COST

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<tr><td>European Cooperation
in the field of Scientific
and Technical Research
- COST -
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Secretariat
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COST 205/08</td></tr>
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NOTE

To :	COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)
Subject :	Guidelines for Assessment, Monitoring, Evaluation and Dissemination of Results of COST Actions

Delegations will find attached the "Guidelines for Assessment, Monitoring, Evaluation and Dissemination of Results of COST Actions" approved by the CSO at its 170th meeting on 12-13 March 2008[1].

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[1]   This document replaces the previous version set out in COST 203/07.

Guidelines for Assessment, Monitoring
Evaluation & Dissemination of Results of COST Actions

1 - Introduction

The main tasks assigned to a COST Domain Committee (DC) in pursuit of a successful Action are:

a. Quality Control

- **Assessment of proposals for new Actions**
- **Monitoring of Actions in progress**
- **Evaluation of completed Actions**

b. Dissemination and exploitation of the results of a COST Action.

Quality control is the prime responsibility of a DC, in accordance with its Terms of Reference approved by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) (see COST Docs 283-289/06 and 297/06 to be found on *www.consilium.europa.eu/cost*). The quality control tasks aim to maintain the excellence of COST Actions, by combining best practices used in the scientific community with the bottom-up approach, equality of access and flexibility traditional to COST. Best practices adopted by the CSO as mandatory include consistent use of external peer review, both in assessing Full Proposals for new Actions and in the final evaluation of a completed Action.

The COST Office provides secretarial support to the DC. It has a central role in the management of the open call process, and also has a prime responsibility for disseminating the results of COST Actions and encouraging their exploitation. But dissemination and exploitation are also important tasks for the Action Management Committee (MC) and the DC.

Funding for quality control and for the dissemination and exploitation of results is provided by the COST Office, using funds from the RTD Framework Programmes allocated to COST.

2 - Conflict of Interest

Standard good practice in science funding schemes requires that any individual with an interest in a proposal for funding should not take part in the selection process. Executing the COST quality control tasks may give rise to a conflict of interest, for example if a DC member is at the same time a participant in a current Action, or is involved in a new Action proposal.

To ensure the 'bottom-up' characteristics of an Action, the proposition and execution of an Action shall not normally be performed by any member of a body that has executive or advisory power over its assessment, management or evaluation (e.g. the membership in the CSO, the membership of a DC, and Chairmanship of an Action are mutually incompatible).

It is mandatory that any potential conflict of interest be declared. Any DC member who has a conflict of interest is not permitted to participate in the assessment, monitoring or evaluation of the Action concerned. The same principle applies to any other person who may be approached to assist with any COST quality control task. Details are given in Doc. 236/06 - Rules of procedure of DC's and 319/04 - COST Code of Conduct (to be found in *www.consilium.europa.eu/cost*)

Therefore, following considerations shall be undertaken at the respective levels:

- A declaration that there is no potential conflict of interest must be made by every assessor of Preliminary Proposals. If, at a later stage, such a conflict comes to light, the COST Office may suspend the funding of the Action until the conflict of interest is resolved.
- In case a DC member is involved in a running Action as a MC member, he/she shall not participate in any discussion or decision concerning that Action within the DC, unless invited.
- The "Rapporteur" on an Action to the DC cannot be a member of the Action's MC.
- DC members should not be one of the Proposers of a new Action.

3 – Anonymity

All individual marks and comments during the assessment process will be kept anonymous. On the other hand, in order to guarantee the widest transparency, all such marks and comments will be made available for the Proposer and those involved in the assessment process.

4 – European Commission involvement

The Commission Contact Persons will have access to all proposals and are encouraged to submit comments on the Full Proposals. These comments will be sent to the COST Office no later than one week before the relevant External Expert Panel (EEP) meeting and will be made available both to the EEP and the DC for consideration. They will also be made available to the COST National Co-ordinators (CNC).

5 - Assessment of new Action proposals

New Action proposals are assessed and selected from submissions to a continuous and thematically Open Call normally with two collection dates a year. Proposals submitted after a collection date are retained for the next collection date.

The objective of the Open Call is to enhance the scientific excellence and transparency of COST through an accessible bottom-up opportunity with rigorous peer review. The Call follows a two-step process, with Preliminary Proposals followed by invited Full Proposals. This helps to reduce over-subscription and ensures a reasonable success rate for Full Proposals.

Characteristics of a COST Action

COST Actions are new, innovative and often interdisciplinary scientific networks. COST does not fund the research in itself. COST Actions contribute to the scientific, economic, cultural or societal development of Europe, by supporting networking activities such as meetings, conferences, short term scientific exchanges and outreach activities. An Action is based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) accepted by the Governments of at least 5 COST member countries.

A successful proposal should:[1]

- reach out for high scientific/technological quality in an innovative way (interdisciplinary topics are also welcome);
- contribute substantially to the coordination and defragmentation of research efforts across Europe and to the strengthening of Europe's scientific networking capacity (in the context of the European Research Area);
- contribute strongly and visibly to European society, economic growth and welfare by producing results of potential interest to important sectors such as public authorities, policy institutions, standards bodies and/or private companies and industry;
- be based on a) careful consideration of the level of interest and relevant research resources in the countries likely to participate in the Action; b) assessment of the added value expected from the coordination of national research efforts by the Action;
- be flexible enough to permit the inclusion, at the implementation stage, of disciplinary perspectives and activities not foreseen during the preparation of the proposal;
- identify and take into account R&D efforts supported by other national and international funding schemes;
- encourage capacity building and the mobility of early-career European researchers.

6 - The Open Call process for New COST Actions

Upcoming collection dates for the Open Call will be announced on the COST website, in the Official Journal of the European Union, on CORDIS, on the European Science Foundation (ESF) website, in selected scientific journals, and in other appropriate media (see Annex G).

Selection Procedure

I. Preliminary Proposals (see Template in Annex C)

a. The initiative of preparing a new Action proposal is normally taken by a group of European researchers, who see an opportunity for advancing scientific, technological or social knowledge through the international coordination support offered by COST. The Coordinator of the group (the "Proposer") is responsible for submitting the proposal.

b. Proposers may wish to contact their national COST Coordinator (CNC) for information and guidance – see www.cost.esf.org/cnc.

c. Submission: the Preliminary Proposal is submitted online to a dedicated secure database operated by the COST Office. The web template (see Annex C) limits the main text of the proposal to 10 000 characters (equivalent to about 1 500 words). The Proposer is asked to indicate the preferred Domain. The text must be in English, as no translation is provided and peer reviewers will come from various countries. The Proposer is strongly advised to have the text checked for correctness and clarity.

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[1] This passage replaces the corresponding section 7 in the terms of reference of the Domain Committees (documents COST 283-289/06 and 297/06).

d. A pre-check is performed by the COST Office to reject any Preliminary Proposal which does not meet the basic requirements for COST support. The pre-check addresses four questions:
- Does the Proposal conform with the specified template? [NO = Reject]
- Are 5 or more COST Member States involved in the Proposal? [NO = Reject]
- Does the Proposal seek funding for research? [YES = Reject]
- Is there obvious duplication with work currently or recently supported by COST? [YES = Reject]

e. The COST Office allocates the Preliminary Proposal to the relevant Domain, based on the Proposer's stated preference and its own judgment. The DC Chairs may also be consulted, if needed.

f. Any Preliminary Proposal which cannot readily be allocated to a COST Domain, because its topic is unusually broad and interdisciplinary, is considered as a Trans-Domain Proposal (TDP) and assessed as follows:

1. A TDP Standing Assessment Body (TDP-SAB) is constituted.
2. Members are the DC Chairs and two other members appointed by each of the DC Chairs. One of these two may be a Science Officer from the COST Office.
3. The Coordinator of the TDP-SAB is appointed by the CSO President normally for a period of 4 years. The Coordinator remains neutral in the process.
4. The TDP-SAB will operate according to the usual rules for the assessment of pre-proposals in the COST Open Call. At the end of the pre-proposal assessment phase, the marks given by the TDP-SAB are to be treated for filtering at the same level as the other 9 Domains. In case TDPs are invited for submission of Full Proposals, then an EEP will be formed and TDP-SAB hearings will be organised.
5. In case of need of an EEP, its composition is decided by the Coordinator with the help of the DC Chairs. The Coordinator is the convenor of the EEP.
6. At the end of the TDP-SAB hearings, the TDP-SAB hearing panel shall allocate each of the recommended TDPs to one of the following Clusters for further ranking at the DC Chairs Cluster Consensus Meetings:
    - Cluster "Life Sciences" (Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences; Food and Agriculture; Forests, their Products and Services),
    - Cluster "Natural Sciences" (Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies; Earth System Science and Environmental Management; Materials, Physical and Nanosciences) and
    - Cluster "Science in Society" (Information and Communication Technologies, Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health; Transport and Urban Development)
7. The Coordinator is invited to the DC Chairs Cluster Consensus meetings.
8. In case a TDP is approved by the CSO, it is allocated to a single Domain for administrative purposes, but Rapporteurs from several DCs should normally be appointed to monitor the resulting Action.

