

Explanatory notes concerning

Opening a Call for VNT – Virtual Networking Tools to support the CA18219 Geothermal DHC

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1. Concern

The Management Committee decides to place a call for the position of Virtual Networking Support Manager as well as for Virtual Mobility Grants to support the activities of the COST Action CA18219 Geothermal-DHC. The MC is aware that the introduction of VNT to COST Actions is under testing in Grant Period 2 (1st of May 2020 until 31st of October 2021) and the COST Association preserved all rights to decide whether to continue offering this grants or not in the subsequent Grant Periods.

The Management Committee also provides a mandate to Executive Committee (ExCo) of CA18219 Geothermal-DHC to align the Work and Budget Plan for Grant Period 2 in order to use unspent funds for VNT support. The maximum indicative amount of budget referring to VNT support in Grant Period 2 is limited to EUR 13000.

The Management Committee furthermore provides a permanent mandate to the Vice Chair of CA18219 Geothermal-DHC for approving grants for beneficent upon proposal of the Executive Committee (ExCo) of CA18219 Geothermal-DHC.

2. Concerned activities

The placement of the VNT call covers the following points:

- Call for Virtual Mobility Grants
- Call for a Virtual Networking Support Manager

The provided mandate covers the following activities inside Geothermal-DHC:

- Provision of Grant for Virtual Networking support manager position (1 grant at a maximum amount of EUR 4000,-)
- Provision of Grants for Virtual mobility (up to 6 grants, each rewarded with a maximum amount of EUR 1500,-)

3. Descriptions of Virtual Networking Tools (VNT)

The VNT (Virtual networking Tools) are a pilot scheme running in the current GP (ending in October 2021). To apply for a VNT Grant you need to be a member of the Action CA18219 Geothermal-DHC.

The **Virtual Networking Support Grant (VNS)** should be used to promote virtual collaboration as a complement to traditional ways of collaboration and to stimulate virtual collaboration among the members of a given Action. The Grantee of the VNS, further referred to as **Virtual Networking Support Manager**, is subject to the following activities:

- develop a virtual networking strategy
- coordinate the call for expression of interest for the Virtual Mobility Grants
- draft at the end of the grant period a report to be approved by the MC

The **Virtual Mobility Grant (VM)** is supposed to strengthen the existing networks by allowing scientists to foster collaboration in a virtual setting, to exchange knowledge, learn new techniques, disseminate the Action results, etc. The VM can be granted up to 6 times. Proposed activities for these grants are:

- supporting the harmonization and standardization of methods and procedures within the Action networking activities (setting up a survey amongst all Action members to collect different results and outcomes from experiments; 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.
- supporting the implementation of research related activities that do not necessarily require in-person presence (computational or modelling activities; data analysis of the Action for a specific report or activity; Virtual mentoring scheme, with special focus on activities and exchanges that can generate capacity building and new skills, particularly for ECIs researchers (e.g. managerial skills, methodological skills, communication skills, etc).
- preparation and coordination of science communication activities (Massive Online Open Courses (MOOC); Online workshops like 'webinar series' or 'tv series'-like format

For more information please visit: <https://projects-geba.geologie.ac.at/index.php/s/xdJEM92X8TPd7N0>

4. Application and selection procedures for VNT grants

Virtual Networking Support Manager

- A pre-call for applications for the VNS manager position will open on the 22nd of July 2021 and will close on the 6th of August. Applicants need to indicate their interest to CA18219@geologie.ac.at.
- Based on the approval by the Management Committee to introduce VNT grants, a call for the VNS manager position will open in the beginning of August and will close on the 14th of

August. Applications need to be submitted to the eCOST tool using the following access link: <https://e-services.cost.eu/activity/grants>. Please note that applicants need to provide a brief VNT strategy for submission and that the strategy should be aligned with the ExCo via the Action Office.

- Based on the quality of concept the ExCo will provide a list of ranked candidates to the Vice Chair of CA18219 Geothermal-DHC for selection of the beneficent.

Virtual Mobility Grants

- A call for proposals concerning Virtual Mobility Grants in Grant Period 2 will be launched on the 22nd of July. All feedbacks need to be communicated to CA18219@geologie.ac.at and will be made available by the Action Office to the VNS applicants.
- Based on the approval of introducing VNT by the Management Committee and selection of the VNS Manager, the open VM calls will be published at the eCOST tool. A call for applications will be launched in August 2021 and will close around mid-September. All calls will be made publically available through Geothermal-DHC participant newsletters.

5. Measures for ensuring a high level of transparency

- All grants offered by CA18219 Geothermal-DHC are based on a published calls for applications
- The selected VNS manager in cooperation with the ExCo of CA18219 Geothermal-DHC provides a pre-selected list of ranked candidates for approval by the Vice-Chair
- All decision made by the Vice –Chair are made accessible to the Management Committee of CA18219 Geothermal-DHC

6. Conflict of interest

- A conflict of interest is given when the Vice-Chair is applying for one of the above mentioned grants
- In such cases, the Management Committee is mandated to make the decisions on granted candidates upon e-voting

7. Closing terms

- The general rules as stated in the COST Vademecum apply in addition to the given mandate. Any regulation stated in these explanatory notes may be considered as invalid in case of conflicting general rules as mentioned in the COST Vadmecum or any similar publication provided by the COST Association
- For any specific questions concerning the VNT grants please contact CA18219@geologie.ac.at.