COST - Promoting and Spreading Excellence

Prof. Dr Sierd Cloetingh (COST President)

Sarajevo, 17 April 2019

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IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Funded by the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme
of the European Union

Bosnia and Herzegovina is an active COST participant

- BH participates in 71% of all the COST Actions
- Participation has more than quadripled in the last 5 year
- Testimonials during this Info Day of successful COST Action participants and the BH Scientific Committee member

COST in Horizon Europe

- Horizon Europe agreement in March 2019
  - COST in the “Sharing Excellence” pillar, together with Teaming, Twinning and ERA Chairs
  - 3.3% of the overall budget will be dedicated to this pillar.
    - *“This intervention area will support the Horizon Europe specific objectives: Spread and connect excellence across the EU; Reinforce the creation of high quality knowledge; Increase cross-sectorial, cross-disciplinary cross-border cooperation.”*

COST - 45 years proven track record in research collaboration

- 38 COST Members

  Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, The Netherlands, The Republic of North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and United Kingdom

- 1 Cooperating Member

  Israel

- Near Neighbour Countries participation

  Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Kosovo*, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Russia, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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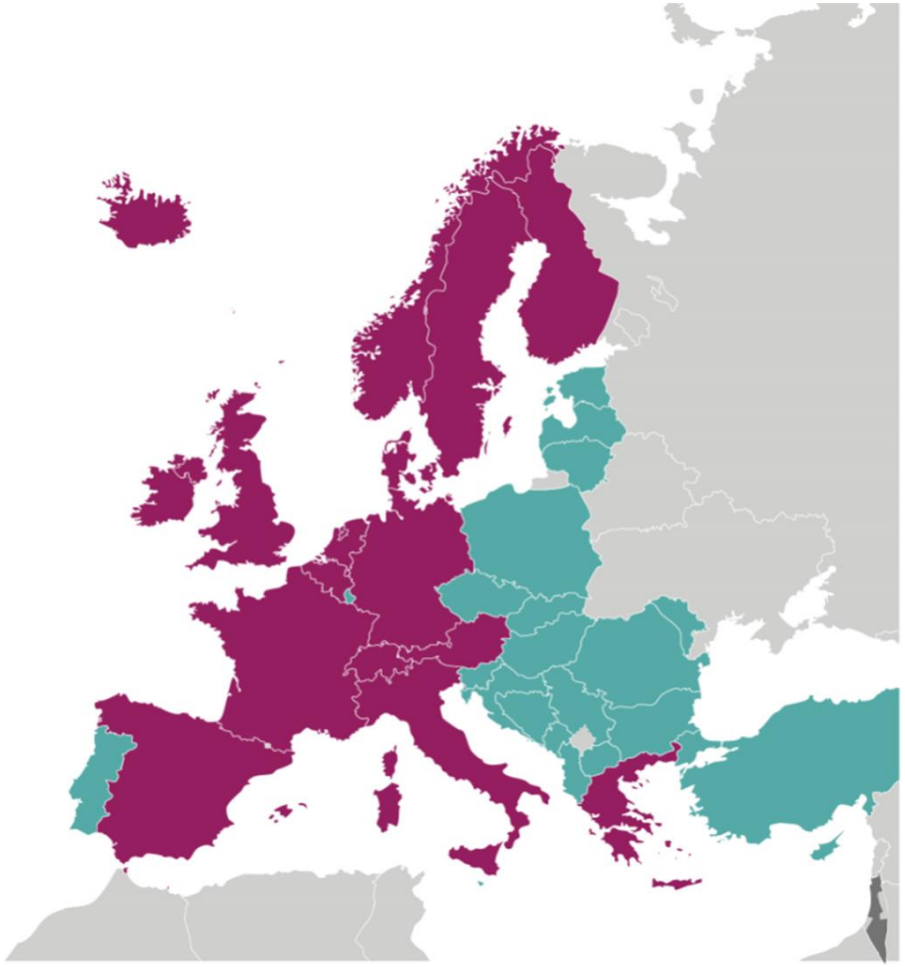
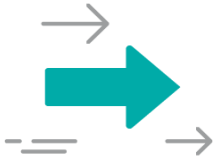


- COST Members
- COST Members (ITCs)
- COST Cooperating member

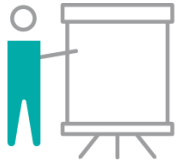
COST key figures of 2018

291



Running Actions

213



Training schools

€134,500

Average annual budget of a COST Action

2,457

Short-term scientific missions

45,000

Researchers involved in COST Actions

€300 million

COST budget (from Horizon 2020 for a 7 year period)

COST: The networking tool in the ERA and the pre-portal to other ERA funding schemes