In the following paragraphs, references to DC should be read as including the TDP-SAB.

g. Assessor allocation: The DC chair, supported by the COST Office, allocates to each proposal sufficient Assessors, i.e. DC members or external experts (who may be drawn from the pool of "nominated DC experts" or from other sources), to ensure that a minimum of six assessments are completed for each proposal. DC Chairs are not entitled to assess the pre-proposals in their domains. Any Preliminary Proposal achieving fewer than six assessments is deemed not to have received sufficient interest and is therefore disregarded.

h. The Assessors mark their allocated Preliminary Proposals on the basis of the criteria in Annex A by assigning between 1 and 4 marks to each criterion. For this purpose they have electronic access to the proposal, and secure access to an online automated marking database.

i. Assessors are encouraged to add meaningful comments in order to provide an appropriate feedback to the Proposer, for improvement of the proposal in view of a potential resubmission.

j. Access to the marking database is password protected. Marks are not visible unless at least six Assessors have entered their marks. This helps to guarantee unbiased assessment.

k. The marks assigned by each Assessor are automatically added. If the average total of all Assessor marks for the Proposal fails to reach the threshold of 70% of the maximum achievable score, the Proposal is not considered for invitation to submit a Full Proposal.

l. To overcome inter-Domain variation in scoring practice, a process of filtering is applied. The filtering formula must be consensual between the DC Chairs and the COST Office and any possible conflicts are to be resolved by JAF/CSO. The COST Office provides for each Domain a table with the total Assessor marks, and derived from that the average mark for all proposals. This table is made available to all members of the Domain Committee.

m. In order to ensure reasonable parity across all fields of science and technology supported by COST, while maintaining the principle of open competition, invitations to submit a Full Proposal are considered within each of the three Science Clusters.

Each Cluster shall be able to generate roughly the same number of new Actions; not taking into account possible Trans-Disciplinary Proposals which will be additional to these.

The COST Office prepares a ranking list of all above-threshold Preliminary Proposals for each Science Cluster.

n. The COST Office normally invites, in total, around three times as many top ranked Preliminary Proposals to submit Full Proposals as the total number of new Actions that can be supported by the available funds. The number of invitations in each Cluster will normally be similar, but will also have regard to the absolute numbers of above-threshold cases in each Cluster.

o. The COST Office informs all other Proposers that they are not invited to submit a Full Proposal. If requested by the Proposer, the COST Office shall provide the assessment scores and comments for that Proposal.

p. The COST Office provides the Commission Contact Persons with username and password for access to the COST website with an overview of the selected pre-proposals. The relevant time table for the assessment process will be available on the COST website.

II. Full Proposals

When submitting a Full Proposal, the Proposer should contact the national COST Coordinator (CNC) – see www.cost.esf.org/cnc.

a. Full Proposal format: The text of a successful Full Proposal will constitute the formal Technical Annex of the Memorandum of Understanding of the COST Action, and must therefore conform in all material respects, including formatting, to the template provided by the COST Office (see Annex D). The Proposal must be formatted as Rich Text Format (.rtf) or a word (.doc) file. The Proposal must be written in English; no translation service is provided by the COST Office, and peer reviewers will come from various countries. The Proposer is strongly advised to have the text checked for correctness and clarity.

The Assessment Criteria for a Full Proposal are shown in Annex B.

b. External Expert Panel: The COST Office, in close cooperation with each DC, convenes for each round and each DC an External Expert Panel (EEP). The EEP typically has five members, drawn from the pool of nominated DC experts or experts from other sources, aiming to cover adequately the required expertise. The EEP members provide individual assessments of each Full Proposal, before they convene for a consensus meeting.

The EEP should not include experts drawn from the pool of nominated DC experts who were involved in the assessment of Preliminary Proposals in the current round, in order to avoid a conflict of interest.

c. The Commission Contact Person will give comments according to relevance for their Directorate and FP7 activities. Commission Contact Persons will send their possible comments to the COST Office (with a copy to DG RTD). If available, these comments will be forwarded to the members of the EEP and DC.

d. The EEP is normally coordinated by the DC chair or a member delegated by the DC ("the Convenor"). The Convenor moderates the EEP meeting.

e. The COST Office draws up a summary table of the individual EEP assessor marks; organises the consensus meeting; prepares briefing materials in consultation with the Convenor and sends these to members before the meeting; and ensures that all relevant documentation is provided at the meeting.

f. At the meeting the members consider how far each Full Proposal meets the assessment criteria, and agree on consensus marks and the recommendation to the DC for each Full Proposal. Any Proposal recommended by the EEP to the DC must be marked above the threshold of 40 points.

g. Before the meeting closes the members must agree a brief consensus report on each Full Proposal, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses. In addition, the EEP may suggest leading

experts or institutions in the relevant field for possible nomination to the Management Committee (MC) by the CNC. The Convenor presents the EEP's conclusions to the DC.

h.   Proposals marked below the threshold are normally excluded from further assessment.

i.   DC decision process: The Proposers of each Full Proposal recommended by the EEP are invited to present the Proposal to the DC (or its delegated Executive Group). Following the presentations the DC (or Executive Group) ranks the Proposals and shall document the reasons for the ranking, in particular regarding any deviations with respect to the EEP rating. The DC may suggest leading experts or institutions in the relevant field for possible nomination to the MC by the CNC.

j.   For each of the three Science Clusters, the COST Office prepares a table of DC rankings for all Full Proposals marked above the EEP threshold.

k.   The Chairs of each DC within the Cluster and the Coordinator of the TDP-SAB are then convened to a Cluster DC Chair consensus meeting to compile a final agreed ranking list of all Full Proposals in the Cluster, having regard to the suggested DC ranking list produced by the COST Office. The Cluster meetings are normally chaired by the Vice-President of the CSO.

l.   On the basis of the final ranking lists for the three Clusters, and of an overall proposal of the COST Office, the JAF group will propose a definitive list for the CSO to approve within the available funding.

m.   The COST Office will inform all the Proposers of the Full Proposals of the result of the selection process.

The envisaged timeline for the open call process is indicated in Annex H.

7 - Monitoring of Actions in progress

Monitoring of Actions in progress is the second important task of the COST DCs.

The DCs Terms of Reference state that the DC will:

- monitor the implementation of its COST Actions to ensure that the objectives as set out in their Memoranda of Understanding are met;
- ensure coordination and exchange of information, as required, as well as complementarity and synergy between its Actions as well as with relevant activities in other DCs in COST, the Community R&D programmes, EUREKA, the European Science Foundation, other European cooperative research frameworks and standardisation bodies and will appoint members of the DC as liaisons with these bodies, as appropriate;
- take account of interdisciplinarity within its domain and with other domains and of new developments in its domain;

and that the DC will give an opinion to the CSO on any proposal pertaining to one of its COST Actions and concerning:

- an extension or prolongation of an Action,

- a change of the title or a modification of the objectives of an Action, or
- contributions of other participants to an Action.

