



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



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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.