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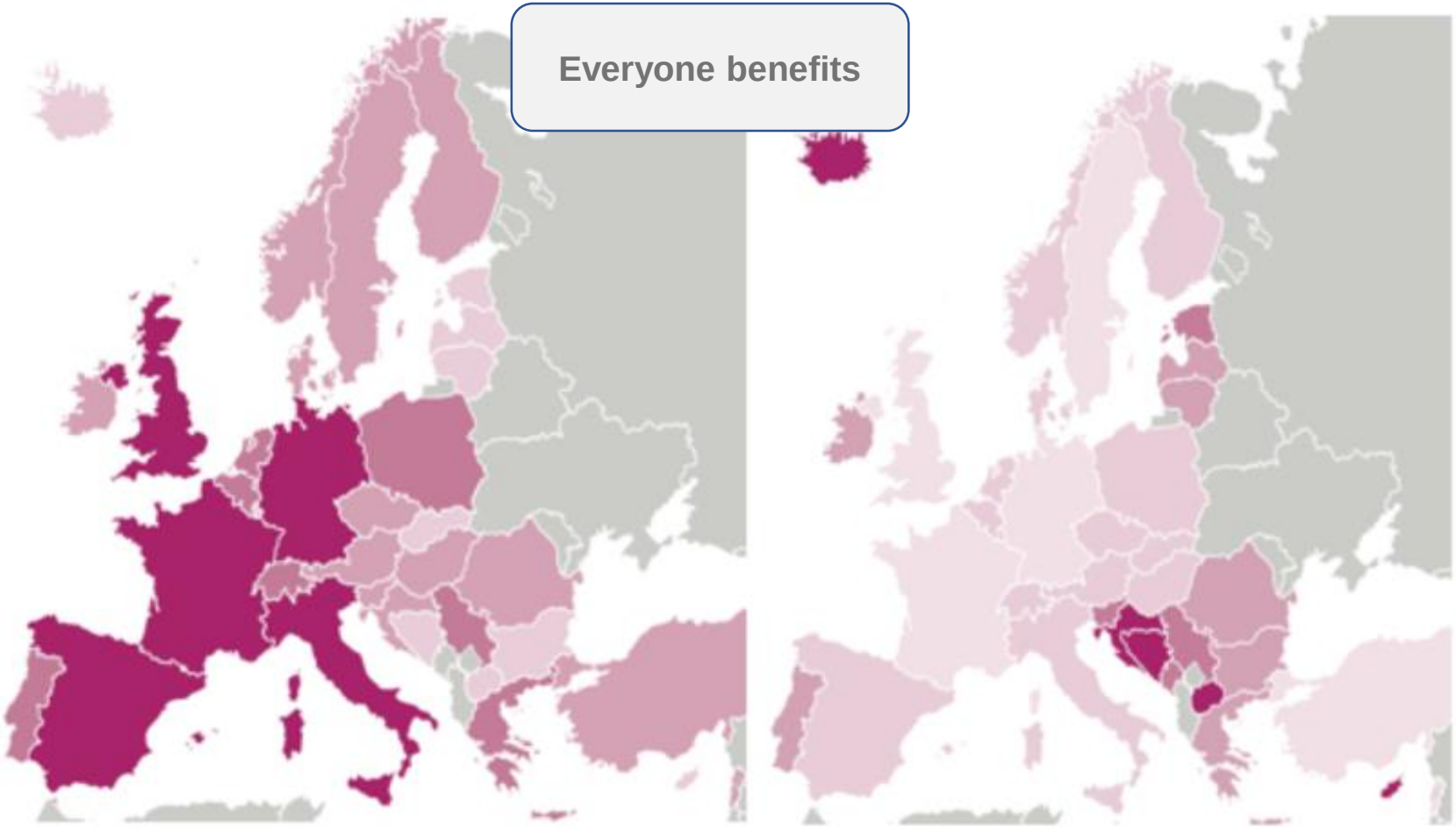
Role of COST in the ERA – 3 Strategic Priorities