Such an opinion shall be given with full knowledge of the views of the Management Committee of the Action concerned; a decision on the proposal will then be taken by the CSO.

The DC advises the Actions assigned to its Domain with regard to the scientific and strategic aspects within the objectives as laid down in the respective MoU. During the course of the Action, the DC will encourage the MCs to enter into dialogue with international organisations or bodies such as EUREKA and CEN in order to link to industry and standardisation activities.

As soon as a new Action is approved by the CSO, the relevant DC nominates one of its members as Rapporteur. The Rapporteur of an Action is encouraged to attend MC meetings of the Action whenever it is considered necessary. He/she should not be actively involved in the Action. The Rapporteur will be on the mailing list covering all Actions' activities. He/she also receives and reads MC minutes. He/she reports to the DC about progress and problems.

In the monitoring process, the DC and its Rapporteur are assisted by the Science Officer and Grant Holder of the Action respectively.

The Monitoring of an Action in progress by the DC is based on the annual "Monitoring Progress Report" which each Action is required to provide, following the layout in Annex E, and to forward to the DC's Science Officer. The report is a "cumulative" report, i.e. it is updated annually and covers the period from the start date of the Action to the end of the current year. The entire set of progress reports of all current Actions in a given Domain is made available every year to the members of the DC. It will be listed on the COST website along with other Action documents.

The monitoring of Actions in progress by the DC is performed annually by each Domain during a joint meeting between the DC members and the MC Chairs of the Domain. This should be combined with an event presenting the scientific achievements to the scientific community and interested parties, in particular potential users of results.

When the result of the monitoring is positive, no further action is taken by the DC. If the progress of an Action is found to be unsatisfactory, or requires a revision to the original description of the activities, the DC will inform the MC Chair who will be asked to respond to the comments and take appropriate measures. Should the monitoring produce an unacceptable result, the DC will inform the CSO and recommend appropriate remedial measures, or the termination of the Action.

8 - Evaluation of completed Actions

Within 6 months of the end of an Action, the MC will prepare a final report composed of the last updated version of the progress report covering the entire period of the Action and an extended scientific report. The MC is encouraged to produce also an extended version that can be published and circulated as widely as possible, with the aim of reaching the target scientific community and the end users of the results.

The evaluation of completed Actions is the third important duty of a DC, which according to the DC's Terms of Reference "is responsible for the evaluation of its COST Actions on completion of each Action".

The basic objective of the final evaluation is to identify and describe how well the Action has reached its stated objectives, including the initiation of any follow-up activities and its impact on R&D activities in the area covered by the Action. The Action is evaluated as a whole examining the scientific results, any added value, and the coordination and management aspects. Issues relating to possible future activities should be considered in the evaluation.

The final evaluation of the Action is performed by the DC through an Evaluation Panel, which is supported by the Science Officer. The Panel comprises the DC Rapporteur, who will act as coordinator of the Panel, additional DC members and up to two external experts who may be appointed by the COST Office in consultation with the DC.

If appropriate, a representative of the European Commission may be invited to participate. The views of the European Commission, through its Contact Points involved in DCs and those of other bodies are normally taken into account by the Panel. In those cases, when it is impossible or difficult to convene a meeting of the Evaluation Panel, the final evaluation may be carried out through a written process.

The evaluation process includes:

o   Establishing an Evaluation Panel;

o   Arrangement of a final workshop or conference where the Rapporteur and preferably the external evaluators participate;

o   Submission by the MC Chair of the final report. This report and any other additional document considered useful including book of abstracts/proceedings of the final workshop or conference will be made available to the members of the Evaluation Panel, within 3 months after the final workshop/conference;

o   Evaluation Report, prepared by the Evaluation Panel according to the layout shown in Annex F. The DC Rapporteur will act as Editor of the report and will submit it to the DC at the first DC meeting after the preparation of the report;

o   Final evaluation by the DC. The DC will complete the "Final Evaluation Report" by adding remarks, if applicable, and approve it. The approved Final Evaluation Report will then be made available on the COST website and the CNCs notified accordingly;

o   A summary of the main results obtained in the Action will be prepared by the COST Office for inclusion in the COST Annual Report.

In case an Action fails to comply with this evaluation procedure the COST Office will inform the COST National Coordinators accordingly.

At the end of the penultimate year of operations, the MC of the Action will produce a revised dissemination plan as part of its annual report and present it to the DC for approval.

The Final Evaluation Report shall also cover the dissemination and exploitation of the results in line with the DC's Terms of Reference:
"The DC should take all the measures it considers necessary to ensure efficient dissemination and/or exploitation of the results of its COST Actions, in close cooperation with the relevant Management Committees."

The DC may consider the possibility of publishing its final evaluation reports and of giving them a wide circulation. Similarly, any document prepared by the DC about the activities and the results obtained in its domain, may be published and disseminated to a wider audience in order to substantially increase the visibility of COST.

The COST Office routinely publishes reports highlighting outcomes and impacts of all Actions, and other documents highlighting noteworthy achievements of COST Actions as part of its general publicity and dissemination policy.

A general COST condition is that subject to copyright and licensing arrangements, a copy of publications arising from and supported by COST (including journal articles, books and conference and workshop proceedings) are deposited in an appropriate e-print repository of the COST Office.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL

I.1	**RIGHT FOR COST?** **Is COST the best mechanism for achieving the Action's objectives?** 4. Meets all the criteria for COST. 3. Generally matches COST criteria, but some changes needed in Full Proposal (to be specified to Applicants) 2. Not really for COST; another funding instrument would be more suitable (to be specified to Applicants). 1. Completely unsuitable for COST. A SCORE OF 2 OR 1 AUTOMATICALLY TRIGGERS LOW SCORES IN THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA	yes no ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1
I.2	**SCIENCE** **Does the proposed Action address real current problems/ scientific issues?** 4. Highly exciting and interesting proposal on a very important and/or timely topic. 3. Interesting proposal on an important topic. 2. Some interesting aspects, but lacks clarity and/or coherence. 1. Serious lack of substance and/or relevance.	yes no ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1
I.3	**INNOVATION** **Is the proposed Action innovative?** 4. Highly innovative: identifies a significant new problem and/or a significant new approach. 3. Some notable innovative aspects. 2. Not very innovative: the topic is already well-studied and/or the proposal largely follows a well-trodden approach 1. Not at all innovative.	high low ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1
I.4	**IMPACT** **Would the proposed network make a significant difference in terms of knowledge, capacity building, social impacts, etc?** 4. Important impacts very likely in several respects. 3. Some notable impacts likely. 2. May be some minor impacts. 1. Unlikely to make any significant impacts.	yes no ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1
I.5	**PRESENTATION** **Is the proposed Action presented in a clear, rational and understandable way?** 4. Very clearly written; well argued; makes a compelling case. 3. Well written; the argument is easy to follow. 2. Poorly written, but with some effort the argument is clear enough 1. Poorly written, many errors, disorganised, hard to follow the argument.	yes no ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR FULL PROPOSAL

A	CRITICAL CRITERIA	
A.1	**IS THIS RIGHT FOR COST NETWORKING OF EUROPEAN NA-TIONAL RESEARCH TEAMS? Is COST the right funding mechanism for achieving the proposal's objectives?** 4. Proposal is very suitable for COST. 3. Proposal is quite suitable for COST; any defects can be easily remedied (specify in Comments). 2. Proposal is unsuitable for COST; includes ineligible or inappropriate aspects (specify in Comments). 1. Proposal is completely unsuitable for COST. A SCORE OF 2 OR 1 AUTOMATICALLY TRIGGERS REJECTION	yes no ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1
A.2	**IS THE PROPOSAL PRESENTED IN A CLEAR, CONVINCING, AND APPROPRIATE WAY?** 4. Very clearly written with compelling argument; fully appropriate format. 3. Well written; argument is easy to follow; appropriate format but may need minor changes; 2. Poorly written, but argument can be followed with effort; and/or defective format. 1. Poorly written; argument is unclear; and/or inappropriate format. A SCORE OF 2 OR 1 AUTOMATICALLY TRIGGERS REJECTION	high low ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1

Comments:

TOTAL MARK FOR SECTION A (Max 8)	

COMMENTARY ON SECTION A:
1. Weakness in either of these criteria should automatically lead to rejection. If a proposal is clearly not right for COST, then assessors should not need to spend time scoring the other boxes. The electronic assessment form should automatically fail a proposal where score 1 or 2 is given in either box.
2. **A.1 score 3**: Where specific improvements are needed, the assessment process should provide precise information about these to Proposers and COST office.
3. **A.1 score 2**: The assessment process should identify where applicants include ineligible or inappropriate aspects, so that COST guidance and publicity can be improved.
4. **A.2 score 3**: Where specific improvements are needed, the assessment process should provide precise information about these to Proposers and COST Office.

