

Brussels, 12 November 2024

COST 101/21

Version 2.0

## **COST ACTION PROPOSAL SUBMISSION, EVALUATION, SELECTION AND APPROVAL (LEVEL B)**

The COST Committee of Senior Officials (“CSO”) having regard to:

The Statutes of the COST Association,

The Internal Rules of the COST Association,

The CSO Decision COST 088/21, “Rules and Principles for COST Activities”,

In accordance with its role as General Assembly of the COST Association,

Whereas

- (1) COST Full Members have established an International not-for-profit Association, the COST Association, integrating the governance, management and implementation functions of COST.
- (2) COST contributes to the objective of strengthening the scientific and technological bases of the European Research Area by promoting the European-based scientific and technological networking encouraging all stakeholders to share, create and apply knowledge, thereby encouraging Europe to become more competitive.
- (3) COST shall be open to all fields in science and technology and wishes to foster multi- and interdisciplinary networks, aiming to enable breakthrough scientific developments leading to new concepts, services and products.
- (4) The set of COST Rules should provide a coherent, comprehensive and transparent frame to ensure efficient and harmonised implementation of activities, as well as ease access for all potential stakeholders, by promoting and facilitating participation from a wide range of researchers, engineers or scholars from universities, research centres and companies, as well as other relevant stakeholders (in particular small and medium-sized enterprises - SMEs) and legal entities.
- (5) For the benefit of the Action Participants the set of COST Implementation Rules should be robust, stable and consistent and should focus on best interest of research communities and foster mutual trust in their networking activities.
- (6) COST should provide funding for activities of relevance for fulfilling COST mission and achieving COST objectives, more particularly for COST Actions, the COST networking instrument.
- (7) COST should further encourage participation of young talents and next generation leaders in science and technology, promote working opportunities for Young Researchers and Innovators and gender balance.

- (8) COST should support integration of scientific research communities and increase the contribution of participants from identified Inclusiveness Target Countries in COST activities.
- (9) COST should fund networking activities in the field of science and technology destined only for peaceful purposes; any funding of activities related to sensitive technology development, armament or defence-oriented research should be avoided. COST should support activities carried out in compliance with fundamental ethical principles.
- (10) COST should establish rules and procedures to govern the submission, evaluation, selection and approval of proposals for COST Actions and other activities where appropriate.
- (11) COST should protect EU financial interests and ensure sound financial management. COST is aware that the EU auditing procedures apply.

The CSO has adopted the present rules for Submission, Evaluation, Selection and Approval for COST Action Proposals in accordance with the [Rules and Principles for COST Activities](#).

The present rules shall be subordinated to and may not contravene the Rules and Principles for COST Activities. In case of any contradiction between those CSO Decisions, the Rules and Principles for COST Activities shall prevail.

These rules shall enter into force on 12 November 2024, approval date of the Committee of Senior Officials.

## **SUBJECT MATTER AND SCOPE**

COST shall strive to implement transparent, cost-efficient, timely and simple evaluation and selection procedures.

This decision shall lay down the rules and procedure for the submission, evaluation, selection and approval of COST Action proposals. These rules derive from the basic principles laid down in the Rules and Principles for COST Activities.

These rules shall be further detailed and explained in the Level C document: [COST Open Call Proposers' Guidelines](#).

## **DEFINITIONS**

Definitions of the [Annex II of the Rules and Principles for COST Activities](#) shall apply to this Decision.

## **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

The present rules and procedures shall allow researchers and innovators or other stakeholders to submit proposals and provide them with networking opportunities in order to strengthen Europe's capacity to address scientific, technological and societal challenges.

The objective of the rules and procedure described herein shall be to enhance the scientific excellence and transparency through an accessible bottom-up opportunity with rigorous peer review on a competitive basis.

COST Action proposals shall be submitted for evaluation and selection following the publication of the Open Call. They shall aim at addressing the COST mission and Excellence and Inclusiveness policy.

COST Action proposals shall guarantee that the proposed Action objectives shall be achieved by means of COST networking support using national or other R&D funding and resources.

