Third Open Call for

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)

and Virtual Mobility (VM)

Grant Period

March 2023 – October 2023

The main aim and objective of the Action CA20128 "Promoting Innovation of ferMENTed fOods" (PIMENTO) is to federate and structure the scientific community working on **Fermented Foods**, building a multi-stakeholder vision and a transdisciplinary perspective. The long-term vision of PIMENTO is to place Europe at the spearhead of Fermented Foods, promoting health, sustainability, regional diversity, and innovation.

Funding provided by COST, supports, among others, mobility of researchers and innovators through Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) and Virtual Mobility (VM) grants.

The grant awarding by COST Actions and its implementation
• Contributes to the visibility of COST as an open, flexible, and inclusive funding programme;
• Offers a valuable experience for Young Researchers and Innovators as well as for the already established researchers in supporting their career development;
• Can strengthen the existing networks by allowing researchers and innovators to foster collaboration both in a face-to-face and virtual setting, to exchange knowledge, learn new techniques, disseminate the Action results, etc.

These opportunities are open to all members of PIMENTO (students / professors / researchers). Eligibility for the STSM's and reimbursement scheme are described in the Annotated Rules for COST Actions. The topics and places of STSM's for the current grant period are available in the **STSM/VM Register** attached. Only one topic application is allowed per member at one time. This call will stay **CONTINUOUSLY OPEN** and selection of candidates will follow the method "**first-in-first-evaluated**", until the end of the allocated budget or the grant period.

We are also keeping continuously open the expressions of **interest to host** STSM. Please fill **HOST Form** which will be forwarded to the Grant Awarding Coordinator and approved by the CA PIMENTO Assessment Committee.

What is STSM and VM?

Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) consists in a visit to a host organization located in a different country than the country of affiliation by a researcher or innovator for a specific work to be carried out and for a determined period. The aim is to strengthen the existing networks and foster collaborations with other institutions.

Short-Term Scientific Missions **benefit to**:
• **STSM Grantee**: receives funding for implementing a project with an international team and gains new
knowledge or access to equipment or techniques not available in the home institution;
• **STSM Host**: receives an international partner in their institution and can develop long lasting collaboration.

STSMs in PIMENTO intend to contribute to the scientific objectives and deliverables of the COST action, while providing mission participants with the opportunity to establish long-term collaborations with an international team and gain new knowledge or access to equipment or techniques not available in the home institution/organisation.

Specific tasks defined for each working group and mainly support the collective analysis or synthesis of the data collected in each WG based on the current progress of the current work:
• WG2 about the cartography of Fermented Foods and Food Frequency Questionnaire;
• WG3 health benefits analysis of Fermented Foods;
• WG4 analysis of the questionnaire dedicated to the needs and feeds from European companies.

STSMs will boost the work activities of WG2, WG3 and WG4 to meet deadlines of deliverables and progress quickly.
Outputs: The list of achieved deliverables and a short presentation report of the STSM will be placed on the CA PIMENTO website https://fermentedfoods.eu/ and the on-line newsletter.

Virtual Mobility (VM) consists of a collaboration in a virtual setting among researchers or innovators within the COST Action, to exchange knowledge, learn new techniques, etc.

Virtual Mobilities **benefit to**:
• **COST Action**: uses a flexible tool to implement virtual activities inside the network, achieve the MoU objectives and significantly increase their impact and reach. Contributes to European leadership in knowledge creation and increasing its innovation potential;
• **VM grantee**: develop(s) capacity in virtual collaboration and networking in a pan-European framework.

VMs in PIMENTO intend to contribute to the scientific objectives and deliverables of the COST action, while providing virtual mobility of participants especially focus on teaching systematic reviews to all members of WG3 and translation activities and analysing the first dataset related to Food Frequency Questionnaire resulted from WG2 activities.
Outputs: The list of achieved deliverables and a short presentation report of the VM will be placed on the CA PIMENTO website https://fermentedfoods.eu/ and the on-line newsletter.

Who is eligible?

An **STSM applicant** and a **VM applicant** can be any person affiliated with a legal entity located in a COST Full or Cooperating Member or a Near Neighbour Country or a European RTD Organisation. The applicant must have an e-COST profile.

See also the section 6.4 "Eligibility to receive financial support" in the Annotated Rules for COST Actions for further details.

Applicants are invited to apply to one of the proposed topics related to specific Working Group (WG) objectives.

WG	Title	Leader and Co-Leader
1	Build a multi-actor operational network	*TBA*
2	Cartography of Fermented Foods in the diet of COST Countries	Prof Effie TSAKALIDOU
3	Health benefits and risks of fermented foods	Dr Guy VERGERES
4	WG4	Dr Marie Christine CHAMPOMIER VERGÈS
5	Dissemination, training & events	Dr Vittorio CAPOZZI

How to apply for STSM and VM grants?

