

## COST Action CA24131

### European Network for Radiation-Detection-based Research and Innovation addressing increasing societal Challenges - ENRICH

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Call for applications for Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSM)

**Deadline for applications: 31th March 2026**

**STSMs must be completed by 30th September 2026**

**The first call for applications for Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSM), with implementation possible until 30th September 2026, is now open.**

STSM support international mobility by enabling Action participants - especially early-career researchers - to undertake short research visits abroad, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange. Funding is provided for visits to host institutions to gain new expertise or access facilities not available at the home institution.

Applicants must have an e-COST profile and submit their application online via e-COST, outlining objectives, planned work, expected outcomes, and the contribution to ENRICH.

#### **1. About the ENRICH COST Action CA24131**

**The ENRICH (European Network for Radiation-Detection-based Research and Innovation addressing increasing societal CHallenges) COST Action** aims to establish a strong European network of researchers and stakeholders engaged in radiation-detection experiments and applications.

Photon detection is a daily tool for many researchers across fields such as astrophysics, nuclear and atomic physics, materials science, data analysis, simulations, detector development, electronics, optics, medicine and biophysics, cultural heritage, food safety,

fraud detection, and beyond. Despite this broad use, the community remains highly fragmented, with sub-communities (for example, nuclear physics and synchrotron users) often operating in isolation. This fragmentation hinders knowledge exchange and limits the transfer of technologies from large-scale research infrastructures to smaller laboratories and industry.

**ENRICH aims to bring together these diverse communities, fostering cross-sector and cross-disciplinary collaboration to accelerate scientific progress and technological innovation in radiation detection.**

A primary focus of the collaboration will be to address key scientific and technological challenges in radiation detection across a broad range of disciplines, including fundamental, nuclear, and astrophysics, data analysis and simulations, detector and electronics development, optics, and X- and gamma-ray spectroscopy and imaging, with applications extending to medicine, materials science, cultural heritage, food safety, and security-related detection.

Beyond scientific impact, ENRICH's activities will strengthen Europe's industrial competitiveness by contributing to solutions for major societal and technological challenges, including energy autonomy, food security, and faster medical diagnostics. Meeting these challenges requires advances in analytical sciences, where radiation-based technologies play a pivotal role across many domains of science and society.

The **CA24131** is structured around seven Working Groups (WGs), each addressing a specific set of objectives:

**WG1: Community Coordination:** Focuses on activities that enhance the quality of the Action and expand community participation.

**WG2: Technological Advancement:** Addresses activities aimed at driving technological progress with impact across a wide range of applications.

**WG3: Software Advancement:** Concentrates on the development of new software tools and the establishment of common standards for the community.

**WG4: Electronics and Data Acquisition:** Targets the advancement of photon-detection readout electronics beyond the current state of the art, with the goal of improving energy, spatial, and timing resolution while reducing system size and cost.

**WG5: Multidisciplinary and Societal Applications:** Covers activities related to multidisciplinary use cases, with particular emphasis on applications addressing the societal challenges targeted by the Action.

**WG6: Integration and Interchange:** Ensures that all ENRICH activities (such as meetings, workshops, and schools) are accessible to the entire community, while also supporting funding acquisition. This WG operates throughout the full duration of the Action and is continuously updated to support its success.

**WG7: Mentoring, Training, and Dissemination:** Focuses on mentoring and training activities - especially for early-career researchers - and on disseminating ENRICH outcomes to both specialist audiences and the general public.

More details in [CA24131](#)

## 2. What is STSM (Short-Term Scientific Mission)

A **Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM)** is a funded research visit by a researcher or innovator to a host institution in another country, carried out for a defined period and focused on a specific scientific task. During the mission, the grantee works within an international team and gains new expertise, methods, or access to facilities, equipment, or techniques that are not available at their home institution.

STSMs are a core instrument of **EU COST Actions** and play a key role in strengthening international collaboration.

## 3. Who can apply

STSM applicants must be enrolled in an official research programme as a **student/PhD student or postdoctoral fellow, or be employed by or formally affiliated with an institution, organization, or legal entity with a clear research mandate, located in a COST Full or Cooperating Member Country or in a Near Neighbour Country (NNC)**. The list of COST countries is available here: [Annex-I-level-A-Country-and-Organisations-Table-Version-1.7.pdf](#). The applicant must be actively involved in the ENRICH Cost Action and the proposed STSM must clearly contribute to the scientific objectives of the Action.

**The nationality and the age of the applicant are not criteria for eligibility.**

The institution where the applicant conducts their main research activity is considered the **Home Institution**. The **Host Institution** is the institution or organization that will receive and host the applicant during the STSM and can be **any legal entity anywhere in the world**. Both the Home Institution and the Host Institution must be located in **different countries**.

