

COST Action CA21107

Work Inequalities in Later Life redefined by Digitalisation (DIGI-net)

1st Call for Virtual Mobilities (VM)

Grant period no. 4

Applications for Virtual Mobilities

occurring between

1 April – 15 August 2026

The aim of the *COST Action 21107: Work Inequalities in Later Life redefined by Digitalisation (DIGI-net)* is to overcome critical gaps in conceptual innovation on the influence of digitalisation on work inequalities in later life, in order to address the research-policy disconnect and tackle work inequalities in later life redefined by digitalisation. The Action will enhance scientific knowledge by integrating the different disciplines and schools of thought, by developing collaborations with public policy officials, international policy bodies, non-academic professionals, civil society NGOs, trade unions, management of organisations and older workers themselves.

The Action is an innovative participatory, interdisciplinary, and cross-European network. The first area concerns social inequalities in cases where some groups are privileged, and other groups are marginalised. The second knowledge gap concerns organisational age culture in which stereotypes and discrimination are known to strongly shape organisational life for older workers in terms of hiring, training and retirement. A third largely unexplored central area concerns the complex interplay and connection between digitalisation of work and older workers' health, which is a vital condition for extending working life. A fourth direction envisages policies and practices dealing with digitalisation and which are implemented by national governments, as well as by European institutions and organisations. The fifth dimension of the CA21107 is focused on the social, corporate and news media reflecting and propelling stereotypes of older workers and digitalisation.

Purpose of a Virtual Mobility

Virtual Mobilities (VMs) are collaborations in an online setting among researchers or innovators within the COST Action, to exchange knowledge, learn new techniques, etc. Their aim is to support capacity building and transfer of knowledge through bilateral/multilateral collaborations and support topics that can help achieving the Action MoU objectives and deliverables. By these grants, the Action uses a flexible tool to implement online activities inside the network, achieve the MoU objectives and significantly increase their impact and reach, and the VM grantee develops capacity in online collaboration and networking in a pan-European framework.

The grants cover max. EUR 1500.

Activities for a virtual mobility

According to the [Annotated Rules for COST Actions](#), the eligible activities for a virtual mobility may be:

- Virtual mentoring scheme, with special focus on activities and exchanges that can generate capacity building and new skills, particularly for Young Researchers and Innovators (e.g. managerial skills, methodological skills, communication skills, etc.);
- To support the harmonisation and standardisation of methods and procedures within the Action networking activities (e.g. setting up a survey amongst all Action members to collect different results and outcomes from experiments done in their respective labs and research groups; coordinating the discussions to create common protocols to be used by the network afterwards; preparing questionnaires and response scales to be used by the Action members as part of virtual networking activities);
- To support the implementation of research coordination related activities that do not necessarily require in-person presence (e.g. computational or modelling activities; data analysis of the Action for a specific report or activity).

Eligibility and selection priorities

- VM applicants may be any individuals affiliated to a Legal entity according to the [Annotated Rules for COST Actions](#);
- VM applicants shall be engaged in an official research programme as a PhD student or postdoctoral fellow or can be employed by, or affiliated to, an institution, organisation or legal entity which has within its remit a clear association with performing research;
- VM applicants shall be members of COST Action CA21107 *Work Inequalities in Later Life redefined by Digitalisation (DIGI-net)*;
- Preference and priority will be given to the **active members of the CA21107** with the relevant research interests in the Action topic;
- The selection of applicants is based on the scientific scope of the VM application, which must clearly compliment the overall objectives of the Action and be related to a specific Working Group;
- Preference and priority will be given to Young Researchers and Innovators, which means, according to [COST definitions](#), researchers or innovators under the age of 40. COST Action CA21107 supports Young Researchers and Innovators (YRIs) and the participation of this category is particularly encouraged. Other researchers are also eligible to partake in VMs, but YRIs are prioritized when applications are evaluated;
- Preference and priority will be given to the applicants who have not been awarded a DIGI-net grant before, although previous successful applicants are not precluded from applying;
- Applicants being involved or having been involved in any type of ongoing grants under CA21107 which have not yet been approved cannot be considered for funding

The selection of applicants is based on the following criteria:

- A. Membership in the COST Action 21107 of the applicant and the collaborators within the VM;
- B. Contribution to achievement of the COST Action 21107 MoU objectives and deliverables;
- C. The gains of VM in terms of capacity building in online collaboration and networking;
- D. Inclusiveness criteria.

