Guidelines for the communication, dissemination and exploitation of COST Action results and outcomes

cost
EUROPEAN COOPERATION
IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Document history

Version	Release date	Summary of changes
1	22/06/2015	First release of the document
2	25/11/2015	Update of the document to comply with the new template for COST documents. Besides that, other updates were made as described below: 1. Links in the body of the text updated 2. List of abbreviations 3. List of document reference added
3	26/02/2016	The document now features a chapter on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and one on Open Access (OA).
4	8/11/2017	Update of the document to comply with the new template for COST documents. Besides that, other updates were made as described below: 1. Change of title in order to better reflect the content of the guidelines (addition of 'communication') 2. The branding section is now part of the brand book (to avoid redundancy) 3. Revised (more developed) tips on how to create a communications strategy 4. The first section now includes more guidelines on how to choose the right journal and how to avoid 'predatory' publishers 5. Additional resources on science communications added

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1) COMMUNICATING YOUR COST ACTION

SHORT INTRODUCTION

About this document and sharing ideas

These guidelines aim to help you communicate strategically, so your ideas and projects reach your target audiences and have as much impact as possible. We want to help you make the best of your networking activities and share the story of your Action.

Strategies to communicate your Action involve engaging with two main types of audiences:

1. Sharing results and ideas with your peers, by publishing in scientific journals or presenting at conferences. The EU Commission term relating to this activity is 'dissemination'.
2. Sharing your work with audiences outside your scientific area, also known as science communications. These audiences can be industry or SMEs, policymakers, the media, laypersons or very specific groups such as patients affected by a particular disease or standardisation bodies, etc. We call this communication.

The first part of these guidelines is mainly about *communication* work – sharing your COST Action results and related messages with audiences outside your scientific area. The second part of the guidelines is dedicated to *dissemination* – sharing results and ideas with your peers, which is a 'must', strict requirement when receiving EU and COST funding.

The third part of the guidelines deals with the exploitation of COST Action results and outcomes, referring to Intellectual Property (IP).

Why invest time in communication when I could be doing research?

Communicating within and outside of your scientific community helps you:

- Put your work in the spotlight, which can attract future funds for your research; perhaps you are working on a new topic that needs extra funding?
- Build new connections within and outside your Action, which also helps the Action grow (think of businesses, NGOs and other organisations that may be interested in your Action's work).
- Put your proposals on the agenda of EU or national policy makers, provide advice and influence decision making (evidence-based policymaking)
- Educate and inform the public – you have a crucial role to play in proving that research, and the COST programme, is worthy of taxpayers' investment.

A) HOW DO I SET UP A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY?

From where do I start?

Communication planning starts at the beginning of the Action's lifetime. Based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), an assessment will help you define what you would like to achieve together, and the impact you would like to create. Which tangible results and benefits will you produce? Will there be any news value? This questioning process, which is the basis for the development of each communication strategy and plan, will be led by the communication responsible in each COST Action, the science communication manager. This can take place, for example, during the second MC meeting.

We advise to present a first proposal to MC members so they could comment on. Always align your communications objectives with the objectives stated in the Action's Memorandum of Understanding so that your efforts are logical and consistent.

Key questions are:

- What is your Action about?
- What do you want to achieve?
- For who are those results relevant?
- Who would need to know about this? Next to scientific communities, are the results also relevant for policymaking, do they have a societal impact and could grab the attention of the media?
- Is your Action about a new scientific field?
- Is there a lack of understanding of your topic among certain audiences that should be addressed?
- Is your Action on a research topic that should be more visible because of its societal impact?
- Do the expected results have news value for certain target audiences?

Per se, the creation of a network of scientists does not have any news value, except if the research field is new, or if there is a new dimension to it, e.g. interdisciplinary. There can be news value at local level, due to the involvement of a certain institution/university or high profile experts, which are of local or national interest.

What do I want to achieve?

Once you know where you stand, you can s**et a** communication goal or target for your Action. This involves knowing what you aim to achieve by the end of the Action. Try to be realistic in terms of resources and timeframe.

You may want to connect with stakeholder and research communities by:

- Sharing research results with your peers (see the dissemination section)
- Stimulating new research or projects
- Increasing/raising awareness of a certain research topic and its link with societal issues
- Influencing policymaking
- Changing views and behaviours.

Being able to measure your communication objectives will enable you to evaluate your results. This means you will need to define measurable goals where possible – e.g. visits to your COST Action website, number of queries from journalists, likes and followers on social media such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube.

Who needs to know? Whom should I reach?

Potential target audiences for your project:

- Scientific communities across Europe – any other COST Actions in the same field?
- Policymakers (EU or national, regional institutions and government authorities)
- Industry
- SMEs
- Regulatory authorities
- Standardisation bodies
- Laypersons.

What is the main message?

