

PR1: CA15140

First Progress Report from Action

Submitted on: 22-3-2017

This report was submitted by the Action Chair, on behalf of the Management Committee of the Action, in fulfilment of the requirements of the rules for COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment. The first Progress Review (PR1) enables the monitoring of the Action's implementation of the SC Recommendations from the proposal stage and the COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy.

Throughout this document Early Career Investigators and Inclusiveness Target Countries, as defined in the "Rules for Participation in and Implementation of COST Activities" (COST 132/14 REV), are referred to using the acronyms "ECIs" and "ITCs".

Proposal							
	Participating countries	Main Proposer			% in Network of Proposers		
	% ITC	ITC	ECI	Female	ITC	ECI	Female
Proposal OC-2015-1-19890	13	NO	NO	NO	7	36	14
SC Recommendation							
The proposed Action must develop and implement specific plans to increase the participation of Inclusiveness Target Countries. The implementation of the good plan for ensuring gender balance at both the participation and management levels carefully monitored. It must also plan and implement mechanisms for the expansion of the network.							

Action: Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs)				
	Participating countries % ITC	MC Members % ITC	Leadership roles % ITC	Relative representation of ITCs in leadership roles
Action CA15140	48	50	17	33
All Actions	46	44	20	45
Our proposer network included only one ITC (Portugal). The setup of the proposer network accurately reflected the existing collaborations at the point of time before our COST Action started. Given this starting point we feel that have we made excellent progress. We have an excellent ratio of participating ITCs and also excellent involvement in our working groups. Three out of our four working groups include one member of an ITC as leader or vice leader. We have also had one workshop (out of two) in an ITC (Romania). Out of the 7 STSMs 6 involved an ITC (either as host or as country of origin of the researcher). To ensure a high participation of ITC researchers in upcoming meetings and schools, we will take advantage of the high ratio of ITC in our network, using MC members as promoters for our COST action.				

Action: Early Career Investigators (ECIs)			
	MC Members % ECI	Leadership roles % ECI	Relative representation of ECIs in leadership roles
Action CA15140	35	33	96
All Actions	24	8	33

We feel that we are doing a good job in involving ECIs in our COST Action on every level. We have one ECI as Vice Chair and another ECI as leader of one of our four working groups. STSMs also were carried out by ECIs to a large degree (or researchers in an even earlier stage of their career, PhD students). It is often ECIs who are the most enthusiastic researchers and who bring the most new impulses to a field. We will continue to encourage them to do this within our COST Action and trust that we will continue to see significant ECI involvement.

Action: Gender Balance			
	MC Members % Female	Leadership roles % Female	Relative representation of females in leadership roles
Action CA15140	19	33	173
All Actions	41	20	49

The core of our COST Action lies in computer science and in computer science it is notoriously difficult to achieve gender balance. While gender balance is something that we already had in mind when building the proposer network we are still far from achieving this. We always consider gender balance and encourage members of the minority gender to take on responsibilities. We feel that we are on a good way with the goal of gender balance still a way off. We have a female Vice Chair, a female Working Group Leader, a female lead organiser of one of our two workshops and plan to have a female local organiser for the training school. We will keep having gender balance as an important goal in mind and will use it as one criterion of importance whenever a decision is made.

Action comment on its implementation (achievement and/or effort) of SC Recommendation(s) to date
When our proposal was accepted we received the following comment of the scientific committee: 'The proposed Action must develop and implement specific plans to increase the participation of Inclusiveness Target Countries. The implementation of the good plan for ensuring gender balance at both the participation and management levels carefully monitored. It must also plan and implement mechanisms for the expansion of the network.' We have commented on the matters of ITCs and gender balance above. With respect to expansion we feel now that we have a very good network within Europe that is way beyond our original proposer network. Many novel collaborations could be established already (partly thanks to STSMs) and we expect to see this continuing in the next grant period and beyond.

Action description of plans to implement SC Recommendations and COST policy in the future
As outlined above we have concrete plans to continue our efforts in the areas of ITCs, ECIs and gender balance. We feel that the size of our COST Action is sufficient to have excellent visibility and accomplish our goals. We will keep actively promoting the goals of our COST Action, for example by making sure we are visible at major conferences in the field. We had the opportunity to present ourselves in the main session of PPSN 2016 (the largest European conference in the area), at Dagstuhl seminar 16412, as well as at the French Journee Evolutionnaire Thematique. We will do a similar presentation at GECCO 2017 (one of the two largest international conferences in the area). We feel that we are on a good path (with already 8 published publications that benefitted from collaborations supported by the Action) and are hopeful to have an exciting and successful second GP.

First Progress Review by Scientific Committee

Validated on: 18-9-2017

Scientific Committee classification of Action at PR1

Implementation sufficient