Promoting and spreading excellence



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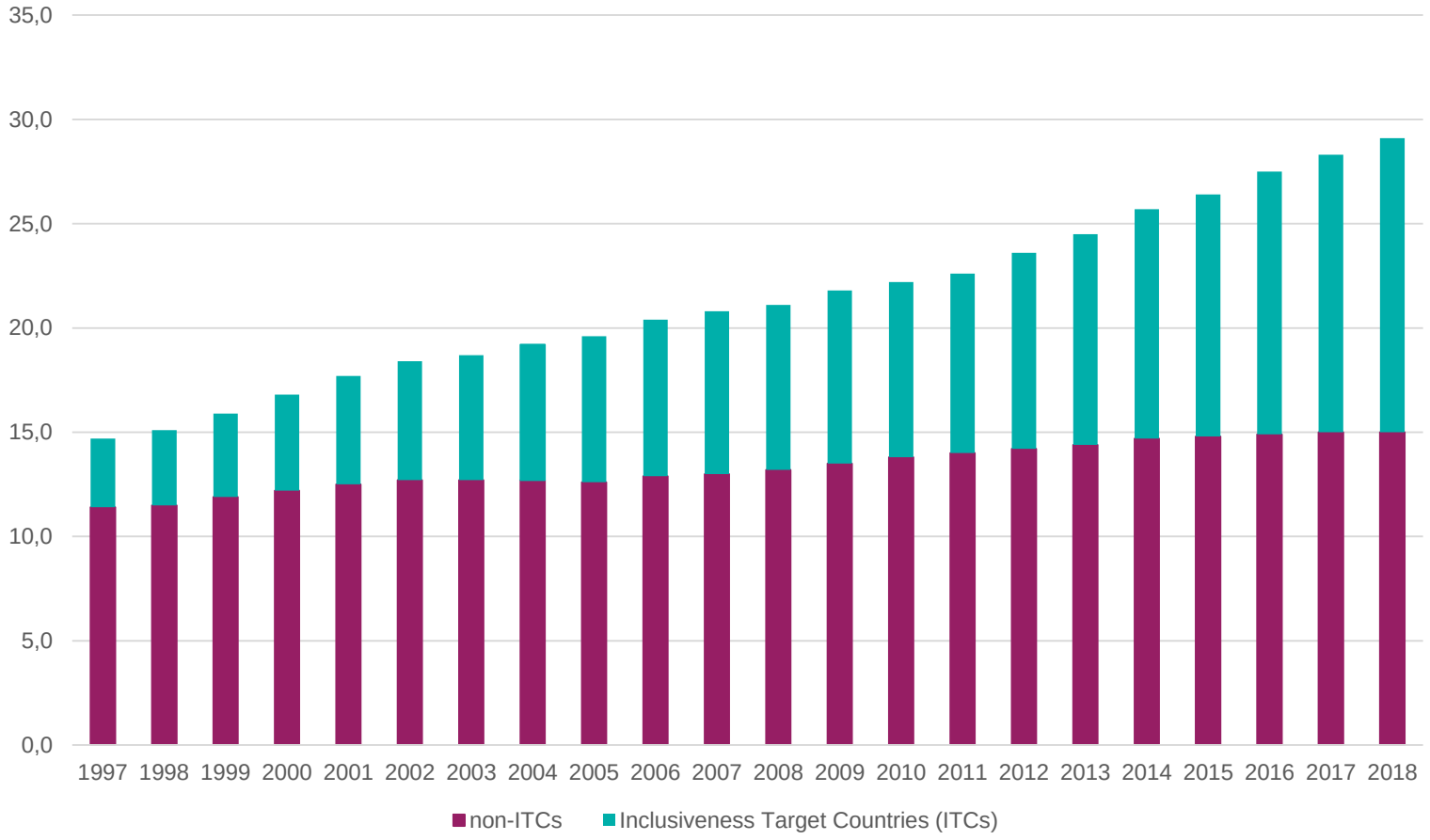
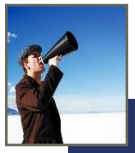
Average participation in COST Actions, ITCs and other countries

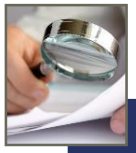


Dedicated measures for active ITC participation



COST Info Days

- Targeted to ITC
- combined with high-level meeting ITC government, including NCP



Proposals

- Eligibility
- External experts
- Inclusiveness policy

COST Actions

- COST Action Leadership
- Conference grant for PhD students and young researchers
- Pre-payment for STSM

COST Academy

- Leadership workshop
- Finance/Admin workshop
- Science Communication training
- Mentoring GH
- Mentoring Chair

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Fostering interdisciplinary research for breakthrough science

"Industry needs to cooperate with academia just like in COST networks. Over there, knowledge transfer and getting results to industry happens in real time."

Mark de Boevere, Managing Director, Pulsemaster (SME), The Netherlands

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Boosting careers of young researchers

"I always say that I have learnt more in these 3 years in COST than I would have in 10 years of my career."

Dr Lara Pajewski, Researcher, Engineering Department, "Roma Tre" University, Italy

