

## **COST Action 23137**

### **Print Culture and Public Spheres in Central Europe (1500–1800) | PCPS<sup>CE</sup>**

#### **Open Call for Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs)**

#### **with a special focus on Digital Humanities**

**For STSMs undertaken between 1 July 2026 and 31 October 2026**

#### **Important Dates**

**Call closes:** 30 June 2026

**Notification of Results:** 1 week after submission of complete application

**Mission Period:** 1 July 2026 – 31 October 2026

#### **About this Action**

PCPS<sup>CE</sup> investigates the interactions between the pre-modern media revolution through printing and the emergence of public spheres in Central Europe in early modern history. The Action aims to build a European and global network of stakeholders from education, research and cultural institutions with a special focus on Young Researchers and Innovators. It works towards an integrative methodology that brings together experts from different national and disciplinary backgrounds. The Action includes work on joint publications such as a compendium on the book history of Central Europe and the development of an annotated catalogue of digital data and tools. The initiative aims to promote a new scholarly and public historical awareness of the diverse, non-national pasts of Central Europe. More information can be found in the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) available in the following web page: [www.cost.eu/actions/CA23137](http://www.cost.eu/actions/CA23137).

#### **General information**

Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) are research visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, strengthening existing networks and fostering collaboration between COST Action Participants.

The Digital Humanities STSMs are specifically intended for researchers wishing to work on datasets that enable computational analysis related to the themes of the Action. Possible use cases include:

- compiling bibliographical datasets related to Central Europe;
- creating text corpora to analyse the dissemination of ideas;
- developing corpora for computer vision experiments, such as image reuse detection, feature extraction, and related analyses.

The PCPS<sup>CE</sup> Action is offering grants of up to €4,000 each for STSMs to be completed by 31 October 2026. The STSMs can range from 3 calendar dates to 3 months (maximum to the end of the Grand Period!) and are aimed at providing learning opportunities, preferably but not solely, to Young Researchers and Innovators<sup>1</sup> through research exchange outside their home country. The grant will be paid on successful completion of the STSM, but an advance payment of up to 50% can be paid to researchers from an Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC).

### Eligibility Rules

To apply for an STSM, the following criteria must be fulfilled:

- The Applicant must
  - be a member of COST Action 23137 and have an eCOST profile;
  - be based within a research institution in a legal entity in a COST Full/Cooperating Member, Near Neighbour Country (NNC) or European RTD;
  - be engaged in an official research programme as a PhD Student or postdoctoral fellow or can be employed by, or affiliated to, an institution, organisation or legal entity which has within its remit a clear association with performing research.
- The STSM must be in a different country to the applicant's institution.
- The application needs to be submitted before the deadline for an STSM call.
- The STSM must have a minimum duration of 3 calendar days. STSMs of longer duration are encouraged.

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<sup>1</sup> The researcher must be affiliated to a legal entity in a COST Full/Cooperating Member, NNC or European RTD. We particularly encourage Young Researchers (under 40 years old) to apply.

- STSM need to be carried out in their entirety before 31 October 2026

## Financial Rules

- The maximum grant is €4,000.
- The STSM will refund costs for travel, accommodation, subsistence and other costs to complete the mission.
- Specific provisions have been made to encourage the application submission by researchers from ITC countries<sup>2</sup>.
- The Action cannot fund salaries.

**Note:** The Action Management Committee (MC) can decide to approve the grant with a lower amount than requested

## Evaluation and awarding of STSM

- The evaluation of STSM applications and selection of STSM Grantees is performed by the Action's Grant Awarding Coordinator and the Core Group, on behalf of the Management Committee (MC) of the PCPS<sup>CE</sup> COST Action.
- The selection of applicants is based on the scientific scope of the STSM application, which must clearly fit into the Action's scientific objectives.
- The selection also takes into account the COST policies on promoting gender balance, enabling Young Researchers and Innovators (under 40 years old) and broadening geographical inclusiveness. As well as the suitability of the proposed budget.
- The applicants will be notified of the application results within 20 working days of receipt of the application.
- In some cases, the evaluation committee may ask for more information or ask the candidate to re-submit with further information or a revised budget.

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<sup>2</sup> Financial support for applicants from ITC countries:

STSM applicants with an affiliation in an institution in an ITC country can request a prepayment of up to 50% of the total grant in advance.

This is payable under 2 conditions: that the GH has sufficient funds to cover 50% of the grant in advance and that the host confirms to the GH that the mission has started.

The remainder will be refunded after the mission and on approval of a report on the mission from the applicant.

## Evaluation criteria for STSM applications

The PCPS<sup>CE</sup> STSM evaluation criteria (listed below) are based on the relevance of the mission to the aims and objectives of PCPS<sup>CE</sup>, the scientific scope and quality of the project, the scientific background and quality of the applicant and the suitability of the host research environment. They also consider COST Policy and Rules on promoting gender balance, enabling Young Researchers and broadening geographical inclusiveness.

