious follow-up project, **SERENA**, funded by the Horizon Europe programme.



Dr Laura Cowley,  
Swansea University, UK,  
Euro-CAN WG co-Leader

*"Being part of the COST Action gave me the opportunity to co-lead a working group and to lead meetings and work packages," explains Laura. "This did wonders for my confidence and my ability to lead teams and collaborate internationally. The Action helped me secure a promotion to Senior Research Officer. It also greatly expanded my professional network and opened opportunities for new projects and grant proposals."*

Laura presented her research across Europe, completed scientific missions, and contributed to two landmark papers, including one as lead author. *"My participation in the international e-Delphi study on child maltreatment definitions was especially meaningful and was only possible through the energetic collaboration of the working group and the support of the Action. This led to my first-authored publication in The Lancet Regional Health – Europe, of which I am extremely proud,"* she adds.

Eva Mora-Theuer also gained confidence and skills by leading an Action working group.



*"Through collaborations, I learned far more than I had ever imagined possible. This process allowed me to significantly strengthen my skills as a young researcher, particularly in contributing to the evidence base within our research field. It was truly hands-on training that neither my PhD nor any other collaboration could have provided in such a comprehensive way."*



# Gracias

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