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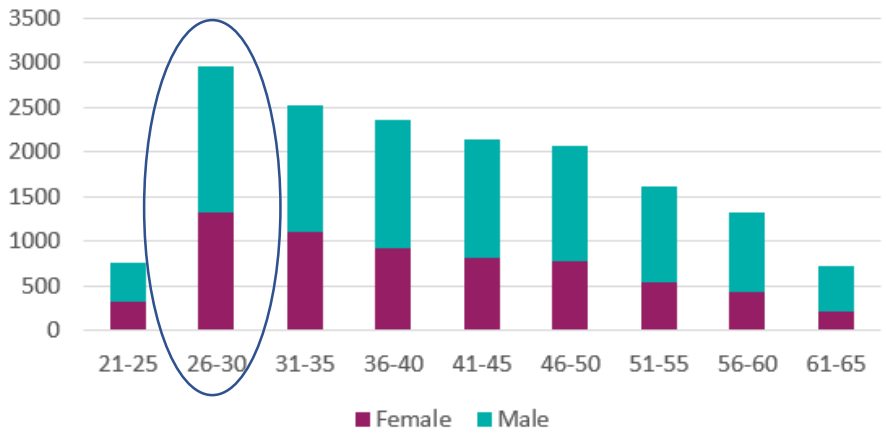
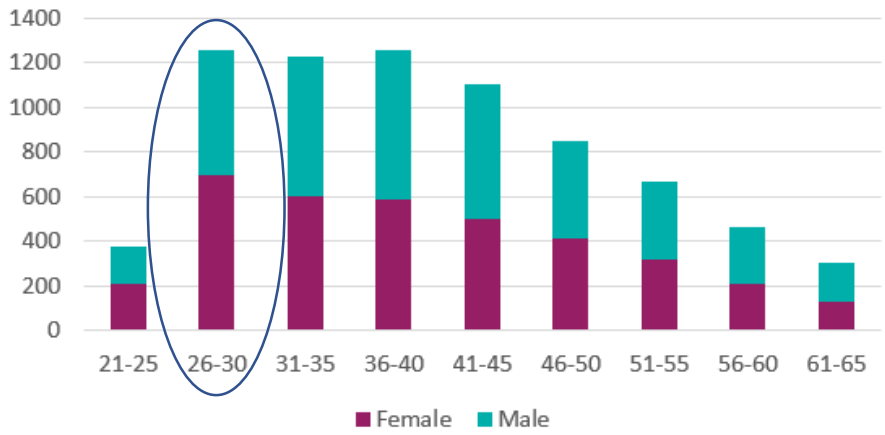
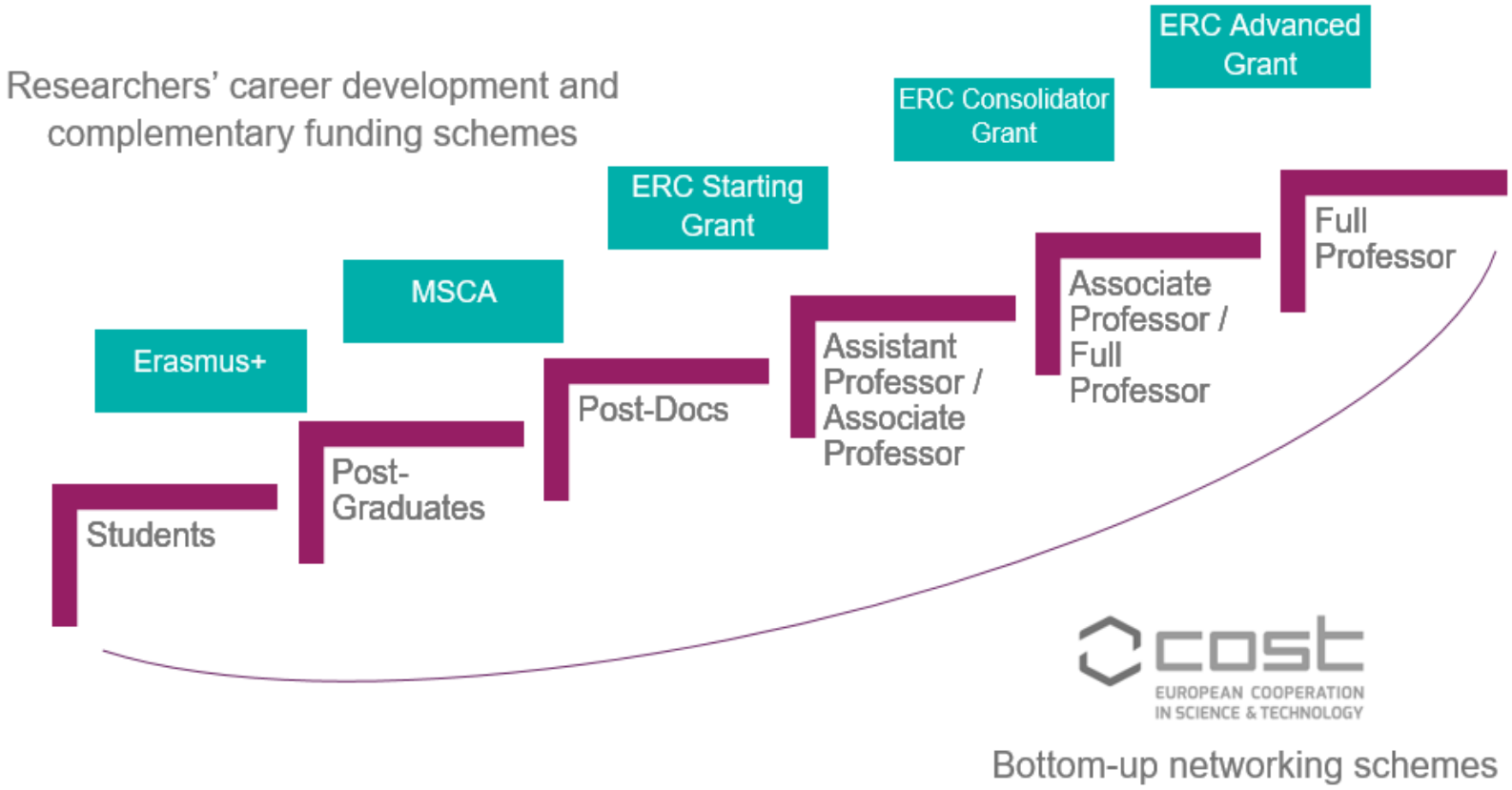
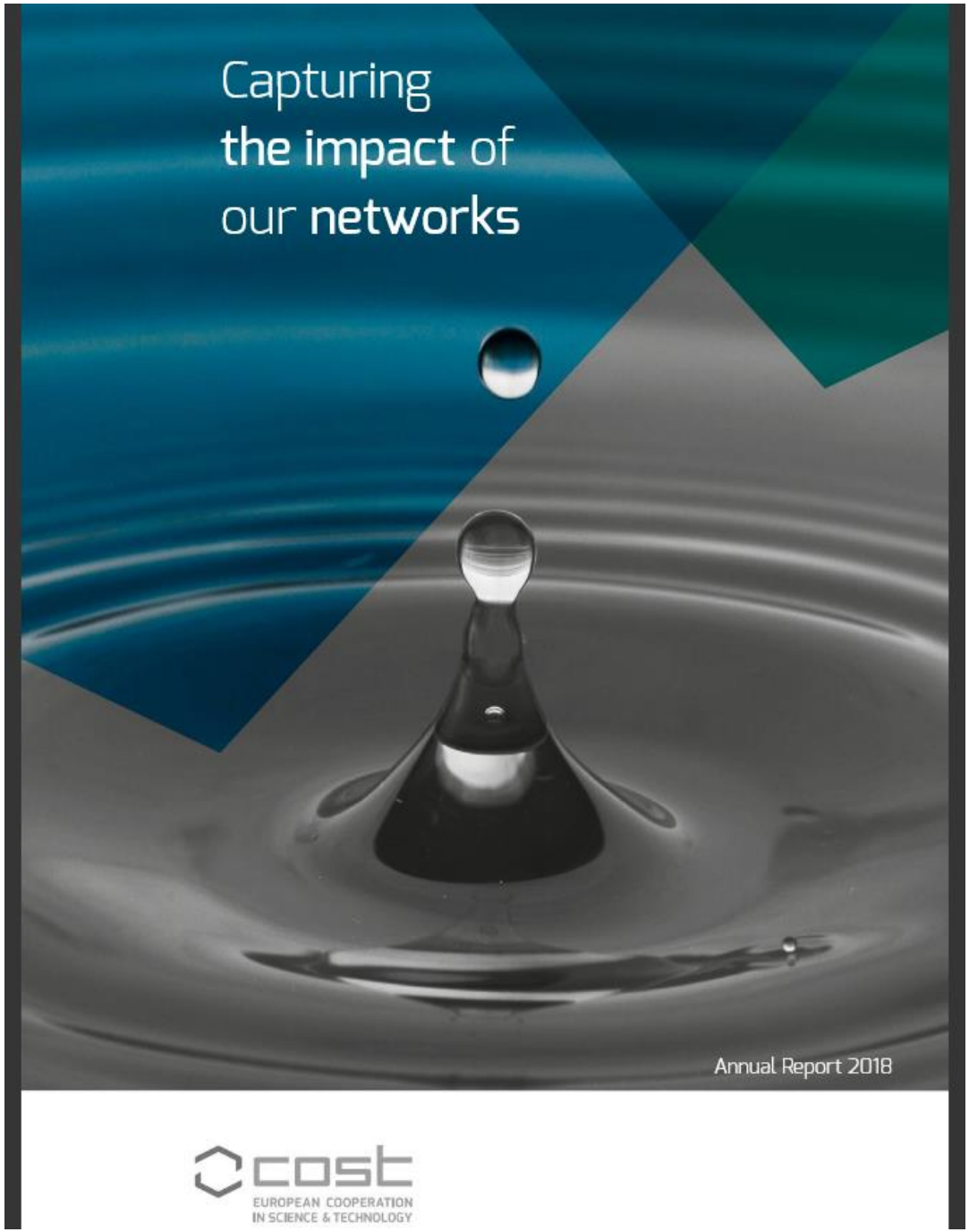
Boosting careers of young researchers