<b>HISTORY OF CHANGES</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Publication date</b>	<b>Changes</b>
1.0	18.11.2021	Initial version adopted by the CSO decision of 16 June 2021.
2.0	12.11.2024	<p>Summary of changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text clarifications and improvements not affecting the content of the document;</li> <li>• Compilation of a comprehensive summary list of eligibility criteria, previously spread across the document (section 5);</li> <li>• Introduction of the notion of acceptability in addition to eligibility (section 5);</li> <li>• Introduction of a new evaluation grid (section 6.2).</li> </ul>

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## 1. BASIC PRINCIPLES

The present rules shall reflect the basic principles governing the submission, evaluation, selection and approval of proposals for COST Actions which shall ensure fairness, transparency, openness, excellence and inclusiveness.

COST shall make the best endeavours to avoid conflict of interest.

All those involved in the submission, evaluation, selection and approval of proposals shall commit to confidentiality.

## 2. OBLIGATION OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Each person involved in the submission, evaluation, selection and approval procedure (Independent External Expert, Review Panel Member, Scientific Committee Member, COST National Coordinator (CNC) and Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) Member) shall:

- Treat confidentially any information, including personal data of any natural person concerned by or involved in the submission, evaluation, selection and approval of proposals process, and documents, in any form (i.e. paper or electronic), disclosed in writing or orally in relation to the performance of the evaluation;
- Process any confidential information or documents as described above only for the purposes and for the duration of the submission, evaluation, selection and approval of proposals process;
- Not disclose, directly or indirectly, confidential information or documents relating to proposals or proposers, without prior written approval of the COST Association;
- Not discuss any proposal with others, including other evaluators or staff not directly involved in evaluating the proposal, except during formal discussions at dedicated Review Panels and Scientific Committee meetings;
- Not disclose any detail of the evaluation process and its outcomes or of any proposal submitted for evaluation for any purpose other than fulfilling their tasks as evaluator;
- Not disclose the names of other experts participating in the evaluation;
- Not communicate with proposers on any proposal during or after the evaluation until the approval by the CSO.

Further, under no circumstances should the proposers contact any of the actors involved in the evaluation, selection and approval procedure regarding their proposal. Any attempt to do so may lead to immediate exclusion of the proposal from the evaluation, selection and approval process.

## 3. COST OPEN CALL

The COST Open Call shall allow submitting proposals on a continuous basis.

COST shall publish on its website the official announcement of the Open Call indicating the Collection Date, the description of the procedure and complete schedule, and criteria against which COST Action proposals shall be evaluated and selected.

The COST Open Call shall enhance transparency of COST through an accessible bottom-up opportunity with rigorous peer review. Proposals shall be evaluated on a competitive basis, taking into account the available funds for the particular Collection Date.

The proposal shall be submitted by a Main Proposer acting on behalf of a network of proposers who see an opportunity for advancing scientific, technological or social knowledge and impact resulting from such advancements through the international coordination support offered by COST.

The Open Call is a one-stage submission process where proposals may be registered and submitted at any time before the Collection Date using a dedicated secure online tool. Proposals shall be gathered at the Collection Date.

The Open Call follows the subsequent phases:

- Proposal Submission by a Main Proposer on behalf of a network of proposers;
- Proposal Assessment for Eligibility;
- Proposal Evaluation by Independent External Experts and ad-hoc Review Panels;
- Proposal Assessment for Acceptability;
- Proposal Selection by the Scientific Committee;
- Proposal Approval by the CSO.

## 4. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be submitted by a network of proposers, represented by a Main Proposer. The network shall be composed of proposers from at least seven (7) COST Full or Cooperating Members amongst which a minimum number ( $\geq 50\%$ ) shall be from COST Inclusiveness Target Countries<sup>1</sup> (see also in Annex B to the present decision the required minimum number of COST Inclusiveness Target Countries per number of COST Full or Cooperating Members represented in a proposal).

The table below shows who can be part of a Network of Proposers as Main Proposer or Secondary Proposer.

Proposers affiliated in	Eligible as	
	Main Proposer	Secondary Proposer
A legal entity in a COST Full/Cooperating member	✓	✓
A legal entity in a COST Partner member	✗	✓
A legal entity in a Near Neighbour Country (NNC)	✗	✓
A legal entity in a Third State	✗	✓
Specific Organisations		
EU Institutions, Bodies, Offices and Agencies (EC/EU)	✓	✓
European RTD	✓	✓
International Organisations	✗	✓
Individuals with no legal affiliation	✗	✗

- = Yes
- = No

A list of Countries and Specific Organisations can be found in [Annex I of the Level A Rules and Principles for COST Activities](#). It is important to note that for the participation in the network of proposers, the ITC status of researchers and innovators from EU Member States Outermost Regions will be counted as the EU Member State they are linked to<sup>2</sup>.

