

CALL FOR
**YRI
CONFERENCE
GRANT**

CA24108

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OXIDATIVE STRESS AT THE CROSSROADS OF ADVERSE OUTCOME PATHWAYS – PESTICIDES – ONE HEALTH (CAPSTONE)

CONTINUOUS CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR YOUNG RESEARCHER AND INNOVATOR (YRI) CONFERENCE GRANTS

This document is based upon work from COST Action CAPSTONE – Oxidative Stress at the Crossroads of Adverse Outcome Pathways – Pesticides – One Health (CA 24108), supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation.

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1 ABOUT CAPSTONE

Oxidative stress (**OxS**) plays a central role in ecosystem disturbance and human pathologies. Some pesticides have already been banned due to their pro-oxidative properties which are linked to their adverse effects in both humans or in off-target organisms in ecosystem. However, several classes of pesticides are still authorized and could lead to oxidative stress, particularly those that target mitochondria, the main site for reactive oxygen species generation in all living organisms.

There is an increasing scientific, societal, and politic concern about pesticides within the One Health framework. In this context, the challenge of the Action is to identify pesticides' adverse effects linked to oxidative stress that are relevant for both humans and ecosystems, and to describe the Key Events (**KE**) involved in these effects. This Pan-European network will develop a new research strategy based on Adverse Outcome Pathways (**AOPs**).

The Action works within the One Health concept, promoting interdisciplinary breakthroughs between ecotoxicology, toxicology, bioinformatics, epidemiology and risk assessment. It includes scientists from academia, industry, regulatory agencies, a National Social Protection Scheme in charge of agricultural workers and operators, and Non-Governmental Organizations. As there is an increasing interest of New Alternative Methods such as AOPs that has been identified as keys areas of regulatory challenges, the Action will provide scientific input to the pesticide industry and regulatory agencies, disseminating science to a broad audience that include pesticide consumers, civil society, and policy makers.

The objectives of CAPSTONE are to:

- ▶ identify and characterize oxidative stress biomarkers relevant to pesticide exposure across humans, animals, and ecosystems;
- ▶ develop and apply AOPs to better understand the links between pesticide modes of action and adverse health and environmental effects;
- ▶ integrate experimental, computational, and regulatory approaches to improve the assessment of pesticide toxicity, including mixture effects and long-term exposures; and
- ▶ support the development of improved risk assessment strategies by identifying knowledge gaps and proposing harmonized methodologies.

Six working groups (WG) focus on work as follows:

WG1. Literature analysis on pesticides KE/AOPs relevant to OxS in ecotoxicology

WG2. Literature analysis on pesticides KE/AOPs relevant to OxS in toxicology

WG3. List of existing methods to assess OxS

WG4. Comparison of OxS KE/AOPs relevant in ecotoxicology and toxicology for pesticides

WG5. Dissemination of knowledge to pesticides industry & policy makers

WG6. Dissemination among scientists from different fields and to a wide public

2 WHAT IS A YOUNG RESEARCHER AND INNOVATOR (YRI) CONFERENCE GRANT?

A YRI Conference Grant provides financial support to Young Researchers and Innovators (YRI) to attend international scientific conferences relevant to the objectives of the CAPSTONE Action and present their own work through an **oral** or **poster** presentation.

The grant aims to support the professional development of early-career researchers by promoting networking opportunities, scientific exchange, visibility within the research community, and the establishment of future collaborations. YRI Conference Grants also contribute to increasing the visibility and dissemination of CAPSTONE-related research.

3 ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must:

- ▶ Qualify as a YRI (**below age 40**)
- ▶ Be **actively involved** in the CAPSTONE Action
- ▶ Be affiliated with an institution located in a **COST Full or Cooperating Member Country**, or a **Near Neighbour Country (NNC)**
- ▶ Have an **accepted oral or poster presentation** related to the objectives of the CAPSTONE Action at a conference organized by a third party, i.e. not organized or co-organized by the Action

4 FINANCIAL SUPPORT

YRI conference grants provide a **contribution** towards travel, accommodation, registration fees, and subsistence expenses related to conference participation. The maximum grant amount is **2,500 EUR** for **face-to-face** conferences, and **500 EUR** for **online** conferences. The financial contribution will be determined according to **available budget, duration** and **location** of the conference.

Grants are paid after completion of the activity and approval of the required documentation.

5 GRANT AWARDING PROCESS

This call will remain open without a fixed deadline, and applications will be evaluated on a rolling basis. Proposals will be considered in the order in which they are received, subject to the availability of funds. The supported activity, including reporting and payment, must be carried out entirely within one Grant Period. Each Grant Period runs from the **1 November until the 15 September** of the following year.

Each application will undergo an evaluation by at least two members of the evaluation committee, under the coordination of the Grant Awarding Coordinator. Based on this assessment, the **Grant Awarding Coordinator** will provide a recommendation to the **Action Chair**, who will take the final decision in line with the available budget.

Candidates are strongly advised not to make any financial commitments, such as booking travel or accommodation, prior to receiving formal approval in the form of a **Grant Letter**.

6 APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applications should be submitted directly to the Grant Awarding Coordinator (Katarina Matković) by email at kmatkovic@imi.hr.

Each application should include:

- ▶ Application form ([Template](#))
- ▶ Abstract of the accepted oral/poster presentation
- ▶ Proof of acceptance from conference organizers
- ▶ Budget estimate
- ▶ CV and short motivation letter to explain how the main topic of the presentation is relevant to the objectives of CAPSTONE

Selected applicants will subsequently be asked to complete the administrative procedure through the e-COST platform.

7 SUBMISSION OF THE REPORT AND PAYMENT

Following the conference, grantees must submit:

- Proof of participation
- Short scientific report using a template ([Template](#))
- Dissemination material if applicable

Payment will be made after approval of all required documents.

A summary of the scientific report may be published on the CAPSTONE website.



All documents should also be sent directly to the Grant Awarding Coordinator (Katarina Matković).

Any publication or presentation resulting from a YRI Conference Grant **should acknowledge** the support of the **CAPSTONE Action** and **include the COST** and **CAPSTONE logos**, where appropriate (e.g. on presentation slides and poster).

Acknowledgement text:

“This work is based upon work from COST Action CAPSTONE CA24108, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).”

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