



Call for Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM)

Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) – Software & Hardware Evaluation Framework for AR in Forestry

Applications are now open for a **Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM)** at the **TED University, Ankara** to be carried out between **20 August and 9 October 2026** (the exact dates are flexible but the duration is 1 month).

During the STSM, the selected participant will work with XR hardware and software to prepare task tutorials and develop a template for hardware and software evaluation within WG2 and WG3. The main task will be to conduct and document example evaluations of Unity, resulting in a structured software and hardware evaluation report that can be used as a basis for evaluating additional software within the COST Action.

If you are interested in applying, please contact the host for further information. I will provide the application details and discuss the proposed activities and practical arrangements.

Application deadline: 30 July, 2026

The start date: Between 15 August – 5 September, 2026

If you are interested, please contact

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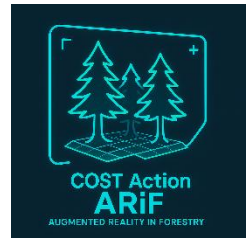
Short-Term Scientific Mission (STSM) are exchange visits between researchers and innovators involved in a COST Action, allowing a scientist to visit an institution or laboratory in a country different from the applicant home affiliation. The start and end date of a STSM must be within the active Grant Period of the Action. Their aim is to foster collaboration in excellent research infrastructures and share new techniques that may not be available in a participant's home institution or laboratory. These exchanges typically last from a few days to several months.

How to apply?

Follow these steps to submit your application:

1. **Review the Guidelines:** Carefully read the **ARiF STSM Guidelines** before applying (next pages).

COST Action CA23135 - Bringing Digital Data and Reality Together Augmented Reality in Forestry (ARiF)

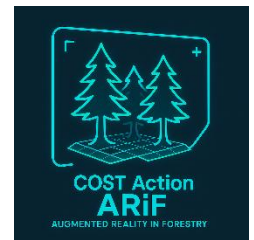


2. Prepare the required documents:

- Complete the **STSM Grant Application Form** and save it as a PDF document. → [STSM_GrantApplication](#)
- Invitation letter from the Host Institution.
- Letter of Support from the applicant's home institution (optional)
- Updated CV in e-COST profile
- A budget estimate (up to €4.000)

3. Submit your application:

- Log in to your e-COST profile (or create one if you don't have an account).
- Complete the electronic application form available [here](#).



After the STSM

- **Confirmation from the Host Institution.** Get a letter or an email from the senior researcher of the Host institution confirming that you have successfully completed the STSM.
- **Prepare Your Report:** Use the **STSM Report Template** to draft your report.
- **Submit the Report:** Upload the completed report to **e-COST** no later than **30 days** after the activity's conclusion, **15 days** from the end date of the Grant Period, or, within a shorter timeframe if requested by the Grant Holder or Grant Awarding Coordinator to meet reporting deadlines.
- **Capture the Moment:** Take photos with the Host Institution team to share on ARiFs social media. Personal posts on your own social media are also encouraged—please refer to the Guidelines for details.

Contact:

Karol Tomczak (Grant Awarding Coordinator) karol.tomczak@pit.lukasiewicz.gov.pl

Thomas Purfürst (Action Chair) thomas.purfuerst@foresteng.uni-freiburg.de

Links:

- ➔ [Grant Awarding user guide](#)
- ➔ [STSM GrantApplication](#)
- ➔ [STSM report template](#)
- ➔ [Annotated Rules for COST Actions](#)

Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)

[Annex 2 of the Annotated rules for COST Actions](#)

Eligibility

Eligible individuals to apply for a STSM grants must be affiliated to a legal entity in

- a **COST Full Member state**
- COST Cooperating Member (**Israel**)
- COST Partner Member (**South Africa**), with the grant being funded by the Partner Member
- a **Near Neighbouring Country**
- a specific organization among **EU Institutions, Bodies, Offices and Agencies**, with the grant being funded by the organization,
- a **European RTD Organisation**.