Proposals may be registered and submitted at any time before the Collection Date via a secured online tool designed for this purpose (e-COST). The online tool allows the Main Proposer to access, edit and submit the proposal until the chosen Collection Date. Only the last submitted version of a proposal shall be considered for evaluation.

<sup>1</sup> [Annex I – Level A: Country and Organisations table](#)

<sup>2</sup> Researchers affiliated in a legal entity in e.g., Guadeloupe will be counted as France (non-ITC), researchers affiliated in a legal entity in Azores will be counted as Portugal (ITC).

## 5. PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT AGAINST ELIGIBILITY AND ACCEPTABILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible, a proposal for a COST Action shall:

- a) Be submitted by an eligible Main Proposer
- b) Represent a network of proposers from at least seven (7) COST Full or Cooperating Members amongst which  $\geq 50\%$  shall be from COST Inclusiveness Target Countries as detailed in Annex B with proposers having a registered e-COST profile;
- c) Respect word or page limits; as described in the [COST Open Call - Proposers' Guidelines](#)<sup>3</sup>;
- d) Be written in English, the working language of the COST Association;
- e) Be anonymous, hence contain no reference to the proposers' and/or institutions' names participating in the network of proposers, meaning that proposers and/or institutions' names should neither be explicitly mentioned nor be potentially identifiable.

Proposals can be declared ineligible any time during the evaluation and selection procedure.

To be acceptable, a proposal for a COST Action shall respect fundamental ethical principles as described in the [Rules and Principles for COST Activities](#), including originality of ideas, and peaceful purposes.

Only the proposals reaching the selection phase will be subject to acceptability check.

The eligibility and acceptability criteria are explained in detail in the [COST Open Call - Proposers' Guidelines](#).

## 6. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION

### 6.1 ROLES

#### 6.1.1. EXTERNAL EXPERTS

Independent External Experts carry out the remote peer-review evaluation.

They shall be identified, selected and assigned to proposals on the basis of their scientific and technological expertise necessary for the evaluation of proposals. This will notably be based on Research Areas<sup>4</sup> and keywords chosen by the network of proposers themselves.

Whenever possible, each External Expert will evaluate at least three proposals.

#### 6.1.2. REVIEW PANEL

The Review Panel shall be established after each Collection Date based on the number and topics of received proposals from a pool of active researchers and innovators, previously nominated by the COST National Coordinators.

The experts shall register in the COST Expert Database (e-COST). A Review Panel expert may serve in the Review Panel for a maximum of four collections out of eight successive collections. After four participations as Review Panel expert, a minimum of four collections shall pass before the same person may participate again as Review Panel expert. In all cases, COST shall strive for diversity among RP members in topic expertise and experience in serving in the RP.

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<sup>3</sup> Details in [COST 104/21 COST Open Call - Proposers' Guidelines](http://www.cost.eu/open-call-proposers-guidelines) (<http://www.cost.eu/open-call-proposers-guidelines>).

<sup>4</sup> See Annex A to the present document: List of Fields and Sub-Fields of Science and Technology.

The Review Panel shall ensure the quality of the Independent External Expert evaluation outcome and resolve potential differences in their opinions.

The Review Panel prepares a shortlist of proposals with their validated consensus reports and marks for the selection by the Scientific Committee.

In addition, the Review Panel shall prepare a report to the Scientific Committee using the templates provided by COST.

### 6.1.3. COST SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The Scientific Committee shall:

- a) Assess with regard to the acceptability of proposals that have been identified as potentially breaching the Rules and Principles for COST Activities and make a recommendation to the COST Administration;
- b) Identify, among the list of proposals presented by the Review Panel, those that respond best to COST Mission and Policy;
- c) Based on b), establish the shortlist of proposals that shall be presented to the CSO for approval.

## 6.2 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposals shall be evaluated against the following two-step procedure. During this phase, the identity of the Main Proposer and of the network of proposers is kept anonymous.

### 6.2.1 STEP 1 – EXTERNAL REMOTE EVALUATION

Each proposal shall be evaluated by a minimum of 3 Independent External Experts identified, selected and assigned to proposals as described here above. The evaluation shall be performed remotely, and each Independent External Expert shall submit an evaluation report for each proposal they evaluate.

Further to the individual evaluation, a consensus shall be sought between the Independent External Experts (remotely).

