

COST Action Alien Challenge

Short Term Scientific Missions

2013 Call Dates: September 6 and December 31

The COST Action Alien Challenge will facilitate enhanced knowledge gathering and sharing through a network of experts, providing support to a European IAS information system which will enable effective and informed decision-making in relation to IAS (<http://www.brc.ac.uk/alien-challenge/home>).

Alien Challenge promotes Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) to facilitate knowledge exchange and acquisition, and to implement action objectives, by fostering collaboration, technology transfer and by tackling various research needs. STSM applicants must be engaged in a research programme as a postgraduate student or postdoctoral fellow, or be employed by or officially affiliated to an institution or legal entity. This institution is considered as the Home institution. Institutions may be public or private entities.

Both the home institution and the host institution should be located in a participating COST Action Country or Cooperation State (for this COST Action: Israel). Neither of these institutions need to be associated with core activities of the COST action. See the following website for the complete list of countries involved in the COST Action:

http://www.cost.eu/domains_actions/fa/Actions/TD1209?parties.

The participation of PhD students and early stage researchers (i.e. early stage researchers with PhD title <8 years) is strongly encouraged in order to enhance their capacity and mobility. Participants in STSMs should present their studies at a WG meeting subsequent to their STSMs and should ensure a report also for the website of the Action.

During this first year of the COST Action, 8-10 STSMs are expected to be carried out for a total budget of € 20,000. STSMs must be carried out in a COST country other than the applicant's. Duration for STSMs: for PhD students and other applicants, between 5 working days and 3 months, to a maximum award of € 2,500, and for early stage researchers up to 6 months, to a maximum award of € 3,500. STSM awards may be combined with other funding sources, but these must be acknowledged in the application. Please note that the award will be given only after the STSM has been completed – therefore the applicant must have approval and prior financial support from their own institution.

Scientists interested in an STSM should submit a proposal by e-mail to Dr. Frances Lucy (lucy.frances@itsligo.ie) and Dr. Elena Tricarico (elena.tricarico@unifi.it), for one of two 2013 calls, either before **September 6th 2013** or before **December 31st 2013**.

Instructions for compiling the proposal

Maximum 8 pages. The font should correspond to Times New Roman size 12 pt with single line spacing and standard margins of 2 cm. The proposal should clearly state the work plan, the aims, the work timetable, the expected outputs and the links with the objectives of the COST Action. Also the host scientific expertise for the potential achievements of the STSM aims should be indicated. The applicants should provide a short CV (maximum 5 pages). All proposals must contain a proposed budget and they must be stamped and signed by the relevant research official at their institute.

Evaluation criteria

Each proposal will be assessed independently by the COST committee and an evaluation score will be given considering the proposal clarity, relevance for the Action, feasibility, planning and outputs. The proposal will be assigned to one of the following categories:

- 1 - **Very poor**: proposal illogical and not understandable. Not clearly linked to any WG. (0-10 marks)
- 2 – **Poor**: proposal with limited understanding, planning and no clear objectives. Weakly linked to at least one WG. (10-25 marks)
- 3 – **Fair**: proposal with some understanding, planning and objectives. Moderate links to at least one WG. (25-35 marks)
- 4 – **Good**: good proposal but needs input to develop feasible STSM. Well linked to at least one WG. (35-50 marks)
- 5 – **Excellent**: proposal well designed in terms of planning, feasibility and projected outputs. Strongly linked to at least one WG. (50-60 marks)

Extra marks will give for links with a WG of the Action (score comprised between 0 and 4: no link-strong link) and the output value to the COST Action via development of research, scientific networks and information technologies (score comprised between 0 and 24: no value-high value). A proposal can reach a maximum score of 100. The proposals will be ranked and those with the highest scores will be financed, subject to the duration of the STSM applications and the available budget. The results will be published in the COST Action website.

Evaluation outcome

Within one month after the deadline

October 6th 2013

January 31st 2014