#### 4. Financial support

An **STSM Grant** is a **fixed financial contribution** provided to support researchers participating in a Short-Term Scientific Mission. The grant amount is determined based on the applicant's budget request and the evaluation of the STSM application. It is intended as a contribution toward travel, accommodation, meals, and other mission-related expenses (ex. conference fee, cancellation insurance), and may not cover all costs associated with the STSM. **No invoices are required.**

Key points about the STSM financial support:

- **Grant duration:** There is no minimum or maximum duration specified, but each STSM mission must be carried out entirely within one **Grant Period** (runs from the 16 October 2025 until the 15 October of the following year).
- **Grant amount:** Up to **EUR 4,000** per successful applicant. Applicants should provide a budget reflecting the **duration and location** of their mission. The final amount is decided by the Action Management Committee and Grant Holder, based on the recommendation of the Grant Evaluation Committee.
- **Country-specific rates:** Accommodation and meal rates will be approved taking into account the cost of living in the host country.
- **Employment status:** Neither the COST Association nor the Grant Holder acts as the employer of the STSM grantee (unless it is in alignment with the Action deliverables in the latter case). Grantees are responsible for their own personal security, health, taxation, social security, and pension arrangements.
- **Payment procedure:** Grants are paid by the Grant Holder **after completion of the STSM activity** and **approval of all required reports and documentation**.
- **Pre-payment for ITC researchers:** Researchers from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) may request a **50% pre-payment** of the STSM grant after completing the first day of their mission. The Host Institution must confirm the start of the STSM by email

before the pre-payment is issued. The remaining 50% is paid upon completion of the STSM and submission of all required documentation.

Before applying, candidates should consult **Annex 2 of the Annotated Rules for COST Actions** for further guidance: [COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V3.0-25-IX-2025.pdf](#).

## 5. How to apply

To submit an STSM application, applicants must have an **e-COST profile**. The application process involves the following steps:

1. **Log into e-COST** and click on the *My Grant Applications* tab, and encode a new application, clicking on *Apply for a grant*.
2. Fill the **Grant Application** ([STSM GA link](#)) including
  - grant title for the mission that communicates the content and purpose of the work
  - grant period (no overlap across two consecutive grant periods)
  - grant amount requested
  - basic information about the host institution and contact person
3. Attach following **supporting documents**:
  - **Application Form** describing STSM goals, description of the activities to be carried out by the applicant, expected results (outcomes) and description of the contribution to the Action MoU objectives ([template STSM application](#)).
  - **Confirmation from the Host Institution** of its willingness to receive the applicant ([template STSM host approval](#)). A scanned copy with a handwritten signature or a document with an electronic signature is accepted. Before submitting the application, the applicant must secure written agreement from the host scientist. The host and applicant should mutually agree on the objectives and content of the planned STSM.
  - **Curriculum Vitae** of applicant, *1\_Lastname\_Firstname\_CV applicant.pdf*
  - **Letter of motivation** from the applicant (maximum 1 page), explaining how the STSM will contribute to the ENRICH CA24131 objectives and support the grantee's career development. Applicant should also indicate the COST

Action Working Group to which this STSM is related,  
*2\_Lastname\_Firstname\_Letter\_of\_motivation.pdf*

- **Full work plan** (two pages maximum),  
*3\_Lastname\_Firstname\_workplan.pdf*
- **Requested budget and its justification** including total expected cost for travel, accommodation and daily allowance, additional financial support following COST rules (maximum 1 page). Also indicate the amount of support already received from other sources,  
*4\_Lastname\_Firstname\_Budget.pdf*
- **Support letter from the Home Institution** required for **students/PhD students**, *5\_Lastname\_Firstname\_Support\_Letter.pdf*

4. Submit the **Grant Application with supporting documents**. Once submitted, the application status will change from *draft* to *submitted*. Before the application is approved, the applicant may revise it if necessary.

If any documents cannot be uploaded, send them directly to:

**Grant Awarding Coordinator:** Magdalena Skurzok, [magdalena.skurzok@uj.edu.pl](mailto:magdalena.skurzok@uj.edu.pl)

**Chair of the COST Action:** Alessandro Scordo, [alessandro.scordo@Inf.infn.it](mailto:alessandro.scordo@Inf.infn.it)

## 6. How the evaluation proceeds

When the Grant Application is submitted, the Grant Awarding Coordinator (GAC), CA Chair, and Vice Chair are notified. The Grant Evaluation Committee (GEC), consisting of seven members including the GAC and nominated by the Management Committee (MC), is authorized to review Grant Applications. To ensure efficiency, all applications will first undergo a screening by the GAC. Applications that are incomplete may be rejected, but applicants will have the opportunity to resubmit. **Applications that are irrelevant to the Action's objectives will be rejected and cannot be resubmitted.** Then the members of the **GEC will evaluate the eligible applications** according to **the criteria (shown below)** and submit proposals for selected grants and their amounts to the GAC **within 14 days after the STSMs call deadline**. Each application must be evaluated by at least four GEC members. The GAC convenes a meeting of the GEC to rank all evaluations and then informs the Management Committee and the Core Group (CG) about the approved grants. If an application is rejected, a justification must be provided to the applicant (the e-notification will be sent). The GAC will

notify the Grant Holder (GH) of the proposals approved following evaluation. The grantee will then receive a **Grant Letter Notification** (aby email) from the GH confirming the official approval of the STSM application, the awarded budget, and including a payment request form to be completed upon completion of the STSM in order to receive the grant. The Grant Letter also outlines the rights and responsibilities of both the grantee and the GH. STSM applicants should not book anything (e.g., transportation or accommodation) before receiving confirmation through a Grant Letter. **The final evaluation outcome is announced within one month after the submission deadline.**