Adapting your message to the audience is vital for efficient communication. Try to be short and clear, so that your message is as impactful as possible. A short single phrase can reflect the reason behind your Action, and how you plan to tackle the issue you are facing. If your Action has already made significant progress and has had important results, it would be great to build the message around those achievements, e.g. studies. The message should leverage the relevance of these achievements for specific target audiences, which could be policymakers, industry, society as a whole, or perhaps a specific community and specific individuals, for example.

B) THE COMMUNICATION MIX: SHOULD I BLOG? SHOULD I SEND OUT A PRESS RELEASE? OR BOTH?

Here is an overview of the tools you can use to communicate to your target audiences.

Audience	Channel	Tools
Scientific communities, industry, other organisations	Online	Websites (COST Action, university, conferences, etc.), social media, blogs, e-newsletters, e-books, online scientific journals, magazines targeting industry, articles in scientific magazines, videos
	Events	Exhibitions, conferences, workshops, seminars, congresses, videos, posters, brochures…
Policymakers, national authorities	Online/Print/TV/Radio	Articles for EU policy/research websites & magazines, in national/local media, press releases, videos, e-books, white papers, interviews, articles for national and/or regional/local press, dailies, weeklies, television, videos
	Events	1-on-1 meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars
Layperson	Online/Print/TV/Radio	Social media, educational material: videos, multimedia), videos, interviews, success stories, press releases, articles for national and/or regional/local press, dailies, weeklies, television, radio
	Events	Info days, lectures, festivals. Special events

You can use multipliers to help you spread your messages across their channels:

- Scientific publishing houses, peer reviewed journals
- Your university (e.g. press releases)
- Specialised media target niches, i.e. research communities and industry associations, not-for-profit organisations
- Scientific libraries
- COST (website, newsletter and social media accounts).

C) TIMING

Plan your timing carefully so you do not waste an opportunity that could help your message stand out.

For example, you might want to issue a press release or arrange for a media interview quickly, so that you do not lose momentum if your Action is working on a topic:

- That has been receiving media attention (on political or societal issues such as migration, climate change etc.);
- Or is related to an upcoming event (e.g. foreseeable weather disaster, a hurricane);
- Or a recent important dramatic science-related event (e.g. Fukoshima).

These kinds of links will help attract media attention and coverage and thereby reach a bigger audience.

There are science media centres in two countries – e.g. Germany (www.sciencemediacenter.de) and the UK (www.sciencemediacentre.org) – that have as their mission to support and guide science journalists in identifying scientific experts for interviews on breaking news and on dramatic science-related events that need to be evaluated immediately. They also offer to identify experts for background stories. You could consider registering yourself in their expert database – if you are willing and able to communicate in the respective national language, as they target national media.

You should also set up a communication timeline (a so-called *editorial calendar*) for the Action's entire duration. In practical terms, key moments for communication activities could be set as reminders in Outlook or an online calendar that will alert you weeks and days in advance so that you can prepare your communication in time. Think about what (the message) you would like to say, when (over the next 12, 24, 36 months), how (what channel) and to whom (audience).

D) SOCIAL MEDIA

Sharing your content on social media helps reach more stakeholders and communities. COST's largest social media community is active on Facebook and Twitter, but our LinkedIn and YouTube channels can also help you create new connections.

You can share all your activities on social media by posting your news and events, linking to your Action website, and sharing live webcasts of your meetings (YouTube Live).

Here is the A-Z of social media platforms from the Times Higher Education

Read more: How academics and researchers can get more out of social media

E) A PICTURE TELLS A THOUSAND WORDS

Always think about adding a good photo or video to your news content. This boosts the number of people who will interact with your web and social media content. Here are some links to online providers of free resources, courtesy of the European Science Communication Institute (ESCI).

Looking for free to use and Creative Commons images. Here are some of ESCI's favourites

- National Science Foundation – Images, audio & video from nanotechnology to space
- Free Underwater Images – Deep dive into this!
- Animal photos.info – bird based creative commons pictures
- US library of congress science files – vast resources on numerous science topics
- Flickr Creative Commons - 100 million to chose from!
- Google Images – search & filter by usage rights
- CC Search – search engine of Creative Commons
- Every Stock Photo – search engine for free photos
- Pixabay – free high quality images, useful for print materials
- Public health library - disease control & prevention

F) A WEBSITE FOR MY COST ACTION

As stated in the COST Vademecum, your Action can have only one website. An Action's website needs to feature:

- COST logo, EU emblem and accompanying text: "Funded by the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme of the European Union"
- Link to the Action's web page on the COST website and a link to the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as it appears on the COST website
- Link to the relevant COST website pages featuring the COST rules and guidelines: see http://www.cost.eu/participate.
- Names and contact information of the leading persons of the Action (Action Chair, Vice-Chair, Work package leaders, Science Communication Manager, Grant Holder, etc.).
- Short description of COST and a link to the COST website
- Information and rules for joining the Action and taking part in its activities.

DOs

The homepage should clearly communicate the:
- Aim of the Action
- Information on how other researchers can join the Action or its activities
- Upcoming events (training schools, conferences etc.)
- Action's results and outcomes (be those publications, guidelines, white papers etc.).

