

COST – European Cooperation in Science and Technology

Funding opportunities for research cooperative activities

BACKGROUND

In June 2009, South Africa concluded an agreement with COST (*European Cooperation in Science and Technology*), which is one of the longest-running European instruments supporting cooperation among scientists and researchers. This agreement allows South African researchers to participate in COST *Actions*, which are networks of research and which could be within any one of the following of COST's nine key scientific domains:

- Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences
- Food and Agriculture
- Forsts, their Products and Services
- Materials, Physical and Nanosciences
- Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies
- Earth System Science and Environment Management
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Transport and Urban Development
- Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health.

In terms of the South Africa-COST reciprocal agreement South African researchers could participate in any of the approximate 200 current *Actions* in the above-mentioned nine scientific domains. Please note that it is not research *per se* which is supported, but cooperative activities which could include meetings, workshops, short-term scientific missions etc. A specific *Action* will determine the nature of its cooperative activities. The main benefit of participating in COST is that effective networks are built which are often maintained beyond the normal four-year duration of a COST *Action*. These could result in joint projects under the EU Seventh Framework Programme (FP7)

HOW TO JOIN A COST ACTION?

Step 1: Choose a COST *Action*

Use the COST pocket guide *About COST 2010* for a list of all the *Actions* [see http://www.cost.esf.org/about_cost]

Please note that there are no due dates for applications for as long as an *Action* is current.

Step 2: Contact the Chair and the COST Science Officer of the domain under which a particular *Action* falls.

[a] The contact details of Chairs and COST Science Officers are listed in the *Fact Sheet* appearing for each domain at the following web address: http://www.cost.esf.org/domains_actions.

[b] Explain your interest to the Chair for a specific *Action* and request a **non-COST county application template** from the COST Science Officer for that specific domain.

Step 3: Send the completed application template and a letter of motivation to the Chair and the COST Science Officer

The *Action's* Management Committee, the relevant Domain Committee, and the executive group of the COST Committee of Senior Officials each evaluate your application.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR APPLICATION HAS BEEN APPROVED?

[a] You receive confirmation by email

[b] You are asked to create an *online e-COST registration*

[c] You appear on the COST website as a non-COST country *Action* participant

WHERE DO YOU SEEK FUNDS TO ATTEND COST ACTION MEETINGS?

Once you have been notified of your application having been approved, please contact Mamohloding Tlhagale at ESASTAP: mamohloding.tlhagale@dst.gov.za or (012) 843-6340.

HOW MUCH FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

[a] DST is able to provide seed funding for the travel costs of South African researchers traveling to Europe up to a maximum of R50 000 per visit. The visit must contribute or enhance South Africa's Science & Technology knowledgebase and human capital.

[b] For an application form for seed funding from DST, see www.esastap.org.za/esastap/dost/index.php

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please visit the COST website: www.cost.esf.org

If you require assistance in any of the above, please contact Wilna Venter (wilna.venter@uct.ac.za) in the Research Office, UCT.