

# Short-term scientific mission (STSM)

Work together, exchange technology & build new scientific collaborations  
within EU-METAHEART (CA 22169)

⇒ **STSMs** are THE way to start! ⇒ How to apply?

update **March 2026**

**Eligibility:** The applicant must be a member of COST Action EU-METAHEART. The host does not need to be but is preferably a member of the Action.

## Submit your STSM application through the COST homepage

Submission for applications is open until **May 1, 2026**. The budget is up to **€2,000 per STSM** and can be used for travel and housing. The STSMs should be conducted **between June and September 2026**.

To submit your application, please follow the scheme:

### STEP 1: Formal agreement of host institution and online registration by the applicant

- Obtain a written agreement of the **Principal Investigator hosting the STSM** before applying.
- **Log into e-COST** (<https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>) and click the **STSM application** tab.
- Use the **online registration tool** to register your request for an STSM.

### STEP 2: Formal STSM application and annexes

After adding all formal information and pressing the “submit” button, the online registration tool will issue a formal STSM application that will automatically reach the Grant Awarding Coordinator and the STSM coordinator. The following documents are required:

- **STSM Proposal** (use the template of the **APPLICATION FORM** <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm>; it is **necessary** that the following information is included; a) indicate whether this is a first time application of the applicant and/or home and host institution, b) indicate the WG to which the STSM is aligned, c) indicate whether this STSM is a start of a new collaboration, and d) indicate whether home and/or host country is an ITC country.
- **Letter of support** from the **HOME** institute (**max. 1 page, an informal letter from the PI responsible for the planned collaboration (Who? Where to? When? Planned aims?)**)
- **Letter of support** from the **HOST** institute (**max. 1 page, an informal letter from the PI responsible for the planned collaboration**)
- **Curriculum Vitae** (max. 2 pages) with a list of publications (if applicable)

The STSM Coordinator and the Grant Awarding Coordinator review the formal criteria of the STSM application.

### STEP 3: Assessment of the STSM

After the above-mentioned deadlines, the STSM Evaluation Committee\* will perform the scientific and budgetary assessment of the applications, considering the Action objectives and

the previously defined evaluation criteria. Each application will be scientifically reviewed by three independent experts of the evaluation board. The committee will also define an acceptable funding level for the approved applications. **The amount of the awarded grant can never be higher than what the applicant requested (up to € 2.000,-).**

#### STEP 4: Approval from the STSM coordinator and Chair of the Action

The Grant Awarding Coordinator and the STSM coordinator present the applications to the Action Core group and the Chair, and after its approval, COST will be informed.

#### STSM SELECTION CRITERIA

1. The goal of STSMs is to **foster collaboration** at the cutting edge of “metabolic dysfunction in heart failure”. The work plan must be in line with the Action’s objectives. We particularly encourage applications aimed at **establishing new scientific contacts**. The STSMs are intended to be the starting point for a collaborative project that will **culminate in a publication** in the framework of EU-METAHEART.
2. The STSM serves the **exchange of knowledge**; researchers either exchange expertise due to the planned scientific visit, **obtain practical skills** by learning unique “technology” not available in their home institution and/or **learn new methods** or experimental approaches.
3. The **scientific quality** of the proposed STSM is high, its timeliness is justified, and the work plan for its realization is well founded.
4. The application should be **financially justified**; the estimate of expenses must be reasonable.

**Please note:** The final selection of the applicant is the responsibility of the Grant Awarding Coordinator, the STSMs Coordinator, and the Core Group of the Action.

#### SCORE (by using a threshold)

- Relevance of the STSM objectives with respect to EU-METAHEART topics and objectives
- Excellence and impact of the research to be carried out during the proposed STSM
- Implementation feasibility
- Relevance of the host lab’s expertise to support the STSM goals
- Applicant’s CV (dependent on the stage of their career)
- Dissemination perspectives

#### CRITERIA CONSIDERED FOR FINAL DECISION AFTER EVALUATION

- A first-time application is preferred.
- Geographical distribution of applicants across the same STSM Call is important (applicants should come from as many countries as possible)
- Applications from ITC countries are particularly welcome
- Applications that propose to initiate a new collaboration are preferred
- Balance across Working Groups
- Gender balance across the same STSM Call

⇒ If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us:

- Grant Awarding Coordinator: [petra.kleinbongard@uk-essen.de](mailto:petra.kleinbongard@uk-essen.de) or
- STSM Coordinator: [katrin.streckfuss-boemeke@uni-wuerzburg.de](mailto:katrin.streckfuss-boemeke@uni-wuerzburg.de)

**\*STSM Evaluation Committee:** Grant Awarding Coordinator, STSM coordinator, and 1 representative of each Working group and the vice chair of the Action.