

Introduction

1 - General Principles

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COST (European **CO**operation in the field of **S**cientific and **T**echnical Research) promotes cooperation in the field of scientific and technical research for all its member states across a wide spectrum of disciplines and themes. Chairs and Management Committees are asked to pay special attention to country balance when drawing up lists of participants entitled for reimbursement, and to ensure that COST events and activities are distributed as fairly as possible to all the countries that have participated in an Action.

COST also practices an *open door* policy. The activities the COST Office supports are open and Actions should pay particular attention to encourage the younger members of the research community to attend the meetings, workshops and conferences that they organize. To promote this *open door* policy, Actions can apply for meeting support to offset the normal costs of organizing an event. As a result, the COST Office does not expect any charge to be levied for attending the scientific sessions of a COST meeting. Note, however, that participants may be asked to pay a fee to cover the provision of refreshment and meals, and lodging, where these have to be provided on site.

COST dispenses public funds and it is expected to make good use of them. The COST Office is subject to regular audits and has to be prepared to fully justify the payments it makes. The COST Office, therefore, may ask for clarification or further justification on occasion. It reserves the right to make spot checks with institutions, universities and firms whose employees it reimburses to check possible double payments. A constant objective is to simplify the system, to minimize the amount of paperwork, and to reimburse people as quickly as possible. Regularly reviews are carried out on these procedures.

For any questions contact office@cost.esf.org using 'Vademecum' as the subject line.