You should also:

- Link to similar COST Action websites and eventually other ERA initiatives
- Think about including a media section (material for the press: facts and figures, outcomes of your activities, press releases, videos, contact details of your Action's communication coordinator)
- Include the COST Action's social media accounts
- Consider using the ".eu" domain
- Add keywords to the webpage's metadata and use tools that search engines provide to optimise the site's visibility
- Check the **COST brand book** in order to ensure a correct use of the COST logo, EU flag, acknowledgements, etc.

DON'Ts

Try to avoid linking to COST documents like the Vademecum or others describing participation rules. Link to COST website pages only, since the document download links may change.

Some examples:

- https://mi-network.org
- http://www.intrepid-cost.eu
- http://www.enckep-cost.eu
- http://aelaw.unizar.es

G) MAKING A VIDEO: FILMING MY ACTION CONFERENCE OR MEETING

Here are some tips on making a video by the School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR) at the University of Sheffield, UK.

H) WHAT MAKES A GOOD STORY; HOW TO SPOT AND WRITE ONE

Success stories are articles usually meant for non-specialised audiences and policymakers. We can help you share them with science journalists across the world through the Alpha Galileo science media platform. This is a science news service that journalists from around the world are subscribed to and receive all kinds of content, ranging from press releases, multimedia, events, publications or longer background stories. The stories on the COST website are also posted on Alpha Galileo. We also share our content on social media.

Everybody likes a good story to relate to, so our advice is to try not to sound too abstract and avoid scientific jargon as much as possible by using plain, simple language. Try to cut long phrases into short, clear sentences.

A good story is usually about:

- Timeliness – link your story to current events, if you can. e.g. forest fires across Europe
- Importance – your story is of public importance, essential information everyone should know about
- Identification – give the journalist the chance to identify with your message. How does my network/research affect people's everyday lives?
- 'Conflict' – provide an alternate or conflicting position to other professional opinions, positions or knowledge?
- 'Fascination' – the "wow" factor
- 'Myth busting' – How does my scientific knowledge counter beliefs generally accepted by the public/society? Example: climate change being a result of the Sun's radiation (http://www.cost.eu/media/cost_stories/changing-sun-changing-climate).

I) PRESS RELEASE WRITING TIPS

Press releases are solely created for media distribution, meaning that they need to be framed in such a manner that reflects the "news" factor. Press releases are written in the style of an "inverted pyramid", with the top paragraphs containing the most relevant information. Please keep in mind the points made in the section above, 'What makes a good story', before deciding to write the release (think about whether the content would really be newsworthy to a journalist).

It is always a good idea to kick off your Action with a press release, if the topic is timely (e.g. an Action working on forest management kicking off during a forest fire crisis in Southern Europe). It can create

local/regional media attention due to the reputation of the organisation (e.g. university/institution) having initiated the proposal. If the Action has had significant outcomes, you can plan for a press release towards the end of the project.

The COST Association's Communications Unit (communications@cost.eu) can help you edit press releases, within our capacity limits. We also recommend getting in touch with your institution's press office for specialist advice. The press office will be able to help you send the release to the relevant media and could eventually organise interviews (if relevant).

- Recommended length: max. 350 words

Texts should stay within the limit and follow best web content practices. These include the use of clear language and the text should be easy to scan by readers.

When possible, the passive voice should be avoided: "Anna returned the book" instead of "The book was returned by Anna". Try to avoid jargon as much as possible. Avoid lengthy sentences and paragraphs.

Summary of the above points.

Aim	Telling a story that matters to EU citizens and policymakers
Storyboard	Inverted pyramid: make sure you focus on the most important parts of the story first: who, what, when, where and why.
Structure	Title: it should reflect the message of the story, be short and catchy. Introduction (stand first): 70 words The introduction expands on the title by describing the main message in a couple of lines (such as the main network achievement or objective). Help readers scan the story by adding bullet points and subheadings to mark key content.
The situation at hand or the big picture:	What makes the network so important from a societal perspective? What challenge is the research community facing? Focus on the big picture. How is that relevant to the average citizen? What is the benefit to Europeans of the networking? Enlarge on results, benefits behind networking etc.
Actors	Who is involved? What past/future activities should be highlighted? Insert quotes whenever possible.

| Background/extras | More details on the challenges faced, previous efforts in the field(s).

Add a picture that illustrates the work /aim of the Action.

If you happen to have writer's block, remember the aim of your effort. |
|---|---|

In the case of mainstream media, COST Actions can frame the content of a story by first defining what is newsworthy (the human factor) about their activities and research. This includes:

- The societal issue(s) or challenge(s) that the Action is tackling – facts and figures
- The main results, objectives, risks or benefits in a clear, simple manner, avoiding scientific jargon
- Outcomes in facts and figures.

