



Open Call for Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) Grants

COST Action CA23103 Life, Liberty and Health: Ensuring Universal Protection of Human Rights at Sea (BlueRights) is offering Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) Grants for Action Participants to carry out a research visit at a host organisation located in a different country from the applicant's country of affiliation. STSMs support capacity building and the transfer of knowledge through bilateral or multilateral collaboration, including work that contributes to the objectives and deliverables of COST Action BlueRights. The grant provides a contribution to travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses, implementation of the project, delivery of the report to the COST Action MC and overall effort.

Applications can be filed until 1 September 2026 and will be assessed on a rolling basis until funds are exhausted. Applicants can expect to hear whether they have been successful within 14 days after submitting their application.

Eligibility

In order for applications to be eligible for funding, all of the following conditions need to be met:

- the applicant must be affiliated to a legal entity eligible to receive COST financial support for STSMs, including a legal entity located in a COST Full/Cooperating Member Country, a European RTD Organisation or a Near Neighbour Country (NNC);
- the applicant must already be a member of COST Action BlueRights when the application for the grant is submitted;
- the host organisation must be located in a different country from the applicant's country of affiliation;
- the proposed STSM must relate to the aim of COST Action BlueRights: that is, to assess, from a legal perspective, how human rights can be enjoyed also by people at sea and by all people at sea;
- the proposed STSM must involve specific work to be carried out by the applicant for a determined period of time;
- the STSM must contribute to one or more of the objectives, Working Groups or deliverables of COST Action BlueRights;
- the STSM must be fully completed before or on 30 September 2026;
- the applicant must provide written confirmation from the host institution agreeing to receive the applicant and confirming the proposed dates of the STSM;
- the applicant must commit to submit a report on the work carried out, the main achievements of the STSM and planned future follow-up activities, acknowledging funding by COST Action BlueRights in any resulting outputs.

How to Apply

Before applying, carefully read the [Grant Awarding User Guide](#).

Applications must be submitted online in [e-COST](#) and using the application template available for STSM Grants.

To be filled in e-COST by the applicant:

- title of the proposed STSM;

- start and end date of the STSM, within the active Grant Period and with no overlap across two consecutive Grant Periods;
- budget requested by the applicant;
- information about the host institution and the host contact person.

To be uploaded to e-COST by the applicant:

- STSM Grant Application form, describing the goals of the mission, the work to be carried out, the expected outcomes and the contribution to COST Action BlueRights;
- CV, including a list of academic publications where relevant;
- confirmation from the host institution agreeing to receive the applicant and confirming the proposed dates of the STSM;
- brief budget justification explaining the amount requested;
- any other supporting documents requested by COST Action BlueRights or by e-COST.

Incomplete applications will automatically be rejected.

Evaluation and Selection

Applications will be reviewed according to COST procedures. The Core Group of COST Action BlueRights evaluates STSM Grant applications on behalf of the Management Committee (MC).

Because this is an open call, applications will be assessed on a rolling basis against the eligibility and scientific criteria below. Applications will not be assessed comparatively against a fixed deadline cohort. Approval remains subject to budget availability.

Selection criteria:

- formal eligibility and completeness of the application, including the host confirmation letter and budget justification;
- relevance of the proposed STSM for the objectives and aims of BlueRights;
- quality, clarity and feasibility of the proposed work plan;
- contribution of the proposed STSM to one or more Working Groups, Action deliverables or MoU objectives;
- expected outputs of the STSM, including publications, working papers, blog posts, policy outputs, future grant activity or other concrete deliverables;
- added value of the proposed mobility, including the suitability of the host institution and the scope for future collaboration;
- an equitable geographical distribution of grants, taking into account the State where the applicant is based and the State where the host institution is located;
- the need to ensure as broad a participation as possible by BlueRights members: as a general rule, priority will be given to BlueRights members who have not yet received a BlueRights conference grant or STSM;
- the need to ensure an equitable distribution among members of all three Working Groups (WGs) and that the themes of all three WGs are represented;
- the need to ensure an equitable distribution of grants taking into account, in particular, gender, career stage and the type of organisation for which the applicant works;
- active participation by BlueRights members in the Action's activities, prioritising applications from BlueRights members who have actively participated in the meetings and other activities of their working group.

Important Notes

- STSM Grants may provide up to EUR 4,000.00 per grant;
- the awarded amount may be lower than requested, subject to budget availability, the number of selected applications and the reasonableness of the expenses indicated;
- the approved amount should reflect the duration and location of the STSM;

- grantees must retain receipts and evidence of all expenditures in case of audit;
- only activities fully completed and reported before the financial closure will be reimbursed;
- grants will normally be reimbursed after the STSM and only after approval of the required report and supporting documentation;
- STSM grantees may request up to 50% pre-payment of the approved grant, subject to availability of funds and approval by the Grant Holder Institution;
- the grantee must submit a report to the Action MC on the work developed, the main achievements of the STSM and planned future follow-up activities;
- the host institution may be asked to confirm that the STSM has been completed and that the planned work was carried out;
- grantees must duly acknowledge BlueRights funding in any output made in relation to the STSM, including presentations, articles, book chapters, blog posts, policy outputs and social media posts.

Important Dates

- Deadline for applications: any time until 1 September 2026, or earlier if funds are exhausted
- Notification of Results: within 14 days after submission of the application
- Acceptance of grant: within 7 days following notification of results
- STSM to be completed by 30 September 2026
- Submit all relevant documents through e-COST: within 30 days after the end of the STSM and at the latest by 10 October 2026

Key Contacts

Short-Term Scientific Mission Officer of COST Action BlueRights:
Dr Reece Lewis (LewisR74@cardiff.ac.uk).

Further Information

Annotated Rules for COST Actions (see Annex 2 for STSM Grants):

https://www.cost.eu/Annotated_Rules_for_COST_Actions_C

Grant Awarding User Guide: https://www.cost.eu/grants_userguide

e-COST Platform Guide:

<https://rise.articulate.com/share/BrjGlalM0EuVkXk7uFzzpC4nkLXJtaA2#/lessons/X2hdnJQ6qttpNCm0rc5NBvC77G8luKXH>

FAQs (see section Mobility of researchers and innovators and presentations at conferences organised by 3rd parties): <https://www.cost.eu/cost-actions/annotated-rules-qa/>

Dissemination

This call will be published on the BlueRights website and shared via the Action's social media channels. For visibility purposes, applicants are encouraged to share news of successful applications, tagging BlueRights.