Applications are submitted online in e-COST using dedicated forms available at https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants after registration. Templates are here: STSM_Application form_Template; VM_Application form_Template.

1. All applicants must carefully read the funding rules detailed in the Annex 2 of the Annotated Rules for COST Actions.

2. For guidance on the e-COST tool, applicants can consult the Grants User Guide (see Documents for running a COST Action).

3. All applicants must have an e-COST profile with bank account information and an updated CV.

4. STSM applications must be made through the above link by logging into e-COST and clicking on the Grant Applications tab.

5. All applicants must obtain a letter of invitation from the host institution confirming that they can undertake the STSM/VM on the given dates prior to submitting an application.

6. All applicants must complete and submit their STSM/VM application on the e-COST-system using dedicated forms available.

STSM and VM applications must be filled in e-COST providing:

- **Title**
- **Start and end date (within the active Grant Period)**
- **Budget requested by the applicant**
- **Information about the host institution and contact person (only for STSM)**

STSM documentation which must be uploaded in e-COST:

• **Application form (template available on e-COST) describing:** Goals; Description of the work to be carried out by the Applicant; Plan for participation; Expected outcomes; and Description of the contribution to the PIMENTO Action MoU objectives (available in the Action documents [here](#));

• **Confirmation of the host on the agreement from the host institution in receiving the applicant;**

• **Other documents required by the Action:**
  o **Recommendation letter**
  o **Breakdown of estimated costs (travel costs, accommodation costs, subsistence allowances)**

VM documentation which must be uploaded in e-COST:

• **Application form (template available on e-COST) describing:** Main Objective; Description of the work to be carried out by the applicant; Plan for participation; Expected outcomes; and Description of the contribution to the Action MoU objectives;

• **Other documents required by the Action:**
  o **Recommendation letter**
  o **Justification of required costs**

Priority criteria for selection

Applications will be assessed by the Assessment Committee consisted of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, the Grant Awarding Coordinator and the WG Leaders. The criteria for selection of candidates are as follows:

1) Excellence of the application promoting the direct contribution to the PIMENTO WGs assessed by the Assessment Committee

2) Active participation of the applicant in the COST working groups assessed by the WG leader

3) 1st time participant in PIMENTO COST STSM/VM

4) COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy:
  • *Geographical diversity,*
  • *Career stage: involving Young Researchers and Innovators,*
  • *Gender balance.*

The requested budget must be compatible with the activities and their time frame proposed by the applicant to be developed during the STSM/VM.

The Applicant will receive an official confirmation of the STSM/VM with a link to the official grant letter.

Financial support – reimbursement

• **STSM grants** provide a financial contribution for **travelling, accommodation and subsistence expenses** and implementation of the project. They do not necessarily cover all the expenses.

• According to the MC decision, **the maximum amount for STSM grant is 2,800 € for one-month typical duration of STSM.** The amounts may change taking into consideration the specific conditions of the applicant and should reflect the duration and location of the STSM, based on the available budget of the Action.

Obs.: STSMs grantees may request up to 50% pre-payment of the approved grant. The remaining 50% of the grant is paid after the completion of the activity and approval of all required report/documentation.

• **VM grants** provide a contribution for the overall effort, not necessarily covered by an employer or by a Grant Holder Institution. **The maximum amount for VM grant is 1,500 €.** The amounts may change based on decision of the Assessment Committee and should reflect the duration, scope and complexity of the task and activities to be covered via the VM grant.

After the STSM/VM

Reporting and claim for payment of the grant:

• Payment will be completed when a short scientific report is approved.

• The required report for claiming the STSM/VM grant should describe the work developed, main achievements of the STSM/VM and planned future follow up activities.

• Once the activity has ended, the grantee must submit the required reports and relevant documentation in e-COST within 30 days after the end date of the activity or 15 days after the end of the Grand Period, whichever comes first.

• Reports need to be approved by the PIMENTO Assessment Committee.

• Payment of the grant must be claimed via e-COST.

• Failure to submit the scientific report within the requested period will effectively cancel the grant. The report will be uploaded to the PIMENTO webpage portal upon approval by the Grant Awarding Coordinator.

• The final report will be uploaded to the COST applications webpage. Scientific report templates are available in Grant Awarding User Guide or through the following links: STSM_Report_Template; VM_Report_Template

Productions of videos about the presentation and travel can be placed on the CA website https://fermentedfoods.eu/ and the on-line newsletter.

For more general information on STSM/VM grants please contact the Grant Awarding Coordinator:

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