B	SCIENCE	
B.1	**Does the proposed Action address real current problems/scientific issues?** 4. Highly exciting and interesting proposal on a very important and/or timely topic. 3. Interesting proposal on an important topic. 2. Some interesting aspects, but not clearly an important or timely topic. 1. Serious lack of substance and/or relevance.	yes no ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 4 3 2 1
B.2	**Does the proposed Action show awareness of the state-of-the-art of the relevant scientific/ technical fields?** 4. Excellent and up to date awareness of relevant scientific/technical fields 3. Good awareness of relevant fields. 2. Defective awareness of relevant fields. 1. Serious lack of awareness of relevant fields.	yes no ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 4 3 2 1
B.3	**Is the proposed Action innovative?** 4. Highly innovative: identifies a significant new problem and/or a significant new approach. 3. Innovative in some notable aspects. 2. Not very innovative: the topic is already well-studied and/or the proposal largely follows a well-trodden approach. 1. Not at all innovative.	high no ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 4 3 2 1

Comments:

TOTAL MARK FOR SECTION B (Max 12)	

C	IMPACT	
A COST Action may make impacts in various valuable directions. This Action mainly aims at impacts in : (1) meeting European economic or societal needs [YES] [NO] If YES go to C.1A (2) developing the scientific or technological field [YES] [NO] If YES go to C.1B (3) both (1) and (2) [YES] [NO] If YES go to C.1C NOTE: Score only ONE of the three alternatives		
C.1A	**If the proposed Action aims primarily to meet European <u>economic or societal needs</u>, how likely is it to achieve useful impacts?** 4. Important impacts very likely in several respects. 3. Some notable impacts likely. 2. May be some minor impacts. 1. Unlikely to make useful impacts.	high low ▢▢▢▢ 4 3 2 1
C1.B	**If the proposed Action aims primarily to contribute to the development of the <u>scientific or technological field</u>, how likely is it to achieve useful impacts?** 4. Important impacts very likely in several respects. 3. Some notable impacts likely. 2. May be some minor impacts. 1. Unlikely to make useful impacts.	high low ▢▢▢▢ 4 3 2 1
C.1C	**If the proposed Action aims BOTH to meet European economic or societal needs, AND to contribute to the development of the scientific or technological field, how likely is it to achieve useful impacts?** 4. Important impacts very likely in several respects. 3. Some notable impacts likely. 2. May make some minor impacts. 1. Unlikely to make useful impacts. Comments:	high low ▢▢▢▢ 4 3 2 1
C.2	**Are there clear plans for stimulating the production of high quality outputs?** 4. Plans for outputs are clear, wide-ranging and ambitious. 3. Plans for outputs are reasonable. 2. Plans for outputs are unambitious or defective. 1. Plans for outputs are minimal or absent.	good little ▢▢▢▢ 4 3 2 1

C.3	**Is attention given to the potential application of results (including, where appropriate, fostering their commercial exploitation)?** 4. Plans for application of results are clear, wide-ranging and ambitious. 3. Plans for application of results are reasonable. 2. Plans for application of results are unambitious or defective. 1. Plans for application of results are minimal or absent.	good little ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1

Comments:

TOTAL MARK FOR SECTION C (Max 12)	

D	STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION	
D.1	**Are the work plan and organisation appropriate?** 4. Work plan and organisation make full, productive and cost-effective use of COST opportunities. 3. Work plan and organisation are reasonable. 2. Work plan and/or organisation show some defects. 1. Work plan and/or organisation are lacking or inappropriate or unclear.	very not ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1
D.2	**Are the time schedule and the setting of milestones appropriate?** 4. Schedule and milestones are well-defined and practical. 3. Schedule and milestones are reasonable. 2. Schedule and/or milestones show some defects. 1. Schedule and/or milestones are lacking or inappropriate or unclear.	very not ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1
D.3	**Are appropriate plans made for monitoring and evaluating the achievement of objectives?** 4. Monitoring and evaluation plans are well-defined and practical. 3. Monitoring and evaluation plans are reasonable. 2. Monitoring and evaluation plans show some defects. 1. Monitoring and evaluation plans are lacking or inappropriate or unclear.	good little ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1

Comments:

TOTAL MARK FOR SECTION D (Max 12)	

E	CONTRIBUTION TO WIDER COST GOALS	
E.1	**How well does the proposed Action aim to involve early stage re-searchers?** 4. Extensive and substantive plans for involving early stage researchers including the organisation of training schools, STSMs etc. 3. Reasonable and substantive plans for involving early stage re-searchers. 2. Promises to involve early stage researchers, but no substantive plans. 1. No attention given to early stage researchers.	high low ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1
E.2	**How well does the proposed Action aim at gender balance?** 4. Extensive and substantive plans for gender balance. 3. Reasonable and substantive plans for gender balance. 2. Promises to achieve gender balance, but no substantive plans. 1. No attention given to gender balance.	high low ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1
E.3	**Will the proposed Action attract interest from a wide range of European countries?** 4. Proposers reflect a wide range of countries, and the topic is likely to attract very wide interest. 3. Proposers reflect a reasonable range of countries, and the topic will attract wide interest. 2. Proposers reflect a quite narrow range of countries, and/or the topic is of quite limited interest 1. Proposers are from a narrow range of countries, and/or the topic is of only narrow interest.	yes no ☐☐☐☐ 4 3 2 1

Comments:

TOTAL MARK FOR SECTION E (Max 12)	

TOTAL MARK FOR FULL PROPOSAL (Threshold: 40 points)

F	**OVERALL RECOMMENDATION OF EEP**	
	Comments:	
	Strength of proposal	
	Weakness of proposal	
	New experts suggested by the EEP for possible nomination by the CNCs	

COST Open Call Proposal
1st stage: Preliminary Proposal

Proposer Details
Please note that proposals should come from COST Countries

For statistical purposes (mandatory):

Title: [title ▼]

Gender: [gender ▼]

Family Name: [   ]

Early-stage researcher

(less than PhD+10years):   [Yes/No ▼]

Forename: [   ]

Resubmission: [Yes/No ▼]

Year of Birth: [year ▼]

Email: [   ]

Institution: [   ]

Position   [   ]

Country: [country ▼]

Contact Address :   [   ]

Scientific Content

Proposal Title

[   ]

Abstract (max 1000 characters, approx. 150 words):

[   ]

TEMPLATE FOR PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL

Key Words (open format, max 400 characters, approx. 50 words):

Preferred COST Domain: to know more about COST Domains please click >>here<<
*if you don't find a suitable domain for your proposal or your proposal covers several domains, select "Transdomain (TD)"
in the drop-down*

Select domain""""""""""" | domain |

Text of proposal (maximum 10000 characters, approx. 1500 words):
Please use the following structure:

Background, problems. for details click >>here<<
Benefits. for details click >>here<<
Objectives, Deliverables and expected scientific impact. for details click >>here<<
Scientific programme and innovation. for details click >>here<<
Organisation. for details click >>here<<

BACKGROUND, PROBLEMS
BENEFITS
OBJECTIVES, DELIVERABLES AND EXPECTED SCIENTIFIC IMPACT
SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME AND INNOVATION
ORGANISATION

Participants interested in network (name, institution and country, maximum 2000 characters, approx. 300 words):

Name, Institution, Country

Template for Full Proposal

Introduction

In case a proposal is selected to become a COST Action, the first part of the Full Proposal, the draft Technical Annex, will become part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which is a specific formal intergovernmental document. Therefore the thorough drafting of the Full Proposal is of highest importance. The draft MoU which will be presented to the CSO for final approval consists of the Memorandum proper which is prepared by the COST Office, and the Technical Annex which is prepared by the Proposer.

