

## **New opportunities for COST participants – actions networking tools and examples of the national funding schemes**

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As the oldest intergovernmental funding organization in Europe COST (the European Cooperation in Science and Technology) facilitates networking among academics and innovators in order to increase Europe's ability to address scientific, technical, and societal concerns (Marinković and Mijić 2022). According to the study (Seeber et al., 2022a), participation in COST program considerably increases researchers' scientific co-publications, therefore advancing their professional careers. The findings demonstrate a 55% average increase in co-publications among active COST action participants as compared to the proposed network of the researchers of non-founded actions. This increase in collaborative co-publications is not at the expense of non-collaborative ones, resulting in a net gain in scientific production. Keeping in mind that the impact of the actions lasts beyond their lifetime, involvement in COST networking activities significantly improves researchers' productions and experience thus increasing their capacity for long-term collaborations (Seeber et al., 2022b). This is especially important for early-career researchers, as around 42% of COST action members in 2023 are young researchers. (Mijić and Marinković, 2024a).

Over the last several years running the COST action have become more and more competitive (Mijić and Marinković, 2024b). The reported success rate of the action proposals for the last open call OC-2023-1 was 11.5%. Since there is a clear benefit of scientific community involved in research network, several European countries established additional national funding to support research projects originating from successful ongoing COST Actions.

In this study, within proposed mini-project, we will discuss the new opportunities for COST participants through the actions networking tools focusing on young researchers' and ITC (Inclusiveness Target Countries) conference grants entering into force in November 2024. In addition, new technical annex, evaluation grid and introduction of the acceptability criterion for new action proposal will be demonstrated. Finally, the existing opportunities for additional funding of research projects originating from COST actions will be introduced. The recent experience

and good practices of national funding schemes for COST participants in several countries will be presented together with available funding support for COST related projects in Switzerland which include project partners abroad.

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