- A minimum score of 75 is required for funding. With a minimum threshold of 15 required for “Relevance to the aims and objective of PCPS<sup>CE</sup>”.
- Applicants will be notified of the application results within 20 working days of receipt of the application.
- Applicants may be asked to provide additional information.
- Applicants may resubmit once in the same call if not successful.
- Applicants may apply for and be awarded more than one grant of any type during the call period, but in the case of restricted funds or applications of equal merit, the grant may be awarded in preference to an applicant that has not held a grant before.

Evaluation criteria	Max points
<b>Relevance to PCPS<sup>CE</sup> aims and objectives:</b> demonstrates an understanding of the aims of PCPS <sup>CE</sup> ; shows relevance to PCPS <sup>CE</sup> Objectives and the scientific objectives and tasks within at least one of the Working Groups	20 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Scientific quality of the project:</b> feasibility, originality, achievability and potential impact	20
<b>Scientific quality of the applicant:</b> skills and experience of the applicant, academic CV, and for PhD students, supervisor’s opinion	15
<b>Suitability of the research environment at the host institution:</b> methodology available, complementarity between host and applicant background	15
<b>Suitability of the budget requested:</b> a plausible and well-planned budget that is sufficient to cover expenses while demonstrating value for money	15

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<sup>3</sup> A minimum score of 15 points is required to be eligible for funding

<b>Relevance to COST policies:</b> promoting gender balance, enabling Young Researchers and broadening geographical inclusiveness	15
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Equal weighting is given to the scientific quality of the project and its relevance to the aims and objectives to PCPS<sup>CE</sup>, as the Action will only support STSM that are clearly relevant to PCPS<sup>CE</sup>. Pay specific attention to the PCPS<sup>CE</sup> MoU to make sure the research issue you wish to work with on the STSM is relevant.

### STSM Application Procedure

For information and a guide on how to apply online see the "[Grant Awarding user guide](#)" in COST Documents & Guidelines in the section "Documents for running a COST Action".

To start the application, you must have an e-COST profile or create one. Do this by logging into the e-COST platform (<https://e-services.cost.eu/>). You will also need to add your bank details and a CV to your profile before you can start the application.

In summary:

1. go to the COST website and select COST Actions and then "Grant applications" from the menu on the left. This will take you to <https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants/add>
2. Select our Action "CA23137 Print Culture and Public Spheres in Central Europe" by typing CA23137 in the search box under COST Action.
3. Then click on the blue box to "Apply for a Grant", select Short-term Scientific Mission grant by clicking "continue" and complete the information which includes:
  - A title for your STSM (limit 128 character limit, including spaces)
  - Start and end date (within the active Grant Period)
  - Budget requested by the applicant
  - Information about the host institution and contact person

**DO NOT SUBMIT** at this stage, just save the draft.

4. You will then return to the application page where you can select “upload documents” from the “options” drop- down box. This will take you to a page where you can download the COST template for the application form.
5. You will then need to complete this and upload the following documents:
  - Letter of support from the host confirming the host institution organisation can host the STSM applicant to perform the activities detailed in the STSM work plan on the agreed dates
  - CV (including a list of academic publications – if applicable)
  - For PhD students, letter with supervisor’s opinion on the relevance of the STSM to the student’s studies and suitability of the applicant
  - Application form (template available on e-COST) describing:
    - Details - STSM Title, start and end dates
    - Goals - Purpose and summary of the STSM (max 200 words)
    - Working Plan - description of the work to be carried out by the applicant (max 500 words)
    - Expected outcomes and contribution to the Action MoU objectives and deliverables
    - Main expected results and their contribution to the progress towards the Action objectives (either research coordination and/or capacity building objectives) and deliverables (max 500 words).
  - Budget plan (up to €4,000) – Please upload an Excel table, which summarizes the budget requested. Typical categories would be:
    - Travel (to and from and during the STSM)
    - Accommodation
    - Subsistence
    - Consumables
    - Other lab costs
    - Any other costs relevant to your STSM

Note: Please make the STSM request before the deadline of an STSM call.

## After completing the STSM

- Within 30 days from the end date of the STSM, the successful applicant must submit a scientific report, using the template provided on e-COST, to include work developed, main achievements and planned future follow-up activities. **IMPORTANT: If the Grant Period ends before the regular 30-day reporting deadline, this deadline shall be shortened accordingly. In such cases, the final report must be submitted no later than 15 days after the end of the Grant Period.**
- The applicant is also responsible for acquiring and uploading an official letter from the host institution formally accepting the scientific report.
- Failure to submit the scientific report within 30 days or rather the reduced deadline of 15 days (if end of activity = end of GP) from the end date of the STSM will cancel the Grant.

We look forward to receiving your application and are here to help with any questions you have.

Please send any questions to: [weis@uni-trier.de](mailto:weis@uni-trier.de)

Copied to: [Mona.Garloff@uibk.ac.at](mailto:Mona.Garloff@uibk.ac.at) & [marion.romberg@uni-bonn.de](mailto:marion.romberg@uni-bonn.de)

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COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation.

[www.cost.eu](http://www.cost.eu)