J) OTHER THINGS TO LOOK FOR WHEN WRITING A STORY

Besides making the headlines, it is very important that we also engage with policymakers at the institutional level and constantly show the added value of the COST programme. This is why we also target these types of achievements:
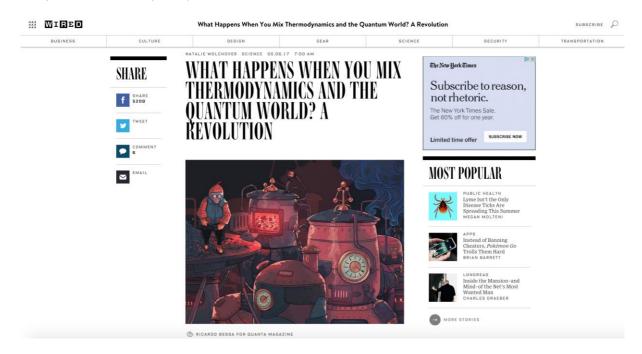
- Researchers who were able to get access to or positions in high-profile institutions/research groups through a COST Action (e.g. European Research Council (ERC) grantees, Nobel Prize winners, big research centres like CERN, important European companies etc.) and were able to establish a long-lasting cooperation;
- New research topics, new scientific fields, breakthrough innovations that emerged from the networking established through a COST Action;
- SMEs that were engaged in a short-term scientific mission (hosting or sending institution) with positive results for the company (new product development);
- SMEs that managed to find partners, together submitting successful EU or national proposals, as a result of their participation in a COST Action;
- Young researchers whose careers got a boost thanks to their participation in COST capacity building activities (training schools, short-term scientific missions);
- Young researchers who introduced a new technique/approach learned at a COST training school/ short-term scientific meeting;
- Young researchers who gained a new insight that strongly impacted their research project(s) or were able to secure a long-term position in academia or industry (in their own country or abroad);
- Fruitful collaborations established with strategically important Near Neighbour Countries (or other International Partner Countries) within a COST Action;
- Researchers/stakeholders providing policymakers and governmental authorities with scientific advice, in the context of new legislation or the development of new standards;
- Researchers/stakeholders developing high-impact citizen engagement initiatives with local communities;
- Any type of story that clearly demonstrates the impact a COST Action can have not only at a national level, but also at an institutional level or on someone's career.

K) DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

Working with the media is an opportunity to get your results out there or to frame the topic of your research.

Usually, journalists covering COST Actions interview network participants for short articles focusing on a particular advancement or for longer pieces (features) that provide a background for reflection. Here, several COST Action members are interviewed in relation to their Action's approach. These different views on the topic (several researchers were interviewed) help build context and balance, ensuring the analysis does not sway in a particular direction.

Example of a feature story published in Quanta magazine and reprinted in WIRED magazine.
https://www.wired.com/2017/05/happens-mix-thermodynamics-quantum-world-revolution/

Please let us know when you can about your media calls and interviews. Sometimes this can prove impossible, given your very busy schedules, but knowing that your Action has caught a journalist's eye is something that helps us develop relationships with them. This is also something we can use to reflect the importance of the COST programme overall.

You can always double check texts or media questions with your institution's press officers – they are there to help as well.

L) PAID ARTICLES IN MAGAZINES

We know that COST Actions members receive calls from various magazines offering them editorial space to promote their results to policymakers and industry representatives. The marketing staff working for these magazines may claim that COST endorses the respective publications. We do not. The European Commission also warns: "Common tactics to secure business include vague references to high-level contributions from decision-makers, or making project participants believe that their activities have been singled out on account of special merit, which may not be the case."

Most of these magazines cannot prove readership profiles and numbers. Paying for an article in a magazine falsely claiming it receives input from EU Commission is not an efficient way of communicating an Action's contribution to research.

Furthermore, we would consider expenses made in the framework of those magazines as 'advertisement' or media placement. These expenses are not eligible under the COST Vademecum.

We will assess all expenses by considering quality and impact. COST Actions should therefore be aware of the criteria below and make a first assessment before committing budget to publications.

Assess the quality of any non-scientific publication/magazine targeting policymakers by considering the following factors:

- The existence of a governing body: magazines need to have editorial boards or other governing bodies whose members are recognised experts in the subject areas included within the magazine's scope. The full names and affiliations of the magazine's editors must be provided on the magazine's website.
- The existence of an editorial team and/or contact information: magazines must provide the full names and affiliations of the magazine's editors on their websites as well as contact information for the editorial office.
- Editorial work/journalistic approach: magazines must not allow for the mere publication of articles written by non-professionals without internal editorial revision, e.g. the publication of articles provided without revision, similar to advertorials.

The impact of such magazines will be assessed using these factors:

- The existence of independent data on distribution and readership profiles, e.g. number and profile of readers (to assess the match of target groups and reach).
- Web presence: the magazine's digital presence (number of followers, etc.) is an indicator of their real reach and distribution figures.

We kindly ask the science communication manager within the COST Action to contact the COST Association's Communications Unit (communications@cost.eu) for guidance in these cases. We have collaborated with some magazines – for example *PanEuropean Networks* (editions: *Science & Technology*; *Government*) and *European Energy Innovation*, where we publish articles on COST Actions free of charge, always considering the magazines' editorial calendar and effort.