Good proposals are precise, concise, formally and linguistically correct and drafted in a clear and easily understandable way.

The proposal should consist of a title page and two parts:
- Part I – the draft Technical Annex
- Part II – Additional information.

In order to help you to draft a Full Proposal that corresponds to the particular COST framework, the following guidelines – formal and content-related – have been developed. Please note that your Full Proposal may be rejected if it does not comply with these guide-lines.

The structure of Part I – draft Technical Annex – of the proposal is mandatory, while the structure of Part II – Additional Information – is a recommendation (except for the List of Experts which is mandatory and must include current contact details for each named person).

Please make sure that your proposal contains all the necessary information in parts I and II for its evaluation, which must follow this template.

General specifications on the format

- The Full Proposal has to be submitted as a word file (.doc) or a rich-text format (.rtf)
- Margins: Top 2cm, Bottom 2cm, Left 2cm, Right 2cm, Header/Footer 1.25cm
- Font type: Times New Roman
- Size: 12pts
- Font colour: black
- No font effects, underlining or background colours
- Alignment: left
- No foot notes/endnotes

Formal Instructions

Language
Make sure that the text is of high linguistic quality. COST does not provide translation or correction services. Peer reviewers, likely to come from several different countries, will assess the proposal as presented.

Spelling
Have the full document spell checked. For terms like "**A**ction", "**A**ction **C**hair", "**M**anagement **C**ommittee", "**W**orking **G**roup" etc. please use capitals.

Expression
Make sure (use "Find" function on Word/Edit) in Part I
- that neither "I" nor "we" appears in the text
- that no individual scientists or institutes are mentioned in sections C and D
- that words like "planned" or "envisaged" or "proposed" about the Action are deleted. Rather use factual words such as "will be", "this COST Action" etc.
- that no references to information contained in Part II are used (such as "see attached list of experts")
- that the indicated structure A, B, C, … is respected
- that the economic dimension is properly cited and calculated

Title Page

The Title Page must contain the following information: preliminary title of the Action and acronym if applicable; the name and contact details of the Proposer; the name and contact details of the COST National Coordinator of the proposing country and the date of the proposal. The names and contact details of the rapporteur appointed by the DC will be added by the COST Office.

Full Proposal for a new COST Action

Title

Proposer: *full coordinates incl. name of proposer, name of Institute, address, tel, fax and email*

COST National Coordinator:* *full coordinates incl. names, affiliation, address, tel, fax and email*

DC: *Domain name[*]*

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[*] *will be completed by the COST Office*

DRAFT
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
For the implementation of a European Concerted Research Action designated as

---

Title

The Parties to this "Memorandum of Understanding", declaring their common intention to participate in the concerted Action referred to above and described in the "technical Annex to the Memorandum", have reached the following understanding:

1. The Action will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of document COST 270/07 "Rules and Procedures for Implementing COST Actions", or in any new document amending or replacing it, the contents of which the Parties are fully aware of.

2. The main objective of the Action is *XX.*

3. The economic dimension of the activities carried out under the Action has been estimated, on the basis of information available during the planning of the Action, at Euro *XX* million in *XX* prices.

4. The Memorandum of Understanding will take effect on being accepted by at least five Parties.

5. The Memorandum of Understanding will remain in force for a period of *XX* years, calculated from the date of the first meeting of the Management Committee, unless the duration of the Action is modified according to the provisions of Chapter V of the document referred to in Point 1 above.

Part I - Draft Technical Annex

A. ABSTRACT

Maximum 200 words, maximum 5 keywords or very short phrases

General remark: Be very clear and precise as this section will form the basis for COST information – web site and booklets – and reporting. The Abstract should include the broader scientific context of the Action as well as the expected deliverables and benefits. It should also indicate the European added value of the Action and the reasons for undertaking it in the COST framework.

B. BACKGROUND

Maximum 2-3 pages – up to 2250 words

B.1 General background

- *Define the research topic in such a way that it is clear that the network will address real current problems or scientific issues.*
- *Inform about the wider relevance of the Action (why is it desirable to launch it as COST Action).*
- *Explain why COST, which funds only networking and capacity-building activities and not research, is the best mechanism for support. State reasons **why COST** seems to offer the appropriate framework for the Action, compared to other research frameworks such as ESF, ESA, EUREKA! or the EU Framework Programme.*
- *Describe the advantages or benefits which should arise from carrying out your project within the COST framework.*

B.2 Current state of knowledge

- *Summarise the previous research in the field of the proposal.*
- *Describe the **current state of the art**, including relevant research within the EU Framework Programmes and other EU fora, comparison of EU research with that in other parts of the world.*
- *Explain how the Action will be innovative in addressing either a new problem or a new approach to an existing problem.*

B.3 Reasons for the Action

- ***Reasons for launching the Action**, emphasising immediate and future benefits and envisaged applications (understandable for non-specialists readers!).*
- *Indicate whether the Action is mainly aimed at European economic/societal needs, or at scientific/technological advance, or both.*
- *Clearly distinguish between objectives, expected results and the means that are needed to achieve them. The impact of COST comes from concrete outcomes, not just activity; so indicate how the Action will aim for maximally productive outcomes.*

B.4 Complementarity with other research programmes (if appropriate)

- ***Relevant links** to **and complementarity** with any current and/or planned European research projects, such as ESF, FP, EUREKA! (bear in mind that avoiding duplication is one of the goals of COST)*

C. OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS
Maximum 2 pages –up to 1500 words

C.1 Main/primary objectives

Standard text as first item of this section (as this sentence will be quoted word for word in point 2 of the Memorandum proper, it should be extremely concise):

"The main objective of the Action is… *(please add*)"

- *The impact of COST comes from concrete outcomes, not just activity. Therefore indicate clearly **what should be achieved** through the Action. Given that all COST Actions are networks of scientists, the objectives should therefore clearly state the purpose of such networking, indicating - where possible - clear expected deliverables, not only research activities to be undertaken. However, if the proposed Action is of specially novel or "high risk" nature so that concrete deliverables are difficult to envisage, this should be explained clearly in the proposal.*

C.2 Secondary objectives
- ***List and explain secondary objectives** (whenever possible in quantitative terms, which will make it easier to evaluate how well the Action may achieve its goals).*

C.3 How will the objectives be achieved?
- ***Distinguish between objectives** (aims of the Action) **and means needed** (manpower, equipment, etc.) **to achieve these objectives** (avoid any reference to method and means – e.g. scientific problems to be solved as well as research tasks – as they belong to section D (Scientific programme) detailed below).*

C.4 Benefits of the Action
- *Describe expected benefits (with reference to section B).*

C.5 Target groups/end users
- *Reflect on the likely end users of the expected results.*

D. SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME

Maximum 3-4 pages – up to 3000 words

D.1   Scientific focus

- *Describe the **most important research tasks** to be coordinated by the Action.*
- *Provide a structured, but not too detailed work plan flexible enough to permit the inclusion, at the implementation stage, of disciplinary perspectives and activities not foreseen during the preparation of the proposal. Keep the framework of the Action open and flexible.*
- *Explain the human and technical **means to achieve the objectives** described in section C.*
- ***Remember that this section must be clear to non-specialists** (even if the description may be more "technical").*

D.2   Scientific work plan – methods and means

- ***Do not mention explicitly** the names of individual scientists, specific research institutions or other bodies (only exceptionally, if the Action cannot be implemented without the participation of a specific Institution, you should clearly mention this with the relevant explanation);*
  Always remember that scientists who have not participated in the preparation are also entitled to join if their countries accept the MoU.
- ***Focus on work plan and methods** of the Action and not on its organisation.*
- *If you plan Working Groups, you may mention their objectives and what they will achieve.*