Boosting careers of young researchers





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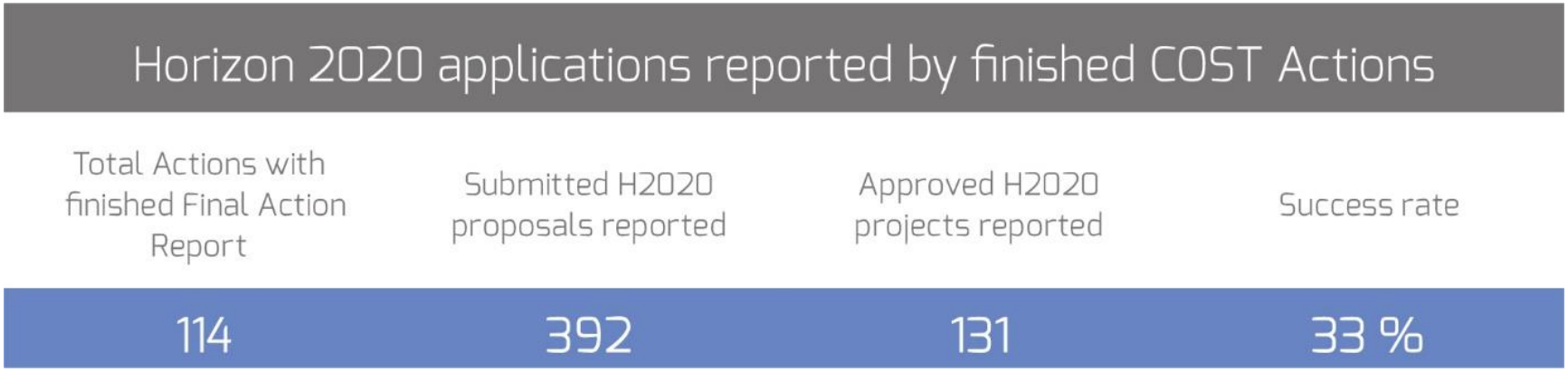
COST Acting as a pre-portal for FP funding



Example of COST success stories

- COST Action FP1106
- Running from 23/04/2012 – 22/04/2016
- STReESS - Studying Tree Responses to extreme Events: a SynthesiS
- Lead to establishment of new research facility, the DendroLab Novi Sad, Serbia

Example of COST success stories

- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Switzerland & Turkey provide additional national support to COST Action participants

- Budget is available for
  - Personnel cost of staff assigned to the project (focus on PhD)
  - Cost of new equipment
  - Cost of sub-contracting
  - …

