Memo │ Online Travel Reimbursement Request (OTRR)

Dear COST Action participants,

In order to optimise the travel reimbursement process and to avoid a duplication of work on the e-COST system, the COST Association has introduced the Online Travel Reimbursement Request (OTRR). The OTRR is an online form which allows eligible participants to directly encode their travel expenses into e-COST and also acts as a platform whereby supporting documents linked to a participants request for reimbursement can be scanned, uploaded and stored.

The rules of reimbursement are shown on page 2 of this document. For complete information, please refer to the Vademecum Part 1: COST Actions (www.cost.eu/COST_Vademecum_Part_1).
For frequently asked questions, please consult our FAQ section available on the COST website (http://www.cost.eu/participate/networking/grant_holder_qa).

For the convenience of all, the maximum number of nights (accommodation) and the maximum number of meals (lunch and dinner only – up to a maximum of 2 per meals per day) that can be claimed by each eligible participant are automatically calculated by the e-COST system based on the travel information (dates and time of travel) encoded by each participant. The maximum number of nights (accommodation) that a participant can claim is limited to the number of meeting days attended by the participant (as evidenced by signing the meeting attendance list) plus 1 night.
The respective flat rate amounts afforded to cover accommodation and meal expenses are determined by the Management Committee (MC) and are pre-set on e-COST by the Grant Holder. Meals provided to participants by the Local Organiser and/or from other sources throughout the duration of any given meeting must be deducted from the meal allowance afforded to each participant.

To enable eligible participant to submit travel expenses incurred whilst returning from the meeting place back to their country of residence, the OTRR should be submitted only after the meeting has taken place. Please note that each participant still needs to print the final version of their submitted reimbursement form, sign it and send it together with the legible copies of supporting documents by post to the Grant Holder in charge of the Action. For electronic tickets and other relevant documentation such as Google maps itineraries, it is sufficient to have these documents simply uploaded and stored onto e-COST.

On the first day after the meeting, eligible participants receive an automated reminder requesting them to complete their online travel reimbursement request. 2 further reminders are sent - 30 and 53 calendar days after the end date of the meeting. Please note that if a claim is submitted beyond 30 days from the end date of the approved meeting, the reimbursement of the participant is up to the discretion of the Grant Holder.

Please see below a step-by-step guide demonstrating how to compile and submit an Online Travel Reimbursement Request (OTRR). The steps detailed below are only relevant to participants who receive an official invitation to a COST meeting and who are deemed eligible to be reimbursed for travel, accommodation and meal expenses incurred whilst attending approved COST Action related activities.

If you encounter any difficulties when submitting the online travel request, please do not hesitate to contact the Grant Holder of the respective COST Action for guidance.

Kind regards,

COST Association

RULES FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST/ EXPENSES FOR ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS
Please read carefully before completing the travel request.

IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE PAYMENT, THE PARTICIPANT MUST:

- Select the most economical means of transportation; make their transportation arrangements as early as possible upon receipt of the official invitation to the meeting; and arrive/depart as close as possible to the beginning/end dates of the meeting.
- Register their bank detail prior to the meeting in e-COST: https://e-services.cost.eu;
- Submit a duly completed and signed by hand Travel Reimbursement Request (TRR) form within 30 calendar days after the end date of meeting (together with the supporting documents), and declare that he/she will not receive any similar reimbursement or allowance from a third party.
- Original invoices/receipts must be kept by the claimant for 3 years after the activity end date for audit purposes.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES (additional details available on the COST Vademecum Part 1):

Accommodation (including breakfast) and Meals

- Accommodation expenses are based on flat rates only (at a maximum EUR 120 per person per night, breakfast included), calculated on the actual attended meeting days (as confirmed by the signatures on the meeting attendance list) plus 1 night, assuming the arrival takes place one day before the meeting and departure one day after the meeting.
  No additional nights will be reimbursed without a justification and prior approval of the COST Association.
- The accommodation expenses must be paid directly by the participant. If sharing the accommodation with another participant, only one participant can claim the reimbursement of the nights.
- Accommodation expenses paid centrally by the Grant Holder or by the Local Organizer are non-eligible.
- Meals are based on flat rates only (at a maximum of EUR 20 per person per meal). Meals provided by other sources are deducted from the number of meals to be reimbursed;

