**The 1st call for Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM) and Conference grants of COST Action DS4ESS is open**

**Application Deadlines:**

**February 28th 2024**

**April 30th 2024**

**for activities ending before 1st October 2024**

**with evaluation of applications after each deadline**

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) allow scientists to learn about innovative concepts and methodologies of particular interest from an institution or laboratory in another COST country. The Applicant should normally be a post graduate student or a postdoctoral fellow and employed in an institution of a COST Country having accepted the [MoU](https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA22141/).

**DSS4ES** is a four year COST Action running between 2023 and 2027. The primary objective of DSS4ES is to facilitate the development of new methodological approaches of decision support systems, including important relations between forest and landscape. The emphasis is on screening, evaluating and proposing existing and future tools to support holistic planning approaches that increase sustainable forest management, consider various ecosystem services, and address associated risks and uncertainties. (For further details, see the Memorandum of Understanding **–** [MoU](https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA22141/) at Action home page <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA22141/> .)

The activities in **DSS4ES** are structured in five Working Groups (WGs):

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| **WG1: DATA AND KNOWLEDGE** | **WG3: USER PERSPECTIVE**  |
| **WG2: MODELS and METHODS** | **WG4: DSS INTEGRATION** |
| **WG5: GOVERNANCE (IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING)** |

The current call focuses on research activities in WG1, 2, and 3 with topics of prime interest described in [Appendix A](#AppendixA). Applications can only be submitted by using the on-line registration tool on e-COST (go to <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA22141/> and choose e-COST; select Action DSS4ES). The applicant should submit the application with the content described in [Appendix B](#AppendixB). The Core Group of DSS4ES will evaluate the applications on behalf of the Management Committee on the basis of criteria found in [Appendix C](#AppendixC).

# FUNDING SCHEME for STSMs and conferences [€]

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| **STSM** |
| Minimum duration | 5 working days |
| Maximum daily allowance rate | 160 |
| Maximum long-distance travel expenses | 1,500 |
| Total maximum amount for mission | 4,000 |
| **Conference** |
| Maximum grant | 1,000 |

Appendix A

# WG related STSM topics

The following indicates areas of research of high relevance at the current stage of the Action and applications for thos topics will therefore be prioritized in the selection of STSMs. This does not preclude applications with other topics, or related topics, if they fall within the tasks of one of the WGs mentioned below.

# WG1

**Topic 1:** Review of existing digital technologies for landscape inventorying and monitoring in relation to forests and decision support.

**Topic 2:** Review of options related to the “Internet of Things” and Big Data for landscape management in relation to forests and decision support.

# WG2

**Topic 1**: Review of existing ecosystem services indicators at the landscape level to be considered in planning, evaluation and monitoring.

**Topic 2**: Screening of existing platforms and frameworks for mapping ecosystem services at the landscape level.

# WG3

**Topic 1**: Identify stakeholders (i.e, types of actors) with their profile across EU as potential end-users of decision support systems.

**Topic 2**: Analyze how different jurisdictions envision and various forms of participatory processes are implemented in resource management.

Appendix B

# Application:

* Shall be submitted online in e-COST using dedicated forms available. In this regard, applicants are informed that their application can be accessed by the holders of leadership positions and any evaluation committees in the Action for evaluation purposes.
* Applicants must upload their CV in their e-COST profile. This information will be visible to the holders of leadership positions and any evaluation committees in the Action for evaluation purposes.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Networking Activity** | **Information to be provided in the application** |
| STSM | *To be filled in e-COST:** Title
* Start and end date (within the active Grant Period, i.e. no overlap across two consecutive Grant Periods)
* Budget requested by the applicant;
* Information about the host institution and contact person.
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|  | *To be uploaded to e-COST:** Application form (template available on e-COST) describing: Goals, description of the work to be carried out by the applicant, expected outcomes and description of the contribution to the Action MoU objectives;
* Confirmation of the host on the agreement from the host institution in receiving the applicant;
* Other documents required by the Action (e.g. recommendation letter, etc…)
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Appendix C

# COST Action DSS4ES Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) Grant Awarding Criteria

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| **1. Relevance to DSS4ES** |
| Relevance | How well the application addresses the objectives of DSS4ES  |
| Applicant  | Different countries, including ITCs(a), should be represented |
| Host institution | Different countries, including ITCs, should be represented |
| Working Groups (WG)  | How well the application contributes to the work of one or several WGs |
| **2. Quality of work plan** |
| Clear workplan | The clarity in which purpose, time plan and activities are described |
| Host institution  | How well the host institution supports the applicant in achieving the objectives of the mission |
| Outcomes | The proposed output in terms of scientific articles, conference contributions or other tangible results(b) |
| Further potential  | To what extend the STSM allows scientific activities to occur beyond the period of the STSM  |
| **3. Applicant’s CV** |
| Applicant  | Priority for early stage researchers with relevant topics of the thesis  |
| **4. Budget plan** |
| Duration/budget ratio | Optimality of budget request for requested period and planed activities |

(a) COST Inclusiveness Target Countries

(b) Tangible results can take many forms, in addition to the compulsory report to e-COST, like presentation at a WG meeting, a short paragraph on the DSS4ES website, scientific article etc.