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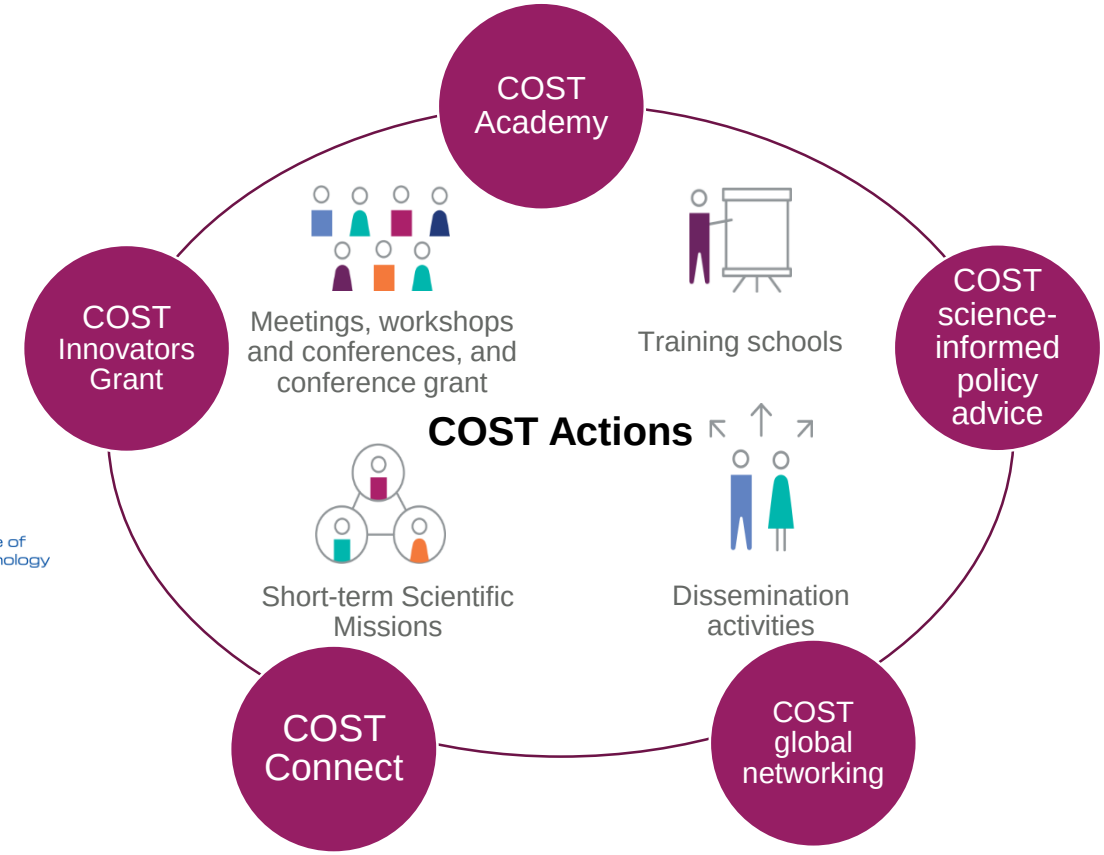
How it works?

COST Action participants
nominated by COST National Coordinators
Main proposer
Secondary proposers

Implementing COST's Strategic Priorities



Key Messages

- COST is committed to promoting and spreading excellence all over Europe and beyond, while …
  - fostering interdisciplinary research for breakthrough science, and
  - boosting careers of young researchers.
- COST will strengthen its role in the ERA by …
  - expanding COST Actions, and
  - providing added value services to COST participants

Thank you!