M) RESOURCES AND ARTICLES ON SCIENCE COMMUNICATIONS

Additional resources from:

- The European Research Council
- The National Science Foundation
- The Science Media Centre
- The BBC's College of Journalism Blog
- Nature – Should scientists tell stories?
- TED talk – Battling bad science
- Nature – Alberto Cairo on storytelling in science communications
- Nature - Storytelling
- Nature – Against storytelling of scientific results
- The Guardian - How to pitch articles to editors
- Medium.com - The difficulty in science communication
- IOP Science - Effective science communication: a practical guide to surviving as a scientist
- Slate: Scientists, stop thinking explaining science will fix things.

N) USING COST'S VISUAL IDENTITY

It is crucial that you acknowledge COST and EU funding in your communications efforts relating to your Action. The COST **_Brand book_**, presents the brand platform and indicates how to use COST's visual elements.

2) DISSEMINATION AND OPEN ACCESS – SHARING RESULTS WITH PEERS

COST promotes Open Access and, in the conditions stated in the COST Vademecum, considers expenses for Open Access as eligible expenses. What follows is some key information on Open Access.

A) GENERAL BACKGROUND

Advances in information technology over the past decades have revolutionised the way information is generated, stored and disseminated. The advances open up new opportunities and challenges for researchers and scholars.

Open Access (OA) refers to making research outcomes available in a digital format, free of charge, and increasingly free of most copyright, licensing restrictions and technical or other barriers to access. These barriers include digital rights management or requirements to register to access research outcomes.

The move towards Open Access publishing is an established trend. Open Access publishing is motivated by the consideration that new knowledge – particularly if achieved and consolidated through public financing – should be made freely available for the benefit of society and its citizens. More and more funding agencies and institutions require researchers to deposit articles in freely accessible repositories as a condition of funding.

The traditional model for academic publishing, which is based on generating profit for publishers, is another strong driver jeopardising access to research results. Subscription costs have increased considerably in recent years. This price rise makes subscriptions increasingly unaffordable for scientific libraries, especially in countries with lower budgets for research and research infrastructure. High prices also reduce access for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that cannot afford to invest large amounts of money in journal subscriptions.

Open Access is vital for research and innovation communities around the world, which is why COST encourages free access to research results and knowledge for the benefit of research communities and people worldwide.

Over the years, a range of different Open Access publishing models has been developed.

- The 'green' model: authors deposit a copy of the manuscript with an institutional or other repository, even if the paper has been published by a subscription-based journal. Most publishers allow authors to deposit full-text versions of their manuscripts in such repositories immediately. In other cases, the manuscript is embargoed and cannot be published before the embargo date.
- The 'gold' model: Articles are universally accessible free of charge, immediately upon publication. This model sometimes requires authors to pay the journal publisher a fee for Article-Processing Charges (APC).
- The 'hybrid' model: This is a version of the 'gold' model. Authors pay a fee for a paper published in a traditional 'toll' journal, which is accessible immediately.

- The 'diamond' model: The journal is freely accessible and authors pay no APC. These are non-commercial journals that mostly do not have a profit motive. They charge neither authors nor readers.
- The 'diamond-plus' model: Authors are exempt from the APC and also receive honoraria.

There are still debates on Open Access because of the interests at stake and the significant economic implications. Additionally, Open Access brings about turmoil in a traditionally established market. Traditional publishers are now confronted with the imperative to revise their business models with the emergence of new legitimate actors in their market niche.

The COST Strategic Workshops on Open Access[1] revealed that different fields of research have different publishing traditions[2], leading to conclusion that the implementation of Open Access requirements should not be done in haste or in an overly prescriptive manner.

B) COST GUIDELINES ON OPEN ACCESS

COST encourages Open Access to promote the availability of results published thanks to COST funding. Open Access is a means to boost the worldwide visibility and accessibility of publicly funded European science and technology research. To achieve this goal, COST facilitates Open Access publishing strategies for COST Actions and contributes to their costs, according to COST rules and principles for dissemination activities.

In relation to knowledge management and IP, the Rules for Participation and Implementation of COST Activities already indicate COST's commitment to promote Open Access and to encourage the availability of results published through COST funding.

COST Actions are required to plan and implement their own dissemination and exploitation activities independently, via their Management Committees (MC)[3]. The MC discussion on this topic starts at the first MC meeting and continues as necessary until the Action ends. The basis for this discussion is the Dissemination and/or Exploitation Plan that is part of the Technical Annex of the Action Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

MC decisions concerning dissemination and exploitation of the Action results and outcomes must be reflected in the Work and Budget Plan of each Grant Period, which is annexed to the Action Grant Agreement – both in terms of planned dissemination activities/outputs and proposed budget allocation.

As the publication of results and outcomes is one of the Actions' key outputs, the MC needs to address Open Access in the context of a dissemination strategy.

