



**3rd BESTPRAC – EARMA Virtual two-day meeting**

# **Managing a COST Action: experience of a grant holder**

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# COST ACTIONS

- COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding organisation for research and innovation networks.
- Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and beyond and enable researchers and innovators to grow their ideas in any science and technology field by sharing them with their peers.
- Duration: 4 years
- COST Actions do not fund research but networking (trips & stay) within the Action

# BESTPRAC: COST Targeted Network since 2014



## WHAT??

- to allow networking and exchanging financial, legal and administrative experience.
- to share and develop best practices encouraging knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer and increased efficiency in project management.
- establish a network for the administrative, finance and legal services in universities, research organizations and related entities.

## BESTPRAC in a nutshell



- 683 research administrators
- 41 countries
- 3 Working groups: Administration (WG1), Finance (WG2), Legal (WG3)
- 12 Working Group meetings held in 10 Inclusiveness Target Countries
- 7 Management Committee meetings
- 8 training schools with 248 research administrators
- 76 Short Term Scientific Missions
- 250 peer to peer presentations 15 presentations by invited experts
- 201 members in LinkedIn group
- 395 followers on Twitter
- 232 followers on Facebook

# Grant Holder – Tasks and Responsibilities

- Grant Holder is the legal entity responsible for the administrative and financial implementation of the COST Action.
- **Administrative Responsibilities:**
  - Preparation of documentation for meetings under the guidance of the Action Chair / Vice-Chair (e.g. overseeing Action MC approvals, distributing agendas, issuing invitations, drafting minutes and ensuring that all eligible participants sign the relevant attendance lists etc.)
  - Coordinating Action meetings.
  - Collecting and archiving supporting documents related to processing reimbursement claims and the associated payments;
  - Archiving all necessary Action MC decisions relating to the Action.
- **Financial responsibilities:**
  - Ensure that all payments linked to approved COST Action activities are paid in line with Action MC approvals and eligibility criteria stipulated in the present Vademecum (within 30 days after the participant's claim and no later than 45 calendar days after the date of the event).
  - Financial reporting (reimbursement forms, pay eligible participants, keep an attendance list etc.)

# What is funded by COST?

## COST Action networking tools:

- Meetings
  - Science management meetings
  - Working Group meetings
  - Scientific workshops & seminars
- Training schools
- Short Term Scientific Missions(STSMs)
- Dissemination + publications



# Eligible Expenses

## Meetings - what is eligible for reimbursement:

- Travel between home/ work and the meeting by the most economical means (arrival just before meeting, departure just after)
- Accommodation for (maximum) number of full meeting days attended + 1 (at flat rate of 120 €/ night) – MC can set a lower flat rate and/ or lower number of nights)

Example	
Meeting Days (x)	2
Reimbursement (x+1)	3
Accommodation ((x+1) * 120 eur)	360
Meals maximum ((x+2) * 2 * 20eur)	160
<b>Total Accommodation and meals</b>	<b>520</b>

- Meals – lunch and dinner

Example	Meeting Day 1	Meeting Day 2	Day after (departure day)
Lunch	Yes if departure before 12:00	Yes	Yes if arrival after 12:00
Dinner	Yes if departure before 19:00	Yes	Yes if arrival after 19:00

# Eligible Expenses Continuation

- Local transport expenses (expenses include the use of metro, local train, bus or ferry). No receipts needed for up to 25euro
- Local Car travel expenses
  - Car travel can be reimbursed at EUR 0.35 per km (limited to a maximum distance of 2 000 km for the entire journey).
  - If multiple participants, only one can claim reimbursement

# Meetings - Ineligible Expenses

- Taxi expenses.
- Parking expenses.
- Conference / registration fees (apart from Dissemination meetings – see Section 4.3. Vademecum).
- Lecture fees and honoraria.
- Accommodation, transportation, SMS costs, photograph or photocopies, postage expenses or service fees associated with obtaining visas.
- Life and medical insurance – expenses related to addressing / treating health issues.
- Luggage insurance.
- Fees, charges and/or penalties linked to a participant changing or having to rebook travel tickets.
- Additional accommodation or meal expenses, fuel expenses, carbon tax, toll charges and car rental expenses linked to car travel.
- Wi-Fi, telephone, internet, laundry and mini-bar consumption expenses.
- Printing and postage expenses.
- Regional and / or national taxation fees; stamp duty expenses.



# Challenges during implementation

- Ineligible VAT cost
- Bank Charges (sometimes more than predicted)
- Money sometimes not enough 😊
- Funding returned if not used after the end of each Granting Period

## Tips for Successful Implementation of the Action

- Dedicate one or two days per week for payments linked to COST Action activities (i.e. Meetings)
- Always advice COST Vademecum to ensure that you follow COST rules and regulations
- Contact participants for further explanation/proof documentation if needed
- Maintain good relationship and ask for advice/feedback/guideline from the dedicated COST officer
- Attend COST Academy workshops/trainings for Grant Holders  
(<https://www.cost.eu/academy/>)





THANK YOU  
FOR ATTENTION..!!