



COST Action CA19120

“WATER isotopes in the critical zONE: from groundwater recharge to plant transpiration” (WATSON)

VIRTUAL MOBILITY GRANT - Application procedure

Objectives / description

Virtual Mobility grants (VM) enable researchers to strengthen existing networks by allowing individual participants to foster collaboration, exchange knowledge, learn new techniques or participate in other activities that do not require in-person presence.

The aim of the virtual mobility grant is to facilitate collaborations with research groups involved in the WATSON Action, with a mutual benefit towards joint publications (acknowledging WATSON and the COST program) and the perspective of attracting additional funding. **A VM should specifically contribute to the objectives of at least one of the Action Working Groups (WG).** Applicants are encouraged to contact WG leaders prior to application to familiarize themselves with the priorities of each WG and to maximize the benefits of the VM. VMs do not fund exchanges between two institutions within the same country. VM grants (as all COST funds) cannot be spent on the preparation of proposals for funding from any source.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for reimbursement, the applicant must be engaged in an official research programme as a PhD Student or postdoctoral fellow, or be employed by, or affiliated to, an institution, organisation or legal entity which performs research related to WATSON and actively contributes to fulfilment of its main objectives.

Young Researchers (i.e., less than 40 years old) and/or come from less research-intensive COST Member Countries and Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs; <https://www.cost.eu/who-we-are/members/>) are particularly encouraged to apply.

Number of supported applicants and timeframe

Up to four applicants for a VM can be supported. Applicants can apply for the third call until **1st August 2022**. All VM applications will be evaluated within 21 days following the deadline of the respective call. The **first possible starting date** for the VM of the third call is **1st September 2022**. All VMs supported in the third call **need to be completed by 1st October 2022**.

Each VM grant is a maximum of 1500 EUR. The grant will be paid based on approval of a final report that needs to be submitted by the scientist supported by VM.

Application process

A VM applicant is required to prepare and submit:

- Application form including:
 - . Short description and motivation for the mission (max 1 page)
 - . Mission schedule (table)
 - . Relevance to overall WATSON COST objectives and WG activities (~1/2 page)
 - . Expected outcome (~1/2 page)
- Support letter from the host institute.
- Support letter of the home institute if the applicant is a PhD student or post-doctoral fellow.
- Short Curriculum Vitae.

All documents must be sent by email to the STSM and VM coordinator Dr Tamara Jakovljević (tamaraj@sumins.hr) and vice coordinator Dr Pilar Llorens (pilar.llorens@idaea.csic.es) before the deadline. The applicant should **also upload all necessary documentation via the E-Cost system**. As stated above, preliminary contact with the WG leader is strongly recommended.

Selection of applicants

The selection of successful VM applications is based on the scientific scope of the proposed mission, and how the mission supports WATSON in achieving its scientific objectives. Priority will be given to projects supporting the development of new collaborations between the applicant and host and young researchers (i.e., less than 40 years old) and/or researchers from less research-intensive COST Member Countries and Inclusiveness Target Countries. Gender balance and the distribution of VMs among different working groups (WGs) will be considered as well.

Reporting and grant payment

After selection, the grantee will receive an acceptance letter with information about the level of the financial support. The grantee has to return this acceptance letter with his/her signature prior to the start of the mission. The grantee will receive a payment request form at the same time.

After completion of the VM, the grantee is required to submit a short scientific report to the VM coordinators within **30 days after** VM has been completed, or by October 15 if this is earlier.

This report should contain the following information:

- Work carried out during the VM (including timeline)
- Main achievements of the VM, with the description of the main results obtained and expected publications/articles
- Planned future follow up (future work and/or collaboration if any)
- Confirmation by the host institute of the successful execution of the mission (with signature of the local supervisor and/or head of the Department).

Grantees are also required to send a picture and a short description of the virtual mobility (one sentence statement or a blog post) to be published on the WATSON Web page.

Upon approval of the scientific report by the VM coordinators and the Action Chair, the grant will be paid directly to the grantee.

Please see the Annotated Rules for COST Actions for more information:

<https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2021/10/COST-094-21-Annotated-Rules-for-COST-Actions-Level-C-2021-11-01-1.pdf>