COST Action CA19126 - Positive Energy Districts European Network (PED-EU-NET)

Open Call for Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs)
(Grant Period: 01.11.2021 – 30.10.2021)

Important Dates:
Application Submission Deadline: 29 November 2020
Notification of Results: 18 December 2020
Mission Period: 01 January 2021 – 30 June 2021

About this Action

The main objective of the Action is to drive the deployment of Positive Energy Districts (PEDs) in Europe by harmonising, sharing and disseminating knowledge and breakthroughs on PEDs across different stakeholders, domains and sectors. It will support cities and empower communities to achieve the city-wide positive energy transformation with pioneering ideas, methods and solutions. More information can be found in the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) available in the following web page: www.cost.eu/actions/CA19126.

What are STSMs?

This COST Action (PED-EU-NET) encourages Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs). STSMs are research visits aimed at supporting individual mobility, strengthening existing networks and fostering collaboration between COST Action Participants. They should specifically contribute to the scientific objectives of this COST Action, whilst at the same time allowing those partaking in the missions to learn new techniques or methods, gain access to specific facilities or instruments that are not available in their own institution/organization.

STSMs range from 5 calendar days to 3 months and are aimed to providing learning opportunities, preferably but not solely, to Early Career Investigators (ECIs) through research exchange outside their home country. STSM applicants must be engaged in an official research programme as a PhD student or postdoctoral fellow or may be employed by, or affiliated to, an institution or legal entity, which has within its remit a clear association with performing research. The institutions/ organisations where applicants pursue their main strand of research are considered as Home Institutions.

For the present Grant Period, the plan is to award 4 STSMs, which are expected to take place between 01 January 2021 and 30 June 2021. A list of potential topics of the missions can be found at the end of the document.

Financial Support

The financial support is a contribution to the costs of a STSM and may not cover all costs. The financial contribution for a STSM will be a fixed grant based on the Applicant's budget request and the evaluation of the application by the STSM Committee. The total support for a STSM shall not exceed EUR 2000. Grantees must make their own arrangements for all provisions related to personal security, health care, taxation, social security and pension matters.

Application and Selection Processes

Before the STSM

Eligible STSM applicants must:

Complete an online STSM application, https://e-services.cost.eu/STSM and send the following by email to the STSMs coordinator of this Action (savis.gohari@ntnu.no):

- ✓ Application form,

- ✓ Cover letter, explaining how your work will benefit from this STSM and how this STSM will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the working groups and this COST Action. Considering the current pandemic situation, the applicants must describe how the proposed activities can be carried out safely according to current international health and safety recommendations,

- ✓ Work plan specifying what you intend to do (800 words) and the mission start and end dates,

- ✓ A written agreement of the host institution that confirms the supervision of the work. The host institution should also confirm that it is able to accept visitors under their anti-Covid19 health and safety policy and the proposed activities can safely take place with appropriate prevention measures in place,

- ✓ A letter from the Home Institution to support the mission and to confirm that travel for the applicant is allowed under their anti-Covid19 health and safety policy,

- ✓ CV of the applicant (2 pages),

- ✓ List of publications.

Evaluation of Applications and Selection of Grantees

The applications will be assessed by the STSM Committee, which will perform the scientific and budgetary assessment of the applications based on the perceived contribution that the proposed STSM will make against the scientific objectives outlined in the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The criteria for evaluation include:

1. Aim and Motivation

Is the STSM appropriate for the selected Working Group and objectives, considering the quality, scope, and feasibility of the outcomes? (Mark: 1-10)

2. Relevance to the Cost Action Goals

Does the STSM contribute to the objectives of the Action? (Mark: 1-5)
Does the STSM have benefits for the applicant and the host? (Mark: 1-5)

3. Techniques:

Is the work plan of the STSM consistent with the Action objectives, methods and strategies? (Mark: 1-5)
Does the STSM add value to the Action and contribute to innovative solution, method or theory? (Mark: 1-5)

4. Planning:

Is the quality and feasibility of the work plan reasonable and satisfying? (Mark: 1-10)

5. Additional points

Is the applicant an ECI? (Mark: 0-3)
Is the applicant or the host based in an Inclusiveness Target Country? (Mark: 0-3)
Does the applicant promote gender equality? (Mark: 0-3)

All applications will be ranked and the Grantees will be selected based on the ranking.