The consensus shall not be imposed; Independent External Experts may maintain their views on the proposal.

### 6.2.2 STEP 2 – REVISION BY THE REVIEW PANEL

After the evaluation performed by the Independent External Experts, the Review Panel shall ensure the quality of the consensus evaluation reports, deliberate how to manage differences in opinions, arbitrate and establish a ranked list of proposals having passed the “Excellence in S&T and Networking” and “Impact” thresholds as described hereunder.

The Review Panel shall:

- a) Review and validate the evaluation consensus reports and marks of the proposals for which the Independent External Experts achieved consensus.
- b) For proposals without consensus, resolve the differences in opinions between the External Experts, using one of the following options:
  - Choose any mark within the range of marks awarded by the individual Independent External Experts or the non-agreed consensus mark entered into e-COST as the review consensus mark and produce the consensus report.
  - In exceptional cases, ask for one or two additional Independent External Experts to remotely evaluate the proposal. In this case the Review Panel shall make use of the additional evaluation reports to prepare the final consensus report and mark.
- c) Strive for consistency of marks across the proposals within and across the Review Panel.
- d) Identify those proposals with potential high impact or that indicate emerging issues or potentially important future developments.



The Review Panel shall prepare their reports for the Scientific Committee.

### 6.2.3 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the following evaluation criteria:

<b>EXCELLENCE IN S&amp;T AND NETWORKING</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>
Range of marks: 0-5 Threshold: 3	Range of marks: 0 - 5 Threshold: 3	Range of marks: 0 - 3
<b>RANGE OF MARKS AWARDED: 0 - 13</b>		

The evaluation criteria shall be further explained in the COST Open Call - Proposers' Guidelines.

Proposals failing to achieve the threshold either in "Excellence in S&T and Networking" or "Impact" shall not be funded.

### 6.3 PROPOSAL SELECTION

Ahead of the meeting, the Scientific Committee shall receive the reports of the Review Panel as well as information on the composition of the network of proposers and other information considered relevant on the proposals, such as:

- Aggregated information on the network of proposers (breakdown, expertise, geographic, age and gender distribution). During this phase, the identity of the Main Proposer and of the network of proposers is kept anonymous
- Plans to involve relevant participants or targeted stakeholders; openness to additional participants.

Based on this information, the Scientific Committee shall establish the shortlist of proposals for approval by the CSO.

In order to do so, the Scientific Committee shall:

1. Check the acceptability of retained proposals according to the Rules and principles for COST activities.
2. Adopt the list of proposals which are of sufficiently high quality to be retained for possible funding based on the available budget for the call (the retained proposals);
3. Select among the retained proposals the ones for the final list on the basis of the following criteria applied sequentially:
  - a. S&T Excellence, Networking Excellence, Impact and Implementation as described in 6.2.3.
  - b. Compliance with COST Excellence and Inclusiveness policy with regard to Inclusiveness issue. A high degree of compliance with it shall be achieved by proposals that build the capacity of COST Inclusiveness Target Countries to engage in the European Research Area by:
    - i. Having very well-defined plans for including COST Inclusiveness Target Countries participants in the implementation of the Action; and/or
    - ii. Being led by a Main Proposer from an ITC.
  - c. Applied with equal weight:
    - i. Compliance with COST Excellence and Inclusiveness policy with regard to Young Researchers and Innovators (YRI). A high degree of compliance with it shall be achieved by proposals:
      1. Presenting a high proportion of Young Researchers and Innovators in the Network of Proposers; and/or

2. Having very well-defined plans for including Young Researchers and Innovators in the implementation of the Action; and/or
  3. Led by a Main Proposer being a Young Researcher and Innovator.
- ii. Compliance with COST Excellence and Inclusiveness policy with regard to Gender balance. A high degree of compliance with it shall be achieved by proposals:
1. Presenting a good gender balance; and/ or
  2. Having very well-defined plans for achieving gender balance in the implementation of the Action; and/or
  3. Led by a Main Proposer of the underrepresented gender.
- d. For proposals that shall be deemed equivalent after application of criteria under 3.a to c, achieving a balanced COST Actions' portfolio and promoting interdisciplinarity. This shall be done by selecting proposals addressing Research Areas and/ or Science Sub-Fields that are less extensively covered among the existing COST Actions' portfolio and those that are of a more interdisciplinary nature.

Detailed procedure shall be described in the [COST Open Call - Proposers' Guidelines](#). The Scientific Committee shall submit the final ranked list of selected proposals to the CSO for approval.