Publicly funded scientific results should be freely available online, without any barriers to access. Consequently, COST Actions should, whenever possible, freely share knowledge and results, including Actions papers in publications, for the benefit of the research community and society at large.

Action publications are a direct result of an Action's activities. They are usually joint publications: the authors are affiliated with different institutions participating in the Action. A notable exception is a publication arising from a short-term scientific mission (STSM), which may have a single author only.

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[1] *Open Access: COST Symposium on Practice, Opportunities and Challenges* http://www.cost.eu/events/openaccess and its follow-up http://www.cost.eu/events/oaworkshop.
[2] Cf. *Open Access: Practice, Opportunities and Challenges. A Report from a COST strategic initiative* (2014), providing an overview of the trends in different scientific domains (http://www.cost.eu/module/download/41717).
[3] COST 134/14 REV (p. 8) The COST Action MC has the responsibility to: establish specific provisions linked to the management, share, creation dissemination or exploitation of knowledge, including Open Access policy and IP management that may rise from an Action. These provisions must comply with national, European or international legislation and the need to protect participants' legitimate interests.

Action publications may benefit from COST funding[4] (i.e., as described in the Work and Budget Plan or in the Final Action Dissemination request).

Action publications benefitting from COST funding shall - whenever possible - be made available as Open Access by means of self-archiving (also referred to as "green" Open Access) in an online repository before, during or after being published[5].

The COST Association encourages Actions to follow this principle for all Action publications in general. During the "green" Open Access embargo period, immediate access to the article may be still possible either through a specific agreement with the publisher, which may involve fees, or by obtaining a copy of the (post-print) publication directly from the author.

An Open Access survey by the European University Association (EUA) found that concerns over copyright infringement and uncertainty about scientific publishers' self-archiving policies remain the main barriers to self-archiving[6].

For subscription-based journals, the publication agreement should mention the author's right to deposit a post-print version of the publication in an online repository. If the publisher allows the deposit of the journal's edited version of the article, then it should be this version that is self-archived and serves as a reference for publishers' self-archiving policies.

Although the "green" route to Open Access is the preferred model, APCs charged by Open Access publishers for "gold" open access (see page 17 of this document) are eligible[7] expenses when approved by the Action's MC and Science Officer.

The MC's discussions and decisions should address the critical aspects of an Action's Open Access strategy, including the compilation of a list of high-quality Open Access journals relevant to the Action and the choice of a repository to archive and make an Action's publications available. The MC may also decide to consult the Science Officer or the Action Rapporteur for additional input on Open Access.

Although COST Action participants are familiar with the key journals in their area, it is worth reminding authors about the problem of "predatory publishing"[8]. An increasing number of Open Access publishers pretend to be legitimate, but in fact aim to exploit Open Access as a means for easy profit without providing the editorial and publishing services associated with legitimate publishers[9]. The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)[10] is a community-curated online directory that indexes and provides access to Open Access, peer-reviewed journals. Established scientific journals are indexed by databases of peer-reviewed literature, e.g. Scopus[11], and may be ranked according to scientific indicators, e.g. the SJR[12].

In relation to choosing the type of repository for archiving Action publications, several options are available, including, for instance, institutional[13] and disciplinary repositories (e.g. Arxiv)[14]. The Open Access Infrastructure for Research in Europe (OpenAIRE) is a reference for this discussion.

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[4] Please refer to the COST Vademecum for further guidance.
[5] The choice should take into account, for instance, the embargo periods that some publishers request. Embargo periods vary, depending on the discipline, from 6 to 36 months.
[6] EUA's Open Access Checklist for Universities: a practical guide on implementation http://www.eua.be/Libraries/publications-homepage-list/Open_access_report_v3 (p. 22).
[7] Please refer to the COST Vademecum, section 9 for further guidance.

[8] A cached list of predatory publishers previously maintained by Prof. Jeffrey Beall is available at http://beallslist.weebly.com/
[9] http://thinkchecksubmit.org/ provides the basic considerations in choosing the right journal
[10] https://doaj.org/
[11] https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/scopus
[12] http://www.scimagojr.com/ and http://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php.
[13] A list of institutional repositories is available on OpenDOAR at http://www.opendoar.org/countrylist.php?cContinent=Europe.
[14] A list of disciplinary repositories is available at http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Disciplinary_repositories

An additional element worth considering is the use of academic social media such as ResearchGate or Mendeley. Any MC decision on the most suitable type of repository for the Action should take into account institutional and national policies on Open Access and self-archiving[15]. When in doubt, researchers should refer to their institution or any other relevant contact point.

Regardless of the chosen repository, the COST Action title, number and acronym should be included as part of the bibliographic metadata.

While COST actively promotes an Open Access policy for results and outcomes published with the support of European Commission funding, we would like to draw attention to and support the protection of Intellectual Property.

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[15] According to the EUA Open Access Survey, 93.4% of universities have an Open Access policy already in place or are developing one. See EUA's Open Access Checklist for Universities: a practical guide on implementation http://www.eua.be/Libraries/publications-homepage-list/Open_access_report_v3 (p. 20).