When to apply?

The current call is open until **15 February 2026**. Applications sent after this date will be rejected, yet applicants are welcome to apply again in a later call.

For this call, the VMs will take place within the period: **1 April – 15 August 2026**.

Amount of grants

- For this call, a grantee can be afforded up to a maximum of **EUR 1500**;
- For this call, the Management Committee of COST Action CA21107 has allocated a budget for up to 5-6 VMs.

Funding & financial issues

- VM activities must occur in their entirety within the dates specified in this call: **1 April – 15 August 2026**;
- VM Grants do not necessarily cover all expenses related to undertaking a given mobility; the financial support on offer is a contribution to the overall effort that is not covered by an employer or by a Grant Holder institution;
- The maximum amounts granted for each individual VM will be determined during the evaluation process by the Grant Evaluation Committee;
- Grants are only paid after the VM has taken place and the reporting requirements have been satisfied and approved by the Grant Awarding Committee;
- The amount is subject to availability of funds and approval by the Grant Holder Institution;
- Reimbursements will be done in compliance with the [COST Annotated Rules](#). The application follows the steps in e-COST.

The application steps and responsibilities

- The applicant is responsible for organizing the application process and sending complete applications;
- All applicants must carefully read the funding rules detailed in Annex 2 of the [COST Annotated Rules](#);
- All applicants must register for an e-COST profile at <https://e-services.cost.eu>;
- The applicants must make sure that information about their *bank account* is added to their profile.
- The applicant must complete and submit their VM application online at <https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants>;
- **The applicants must submit in the e-COST system, before 15 February 2026, the following documents:**
 - The **application form**; the templates for grants can be found on the COST website: <https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2025/01/COST-Grant-Awarding-user-guide.pdf>, section 1.2;
 - **CV** - Europass (see [Home | Europass](#))
 - The **budget** requested by the VM applicant;
 - A **motivation letter**, highlighting the importance of the mobility for this COST Action, and for the applicant's training and career.
- Any changes regarding the grant (period, duration etc.) need to be immediately notified to the Grant Awarding Committee, otherwise the grant may be rejected;
- **After the VM has taken place**, the VM Grantee has **15 calendar days** from the end date of the mobility to send the report and documents to the e-COST and claim the payments; **the VM grantee must submit in the e-COST system:**
 - The **VM report** regarding the work developed, the main outcomes and achieved outputs of the Virtual Mobility, and a description of the future follow-up collaboration; the template can be found on the COST website: <https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2025/01/COST-Grant-Awarding-user-guide.pdf>, section 1.2;
 - **Proof of the work undertaken**, which may also be a ppt presentation of results for a CA21107 meeting or webinar;
 - A **short brief** for website and social media (if relevant, according to the topic and activity of

the VM).

- Only exceptionally, with the approval of the Grant Awarding Committee, may the additional documents be sent to the Committee, and never regarding the documents expressly required by e-COST system, which must necessarily be uploaded in the e-COST system;
- Payment of the Grant is subject to the VM scientific report and other documentation being pre-approved on behalf of the Action's MC by the delegated Grant Evaluation Committee;
- Failure to submit the scientific report within **15 days** from the end date of the VM will effectively cancel the Grant.

For additional info, please contact:

Grant Evaluation Committee:

It consists of Grant Awarding Coordinator and two Members, namely:

Grant Awarding Coordinator:

dr. Lavinia Andreea Bejan, Gheorghe Zane Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy, Iasi Branch

E-mail: lavinia.andreea.bejan@gmail.com

Members:

Dr. Jim Ogg, Caisse nationale d'assurance vieillesse, Paris, France

E-mail: jim.ogg@wanadoo.fr

Dr. Martin Lakomý, Mendelova univerzita v Brne, Czech Republic

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