The Scientific Committee shall adopt a Scientific Committee recommendation per selected proposal and a SC comment per non-selected proposal among the retained proposals.

## 7. PROPOSAL APPROVAL

The final decision on approval and funding for new COST Actions shall be taken by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) on the basis of the shortlist submitted by the Scientific Committee, together with a list of the evaluation results of all evaluated proposals taking into account the available budget. The CSO may decide not to approve Actions selected through the procedure described under sections 5 and 6 of the present rules.

The Technical Annex of a successful proposal approved by the CSO shall form the basis of the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The start of the COST Action shall be described in the [Annotated Rules for COST Actions](#).

CNCs will receive the results either before or at the same time as the Main Proposers. The result of the evaluation and selection shall be made available to the Main Proposer and the network of proposers via e-COST.

## 8. REDRESS OF THE EVALUATION

In order to contribute to the fairness and transparency of the COST evaluation process, the COST Association has established a redress procedure. The Main Proposer shall thereby have the possibility to submit a request for assessment of the evaluation and potential redress.

Redress shall be allowed only in case of potential procedural shortcomings and factual errors, i.e., whenever:

- the network of proposers considers that the evaluation has not been carried out in accordance with the procedure set out in the current document;
- the network of proposers deems that the evaluation report bears a factual error.

Requests for redress dealing with the assessments by the Independent External Experts, of the Review Panel shall not be admissible.

Further, proposal selection by the Scientific Committee as described under section 6.3 shall not be open to redress.

Decisions on acceptability shall not be subject to redress.

The redress procedure shall be designed to ensure a prompt and fair feedback to requests and shall be available in the [COST Open Call - Proposers' Guidelines](#).

## 9. HONORARIA

Honoraria shall be paid to the Independent External Experts and Review Panel members involved in the SESA procedure. The EB shall determine the amount in the relevant [COST Open Call - Proposers' Guidelines](#).

## 10. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

COST expects ethical behaviour from all participants in COST activities in accordance with the principles established in the [Rules and Principles for COST Activities](#).

COST shall strive to avoid any conflict of interest in its evaluation, selection and approval procedure.

Actors involved in the evaluation, selection and approval of proposals may not take any benefit from any Action approved under the particular Collection Date they participated in.

The present rules shall apply to all players concerned by the submission, evaluation, selection and approval of COST Action proposals (Independent External Expert, Review Panel Member, Scientific Committee Member, CNC, and CSO Member).

### 10.1. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DEFINITION AND CASES

A Conflict of Interest with regard to the submission, evaluation, selection, and approval procedure shall be the risk that professional judgement or actions regarding a person's duties and responsibilities shall be unduly influenced by that person's professional or private interests. Each individual shall have only one role in the evaluation, selection and approval of a COST Action.

A Conflict of Interest can be real, potential or perceived.

#### 1. Cases of Real Conflict of Interest

The person involved in the evaluation or selection procedures (Independent External Expert, Review Panel Member, Scientific Committee Member):

- has been involved in the preparation of the proposal;
- has been involved in any previous evaluation step in the same Collection.

#### 2. Cases of Potential Conflict of Interest

The person involved in the evaluation or selection procedures (Independent External Expert, Review Panel Member, Scientific Committee Member):

- was aware of the preparation of the proposal;
- has a professional or personal relationship with a proposer;
- stands to benefit directly or indirectly if the proposal shall be accepted or rejected.

#### 3. Cases of Perceived Conflict of Interest

The person involved in the evaluation or selection procedures (Independent External Expert, Review Panel Member, Scientific Committee Member):

- feels for any reason unable to provide an impartial review of the proposal.

## 10.2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Before performing any evaluation, any person involved in the evaluation or selection procedures (Independent External Expert, Review Panel Member, and Scientific Committee Member) shall sign a declaration stating/accepting that he/she:

- is not aware of any conflict of interest regarding the proposal(s) to be evaluated/selected;
- shall inform immediately the COST Association of any conflict of interest discovered during the evaluation process;
- shall maintain the confidentiality of the procedure.

## 10.3. TABLE OF INCOMPATIBILITIES

This table presents cases where a position shall be incompatible with a submission, an evaluation, a selection and an approval step.