A complete definition of the terms used above is given in the document “Country and organisations table” The affiliation of an individual or a legal entity is determined as per Article 4)1.1.a.1) of the Annotated rules for COST Actions

Application Process

Every STSM application shall be submitted online in e-COST using dedicated forms available. Applicants should be upload their CV in their e-COST profile. This information will be visible to the evaluation committees in the Action.

➔ To be filled in e-COST:

- Title
- Start and end date (within the active Grant Period);
- Budget requested by the applicant;
- Information about the host institution and contact person.

➔ 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...)

Implementation of the Activity

Upon approval of the application, the Grantee receives a Grant Letter from the Grant Holder stating the approved amount and the conditions for receiving the grant.

The Grantee performs the tasks in line with the approved application.

Once the activity has ended, the grantee submits the required report (report to the Action CC on the work developed, main achievements of the STSM and planned future follow up activities) on e-COST within 30 days after the end date of the activity or 15 days after the end of the Grant Period, whichever comes first.

Funding Scheme

The grant scope is to provide a contribution for travelling, accommodation and subsistence expenses, implementation of the project, delivery of the report to the COST Action CC and overall effort.

The grant maximum amount is 4 000,00 EUR. The grant depends on the duration and location of the STSM. Upon approval of the Grant, the Action CC can decide to lower the requested grant.



ARiF Evaluation Criteria for STSM

Criterion	Awarded points
Is the applicant a young researcher? (Yes/No)	0-1
Does the applicant come from an ITC country? (Yes/No)	0-1
Alignment of proposed work with ARiF objectives (Does the proposed work meet the deliverables of ARiF?)	0-3 0 there is no alignment of the proposed work with the ARiF aims 1 the proposed work is aligned at least with one objective of a determined WG 2 the proposed work is aligned with at least three objectives of several WGs 3 the proposed work is aligned with several objectives of various WGs
Expected outcomes and plan to maintain/expand the collaboration between the members engaged with the STSM. (What is the impact of the expected outcomes relevant to the challenges of ARiF? Is there a plan to maintain/expand the collaboration after the end of the mission?)	0 Points: No clarity or inadequate plan - No description of expected outcomes. - No mention of a plan to maintain or expand collaboration. - Response is vague or unrelated to the STSM goals. 1 Point: Minimal or generic response - Expected outcomes are mentioned but lack specificity or feasibility. - Collaboration plan is minimal, generic, or not clearly linked to the event. - Little to no emphasis on long-term impact. 2 Points: Reasonable and relevant plan - Expected outcomes are clearly defined and align with the goals of the event. - Collaboration plan includes feasible steps to maintain relationships (e.g., follow-up meetings, shared publications, joint grant applications). - Some consideration of long-term benefits and alignment with the network's goals. 3 Points: Excellent and well-justified plan - Expected outcomes are specific, measurable, and highly relevant to the event. - Detailed and practical plan for maintaining and expanding collaboration, with specific examples (e.g., multi-institutional projects, formal agreements, future events). - Demonstrates strong potential for long-term impact and added value to the engaged members and the broader network.
Scientific soundness of the proposed work. (Whether the research question is clearly defined, the methodology is appropriate and feasible, and the data collection and analysis are rigorous and transparent.)	0-5 Points Clarity of the Research Question (0–5) 0 points: The research question is vague, poorly defined, or not aligned with the objectives. 1–2 points: The research question is somewhat clear but lacks precision or full alignment with the objectives. 3–4 points: The research question is clear, well-defined, and mostly aligned with the project goals. 5 points: The research question is innovative, precisely defined, and directly addresses the project's objectives.