Airplane, Train or Bus, Car and Ferry

- Only economy class tickets are eligible for reimbursement. Air tickets exceeding EUR 1 200 require prior approval from the COST Office; seat reservations and transport of luggage costs are eligible.
- Travel from/to countries other than the host country and your country of residence (as registered in e-COST), must be explained in the justification box and with a comparative quote of a round trip ticket.
- For Train or Bus, business and economy class tickets are eligible for reimbursement; and supplements for fast trains and sleepers are eligible expenses.
- Car travel is limited to a maximum distance of 2 000 km and is reimbursed at EUR 0.20 per km, when an eligible participant to be reimbursed is travelling alone or at EUR 0.30 per km, when additional eligible participants to be reimbursed are travelling in the same car. Only the driver shall be reimbursed. The names of the passengers must be mentioned on the remarks section of the TRR submitted by the driver. Proof of distance which shows the traveled route beginning at the city of origin to the approved meeting destination has to be submitted along with the TRR by means of a print-out from Google Maps.
- In order to be reimbursed, participants must submit as a supporting document the original ticket (and the related invoice if the price is not indicated on the ticket) mentioning the name of the passenger, the price, dates of travel, departure and arrival times and the booking class – essentially the full itinerary of the trip.

Local transport expenses

- Local transport expenses include any transport costs (including shuttle, buses, trains, metro, tramway, taxis, car costs (up to 2000 km) and parking costs), incurred to go from Home to Airport / train station; Airport / train station to meeting venue / hotel; Hotel to meeting venue; Meeting venue to hotel; Meeting venue / hotel to airport / train station; Airport / train station back to home.
- If the claimed amount is less than EUR 25, no tickets are required to be submitted for reimbursement but the journey must be detailed on the TRR (for both the outbound & inbound

journeys). If the claimed amount exceeds EUR 25, receipts justifying the total amount claimed must be provided. All receipts must display the amount and the date that the expenses were incurred.

- Eligible participants are limited to use taxis only when no other means of public transport is available or for early departures (departure before 7 am) or late arrivals (arrival after 10 pm) up to a maximum of 80 EUR for the entire journey, against receipt.

Other eligible expenses

- Short term visa fees relevant to attending a meeting and eventual additional overnight stays and/or extra meals aiming to significantly reduce the overall transportation costs (by minimum EUR 160 per additional night), require provision of comparative cost statements at the day of purchase, and an explanatory note to be provided together with the TRR.

NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Registration, honorarium or lecture fees; transportation expenses to obtain the visa; health related expenses, life and medical insurance; travel cancelation and luggage insurance; overnight stay during a trip by car, fuel costs, tolls and car rental costs; Wi-Fi, telephone, internet and minibar consumption; printing costs, postage; regional or national taxation fees, stamp duty expenses.

The scenario used as an example in this guide concerns a COST Action Working Group Meeting, taking place on 15 December 2013, in Brussels, with 0 meals provided by the Local Organiser.

Participants eligible and entitled to reimbursement

The invited participants who are deemed eligible for reimbursement will receive the following automatic e-COST invitation:

OFFICIAL INVITATION

Dear Dr John Smith,

You are invited to attend the following COST Meeting as a Meeting Participant:

COST Action: BM1207
Meeting Title: Release of the OTRR-Strong Authentication feature
Location: Cost, Brussels, Belgium

Meeting Type: Working Group Meeting
Meeting Dates: from 15-12-2013 to 15-12-2013

If you wish to attend, you will need to register for this event. If you already have an e-COST user profile, you will only need to login and accept this invitation by following the link below:
http://qa-ecost-dev.bruxelles.esf.org/invitation/1bbefdf1f72ef79617f1ab4a243cc460/

If you are new to e-COST, you can register a new e-COST profile on the following link:
https://e-services.cost.eu

The following link provides instructions on how to fill in the Travel Reimbursement Request:
http://www.cost.eu/download/Travel-Reimbursement-Instructions.pdf

By clicking on the link provided in the invitation, the participant will be re-directed to this page:

Invitation to COST Office Event

If you are the intended invitee to the following COST event and you wish to participate, please log in below to proceed.

