



China in Europe Research Network (CHERN) – CA 18215

Virtual Mobility (VM)

BASIC FACTS

What is a Virtual Mobility?

The Virtual Mobility (VM) Grant is a funding opportunity offered by CHERN. Adjusting to the intensification of online cooperations, COST has enabled us to define a Virtual Networking Strategy (VNS), and VM grants are an important part of that plan. VM aims to provide opportunities for collaboration between researchers based in Europe, China and the US in order to develop research partnerships, forge linkages between academics and stakeholders, and stimulate knowledge creation and virtual research mobility of Early Career Investigators, PhD students and young professionals. CHERN VMs should also specifically contribute to the Action's Capacity Building objectives (#1 and #4)¹ and Deliverables (#2 and #4).²

What kind of activity can I do during a VM?

All VMs entail online collaborations. We are currently offering funding for VM Grants focusing on:

- 1) a targeted online strategy for the further dissemination of STSM and VM results through webinars as part of the future online presence of CHERN
- 2) media stakeholders, journalists, outlets and channels across Europe relevant for the expertise and research conducted within CHERN in order to support its members in the communication of their findings and expertise to the media and the general public
- 3) a strategy to further promote the expertise of CHERN members to relevant policymakers and media outlets where they can have a voice in the public debate around China's influence in Europe
- 4) any relevant topic in within the scope of CHERN.

¹ These objectives are:

1. Place network members in a position to be better able to: (a) advise businesses, national and local governments, and the EU, as well as labour unions, communities and NGOs on Chinese investment and its consequences; and (b) communicate with the general public about these issues.
2. Throughout the lifetime of the Action and beyond, use participants' personal networks and CHERN's public presence (website, publications, media, and conference participation) to identify and absorb additional researchers, policy and related personnel into the network, particularly from countries with high volumes or important instances of Chinese investments.

² These deliverables are:

1. Academic publications by individual Action members as well as joint publications (e.g. special issues and edited volumes) in leading international peer-reviewed journals and with national and international publishers
2. Input to best practices on valorisation, how to involve stakeholders, and apply relevant knowledge.

What does the financial support include?

VM Grants are given under the following funding conditions (see also Annex 2 of the [COST Annotated Rules](#)):

- The maximum amount of the grant is € 1500, depending on the scope and complexity of the proposed tasks and activities
- VM activities must occur in their entirety (including finalizing the report) no later than April 30, 2024. Payment of the grant is subject to the approval of the submitted report (more information about the application and evaluation is given in the section 'How does it work?')

Financial support is paid as a lump-sum grant with no need to submit invoices, receipts, etc. The VM Committee (VNS Manager, CHERN's Chair or Vice Chair and relevant WG leaders) shall, on behalf of the MC, define the exact amount of each grant in line with the scope and complexity of the proposed tasks and activities. The grant does not necessarily cover all the expenses related to undertaking the VM. Payment of the grant is subject to the grant report (after the completion of the VM) being approved by the VM Committee.

The Grant Holder shall pay the approved grant to the grantee after the VM Committee has approved the grantee's report and no later than 15 days from the end of the Grant Period.

Note that the Grant holder or the COST Association cannot be considered the grantee's employer. Grantees must take care of their own health care, social security, safety provisions, taxation, etc. related to the VM. The grantee must also ensure they have the required technical material/equipment and infrastructure to carry out the activities proposed in their application.

Who is eligible to be a VM Applicant?

An applicant needs to be enrolled in an official research program (PhD, postdoc) or employed/affiliated with an entity that has a clear association with performing research. The proposed plan and the applicant's research field should be aligned with [CHERN's aims](#). The applicant's Home institution should be a legal entity in a participating full COST member or Cooperating member³, a European RTD Organization⁴, or a Near Neighboring country (NNC)⁵.

In line with COST rules, we also aim to ensure geographical and gender balance and preferentially award VM Grants to Young Researchers (age < 40). However, this should not discourage more experienced researchers from applying.

How does it work?

1. Carefully read the funding rules detailed in section Annex 2 of the [COST Annotated Rules](#).
2. Applicants can directly submit an application, See section 2 of the [Grant Awarding Uses Guide](#).

³ COST Full or Cooperating Member that has accepted the CHERN MoU. For list of countries, see [CHERN Partner countrymembers](#).

⁴ [List of RTD Organizations](#) (pp. 5-6)

⁵ [List of NNCs](#) (p.2)

3. Submit your application.

All applicants must register for an e-COST profile at <https://e-services.cost.eu/>, adding their bank account details to their profile.

All applicants must submit their VM application online at <https://e-services.cost.eu/>. Please use the template provided in E-COST and upload any supporting documents.

4. The applications are then assessed by the CHERN VM Committee. The selection is based on the alignment of the proposed work plan and the applicants' research background with the outlined activities.
5. The successful applicant(s) are informed of the results and shall implement the work plan approved in their application, complete the report template (in E-COST), and upload and submit it in e-COST before April 30, 2024.
6. The report is reviewed by the VM Committee. The evaluation is based on the contribution of the output to the Action's Capacity Building objectives #1 and #4 and Deliverables #2 and #4.
7. Grant payment by: May 20 2024

MORE INFORMATION

More information on VMs is available in Annex 2 of the [COST Annotated Rules](#) and by contacting the VNS Manager Alexandra Filius (a.filius@vu.nl).