E. ORGANISATION

Maximum 2 pages – up to 1500 words

*General remark: **You need not reiterate organisational features common for all COST Actions**, described in the "Rules and Procedures for Implementing COST Actions" (doc. COST 299/06). As a rule, organisational matters should be mentioned only if you intend to apply them in some specific way. In order to avoid unnecessary repetitions or contradictions, please refer to Rules and Procedures when drafting this section.*

E.1 Coordination and organisation

- *Give a clear picture of the management and organisation of the Action.*
- *Reflect the fact that a COST Action is implemented through a **concerted action**, which means that the research is carried out in and financed by the participating countries, while COST provides the necessary co-ordination.*
- *Use **organisational features common to all COST Actions**, but also allow for limited **Action-specific variations** (e.g. you may want to introduce a Steering Group, an Editorial Board, STSM manager, etc.). Consult "Rules and Procedures for implementing COST Actions". Keep in mind in particular that the Management Committee remains ultimately in charge of the Action, whilst it may arrange for particular support to it or its Chair in their tasks.*
- *Mention **milestones** – major achievements that are crucial to the future direction of the Action.*
- *Explain **how the coordination of national research will be implemented** (including the creation of possible common research teams, conferences and workshops, short-term scientific missions or other exchanges between laboratories, training schools, websites, etc.).*
- *Be aware of the **obligation to set up an Action specific website** that will not duplicate general information already available from the COST website (e.g. list of Parties, MC list, etc.) and to keep it updated: Include a plan to keep this website up to date, both to serve the needs of the participants and with the specific aim of ensuring the dissemination or exploitation of the results of the Action.*
- *As a rule, do not list names of interested research establishments and scientists.(This will be part of the Additional Information.)*

E.2 Working Groups

- *Working Groups are a useful way of extending the Action beyond the membership of the Management Committee and of sharing workloads.*
- *An Action has normally 4, but not more than 6 Working Groups.*
- *If you plan Working Groups, explain their organisation (without repeating unnecessarily the "Scientific Programme" given under Section D).*

E.3 Liaison and interaction with other research programmes

- *Address possible liaisons and interaction with other COST Actions and other European and international research programmes, such as ESF, FP, EUREKA!, etc.*
- *Indicate how these interactions will be organised: by exchange of information, meetings, by joint seminars or any other means.*

E.4 Gender balance and involvement of early-stage researchers

The following paragraph is compulsory:

"This COST Action will respect an appropriate gender balance in all its activities and the Management Committee will place this as a standard item on all its MC agendas. The Action will also be committed to considerably involve early-stage researchers. This item will also be placed as a standard item on all MC agendas."

Please add any additional support the Action plans concerning gender balance and the involvement of early-stage researchers, in particular with respect to the organisation of training schools, STSMs etc. Explain how you intend to realise capacity building.

F. TIMETABLE

Maximum ½ page – up to 500 words

- *Give a **clear picture of the timescale** of the Action and an **explicit estimate of the total duration** of the Action, preferably in the first paragraph. (This estimate will be quoted in the Memorandum proper and will determine the period for which the MoU enters into force.)*
- *Bear in mind that the normal duration of a COST Action is normally **four years**, unless there are specific cases to be approved by the CSO, on the basis of a justification provided in the proposal.*
- *Use **relative time scales** (Year 1, Year 2, etc) rather than specific years.*

G. ECONOMIC DIMENSION

Maximum ½ page – up to 500 words

General remark: *The purpose of this section is to provide an estimate of the total manpower expressed in person-years dedicated to the activities of the Action for each year and the total duration of the Action (Normally, up to 10 person-years per country: 2 per Management Committee and typically 4 Working Groups). An average of 100.000 € per scientist including overhead can normally be used as basis for the calculation. Additional expenses, such as equipment, instruments and/or infrastructure, should be added to the total. Please round up the total to the next full Million.*

"The following COST countries have actively participated in the preparation of the Action or otherwise indicated their interest: **<list of the relevant countries>.**

On the basis of national estimates, the economic dimension of the activities to be carried out under the Action has been estimated at **X** Million €for the total duration of the Action.

This estimate is valid under the assumption that all the countries mentioned above but no other countries will participate in the Action. Any departure from this will change the total cost accordingly."

H. DISSEMINATION PLAN

Maximum 2 pages – up to 1500 words

H.1 Who?

- *Identify the **target audiences** for the dissemination of the results of the Action (in particular findings and recommendations), e.g. other researchers working in the field; other research frameworks; research Institutes and Academia; Standards Bodies; industry (represented by manufacturers and service providers); European level policy makers; Government policy makers, regional planners and policy makers; general public.*

H.2 What?

- *Describe the **dissemination methods** you intend to use.*
- *For each of your audiences you may choose several of the existing possibilities, e.g.*
  - *posting of general information on a public website;*
  - *posting of working documents on a password protected website;*
  - *set up of an electronic communication network (internet discussion forum, e-mail network, etc.);*
  - *publications: state of the art reports, interim reports, case study reports, proceedings, guidelines, manuals, final reports;*
  - *events: workshops, seminars and conferences organised by the MC, contributions to other national and international conferences and symposia;*
  - *articles in peer-reviewed scientific and technical Journals;*
  - *non-technical publications.*

H.3 How?

- *Describe **how these dissemination methods will be used**.*
- *Note that dissemination goes beyond publication of results.*
- *Take into consideration the progress of the Action as well the results of its evaluation in updating the dissemination plan during the course of the Action.*

For details, see chapter 9: "Dissemination of results".

Part II – Additional Information

Maximum 10 pages

General remark: The main purpose of the second part of the proposal is to facilitate the assessment of the proposal and the nomination of National Representatives to the Management Committee (MC). This part will not be element of the MoU. To some extent, however, the information contained in it may also be useful, when the Action starts and a detailed work programme is being planned. Note that part A (List of Experts) is mandatory as the information given here is important for the later nominations to the MC.

The structure of the Additional Information is not standardised and you are at liberty to structure it in any logical way. A suggested guideline is given hereafter under the following subheadings:

A. LIST OF EXPERTS

Two lists should be submitted. The first is a list of experts who have been consulted during the drafting of the proposal and who have already expressed interest in participating in the Action. The second list, if appropriate, covers those experts who may well be interested but who have not been contacted, or who have not yet replied, during the pre-proposal planning.
Please highlight the experts that might be part of the Management Committee (give full contact details), subject to the appointment by the COST countries concerned. For the others, please list only title, institution and e-mail.

Name and title: Country: Institution:

Contact details (if appropriate):

E-mail: Telephone:

At the stage of approval of the draft MoU, remember to provide, the COST Office with a detailed updated list of potential participants in the Action for the CSO, in order to facilitate the work of the CNCs (clearly distinguishing contacted and non-contacted experts).

B. HISTORY OF THE PROPOSAL

The purpose of this section is to give the historical background of the proposal: how the idea of the COST Action was born and how the subsequent definition of the objectives and the pre-proposal planning was carried out.

C. PRELIMINARY WORK PROGRAMME

Especially if the proposal is very complex and based on participation of research teams from different fields of research interacting in a specific way, you may wish to explain how this has been envisaged, at a more concrete level than that indicated in the draft Technical Annex.

D. RECENT PUBLICATIONS

In order to make it easier to assess the scientific merits of the proposal, you may wish to compile a short list of recent scientific publications relating to the topic of the Action. If desired, you could group all the publications authored or co-authored by you as a kind of scientific self-portrait. This should be a maximum of 2 pages.

E. FURTHER REMARKS

In this subheading you may add any information or remarks but also comment on the following assessment criteria as outlined in Annex B.