Meeting Details

Meeting ID	ECOST-MEETING-BM1207-151213-038157
Title	Release of the OTRR-Strong Authentication feature
Start Date	2013/12/15
End Date	2013/12/15
Location	COST, Brussels, Belgium

Your Details

Name	John Smith
Email	j.s.@cost.eu
Organisation	University ***

Username	JSmith	Password	●●●●●●	Login

After login, the participant has to follow 5 steps, taking into consideration that ideally, step 1 should be done before the meeting, that steps 2 to 3 can be done either before or after the meeting, and that step 4 and 5 can be done after the meeting took place.

Step 1/5 - Invitation

In step 1, the participant is asked to accept or decline the invitation.

Step 2/5 - Reimbursement

In step 2, the participant can start to fill in the claim. When selecting "YES", the claim is displayed below and can be updated. The system will record any modification made by the participant from the step 2 to 5.

The participant can only finalise the request and submit it to the Grant Holder after the meeting, therefore it is advisable that the participant completes the request only after the meeting. When selecting "NO", the participant will have the possibility to re-access the page at a later time by following the link provided in the invitation.

Invitation to COST Office Event

Dear Dr L John Smith

You are invited to the following COST event. Please indicate below if you wish to participate.

Meeting Details

Meeting ID	ECOST-MEETING-BM1207-151213-038157
Title	Release of the OTRR-Strong Authentication feature
Start Date	2013/12/15
End Date	2013/12/15
Location	COST, Brussels, Belgium

Step 1/5   Invitation   : Accepted   [Decline]

Step 2/5   Reimbursement   [Yes] [No]

You are eligible to claim reimbursement of your expenses related to this event. Do you wish to submit a claim?

The claim **must** be submitted within **30** calendar days after the end date of the meeting. After 30 days, the reimbursement of expenses are subject to the approval of the Grant Holder and can be rejected.

Step 3/5 – Travel Information and Expenses

Step 3 concerns the actual encoding of expenses.

For the purpose of this guide, the scenario described is as follows: the participant attends a Working Group meeting in Brussels on 15 December 2013. The participant is affiliated to a Spanish institution. To attend the meeting, the participant should be leaving from Barcelona to Brussels and then flying back to Spain.

The participant has the possibility to update each category of expenses.

▪ **Travel Dates and Meeting Attendance**

Travel start date and travel end date are automatically populated with the meeting dates and are editable. The drop down menu allows the participant to select the departure time (from home/ starting location) and the arrival time (back home/arrival location) as well.

The participant needs to complete the attendance to the meeting by selecting the date(s) for which the attendance list has been signed. Travel information and attendance to the meeting are necessary to calculate automatically the maximum number of nights and the maximum number of meals eligible to be reimbursed to the participant.

- **Accommodation and Meals Expenses**

The applicable rate is the same here as the one specified by the Grant Holder while creating the meeting. Using the available drop down menu, the participant selects the number of nights and meals to be reimbursed.

Meals provided by the Local Organiser are automatically deducted from the reimbursement to individual participants. It is the responsibility of the participant to deduct any additional meal(s) being offered.

- **Travel Expenses**

In this section, the participant may encode any long distance travel expenses necessary to attend the meeting by clicking the "Add" button.

The participant needs to specify the means of transport using the drop-down menu, the itinerary, and the amount to be reimbursed. Each leg of the travel has to be encoded separately. Therefore, once the first leg is completed, you have to click on the "Submit" Button at the bottom of the page.

Edit expenses

TRAVEL

Means of transp.	Train

From

Country	Germany (DE)
City	Berlin

To

Country	Belgium (BE)
City	Brussels

Journey

Single	●
Outward and return	○

Price

Amount	253
Currency	EURO

Justification

Please provide justification for your itinerary if you are traveling from/to a country other than the host country and your country of residence (as registered in e-COST). Air tickets exceeding EUR 1 200 require prior approval from the COST Office. Please attach this approval email in the section 'Supporting Documents' on the claim page.