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Impact trough Networking

Bart Veys

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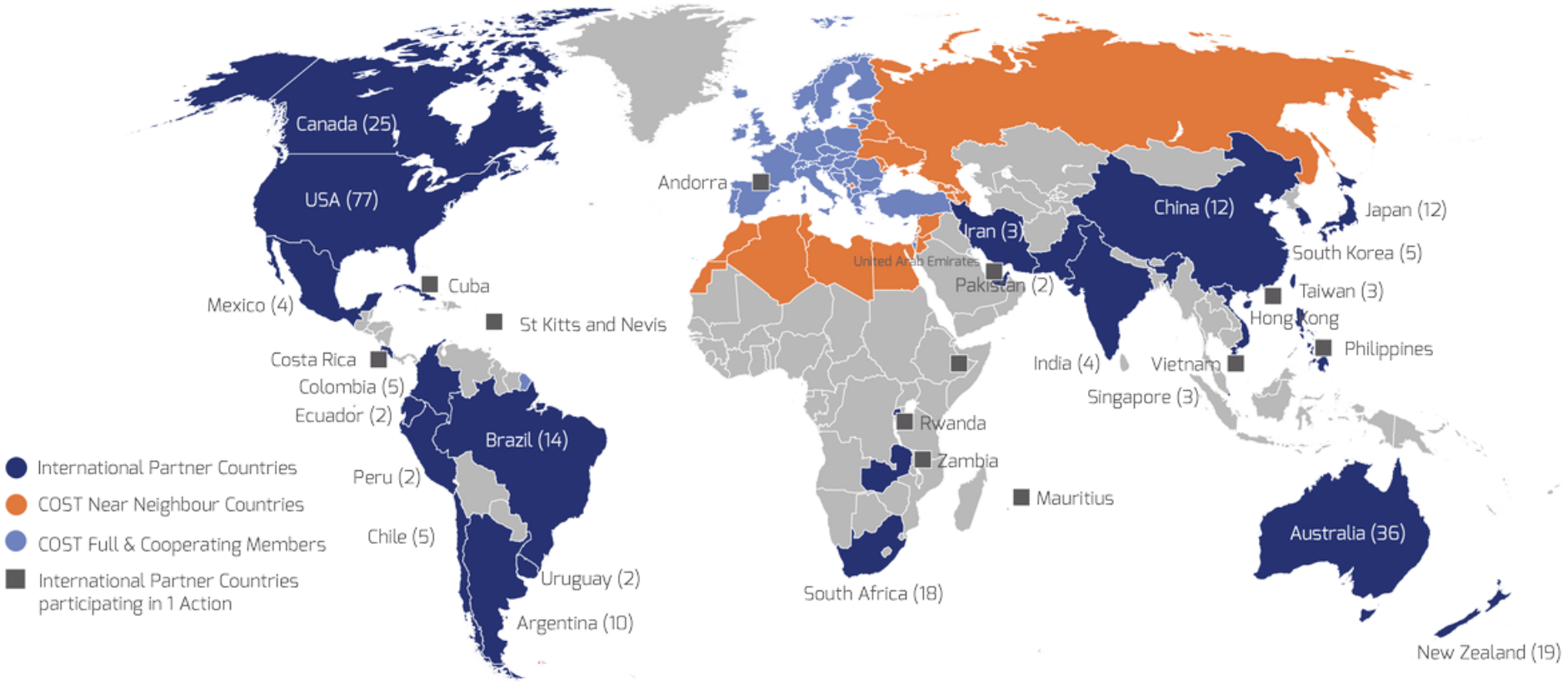
Why Research and Innovation Networks?

- Knowledge sharing leads to…
  - Common understanding of problems at hand
  - Coordinated activities
  - Pooling resources
  - Reduced risks
  - Synthesis and re-combination of spread pieces of knowledge
  - Synergies (1+1>2)

International Partner Countries



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Participation of International Partner Countries in COST Actions

- Invited as individual experts in a specific research field
- Access to the brightest minds
- Creates access to new, local markets

- Often the first entry-point to European collaborative research

Network driven means for participation

Reasons for participation of SMEs: Network and information driven

- Participation of SMEs allows COST Actions to:
  - To widen the network
  - To close the TRL gap
  - To have access to new perspectives and knowledge
  - To get insights in real-life applications
  - To redefine research questions
  - To facilitate access to policy-makers (Business Associations)

COST Impact Model

Impacts

Scientific impact: interdisciplinary collaborations leading to breakthrough science

Societal impact: bridging the innovation divide and participation gaps, and brain circulation in the ERA

Outcomes/ results

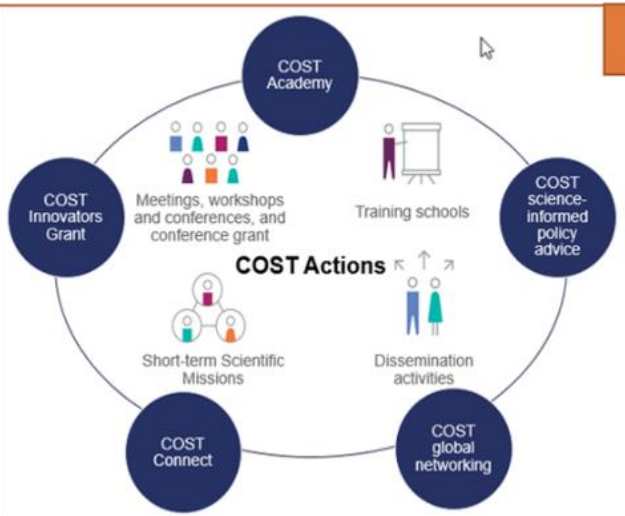
- Approved common research projects on interdisciplinary research
- Coordination of standards, procedures and methods
- New research infrastructure and programs on societal challenges
- Career advancement for less-connected researchers

Output

- H2020, European and national common research proposals
- Peer-reviewed co-created publications
- New (interdisciplinary) research collaborations for researchers
- New research leadership skills and experience for less-connected researchers