3) EXPLOITATION OF COST ACTION RESULTS AND OUTCOMES: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

A) GENERAL BACKGROUND

The aim of this section is to provide some general recommendations on how COST Actions can best manage Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)[16].

Intellectual Property (IP) protection helps inventors create value from their ideas, turning inspiration into sustainable business success[17]. There are many legal definitions of IP. One common definition is Article 2 of the *Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization*[18]. Article 2 defines IP as including rights relating to:

- Literary, artistic and scientific works
- Performances of performing artists, phonograms, and broadcasts
- Inventions in all fields of human endeavour
- Scientific discoveries
- Industrial designs
- Trademarks, service marks, and commercial names and designations
- Protection against unfair competition
- All other rights resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary or artistic fields.

COST Actions seek to generate breakthrough ideas, concepts and products, some of which may involve IPRs. While the COST Association does not impose any constraints or obligations on grant recipients and participants relating to IPRs, we have always aimed to protect participants' interests and ensure that they pay appropriate attention to IP. COST also seeks to avoid any possible IPR-related conflicts and disputes among COST participants.

COST is required through its agreement with the European Commission to implement the principles set out in the Code of Practice annexed to the Commission's Recommendation on IP management [19]. Developing an IP policy is one of the three main principles of this Code of Practice. COST must also ensure that Grant Holders involved in COST Actions are made aware of these measures.

B) COST FRAMEWORK TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE IPR MANAGEMENT

When submitting a proposal in response to an Open Call, proposers are asked to read a Disclaimer on IPRs and on copyright. They must also tick a box stating that they have the necessary authorisations to use photographs, slides, graphs, digital images or other material included in the Technical Annex, either through ownership and/or by permission from the relevant IPRs holders.

Everyone involved in a COST Action must comply with the *COST Code of Conduct*[20], which contains provisions on confidentiality and IP.

In addition, Section 2.2.2 of an Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) presents its dissemination and/or exploitation plan. This includes a plan on IPRs protection and exploitation when applicable.

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[16] See COST's mission statement: http://www.cost.eu/about_cost/mission
[17] Intellectual Property Office (IPO) http://www.ipo.gov.uk/ip4b.htm
[18] http://www.wipo.int/treaties/en/text.jsp?file_id=283854
[19] *Commission Recommendation C (2008) 1329 of 10.4.2008 on the management of intellectual property in knowledge transfer activities and the Code of Practice for universities and other public research organisations*: http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/pdf/ip_recommendation_en.pdf
[20] http://www.cost.eu/about_cost/organisation

Each Action's Management Committee (MC) is also invited to take the necessary steps, be it by written agreement among the participants or otherwise, to protect these rights, if any, in line with the principles set out in the *Rules for Participation in and Implementation of COST Activities*[21] and corresponding guidelines.

C) ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES ON HOW TO MANAGE IPR

The key principles of IP management are identification, exploitation and protection. A COST Action MC may consider requiring the signature of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) by authorised signatories when the MC in planning an activity identifies a risk in the release of information that should be protected.

The legal and/or technology transfer departments/units of most organisations can provide common templates of NDAs. The European IPR Helpdesk[22] also provides such templates.

A Consortium Agreement is not per se required between participants in a COST Action, given the nature of a COST Action and its specific conditions compared to other actions supported by the European Commission (COST funds networking activities and not research).

However, it might be desirable in some specific cases for COST Action participants to make an assessment as to whether a Consortium Agreement is needed. Furthermore, some common principles listed below should apply to a COST Action, hence the importance of the dissemination and exploitation plan agreed to in the MoU.

The guidelines provided below are given as examples and do not constitute an exhaustive list.

Background IP

Background IP[23] means any tangible or intangible input, from data to know-how, information or rights that exist before the COST Action started and that is needed to implement the COST Action or to exploit its results.

Examples: prototypes, patents, database rights.

Best practice

Background IP disclosed by any participant to any other participant in the course of and for use in a COST Action shall at all times remain the exclusive property of the participant who introduced the Background IP for use by the COST Action.

Access right to Background IP

Each participant should grant each of the other participants involved in a COST Action a non-exclusive royalty-free right and license to use and access its Background IP for the duration of the COST Action and for the sole purpose of conducting the COST Action.

If access rights are needed for exploitation purposes, each participant should grant to each of the other participants involved in a COST Action a license under fair and reasonable terms.

It is best practice to list the background at an early stage: this could be done via the Action's MoU.

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[21] http://www.cost.eu/participate
[22] https://www.iprhelpdesk.eu/search/node/NDA
[23] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf#page=198

Foreground IP

Foreground IP[24], commonly referred to as "Results" under Horizon 2020, means any tangible output (e.g. prototypes) and intangible output (e.g. patent rights, database rights) that are produced during the course of a COST Action.