Justification	My travel started from Berlin because I was attending anothe meeting there. The cost of the train from Berlin is cheaper than if I had travelled from Barcelona (see evidence attached)

Submit   Cancel

As the example above requires a justification (*in this case, the participant is not travelling from his home country, but from Germany*) the system will ask for it. The derogation requires a MC approval or a COST Office approval and the participant must upload it as supporting document in the relevant section further below.

If the participant needs to modify, delete, or add another leg of travel, then the participant has to click on one of the button highlighted in the print screen below:

Travel Expenses ℹ️   edit | delete | add

Means of transportation   Train
From   Berlin, Germany
To   Brussels, Belgium
Journey   Single
Justification   My travel started from Berlin because I was attending another meeting there. The cost of the train
from Berlin is cheaper than if I had travelled from Barcelona (see evidence attached)
Reimbursable amount   EUR 253.00

Using the example provided, the Travel Expenses section is completed as follows

Travel Expenses ℹ️   edit | delete | add

Means of transportation   Train
From   Berlin, Germany
To   Brussels, Belgium
Journey   Single
Justification   My travel started from Berlin because I was attending anothe meeting there. The cost of the train from
Berlin is cheaper than if I had travelled from Barcelona (see evidence attached)
Reimbursable amount   EUR 253.00

Travel Expenses ℹ️   edit | delete | add

Means of transportation   Plane
From   Brussels, Belgium
To   Barcelona, Spain
Journey   Single
Justification
Reimbursable amount   EUR 95.00

- ▪ **Local transport expenses**

Local transportation expenses include all costs related to the local transport needed to attend the meeting.
Local transport refers to any inner city trip or short transport to go from home to the airport / train station, and
to the city of the meeting, including public transport, taxis, car and ferries.

Local Transport Expenses ℹ️   add

Reimbursable amount   EUR 0.00

Edit expenses

LOCAL TRANSPORT

The participant must indicate under this section all costs related to the local transport needed to attend the meeting. Local transport refers to any inner city trip or short transport to go from home to the airport / train station, and to the city of the meeting, including public transport, taxis, car and ferries.

Type: Please Select
- Please Select
- Car
- Public Transport
- Taxi
- Parking
- Ferry Costs

...tion from home to the airport, or train station etc.
...rectly or above 200 km shall be recorded under

The distance in KM
Number of other COST Passengers: 0
Justification

For the purpose of this guide, the participant uses the car to return from the airport back home. Car travel expenses are reimbursed based on the distance (in kilometres) travelled by the participant. The system automatically calculates the related total amount in EUR. The proof of distance must be uploaded in the supporting document section (further below).

Once completed, the participant needs to click on the "Submit" button at the bottom of the page.

Edit expenses

LOCAL TRANSPORT

The participant must indicate under this section all costs related to the local transport needed to attend the meeting. Local transport refers to any inner city trip or short transport to go from home to the airport / train station, and to the city of the meeting, including public transport, taxis, car and ferries.

Type: Car

Local car transport used as a connection from home to the airport, or train station etc. Car travel to go to meeting venue directly or above 200 km shall be recorded under Travel Expenses.

