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COST Action SAGA (CA17131)
www.cost-saga.eu

First Call for Virtual Mobility (VM) Grants

This is a call for applications for VM Grants in the framework of the COST Action SAGA (CA17131), Grant Period 3 (GP3):

- Deadline for applications: **20th June, 2021, 13:00 CET.**
- Missions should be completed (including the submission and approval of the report) before 31 October 2021 (the end date of GP3).
- The payment of the Grant is subject to the report being approved by the Core Group. The report must be written and uploaded by the grantee in e-COST within 30 days of finishing the activity (please contact the VNS Coordinator to plan the reporting of late starting VM activities).
- Please note that interested applicants should familiarise themselves with SAGA's aim and objectives (described in the Memorandum of Understanding or MoU) and read the relevant section (Section 10) from the COST Vademecum.

What is a Virtual Mobility (VM) Grant?

It aims at strengthening the existing networks by allowing members to carry out collaboration in a virtual setting, to exchange knowledge, projects, learn new techniques, disseminate results, create new databases, and increase the awareness of new trends aligned with SAGA objectives.

1. Who can apply?

The call is open to all SAGA participants.

Applications of Early Career Investigators (ECI), members affiliated to Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC) are particularly encouraged. An applicant is considered an ECI when the time that has elapsed between the award date of the applicant's

PhD and the date of the applicant's first involvement in SAGA does not exceed 8 years. PhD students are also eligible to partake in VM Grants.

VM Grants must specifically contribute to the research coordination and capacity building objectives of COST Action SAGA.

2. How much?

COST Association has re-allocated a total budget of 9000 EUR during the GP3. A maximum of 6 VM Grants (each up to 1500 EUR max, **depending on the quality of the delivered output**) will be awarded during GP3.

The financial support is a contribution to

the overall expenses incurred during the VM Grants and may not necessarily cover all of the associated outgoings. Financial support is limited to cover needed expenses to achieve success of virtual events and is paid in the form of a personal Grant to the awarded applicants.

3. How to apply?

Applicants must carefully read the funding rules detailed in Section 10 of the COST Vademecum (Vademecum link in the Section 7 of this document).

Applicants can apply by following the directions below. In addition, they are welcome to request more information or clarification on this procedure to our Virtual Networking Support (VNS) Coordinator Mezgeen Rasol (mezgeen.rasol@univ-eif-fel.fr).

Instructions for submitting the online application

Firstly, all applicants must register for an e-COST profile (link in Section 7), if they have not one yet. Applications for VM Grants are managed through the e-COST management tool. The link to the online VM application is available in Section 7. The application is composed of two parts:

1. Online registration by the applicant using the online e-COST tool to register the request for a VM Grant. The following information has to be encoded with the registration:

- Select Grant Period
- Title of the planned VM Grant

- Budget request with breakdown for the costs of the VM (up to 1500 Euro)
 - Bank account
 - Planned starting and ending dates
2. Supporting documents: Grant application form (template will be provided in the e-COST submission system).

After submitting the application, the online registration tool will issue a formal VM application which will be automatically sent to the Action's VNS Coordinator.

Instructions for writing the VM Grant application form (max 2200 words)

A complete proposal should include the following sections:

1. Main objectives of the VM application:

Explain the purpose of the VM event/project and what scientific and/or other outcomes you aim to accomplish with it. Very importantly, **clearly state which SAGA objectives, deliverables or specific Working Group tasks cover the proposed VM application.**

2. Work plan: Detail the steps you will take to achieve your proposed aims and objectives through the VM proposal.
3. Plan of Participation: Detail the plans/techniques/participants you may involve, if applicable.
4. Expected output of the VM (foreseen publications, future collaboration, etc).
5. Description of how the VM activity will contribute to the COST Action Strategy.

4. Selection of applicants

The applications will be pre-processed by the VNS Coordinator who will then distribute a list of applications (containing an informative summary) to be ranked by the VNS Selection Committee (i.e. the COST Action SAGA Core Group): Chair and Vice-chair, WG leaders, VNS Coordinator, Policy Coordinator and Dissemination Manager. Ad-hoc MC members could also join these evaluations if requested.

To guarantee a fair evaluation, evaluators should hold an affiliation with neither the home and the Host institution of the VM proposal in question. Each individual applications will be initially evaluated, at least, by two members of the Core Group and consider in second round by the evaluation committee.

Evaluation will be based on the scientific excellence of the applicant, the proposal, the relevance of the work plan for the

achievement of SAGA's objectives. There should be special considerations with respect to supporting COST policies on promoting gender balance, enabling ECI, and broadening geographical inclusiveness.

For this GP3, VM Grant applications aiming to achieve pending deliverables will be prioritised. Further information about pending deliverables can be found in the second project report and evaluation report. Proposals focused on undertaking further work towards the database (data entry, front end design) or virtual mentoring of activities that can generate capacity, build skills, etc are also encourage.

Successful applicants will receive a Grant letter/email confirmation from the Action Grant Holder, stating the official approval of the VM application and the granted budget. The applicant has to notify acceptance of the Grant.

5. After the completion of the VM activities

The grantee must upload into e-COST a report within 30 days of finishing the activity (please contact the VNS Coordinator to plan the reporting of late starting VM activities).

The scientific report will require the approval of the Core Group in order to effect the payment of the Grant. The submission of the report is mandatory. Late submission

beyond the deadline can also lead to the cancellation of the Grant.

Also, successful applicants are required to submit a brief summary of the VM outputs for the Action's website and social media. Grantees should contact both the VNS coordinator (mezgeen.rasol@univ-eiffel.fr) and the Dissemination Manager (agnese.kukela@gmail.com) to prepare this.

6. Acknowledgement of COST Action SAGA

If work resulting from a VM event is published in a journal, please add the following acknowledgement: "This work/Part of this work was supported by the COST Action SAGA - The Soil Science & Archaeo-Geophysics Alliance (CA17131)."

Events must acknowledge the SAGA logo in relevant documents. If the work is presented in a conference or event, the COST logo must be displayed and the COST Action SAGA (CA17131) must be acknowledged.

7. Links to key webpages and documents

- Website: <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA17131/#tabs|Name:overview>
- MoU (COST Action SAGA): <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA17131/#downloads>
- COST Vademecum (April 2021), Section 10, "Virtual Networking Tools": <https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Vademecum-V9-28-April-20212-1.pdf>
- VM Grants User Guidelines, proposal

template and completion report template: <https://www.cost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/VNT-userguide.pdf>

- Create e-COST profile: <https://e-services.cost.eu/user/login>
- VM Online application form: <https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants> (needs an e-COST profile).

For further information please contact the VNS Coordinator Mezgeen Rasol (mezgeen.rasol@univ-eiffel.fr)



SAGA

The Soil Science & Archaeo-Geophysics Alliance

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