	Appropriateness and Feasibility of the Methodology (0–5) • 0 points: The methodology is inappropriate, incomplete, or not feasible given the scope or resources. • 1–2 points: The methodology is somewhat appropriate but lacks important details or feasibility considerations. • 3–4 points: The methodology is appropriate and feasible, with sufficient detail to understand the approach. • 5 points: The methodology is highly appropriate, well-detailed, and clearly feasible within the project constraints. Rigor of Data Collection and Analysis (0–5) • 0 points: Data collection and analysis methods are poorly described, lack rigor, or are unsuitable. • 1–2 points: Methods are described but lack transparency, rigor, or critical details for reproducibility. • 3–4 points: Methods are rigorous, appropriate, and mostly transparent. • 5 points: Methods are highly rigorous, transparent, and ensure reproducibility and reliability of results. Innovation and Originality of the Approach (0–5) • 0 points: The proposed work lacks originality or novelty and adds little to the field. • 1–2 points: The approach has some innovative elements but is largely conventional. • 3–4 points: The approach demonstrates creativity and addresses gaps or challenges in the field. • 5 points: The work is highly innovative, offering significant advances or introducing novel concepts that are likely to make a major impact. Alignment with Project Goals and Potential Impact (0–5) • 0 points: The proposal is poorly aligned with the overall project goals and has little potential impact. • 1–2 points: The work is somewhat aligned but lacks a clear link to the project’s objectives or broader implications. • 3–4 points: The work is well-aligned with the project’s goals and demonstrates moderate potential for impact. • 5 points: The work is perfectly aligned with the project’s goals and has strong potential to make a significant contribution to the field.
Budget justification. <i>(Is the proposed budget reasonable and sufficiently justified?) If not provided, the application will be automatically disqualified.</i>	0-3 Points Clarity and detail of the justification (could also be 0-1, it is clear and detailed or not) ○ 0 points: The justification is vague, incomplete, or lacks specific details. ○ 1 point: Provides some details but does not clearly explain how funds will be allocated. ○ 2 points: Clearly explains most budget items with reasonable detail. ○ 3 points: Thorough, detailed, and well-organized justification for all budget items.



	Reasonableness of travelling costs ○ 0 points: Costs are excessive or lack reasonable justification. ○ 1 point: Some costs seem reasonable, but others are inflated or poorly explained. ○ 2 points: Costs are generally reasonable and adequately explained. ○ 3 points: Costs are completely reasonable, well-calculated, and justified. • Inclusion of all necessary budget items ○ 0 points: Key budget items are missing. ○ 1 point: Some important items are included, but others are missing. ○ 2 points: Most necessary items for the project are included. ○ 3 points: Budget includes all necessary items with no significant omissions.
CV evaluation (<i>Does the applicant have sufficient background to fulfil the objectives of described proposal?</i>)	0-3



Criteria for evaluating the applicant's CV

Criteria/points	0	1	2	3	Weight
Relevance of academic and professional profile to the mission	Profile unrelated to the mission or key thematic areas.	Profile partially related, with limited skills in key areas.	Profile clearly aligned with the mission, with relevant experience.	Profile exceptionally aligned, with advanced skills and recognized achievements in the field.	1
Level of research or professional experience	Limited or no relevant experience.	Entry-level experience in research or professional domain (e.g., less than 3 years in a relevant field).	Intermediate experience with significant contributions (e.g., 3–7 years).	Extensive experience and demonstrated leadership in projects or related publications.	1
Scientific or technical contributions	No publications or documented contributions.	Limited publications or projects with low impact.	Several relevant contributions with moderate impact (e.g., articles in indexed journals, notable projects).	Highly impactful contributions (e.g., publications in high-impact journals, patents, awards).	1
Participation in international or collaborative activities	No international or collaborative experience.	Limited participation in international or collaborative activities.	Active participation in international projects, academic networks, or previous similar events.	Leadership in international activities or relevant scientific networks.	1
Potential impact of the event	No clear impact of the event on the applicant's professional development or field of study.	Limited or poorly justified impact.	Significant impact on the applicant's development and contribution to the overall project.	Exceptionally clear and well-justified impact, with high benefit for both the applicant and the host institution.	1
Quality of the CV and overall presentation	Disorganized CV or insufficient information.	Adequate CV with room for improvement (e.g., clarity, organization, or relevance).	Well-structured and relevant CV, with clear information.	Excellent CV with professional presentation and strong relevance to the mission.	1

Priority will be given to the applicant who best meets the COST policy criteria, e.g. YRI, ITC, under-represented gender, in case of 'tie' (in case of limited budget and STSM applications of equal merit).