The distance in KM: 25
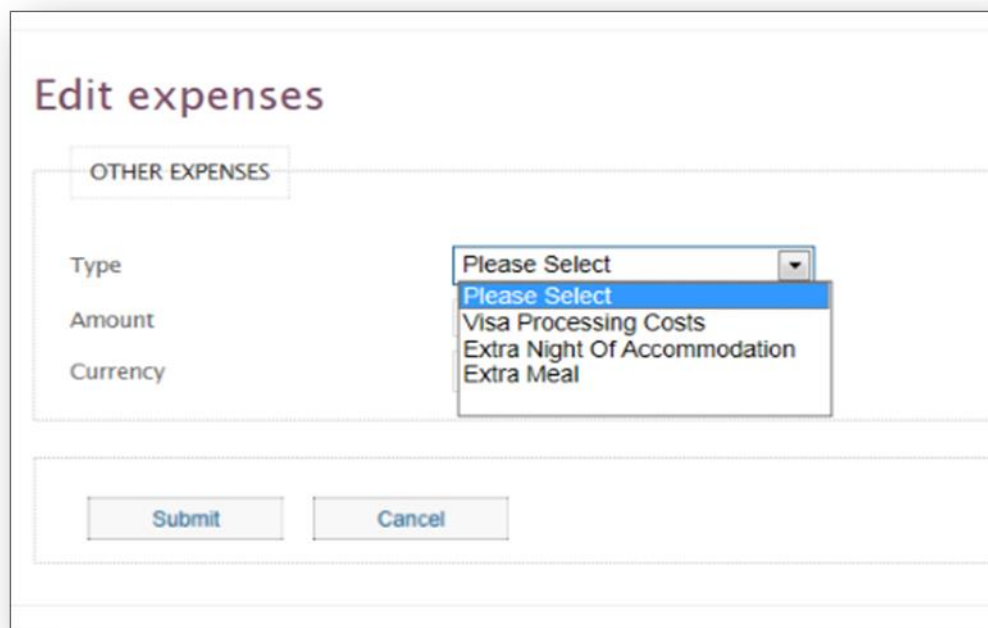Number of other COST Passengers: 0
Justification: Car km from Barcelona airport to home.
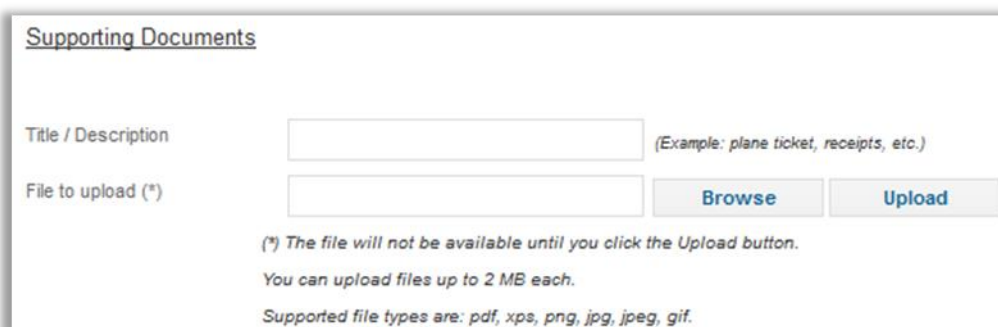
Submit   Cancel

- ■ **Other Expenses**

A list of pre-defined other expenses is populated in the drop-down menu. Depending of the type of other expenses encoded (travel visa cost, additional night, and additional meal), a text box will appear to allow the participant to justify the request. The justification encoded at this stage will also appear in the Financial Report of the Action as well as in the OTRR. An extra night and extra meal will be automatically based on the flat rate encoded by the Grant Holder while creating the meeting.

- ■ **Upload Supporting Documents**

After completing the request, and **before** final submission of the claim to the Grant Holder, the participant must upload all the supporting documents (airplane ticket, transport receipt etc.) as well as any email/justification linked to the expenses claimed, by clicking on the Browse button at the bottom of the page (supported files types are: pdf, xps, png, jpg, jpeg, gif).

Step 4/5 – Bank Account

Once all the expenses had been recorded and the supporting documents have been uploaded, the participant needs to select the bank account to which the payment should be transferred. If the participant

has already encoded his/her bank account in e-COST, then this will be available in the drop-down menu. Otherwise, or if wanted, the participant has the possibility to add a new bank account.

After completion of the step 4, it is now possible to preview the completed TRR. This allows the participant to review the request before submitting it to the Grant Holder.

Step 5/5 – Submission

If everything is correctly encoded and uploaded, then the participant has to certify that the expenses claimed here are not being reimbursed by any other sources. This is done by ticking the box next to the declaration, as shown below.

Step 5/5 Submission

☑ I declare that the above expenses are not being reimbursed from any other source.

The COST Office and the Grant Holder reserve the right to correct this document after signature by the participant to comply with COST Rules.

If you are certain that all the details on the printed TRR are correct, you can submit your claim.

Submit Claim

As soon as the box is ticked, the button "Submit Claim" will be available which will allow participants to submit the Online Request to the Grant Holder. Once submitted, the participant cannot modify the request anymore.

After submitting your reimbursement request, you will not be able to make any change. Are you sure you want to proceed?