After the STSM

The STSM Grantee is required to submit a short scientific report to the Host Institution and the STSM Committee for formal approval within 30 days after the end date of the STSM. Written approval of the scientific report by the Host Institution and STSM Committee must be uploaded in e-COST for archiving purposes. The report must contain the following information:

- ✓ Purpose of the STSM,

- ✓ Description of the work carried out during the STSM,

- ✓ Description of the main results obtained,

- ✓ Foreseen publications/articles resulting from the STSM (if applicable),

- ✓ Confirmation by the Host Institution of the successful execution of the STSM,

- ✓ Other comments (if any),

- ✓ A short description of the mission, which can be added to the Action website,

- ✓ Signed agreement that the STSM report can be used by the Action for publications.

The failure to submit the scientific report on time will effectively cancel the grant. The STSM Coordinator will inform the Grant Holder about the acceptance of the report via e-mail. Afterwards, the Grant Holder will execute the payment of the fixed grant directly to the Grantee or to the Home Institution as stated in the application form.

Working Groups Priorities

WG1- PED Mapping, Characterisation and Learning

WG1 aims at mapping existing concepts, strategies, projects, socio-technical innovations related to PEDs in Europe. It will identify the main PED characteristics and key performance indicators (KPIs), scientifically validate PED definition, advance understanding on socio-technical measures and devise roadmap for the implementation of PEDs.

Recommended topics:

- Aspects of Positive Energy District definition (e.g. key PED characteristics and parameters, system boundaries, calculation of PEDs, standardization, regional differences, meta-analysis of ongoing research and innovation projects, what is a PED-relevant project?)

- Key performance indicators (e.g. monitoring and evaluation methodologies, impact indicators, technological indicators, social and economic indicators etc.)

Other topics shall be considered as well based on their contribution to WG1 objectives.

Suggested host institution:

- Czech Technical University, University Centre for Energy Efficient Buildings

WG2- PED Guides and Tools

WG2 aims at developing guides and tools to support the implementation of PEDs. It will synthesise existing knowledge in a coordinated manner across traditionally technical domains (digital planning, building information management, etc.) and acknowledged crucial governance concerns (e.g., institutional structure, funding and business models) and generate insights into new guides and tools for optimizing the design, operation, financing and opportunities of PEDs.

Recommended topics:

- Identification of non-technical tools, such as governance systems, for creating PEDs

- Identification of technical tools related to the design and planning of PEDs

- Identification of KPI systems for PED's evaluation

WG3- PED Laboratories, Monitoring and Replication

WG3 aims at developing common protocols for monitoring and evaluation of PEDs and PED Labs across Europe to track progress and provide feedback on improvement and adaptation in the PED demonstration projects. For this we will review the existing monitoring concepts, demonstration projects and facilities relevant for monitoring PED Labs. Based on this review we will identify and evaluate current methods applied in the monitoring, evaluation and replication of PEDs/PED Labs.

Suggested host institution:

- Austrian Institute of Technology GmbH (AIT)

WG4- Dissemination, Outreach and Exploitation

WG4 aims at broadening the impacts and outreach of the COST Action, raising the awareness of PEDs and highlighting their relevance to different stakeholders so as to ensure the transfer of knowledge and translation of experience within and beyond the network

Further Enquires

Please contact the STSM coordinator, Dr. Savis Gohari Krangsås, via email if any queries relating to STSMs occur: savis.gohari@ntnu.no.