

WATSON VIRTUAL MOBILITY GRANT- APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Virtual Mobility grant (VM) should contribute directly to the scientific objectives of WATSON. They are a chance for researchers to strengthen the existing networks by allowing individual participants to foster collaboration, exchange knowledge, learn new techniques etc., performing activities that do not require in-person presence.

The aim of the mobility is to facilitate valuable collaborations with research groups involved in WATSON with 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 Working Groups (WG) within WATSON.** Applicants are encouraged to contact WG leaders prior to application to be familiarized with priorities of each WG to maximize benefits of VM. VMs do not fund exchanges between two institutions within the same country. VM grants (i.e., as COST funds) cannot be spent on the preparation of proposals for funding from any source.

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

VM applicants who are **Early Career Investigators (ECIs,** i.e., less than date of PhD + 8 years) and/or come from less research-intensive COST Member Countries and inclusiveness target countries (ITCs; see countries in green here: <https://www.cost.eu/who-we-are/members/>) are particularly encouraged to apply. The selection of successful VM applicants considers the **scientific scope of the proposed mission and how the mission can support WATSON in achieving its scientific objectives.** Priority will be given to ECIs and to **projects supporting the development of new collaborations between applicant and host supervisor.**

Number of supported applicants: for the first period, **up to six applicants** for a VM will be supported across the call. All VM applications will be evaluated within **21 days** following the deadline of the respective call. All VM need to be completed **before 1 October of each year.**

Duration and financial support for eligible VM participants. A each VM grant has a maximum of 1500 EUR per grant. The grant will be paid based on approval of a final report prepared by the scientist supported by VM.

Application and evaluation process. A VM applicant is required to prepare:

- Application form.
- Motivation letter detailing relevance of proposal to WATSON and the expected outputs.
- Work plan 1-2 pages, maximum of 1000 words excluding references, in English. The outline must be approved by signature by the applicant and the host at the end of the document.
- Support letter of the host institution.

- Support letter of the home institution.
- Curriculum Vitae with list of publications.

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 of the current call.. As stated above, preliminary contact with the appropriate WG leader is strongly recommended.

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Eligibility and quality of the proposal and relevance of the suggested activities of WATSON.
- Even distribution of VMs among different working groups (WG).
- Compliance with COST guidelines with regard to geographical inclusiveness, gender balance.
- Priority to support ECIs.

Upon acceptance, the grantee will receive an acceptance letter informing about the level of the financial grant given. The grantee has to return this acceptance letter with his/her signature prior to the mission. The grantee will receive a payment request form at the same time.

After the VM: Reporting and grant payment. After completion of the VM, the grantee is required to **submit a short scientific report to the VM coordinators within 4 weeks**. This report should contain the following information:

- Purpose of the visit and description of the work carried out during the visit, indicating the first and the last day of the VM;
- Description of the main results obtained and projected publications/articles and any future work/collaboration (if applicable);
- Confirmation by the host institute of the successful execution of the mission (with signature of the local supervisor and/or head of the Department).

Upon approval of the scientific report by the VM coordinators and the Action Chair, the grant will be paid directly to the grantee or the organizing institute as requested in the application.

For more details please see new Vademecum available on.

<https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Vademecum-V9-28-April-20212-1.pdf>