- *To what extent does the proposed network aim at involving early-stage researchers?*
- *To what extent does the proposed network aim at being gender balanced?*
- *Does the number of countries the Proposers come from reflect a wide European dimension?*
- *To what extent have provisions been made for monitoring and evaluating the achievement of objectives?*
- *To what extent have provisions been made for assessing potential application, and fostering exploitation, of results?*

Checklist for Proposers of new COST Actions

Before submitting your Full Proposal, please check it against the following items:

- Confirming to the title page template given in the Template
- Respecting the formatting guidelines
- Respecting the indicated structure of the draft Technical Annex
- Presenting the text in a logical way, avoiding unnecessary repetition between the different sections
- Respecting the word limits
- Language check
- Spell check
- Use of capital letters for COST-specific and Action-related expressions; non-exhaustive list: Action, Action Chair, Management Committee, Working Group, STSM (Short-Term Scientific Mission), Steering Group, etc.
- Explaining all acronyms (including those commonly used in the Framework Programme context)
- Use of "Europe" or "COST countries" when referring to the overall geographical scope of COST. "European Union" or "EU Member States" should only be used to refer to the EU as a player ("EU legislation", "EU programmes", "EU policies" etc) or when only EU Member State(s) need to be explicitly mentioned, excluding COST countries not members of EU
- Use of "framework" or "scheme" when referring to COST (COST is an intergovernmental framework, not an "EU instrument", although it is funded by the Framework Programme)
- No mentioning of individual scientists, institutes or organisations
- Avoiding pronouns such as "I", "we"; rather use "the Action"
- Avoiding expressions such as "planned" or "proposed" when referring to the Action; rather use "aims at", "will", etc.
- Avoiding unsubstantiated "value judgements" (neutrality of research) or "overstatements" (regarding the potential/importance of the Action)
- Proper quoting of standard texts (Part A: main objectives; part E: commitment to gender balance and involvement of early-stage researchers; part G: economic dimension)
- Proper calculation of the economic dimension in part G
- Clarity and comprehensibility (also for non-specialist readers)
- Addressing all indicated items

MONITORING PROGRESS REPORT

COST
Domain Committee "   "

COST Action (*number*)

Title

MONITORING
PROGRESS REPORT

Period: *from (start date of the Action)*
to (last update)

This Report is presented to the relevant Domain Committee and contains two parts:

I. Management Report *prepared by the COST Office/Grant Holder*
II. Scientific Report *prepared by the Chair of the Management Committee of the Action*

The report is a "cumulative" report, i.e. it is updated annually and covers the entire period of the Action.

Confidentiality: the documents will be made available to the public via the COST Action web page except for chapter *II.C. Self evaluation*.

Based on the monitoring results, the COST Office will decide on the following year's budget allocation.

I. Management Report prepared by the COST Office

I.A. COST Action Fact Sheet

- **COST Action** *number - title*
- **Domain** *name*

- **Action details:**

CSO Approval: *(day/month/year)*   **End date:** *(day/month/year)*
Entry into force: *(day/month/year)*   **Extension:** *(day/month/year)*

- **Objectives** *(from DB as in About COST)*

- **Parties:** *list of countries and date of acceptance*

Austria *(date)*	Greece *(date)*	Poland *(date)*
Belgium *(date)*	Hungary *(date)*	Portugal *(date)*
Bulgaria *(date)*	Iceland *(date)*	Romania *(date)*
Croatia *(date)*	Ireland *(date)*	Serbia *(date)*
Cyprus *(date)*	Israel *(date)*	Slovakia *(date)*
Czech Rep. *(date)*	Italy *(date)*	Slovenia *(date)*
Denmark *(date)*	Latvia *(date)*	Spain *(date)*
Estonia *(date)*	Lithuania *(date)*	Sweden *(date)*
Finland *(date)*	Luxembourg *(date)*	Switzerland *(date)*
FYR of Macedonia *(date)*	Malta *(date)*	Turkey *(date)*
France *(date)*	Netherlands *(date)*	United Kingdom *(date)*
Germany *(date)*	Norway *(date)*	

- **Intentions to accept:** *list of countries and date*

- **Other participants:**
(Institution Name, Country, Town)

Chair: *(name, institution, address, phone, e-mail)*   **DC Rapporteur:** *(name, institution, address, phone, e-mail)*

Science Officer: *(name, e-mail)*   **Administrative Officer:** *(name, e-mail)*

- **Action Web site:** *http://www.*   **Grant Holder** *(name, e-mail)*

- **Working Groups** *(list of WGs and name)*

cost

I.B. Management Committee member list

Name	Country	E-mail

cost

I.C. Overview activities and expenditure

(year) Budget

Total Action Budget:
Remaining Action Commitment:

Meetings

Meeting Type	Date	Place							Cost	Total
										0

STSM

Beneficiary	Date	Place							Cost	Total
										0

Workshops

Title	Date		Place					Cost	Total
	From	To	From	To					
									0

General Support Grants

Beneficiary	Date							Cost	Total
									0

Schools

Title	Date	Place							Cost	Total
										0

Others

Action Total : **0**

II. Scientific Report *prepared by the Chair of the Management Committee of the Action*

II.A. Results achieved during the period x to y

Describe in no more than 2 pages the main results achieved, indicating the key scientific and technical outcomes of the Action compared to the international state-of-the art, and with an assessment of the results obtained compared to the objectives. Describe briefly:

- Progress with respect to the Action's work-plan, as well as potential scientific problems encountered.
- Efforts made and success achieved in involving early-stage researchers, in particular with respect to STSMs, networking activities, and Training Schools.
- Impact of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and other non-COST participants' involvement.
- STSMs (in addition, justification should be provided if less than 4 STSMs were carried out during the year).
- Synergetic activities (e.g. other Actions and Domains, Framework Programme activities, ESF, EUREKA, etc.).

Additional documentation such as extended scientific reports, proceedings of workshops, seminars or conferences may be provided separately as an annex to the annual progress report, and should be referenced in the report.

II.B. Dissemination of results

- *Action related Publications and Reports (list)*
- *Conferences, Workshops and Training Schools (list and programme)*
- *Web site (description)*
- *Scientific and Technical Cooperation*
  List briefly cooperation and contacts established with scientific institutions, with other research programmes (especially in the EU Framework programme), and with potential users.
- *Transfer of results*
  List briefly cooperation and contacts established with the Commission, with normalisation and standardisation bodies, with industry and operators.
  Provide the dissemination plan with regard to end users.
- *Contacts in the ERA*
  List the contacts, if any, with other activities in the Community R&D programmes, EUREKA, the European Science Foundation and other European cooperative research frameworks etc.

  For details, see chapter 9 - Dissemination of results

II.C. Self evaluation

Indicate in no more than 1 page what, in the opinion of the MC, were the main successes, drawbacks (if any) and the key difficulties encountered (if any).

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

COST
Domain Committee "   "

COST Action (*number*)

Title

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

The Report is prepared to the relevant Domain Committee and contains four parts:

I. Management Report *prepared by the COST Office/Grant Holder*
II. Scientific Report *prepared by the Chair of the Management Committee of the Action.*
III. Evaluation Report *prepared by the "ad hoc" Evaluation Panel established by the Domain Committee and edited by the Rapporteur.*
IV. DC Remarks *prepared by the Domain Committee*

Confidentiality: the documents will be made available to the public via the COST Action web page except for chapter *II.C. Self evaluation* and *IV. DC Remarks*

I. Management Report *prepared by the COST Office*
(see Annex E: Monitoring Progress Report)

II. Scientific Report *prepared by the Chair of the Management Committee of the*
Action. (see Annex E: Monitoring Progress Report)

III. Evaluation Report *prepared by the "ad hoc" Evaluation Panel established by*
the Domain Committee and edited by the Rapporteur

1. *Evaluation panel and evaluation procedures*

   List the members of the panel: *Title, name, affiliation, Tel., Fax, E-mail.*
   Describe briefly the evaluation activities the documents made available to and
   used by the members of the panel and the procedures followed for the evalua-
   tion.

2. *Results versus objectives*

   Describe briefly how and to what extent the results obtained match the objec-
   tives.

3. *Outcome and achievements*

   Describe the main outcome and the main achievements, and the significance of
   these, including the dissemination of results.

4. *Impact of the Action*

   Describe the importance and benefits for international science and technology.