Position	Main Proposer and Network of Proposers	Independent External Expert	Review Panel Member	Scientific Committee Member	CNC	CSO
Main Proposer and Network of Proposers (Submission)	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Independent External Experts (Evaluation)	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Review Panel Members (Revision)	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
COST Scientific Committee Members (Selection)	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
CSO (Final approval)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓

Any individual having participated in the submission, evaluation, selection or approval of Action proposals shall observe these rules of conflict of interest.

## 10.4. CONSEQUENCES

Any actor involved in the evaluation or selection procedures shall immediately declare a Conflict of Interest. Failure to do so shall have the following consequences:

- notification to the COST Association Director;
- notification to the respective CNC for Review Panel Members;
- notification to the CSO for Scientific Committee Members;
- removal of the expert from the COST Expert Database.

All cases of Conflict of Interest shall be recorded and, for nationally nominated evaluators (Review Panel Members and Scientific Committee Members), reported to the COST National Coordinator.

1. If the Conflict of Interest is confirmed/identified before the evaluation starts:
  - the Independent External Expert may not participate in the evaluation procedure of the ongoing collection and shall be replaced.

2. If the Conflict of Interest is confirmed/identified during the evaluation:
  - the Independent External Expert shall stop evaluating in the ongoing collection and shall be replaced;
  - any comments and marks already given by the Independent External Expert shall be discarded.
3. If the Conflict of Interest is confirmed/identified after the evaluation has taken place:
  - the COST Association shall examine the potential impact and consequences of the Conflict of Interest and take appropriate measures.
4. If the Conflict of Interest is confirmed/identified during the quality check performed by the Review Panel, or the selection by the Scientific Committee, the concerned actor shall not participate in the discussion related to the proposal for which they have a Conflict of Interest.

The COST Association has the right to take the lead in any resolution process of a Conflict of Interest situation at any moment of the evaluation and selection.

## 11.FINAL PROVISIONS

The present rules shall be binding in their entirety and directly applicable to all actors concerned by the submission, evaluation, selection and approval of COST Action proposals.

Any change or derogations to the present rules shall be subject to the approval of the CSO.

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List of Fields and Sub-Fields of Science and Technology<sup>5</sup>

<b>Natural Sciences</b>
Mathematics (research on methodologies of pure and applied mathematics, statistics and probability: mathematics and statistics applied to other fields of science are excluded)
Computer and Information Sciences
Physical Sciences (excluding engineering and nano-technology applications to be found under each engineering category)
Chemical sciences
Earth and related Environmental sciences
Biological sciences (excluding medical, clinical and agricultural applications)
<b>Engineering and technology</b>
Civil engineering
Electrical engineering, electronic engineering, Information engineering
Mechanical engineering
Chemical engineering
Materials engineering
Medical engineering (excluding biomaterials and physical characteristics of living material as related to medical implants, devices, sensors)
Environmental engineering (excluding environmental biotechnology)
Environmental biotechnology
Industrial biotechnology
Nano-technology
Other engineering and technologies
<b>Medical and Health Sciences</b>
Basic medicine
Clinical medicine
Health Sciences
Medical biotechnology
Other medical sciences
<b>Agricultural sciences</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (excluding agricultural biotechnology)
Animal and dairy science (excluding animal biotechnology)
Veterinary science
Agricultural biotechnology
Other agricultural sciences
<b>Social Sciences</b>
Psychology
Economics and business
Educational sciences (excluding institutional and economic aspects)

<sup>5</sup> Science and Technology Fields and Sub-Fields correspond to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Fields of Science used for international and European R&D statistics (source: OECD Document DSTI/EAS/STP/NESTI (2006)19/FINAL)

Sociology
Law
Political Science
Social and economic geography
Media and communications
Other social sciences
<b>Humanities</b>
History and Archaeology
Languages and literature
Philosophy, Ethics and Religion (excluding philosophy and ethics applied to other fields of science)
Arts (arts, history of arts, performing arts, music)
Other humanities

**Required minimum number of COST Inclusiveness Target Countries per number of COST Full or Cooperating Members represented in a proposal**

<b>Number of COST Full or Cooperating Members</b>	<b>Minimum number of ITC</b>
7	4
8	4
9	5
10	5
11	6
12	6
13	7
14	7
15	8
16	8
17	9
18	9
19	10
20	10
21	11
22	11
23	12
24	12
25	13
26	13
27	14
28	14
29	15
30	15
31	16
32	16
33	17
34	17
35	18
36	18
37	19
38	19
39	20
40	20
41	21
42	21