

COST Action CA18111 “GENOME EDITING IN PLANTS”

Call for Virtual Mobility (VM) grants

The 1st Call for Virtual Mobility (VM) grants in the COST Action CA18111 PlantEd is now OPEN. We will not have any application deadline but instead leave the call open during the reminder of the 2nd Grant Period (until mid-October 2021). There is a maximum of 6 VM Grants and decisions will be taken continuously.

We invite participants of **COST Action CA18111 PlantEd** to apply for a new modality of financial support, the **Virtual Mobility (VM) Grants**, that COST has introduced as one of the new tools that will allow us to adapt to the current difficult periods (due to COVID-19 pandemic). **The aim of the VM grants is to support virtual collaborations.** Therefore, the grant would support exchanging knowledge or learning new techniques that do not necessarily require in-person presence. It is an on line collaboration between two parties and therefore, also the host institute/researcher is eligible to apply for a grant.

More details can be found in [COST Vademecum](#) (see pages 38-39).

Objectives of VM grants

The VM grants aim at **strengthening the existing networks by allowing scientists to foster collaboration in a virtual setting**, to exchange knowledge, learn new techniques, disseminate the Action results, etc.

COST has suggested several activities expected to be performed by the successful applicant:

- To support the harmonisation and standardisation of methods and procedures within the Action networking activities, e.g.
 - setting up a survey amongst all Action members to collect different results and outcomes from experiments done in their respective labs and research groups.
 - coordinating the discussions to create common protocols to be used by the network afterwards.
 - preparing questionnaires and response scales to be used by the Action members as part of virtual networking activities.
- To support the implementation of research related activities that do not necessarily require in-person presence, e.g.
 - computational or modelling activities.
 - data analysis of the Action for a specific report or activity.

But the tasks are not limited to the ones listed, we welcome other suggestions.

Eligibility

The VM applicant(s) are Action participants with a primary affiliation to an institution located in a COST Full or Cooperating Member country or MC Observers from a COST Near Neighbour Country Action. We encourage applications from PhD students and Early Career Investigators (ECIs, up to 8 years after PhD).

The applicant(s) shall inform the MC about the aim of the VM Grant and how its outcomes will generate benefits to the Action, actively contribute to the overall objectives and relevant deliverables of the Action and submit an activity report at the end, to be approved by the VNS manager on behalf of the MC.

Scientific topics

The work plan in the VM proposal must fit within the scope of any of the Action Working Groups:

- WG1 - Technical platforms
- WG2 - Impact assessment
- WG3 – Policies and regulations
- WG4 – Perceptions and opinions
- WG5 – Integration and communication

Duration

The activities related to the VM grant can take place in the period **mid-August to mid-October 2021** (within Grant Period 2).

The duration depends on the activity (no minimum).

Financial support

A maximum of 6 VM Grants per Action per Grant Period can be awarded. **Each VM Grant cannot exceed EUR 1 500.** The Evaluation Committee will define the exact amount of each grant reflecting the scope and complexity of the task and activities. The grant does not necessarily cover all expenses related to undertaking the virtual mobility activity.

Following the COST rules, the grant is paid after the VM tasks have been completed and the scientific report approved. The grant will be paid directly to the bank account entered in the e-Cost system.

How to apply

The applicant must develop the proposal jointly with other participant(s) of the collaborative initiative. An applicant may choose to contact **any research team participating in the Action.**

The application shall be submitted in e-COST and include the following information:

- Main objective of the Virtual Mobility Grant.
- Working Plan: Description of the collaborative initiative to be implemented.
- Plan for Participation: List of participants in the collaborative initiative (short description of their expertise and contribution).
- Main expected outputs: results and contribution to the progress towards the MoU objectives (either research coordination and/or capacity building objectives can be tackled) and delivery of the MoU objectives.
- Contribution to the COST Action Strategy: How will the Virtual Mobility contribute to the COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy and plans for stakeholder engagement and promoting participation of researchers from NNC and IPC (COST Global Networking) and to the approved virtual networking strategy, if available.

Evaluation of proposals

The evaluation of the applications is performed by the STSM Committee together with the Virtual Networking Support (VNS) manager, the Action Chair and Vice Chair. The evaluation criteria consider the contributions to the overall objectives of the Action, the approved strategy on the virtual networking for the Action and the implementation of the COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy.

As soon as the VNS manager approve the VM application, the GH manager is notified and can send the Grant Letter notification.

The VM grantee must complete the report template, upload and submit it in e-COST, **within 30 days after the end date of the VM period**. The report should contain a description of the virtual collaboration, the work carried out including the outcomes and achieved outputs and the benefits to the COST Action Strategy.

The Action Chair and VNS manager are responsible for approving the scientific report. **The failure to submit the scientific report within 30 days will effectively cancel the grant**. Once the report is approved, the payment of the VM grant will be carried out.

Please add the following acknowledgment if the results from VM grant will be published in a scientific journal or presented at any national or international conference (oral or poster): “This work was partially funded by the COST Action CA18111 Genome Editing in Plants”.

Contact

For more information and enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact the VNS manager Dr Anna Coll (anna.coll@nib.si).