OK   Cancel

The participants are prompted to print the travel claim, sign it and send it by post to the Grant Holder. Without the signed paper-version of the claim, the participant cannot be reimbursed.

Click "Download TRR" to save your reimbursement request in a printable format. Please print it, sign it, and send it to the Grant Holder by post.

OK

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST (TRR) - version 3.1 CGS

Please submit completed and signed travel reimbursement request within 30 days after the meeting end date to the following address:

COST Reference: ECOST-MEETING-_____51014-048055

1. PARTICIPANT DETAILS

Last name			
First name			
Institution	School of Biosciences and Veterinary Medicine University of Camerino	Country	Italy
E-mail		Telephone	

2. BANK DETAILS – (Register your bank details via http://e-services.cost.eu)

Account holder			
IBAN		SWIFT/BIC code	
For NON EU (please indicate the code name)			

3. MEETING DETAILS

GH Contact details		Telephone	
GH Mailing Address			
Meeting venue city and country	Pisa, Italy		
Meeting start date	2014-10-05	Meeting end date	2014-10-09

4. TRAVEL INFORMATION

Travel start date (from home)	2014-10-06	Time	05:00:00
Travel end date (back home)	2014-10-08	Time	19:00:00

5. DAILY ALLOWANCE

				GH Use
Accomodation	Total number of nights	2	EUR 200	
Meals	Total number of eligible meals	3	EUR 60	

6. TRAVEL EXPENSES - (Insert rows if necessary. Please number your receipts as per this table)

	Description	From	To	with return	Amount	Local Currency	
1	Plane	Dresden, Germany	Pisa, Italy	Y	711	EUR	
2	Local Transport (Taxi)				12	EUR	
3	Local Transport (Parking)				28	EUR	

7. REMARKS - (Add here the name(s) of additional COST passenger(s) when travelling by car, if applicable)

Justifications:

- Local Transport: No public transport to the airport from my home.

I declare that the above-mentioned expenses are not being reimbursed from any other source.

In order to be in conformity with the COST rules, the COST Association and the Grant Holder reserve the right to correct this document after Participant's

DATE & PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

GRANT HOLDER USE ONLY		
Date, comments, GH signature and Stamp	Total amount €	

As soon as the participant presses the button 'Ok', (s)he will be instructed as to where to post the travel reimbursement request.

Invitation to COST Event
Prof John Smith

Download, Print, Sign, and Send your TRR to the Grant holder by Post to:

Download TRR

Dr J.J. Smith
ULB
Avenue de Arts, 148,
B-1000, Brussels,
Belgium

The Grant Holder has to receive your signed TRR (Travel Reimbursment Request form) by post in order to process your claim. You will be notified once the Grant Holder has received your signed TRR.

Once the Grant Holder receives the signed claim, the participant will receive the below notification:

AUTOMATED NOTIFICATION: TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST RECEIVED

Dear Dr John Smith

The Grant Holder for the following Meeting, has indicated receipt of your signed travel reimbursement request.

You will no longer be able to make any online change to the submitted request or to the bank account which you indicated to be reimbursed on.

COST Action: BM1207
Meeting Title: Working Group meeting
Location: Brussels
Meeting Type: Working Group meeting
Meeting Dates: from 15-12-2013 to 15-12-2013

Thanks for your cooperation.

Grant Holder
[This is an automated e-mail]

As soon as the Grant Holder confirms the processing of the payment to the participant in e-COST, an automatic e-mail is sent to the participant mentioning the amount paid (including any modifications introduced by the Grant Holder) as well as the payment details.

Event Details

COST Action:	[BM1207]
Date:	2013-12-15 to 2013-12-15
Place:	COST Office
Event Reference:	ECOST-MEETING-BM1207-20131215-038157

Bank Transfer Details

Beneficiary	Dr John Smith
Amount EUR	EUR 743.96
Account Holder Name	Some One
Account Holder Address	**********
Account Holder Country	**********
Bank Name	Belfius
Bank Country	Belgium
IBAN	**********
SWIFT	**********

For any questions concerning the new Online Travel Reimbursement Request, please contact the Grant Holder or submit a request to ecost@cost.eu.