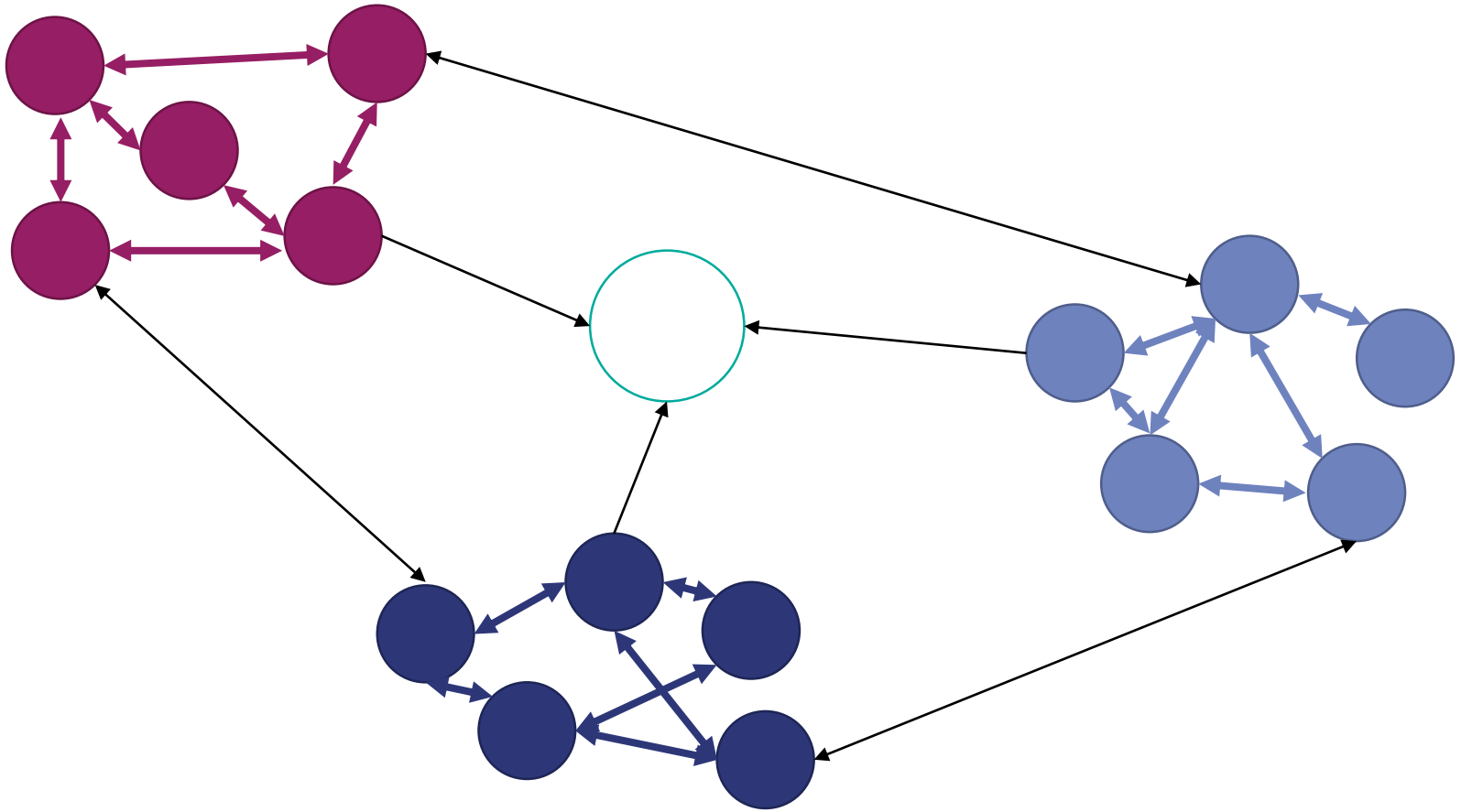
Activities

Networking



Input

- Ideas
- Resources
- People



Inputs

- Ideas: the best ideas are selected through an open, bottom-up process
- People: the COST National Coordinators make sure that the right researchers and innovators are matched with the selected ideas
- Resources: from a dedicated H2020 grant, each Action receives around €135,000 on a yearly basis, on average

Activities

- The COST networking tools: tailor-made for the networking needs of the Actions
- Meetings, Short-Term Scientific Missions, Training Schools, Conference Grants…
- To add value: COST Connect, COST Academy, COST Innovators Grant (soon to come!)

Outputs

- Common proposals: for Horizon 2020, but also for MSCA, Eurostars, Interreg and various national schemes
- Co-created publications: more than 2000 a year as a direct output of COST Actions
- New (interdisciplinary) research collaborations
- Research leadership skills and experience in administering large networks

Results

- Common research projects: out of submitted proposals, 1 in 3 is succesful, beating the ordinary success rate
- Coordination of standards, procedures and methods
- New research infrastructure: physical infrastructure, but also associations, standing groups, conference cycles…
- Career advancement: finding the right research partners, getting involved in a promising consortium, achieving tenure

Impact

- What do we ultimately dream of achieving…?
- Scientific impact: interdisciplinary collaborations leading to breakthrough science
- Societal impact: bridging the innovation divide and participation gaps, and brain circulation in the European Research Area

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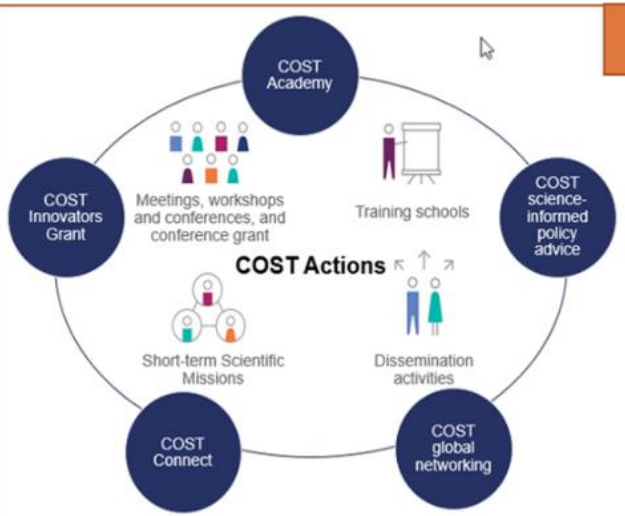

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