Call for Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) COST Action CA24136 InterCoML - Interactions between Control Theory and Machine Learning

The COST Action InterCoML, a research network concerned with exploring and exploiting connections between control theory and machine learning, welcomes applications for 8 Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) related to Working Group 1 (CT for ML) or Working Group 2 (ML for CT).

Bringing together participants from multiple fields (mathematical analysis, numerical mathematics, control engineering, computer science, data science, etc), the Action fosters interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration within a diverse group of researchers from academia and industry.

STSMs allow young researchers to connect to and work with senior scientists on research projects relevant for the Action. The collaboration within an STSM helps promising talents to kickstart their scientific career and to earn valuable experiences abroad. Moreover, the transfer of results from the academic sector into industrial applications can be supported by cross-sectorial STSMs involving industry hosts and academic participants, and vice-versa. The leaders of the Working Groups are happy to help finding a host for an STSM that fits to the respective research interests.

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants must be engaged in an official research programme as PhD candidates, postdoctoral researchers, or employees/affiliates of institutions involved in research activities.

Applicants must be based in one of the eligible COST countries. STSMs must always be performed between two different eligible countries; missions within the applicant's own country are not permitted.

What do STSMs provide?

- Duration: 5 to 90 days (up to 180 days for Early Career Investigators: PhD + <8 years).
- Maximum grant: EUR 2,000, covering travel, accommodation, subsistence, and project-related costs.
- Grants are contributions rather than full reimbursements. Differentiated rates may apply according to the cost of living in the host country. In the event of a successful application, a lower amount may be awarded than was requested.

- STSMs may be combined with other funding sources, which must be acknowledged.

Payment is normally issued after completion of the STSM and approval of the final report. Researchers from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs) may request pre-payment of 50% once the host institution confirms the start of the mission.

Grantees are responsible for their own personal insurance, health, social security, and taxation matters.

How to apply?

Call deadline: 31.03.2026
STSMs must be completed by: 30.09.2026

1. Submit an application through e-COST: https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants
2. If you do not yet have an e-COST account, create one and provide your bank details for potential grant transfer.
3. Obtain an acceptance letter from the Host Institution confirming availability for the proposed dates (template available in e-COST).
4. Complete, submit, and upload the STSM application form via e-COST.
5. Upload all supporting documents via e-COST.
6. The required supporting documents are:
   - Letter of invitation from the Host Institution.
   - The submitted STSM application form (downloaded after online submission).
   - A project description (max. 1000 words) including:
     - overview of proposed activities,
     - workplan,
     - explanation of contribution to InterCoML's scientific objectives,
     - outline of host expertise and resources.
   - A letter of support from the Home Institution.
   - A full CV (with publication list if applicable)
   - A brief document estimating expenses (travel, accommodation, living costs).
7. The InterCoML Grant Evaluation Committee evaluates the proposal following the selection criteria described below.
8. The review period will last up to three weeks from the call deadline (till 21.04.2026), during which all applications will be examined.
9. If approved, the Grant AwardingCoordinator forwards the application to the Grant Holder and Action Chair for final verification. Applicants will be notified of the outcome within one week after this final verification step (by 28 April 2026), and successful applicants will receive the Grant Letter immediately thereafter.
10. The Grant Holder sends the applicant a grant letter. The mission may begin only after this letter has been signed and returned.

Criteria for successful application

Applications will be evaluated according to COST's principles of excellence, fairness, inclusiveness, and balanced participation. The following criteria will be applied in particular:
1. Relevance to the scientific objectives of the InterCoML Action
2. Quality and clarity of the research proposal
3. Scientific rationale for the choice of the hosting researcher(s)
4. Institutional and geographical balance, including attention to ITC involvement
5. Expected outputs, including dissemination and publication potential

After the STSM

The grantees of STSMs will be required to produce a report describing the research conducted during their STSMs and highlighting its impact and relevance. These reports will be published on the Action's online platform, in this way spreading the knowledge gained among the Network. In particular, a one-page summary report following each STSM is mandatory and should be submitted via email to the leader of the respective Working Group within a month after the end of the STSM.