> Best practice
>
> Ownership of the results will be determined based on who generated them.
>
> A participant who generated the results solely will solely own the rights associated to them.
>
> Joint ownership applies if the results are generated *jointly* by more than one participant to a COST Action.
>
> When required for the implementation of a COST Action, some licensing procedure under fair and reasonable terms shall be put in place in order to allow other participants to use and exploit the results.
>
> Adequate forms of protection exist depending on the results, such as, but not limited to, patents, trademarks, industrial designs, copyrights, trade secrets, confidentiality agreements…
>
> The COST Association strongly recommends that attention should focus on results that may lead to commercial or industrial exploitation and that these should receive appropriate IP protection.

IP management during dissemination activities

A participant shall not include in any dissemination activity another participant's result or Background IP without obtaining prior written approval unless these have already been published (and then with proper reference).

If a participant wishes to produce a publication or a presentation in relation to the COST Action that may contain another participant's result or Background IP, he/she must contact the MC, which shall be responsible for the coordination of an appropriate procedure.

The COST Association suggests the following procedure:

- Provide a copy of the draft publication to each participant involved in the generation of results to be published within a sufficient period of time (suggestion – 2 weeks) prior to the intended date of submission of the publication, or prior to the date of the presentation.
- Take account of all and any comments received from the other participants involved in the results to be published within the defined notice period. On request, remove any information belonging to another participant from the draft publication. If necessary, delay the intended publication for a sufficient period of time (suggestion – 3 months) to enable one or more of the other participants to prepare and file a patent application for any patentable inventions achieved during a COST Action that would be prejudiced by the relevant publication.

Open Innovation

COST encourages participants to consider whenever possible an Open Innovation approach. This approach requires a proper management of IP. COST also recommends that participants read useful

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[24] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf#page=198

materials available on the European IPR Helpdesk (www.iprhelpdesk.eu), such as the fact sheet *Intellectual property management in open innovation*[25].

D) BUDGET LINKED TO IPR

The Cost Action participants who own results/Foreground IP shall pay all costs associated to the filing, prosecution and maintenance of all IP applications. Costs may be paid jointly or shared proportionally by each participant contributing to the IP on a case-by-case basis and as agreed between the participants. The COST Association will not cover those costs. Please refer to the COST Vademecum for details on eligible costs under a COST Action.

E) WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT AND USEFUL INFORMATION ON IPR

For assistance, seek support from the relevant resources as described below.

At COST Action level

For any questions connected to IPRs during a COST Action, the COST Association recommends that participants seek advice from the Action Chair and Vice Chair, in addition to seeking support at national and EU levels. We suggest that you discuss any issue with the MC, which shall ensure the appropriate coordination of IPRs management.

At national level

- The national organisation in charge of IP, such as the IPO[26] in the UK, INPI[27] in France.
- The legal and/or technology transfer/knowledge exchange department/unit of your own organisation and internal procedures/guidelines applicable in your own organisation.

At EU Level

Consult the practical guidance and support available on the European Commission's participant portal[28].

- Rules for participating in Horizon 2020[29].
- The Commission's 2008 recommendation on the management of intellectual property in knowledge transfer activities and the Code of Practice[30].
- To learn more about Horizon 2020 rules on IP, read the related articles of Section 3 of the *H2020 Programme AGA – Annotated Model Grant Agreement*[31].
- European IPR Helpdesk[32] and the associated *Your Guide to IP in Horizon 2020*[33]. You can also refer to thematic fact sheets published on the IPR Helpdesk website.

At international level

Useful reading materials are available on the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)[34] website.

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[25] https://www.iprhelpdesk.eu/sites/default/files/newsdocuments/Fact-Sheet-IP-Management-in-Open-Innovation.pdf
[26] https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/intellectual-property-office
[27] https://www.inpi.fr/fr
[28] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/reference_docs.html
[29] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/legal_basis/rules_participation/h2020-rules-participation_en.pdf
[30] Commission Recommendation C (2008) 1329 of 10.4.2008 on the management of intellectual property in knowledge transfer activities and the Code of Practice for universities and other public research institutions attached to this recommendation.
[31] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf#page=198
[32] https://www.iprhelpdesk.eu/
[33] https://www.iprhelpdesk.eu/sites/default/files/documents/EU_IPR_IP-Guide.pdf
[34] http://www.wipo.int/about-ip/en

4) REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

COST Implementation Rules establish the conditions for participation in COST activities and in particular in COST Actions, namely:

- Rules for Participation in and Implementation of COST Activities (COST132/14 REV)
- COST Action Proposal Submission, Evaluation, Selection and Approval (COST 133/14 REV)
- COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment (COST 134/14 REV 2)
- Rules for Participation of Non-COST Countries and Specific Organisations (COST 135/14 REV)
- COST Vademecum: http://www.cost.eu/Vademecum

5) CONTACTS

For any questions related to the content of these guidelines on communications, contact:

communications@cost.eu

For any questions related to the content of these guidelines on Open Access, contact:

Science.Operations@cost.eu

For any questions related to the content of these guidelines on IPR, contact:

legal@cost.eu