Applications will be **evaluated based on several key factors**, including:

- The complementarity between the applicant and the host group.
- The scientific quality and excellence of the proposed research.
- The relevance of the proposed work plan to the objectives of the ENRICH and its Working Groups.
- The expected impact on the grantee's career development.
- The potential to support new collaborations.

**Special attention will be given to supporting COST policies, including promoting gender balance, enabling Early Career Investigators (ECIs), and encouraging participation from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs), while broadening geographical inclusiveness.**

### **Evaluation criteria**

Each proposal is assigned an evaluation score based on clarity, relevance to the ENRICH CA, feasibility, planning, and expected outcomes. Scores range from 0 to 5. The evaluation criteria are given in the table below. The first criterion (a) is assessed by the GAC prior to the evaluation process.

Criterion	Scoring
<b>1. Before any further criteria are considered</b>	
1.1 Application is complete and fulfils all formal requirements (proper documents attached, fitting ENRICH CA)	pass/no pass
<b>2. Evaluation of the proposal</b>	
2.1 Motivation letter	Convincing Y/N
2.2 Applicant is Young Researcher	0 or 5
2.3 Impact on the career of the application	0 - 5
2.4 Complementary between the applicant and the host group	0 - 5
2.5 Multidisciplinary or interdisciplinarity of the proposal	0 - 5
2.6 Alignment of the Applicant's CV with the STSM work	0 - 5
2.7 Scientific Quality and Relevance to the objectives of ENRICH Action	0 - 5
2.8 Creation of a new collaborations within ENRICH partners	0 - 5
2.9 Budget justification (accommodation, travel, subsistence, others, cofinancing from other sources)	Convincing Y/N

The basis for a positive assessment of the application is obtaining **at least 2 points in each criterion** (except 2.2).

## 7. Grant settlement

The grantee will receive automatic reminders to upload the report **1 day and 10 days** after the end of the grant. The report must be submitted **within 30 days after the end date of the activity** or **15 days after the end of the Grant Period, whichever date comes first**.

An e-notification requesting submission of the report and supporting documents will be sent to the grantee via e-COST, with the Grant Holder manager and the Grant Awarding Coordinator in the copy of notification.

To settle the grant the grantee must complete the following documents:

1. **Log into e-COST** and fill the **STSM Report** ([template STSM report](#)) including
  - short description of the performed activities
  - main achievements of the STSM and planned future follow-up activities
2. Attach following **supporting documents**:
  - **Host Institution approval letter** (free format),  
*1\_Lastname\_Firstname\_Host\_approval\_letter\_applicant.pdf*
  - **Scientific Report** with more detailed description of the work including
    - the background, a comprehensive description of the work carried out, and the main scientific results,
    - the impact of the visit on the grantee's professional development, networking activities, and capacity building (e.g. establishment of collaborations),
    - expected publications or articles resulting from the STSM, where applicable,
    - evidence of the stay, such as a photograph of the grantee working at the host institution and a photograph with collaborators, which may be used on the Action's website and social media channels.

**The summary of the report will be published on the ENRICH website.**

Once the documents are submitted, the GAC is notified and verifies the validity and content of the documentation by accessing the link provided in the notification. Following the review procedures agreed by the MC, the GAC records the approval or rejection of the report on behalf of the MC. After the payment is recorded, an e-notification is sent to the grantee, with a copy to the GH manager.

## **Acknowledgement of ENRICH COST Support**

Any publication resulting from an STSM must acknowledge COST support as follows:

*Part of this work was supported by the COST Action 'European Network for radiation-detection based Research and Innovation addressing increasing societal CHallenges (ENRICH) – CA24131'.*

If the results are presented at a conference or event, the **COST logo** must be displayed and the **ENRICH Action CA24131** must be acknowledged. Whenever possible, the COST and ENRICH Action logos should also be used on slides and posters.

## **8. More information**

COST Action webpage: [CA24131](#)

Online Application Form: [STSM GrantApplication](#)

Report form: [template STSM report](#)

COST Annotated Rules: [COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-V3.0-25-IX-2025.pdf](#)

Grant Awarding User Guide: [COST-Grant-Awarding-user-guide.pdf](#)

Other COST documents: [documents-guidelines](#)

For further information, you may contact the Grant Awarding Coordinator

**Magdalena Skurzok**, [magdalena.skurzok@uj.edu.pl](mailto:magdalenaskurzok@uj.edu.pl).