



COST ACTION CA16208 KNOWLEDGE  
CONVERSION FOR ENHANCING MANAGEMENT OF  
EUROPEAN RIPARIAN ECOSYSTEMS AND SERVICES  
(CONVERGES)



## OPEN CALL FOR SHORT-TERM SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS (STSM) APPLICATIONS

The call is now open for Grant Period 4 applications for STSMs that address the aims of the CONVERGES programme: **to establish a baseline in the state of knowledge regarding riparian vegetation across Europe, coordinate research efforts, foster new collaborations, share new techniques, contribute to knowledge conversion from science to practitioners and to COST Inclusiveness Target Countries, and to promote practitioners' research interests in the scientific community.**

In this open call it is anticipated that up to 8 STSMs will be funded.

We would particularly like to encourage applications from Early Career Investigators (i.e. An individual who is within a time span of up to 8 years from the date they obtained their PhD/doctorate) and those from EU Inclusiveness Target Countries.

STSM applications should be of short duration (between 5-90 days, or more for Early Career Investigators) and applicants can apply for a maximum of €2500 (or €3500 for Early Career Investigators). Applications are made online at [COST.EU](https://cost.eu) — an e-COST profile is required and can be created if needed.

All applications will include:

- a completed online application form;
- a short (~1 page) current CV, including any recent publications;
- a concise (1-2 pages) work plan that specifies clearly what you aim to achieve in the STSM visit (i.e. how the work would contribute to the activities of the working groups) and why you have chosen the host institution;
- a letter of agreement for your visit from the host institution, and a letter of support from your supervisor/line manager for the visit.

For further details on STSMs and requirements, please see the COST Vademecum, which can be downloaded on the COST website.

Please bear in mind Covid-19 restrictions when planning your STSM. This includes considerations around international travel, national rules that relate to Covid-19 restrictions in the host country, and all safety and sanitary requirements of the host institution. When booking travel and accommodation, please consider taking appropriate insurance and other precautions to ensure that funds are not compromised if the pandemic situation changes. The latest information in relation to COST and Covid-19 can be found on COST's dedicated Covid-19 [website](#).

The CONVERGES Grant Period 4 STSM call will remain open on a rolling basis; once STSM funds have been fully allocated, the call will close. All STSMs should be completed by 30 April 2021.

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## **COST CONVERGES STSM general information:**

### **The CONVERGES Programme**

Vegetation is a central component of riparian landscapes, and provides multiple ecosystem services. The scientific community is aware of the importance of riparian vegetation and its role in both biological and physical processes. In recent decades such importance stimulated a steadily growing number of investigations focussing on riparian vegetation. However scientific investigations in this field are proceeding as isolated initiatives that translate to common practices at a very slow rate and with limited input from the practitioners. Evidence of poor knowledge conversion at societal levels includes the marginality of riparian vegetation in EU normative assets (e.g. the Water Framework Directive) and the complete neglecting of vegetation-mediated processes in water policy debates. The limited consideration of riparian vegetation is also demonstrated by the widespread degradation of riparian forest resulting from centuries of water use and environmental pressures exerted by society on rivers. Such degradation has motivated many restoration and mitigation projects aimed at the improvement of riparian status. Many of these have failed because of scarce consideration of vegetation-mediated processes, so that public resources have been ineffectively allocated. In order to address the above-mentioned issues, this action aims to establish a baseline in the state of knowledge regarding riparian vegetation, coordinate research efforts, contribute to knowledge conversion from science to practitioners and to COST Inclusiveness Target Countries and to promote practitioners' research interests in the scientific community.

### **Goal**

STSMs (Exchange Visits) are aimed at supporting individual mobility, strengthening the existing networks and fostering collaboration between researchers by allowing scientists to go to an institution in another COST Country. Goals are to foster collaboration, to enable learning of new techniques or to allow visitors to utilise instruments and/or methods not available in their own institution. STSMs are particularly intended for young scientists (i.e. Early Career Investigators (ECI) = less than 8 years after PhD).

### **Duration**

Min 5 days, max 90 days (extended stays beyond 90 days are possible for ECI).

### **Financial support**

A STSM Grant is a contribution to the overall travel, accommodation and meal expenses of the Grantee. The calculation of the financial contribution for each STSM must respect the following criteria:

- Up to a maximum of EUR 2 500 in total can be afforded to each successful applicant;
- Up to a maximum of EUR 160 per day can be afforded for accommodation and meal expenses.

The upper limit is EUR 3 500 in total for Early Career Investigators performing a longer mission, which is between 91 and 180 calendar days. Note that the values above are maximum values. In some cases, part of the fund can be paid the first day of the STSM to help cover key expenses (for details see <http://www.cost.eu/participate>).

The applicant must precisely calculate the requested budget, taking the cost of life of the STSM destination into account. CONVERGES may reject an STSM application if the requested budget is not suited to the mission.

### **Insurance, employment, etc.**

For the period of the STSM neither the MC of the Action nor the COST Office may be considered as the employer and grantees must make their own arrangements for all health, social, personal security and pension matters.

### **Who can apply?**

The Applicant should normally be engaged in a program of research as a postgraduate student or postdoctoral fellow or be employed in an institution of a COST Country having accepted the Memorandum of Understanding of the Action. The following table indicates the types of visits possible within an STSM.

Home Institution	Host Institution
From a Participating COST Country	To another Participating COST Country
	To an approved NNC institution
	To an approved IPC institution
	To an approved EC / EU Agency / an approved European RTD Organisation or an approved International Organisation
From an approved NNC institution	To a Participating COST Country
From an approved European RTD Organisation	To a Participating COST Country

### **Who to visit?**

From a home institution in a COST participating country to a host institution in another COST participating country or to a formally approved host institution in a non-COST country (or from a formally approved home institution in a Near Neighbour country to a host institution in a COST participating country).

### **Applications**

Please complete the form at <https://e-services.cost.eu/stsm> and then send the resulting PDF (including your CV, mission statement and duration) to Rob Francis (STSM Coordinator; robert.francis[at]kcl.ac.uk). You are also encouraged to contact the Working Group leader in charge of the group to which your mission will contribute.

### **Criteria**

STSM applicants will be selected with the aim to promote scientific excellence; special attention will be paid to mainstreaming gender equality, development of collaborations with or within inclusiveness countries as defined by the COST Office, and support of Early Career Investigators. If your organization is not yet a CONVERGES member, you should contact Simon Dufour (Chair), Rennes 2 University, simon.dufour[at]univ-rennes2.fr for more information on the rules of participation.