5. *European added-value*

   Describe how the Action used the COST Framework to achieve its goal and
   what synergies and added value resulted from COST cooperation.

6. *Coordination and management*

   Describe briefly the effectiveness of coordination and management.

7. *Dissemination of results*

   Describe briefly the effectiveness of the dissemination of results.

8. *Strengths and weaknesses*

9. *Recommendations*

   Include recommendations on new Actions.

IV. DC Remarks *prepared by the Domain Committee*

DC comments on the quality of the Action. It should illustrate in 1 or 2 sentences the
"success story" (if applicable) of the Action.

OPEN CALL

European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research (COST)

COST brings together researchers and experts in different countries working on specific topics. COST does NOT fund research itself, but supports networking activities such as meetings, conferences, short term scientific exchanges and outreach activities. Currently more than 200 scientific networks (Actions) are supported.

COST invites proposals for Actions contributing to the scientific, technological, economic, cultural or societal development of Europe. Proposals playing a precursor role for other European programmes and/or initiated by early-stage researchers are especially welcome.

Developing stronger links amongst European researchers is crucial to building the European Research Area (ERA). COST stimulates new, innovative, interdisciplinary and broad research networks in Europe. COST activities are carried out by research teams to strengthen the foundations for building scientific excellence in Europe.

COST is organised in nine broad Domains (Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences; Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies; Earth System Science and Environmental Management; Food and Agriculture; Forests, their Products and Services; Individuals, Society, Culture and Health; Information and Communication Technologies; Materials, Physical and Nanosciences; Transport and Urban Development). The intended coverage of each Domain is explained at www.cost.esf.org.

Proposers are invited to locate their topic within one Domain. However, inter-disciplinary proposals not fitting readily into a single Domain are particularly welcome and will be assessed separately.

Proposals should include researchers from a minimum of five COST countries. Financial support in the range of 100.000 € p.a. for normally 4 years can be expected.

Proposals will be assessed in two stages. *Preliminary Proposals* (maximum 1500 words/3 pages), submitted using the on-line template at www.cost.esf.org/opencall should provide a brief overview of the proposal and its intended impact. Proposals not conforming to the eligibility criteria of COST (e.g. requesting research funding) will be excluded. Eligible Proposals will be assessed by the relevant Domain Committees in accordance with the published criteria at www.cost.esf.org. Proposers of selected Preliminary Proposals will be invited to submit a Full Proposal. Full Proposals will be peer reviewed according to the assessment criteria at www.cost.esf.org/opencall. The decision will normally be taken within six months of the collection date and the Actions should expect to start within three months thereafter.

The collection date for Preliminary Proposals is (*date*). Approximately (*xx*) Full Proposals will be invited for final selection of approximately (*xx*) new Actions. Full Proposals will be invited by (*date*) for submission by (*date*), with decisions expected in (*date*). The next collection date is envisaged for (*date*).

Proposers may wish to contact their national COST Coordinator (CNC) for information and guidance – see www.cost.esf.org/cnc.

Proposals must be submitted on-line to the COST Office website.

COST receives financial support for its coordinating activities from the EU RTD Framework Programme. The COST Office, administered by the European Science Foundation (ESF), acting as the implementing agent for COST, provides the scientific secretariat for COST Domains and COST Actions.
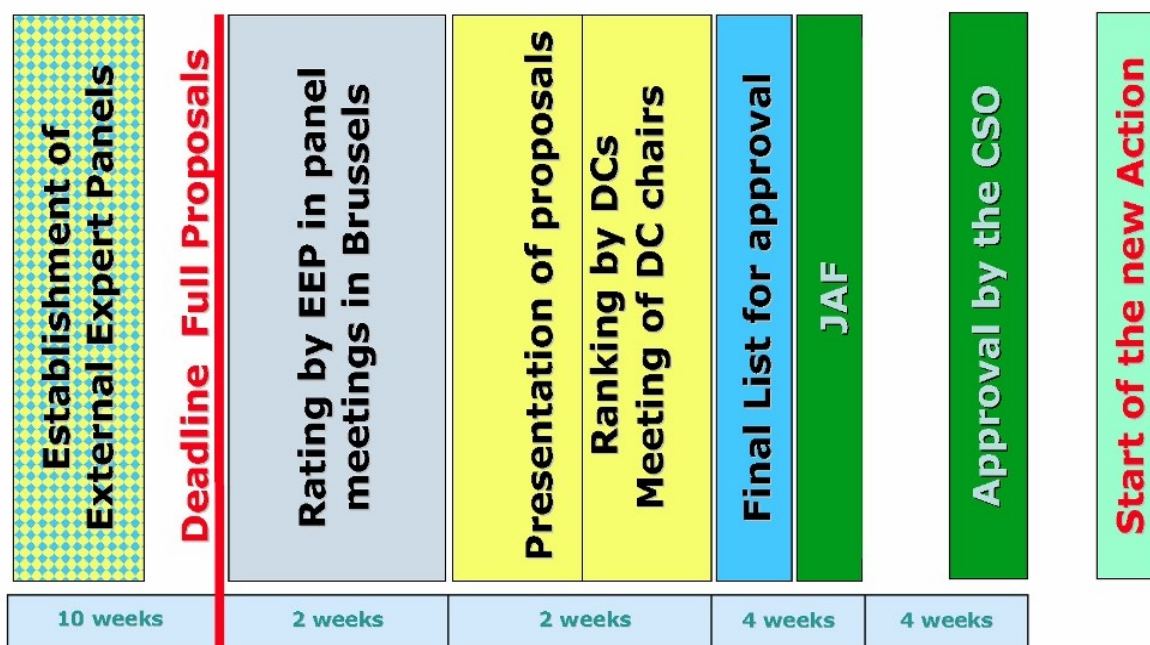

TIMELINE FOR COST OPEN CALL

Selection process – Preliminary Proposals:
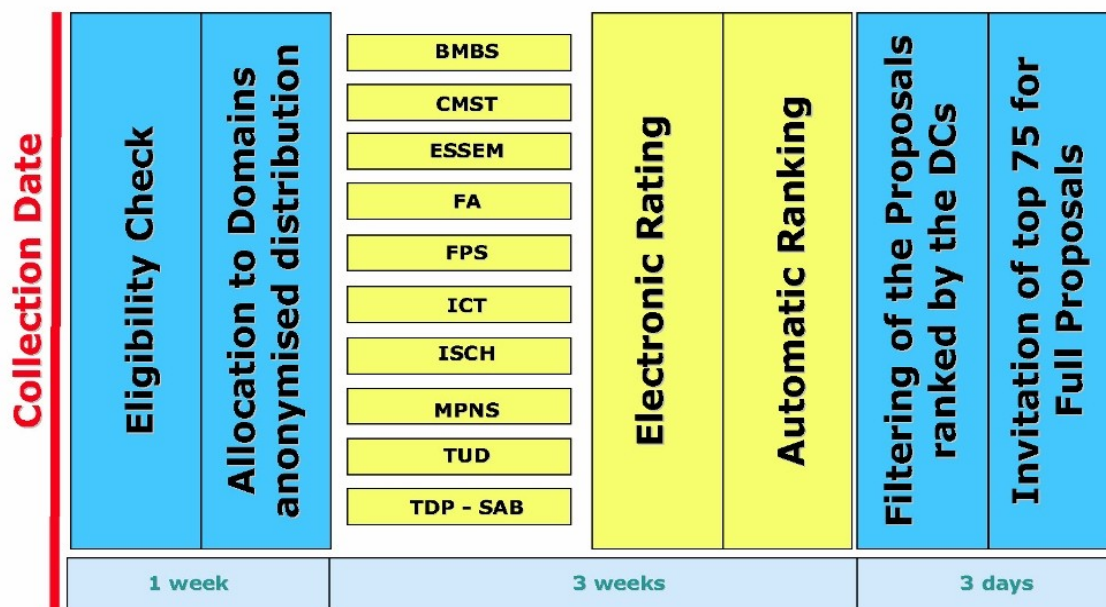
Minimum time span

Selection process – Full Proposals:

Minimum time span