

COST IS1205: Instructions for claiming reimbursement

Dear participant,

Here is a reminder of what you should do in order to get reimbursement for your participation in this COST Action event.

One important point to bear in mind is that we have to comply with two sets of rules that are not always converging: COST rules and those of the Grant Holder, Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), that processes the payments. In the following, I will point the situations in which what is requested from participants in this Action diverges from general COST rules (in case you participated in other COST Actions).

NOT FOLLOWING THESE INSTRUCTIONS = TAKING THE RISK OF NOT RECEIVING REIMBURSEMENT

BEFORE THE MEETING

- First of all, before the meeting, you have to accept the official invitation that you should have received from noreply@cost.eu, by following the link provided in the message. In case you can't find it, let me know and I will send it again.
- The number of eligible hotel nights is strictly limited to the number of meeting days + 1. Beyond this norm, any extra night is not eligible for reimbursement unless with prior approval from the COST office. So such a request should be addressed to the Grant Holder representative (me) **before the meeting**, who will request an advice from the COST office only if the participant can prove that there is no alternative, or that the alternative would be more expensive than staying one more night.
- **Only steps 1 and 2 of the online form should be completed before the meeting.** You will complete it and finalize it after it (Steps 3 to 5). So do not click the "Submit claim" button at the bottom of the page.

WHEN TRAVELLING

Travel expenses

This concerns the journey from your home or institution to the venue and back.

- Keep your boarding passes and the invoice of your flight. We need the **original** ones. Please also make sure that your travel itinerary, with the boarding and arrival times, and the price, is provided. And join a copy of the bank transaction that proves the payment of your ticket. In case it is an electronic ticket, please provide a copy of it. Let me insist on the fact that no reimbursement will be possible if you fail to provide these proofs.

- In case you have to cancel your flight or train travel due to unexpected circumstances (for example, a strike, an accident, etc.), you should inform us as soon as possible. Before asking for reimbursement to COST, you should first request refund to the responsible company. Thus, if you want to claim reimbursement for an unused ticket, you will have to provide evidence for the unexpected circumstances (e.g. a newspaper excerpt), as well as evidence that you have asked for refund to the air or train company.
- Below is the link to the EU passenger rights info and the relevant article related to rail passenger rights:
 - <http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/passenger-rights/rail/index.en.htm>
- In case you travel by car, the driver should send us an original signed copy of the [Car travel expense declaration form](#), together with a proof of distance showing the travelled route beginning at the place of origin to the approved meeting venue, by means of a printout from a route planner web service (e.g. Google maps, Mappy, etc.). In case more than one person travels in this car, please provide the names of all passengers. Note that only the driver will get reimbursement. Parking costs are eligible for reimbursement, based on receipts (they are counted as local transport expenses).

Local transport expenses

This is about the shorter journeys (e.g. from home to airport, from airport to hotel, etc.).

Note that 1) COST strongly supports the use of public transport; 2) my university requires the original proofs.

- Keep original proofs of your local transportation expenses.
- Pay special attention to the fact that **taxi expenses are strictly limited in the COST rules:**

« Action Participants are limited to use taxis:

- When no other means of public transport is available;
- For early departures (travel departure before 7 am) or late arrivals (travel arrival after 10 pm);
- For up to EUR 80 for the entire travel when the above conditions have been met. »

In brief:

- The use of taxis should be avoided (or at least you should not request reimbursement for taxis) in any other situation.
- Every eligible taxi expense should be justified : invoice + an explanation of the reason why the taxi was used, including the proofs. The eligibility will be checked against the official travel itinerary.

For example, if you take a taxi because of an early flight departure (before 7 AM), you need to upload and send us your invoice, write an explanation in the comments section of the « **Local transport** » section, and provide a proof that your departure was early (referring to the plane or train schedule is sufficient). If you took a taxi because no other means of transport was available, then you should also prove it (e.g. if there was a strike, provide a newspaper article that reports the strike, etc.).

- However, COST applies a lump sum of 25 euros for Local transport (for the whole event). But my university requires the original proofs. As a consequence, if the total amount of your local transportation expenses **does not exceed 25 euros**, then it is possible to reimburse taxis if you send your invoices. But **do not mention the word “taxi” in the “justification” section**. Just tick “Public transport”.

Note that we have no control over these rules. We just have to apply them.

- Keep the invoice of your hotel. Even though you will receive a lump sum per night, you must send us the original invoice/receipt. My university **will not reimburse hotel nights** without it.
- You will receive 20 euros per meal not offered by the local organiser. Anyhow, please keep your receipts.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Get back to the Official invitation message you have received from noreply@ecost.eu
- Follow the link and enter the e-cost system
- Fill in all relevant sections: travel dates; meeting attendance days; accommodation expenses (e.g. maximum 3 nights for a two days event); meals expenses; Travel expenses (plane or else); Local transport expenses (e.g. train from airport to the city centre; taxis when eligible; etc. You can add different sections if necessary); other expenses (when applicable.).
 - o Note that, because of the rules applied by the Grant Holder (my university), we will not use the lump sum amount for local transport expenses as is proposed in e-cost. So everything should be justified by proofs.
 - o If you do not manage to enter the reimbursement form, it is probably due to the fact that your eCOST profile has not been created yet. You'll find explanations on how to do so in the invitation message.
- **Scan and upload** all your invoices and receipts as Supporting documents. This can be done in a single document, but please gather the proofs in categories in order to facilitate the checking. If the proofs are in another language than English or French, you may add a brief explanation to help us figure out what it stands for. Please provide as much proofs as possible, even for expenses that will be

reimbursed at a flat rate (hotel nights and meals). Note that it will not create a problem if receipts for meals are missing, but please upload and send those you kept.

- When everything is completed, **download, print, and hand-sign the TRR**. The **original (paper) hand signed TRR is absolutely mandatory**. We recommend you to also keep a scanned copy of your signed TRR.
- Put the signed TRR together with **all the original proofs** in an envelope and send it to us at:

Laurent Licata
Unité de Psychologie Sociale
Université Libre de Bruxelles CP 122
50 avenue F. D. Roosevelt
1050 Brussels
BELGIUM

Note that the TRR is only an estimation of your expenses. It will be corrected, according to the COST rules, as a function of the proofs you will hand in, and you will be reimbursed accordingly.

One last request: if possible, could you please classify the different categories of original proofs (e.g. flight tickets, local transportation expenses, etc.) and send them in separated sets (for example with paperclips, or glued or stapled on a sheet)? This will save Soumaya Hajir, our administrative support, a lot of time and energy and your request will be treated more quickly.

Please do all this as soon as possible, and definitely within **30 days** after the meeting (after that date, it will be impossible to process your request).

Do not hesitate to contact Soumaya Hajir should you require more info: is1205@ulb.ac.be

The COST rules are available in the COST vademecum (see pp. 20-23): <http://www.cost.eu/Vademecum>

Best,

Laurent

Laurent Licata

COST IS1205 Action's Chair
Action's website: <http://costis1205.wix.com/home>
Password to the members' area: srhistory1205