

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting of the COST Action

**CA18202 - Network for Equilibria and Chemical
Thermodynamics Advanced Research**

26/08/2022 at 16:30 CET

Face to face, Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology (FCCT), University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana,
Slovenia**

Webex link for online participants (need to download Webex app on your PC):

<https://fkkt-uni-lj.webex.com/fkkt-uni-lj/j.php?MTID=mc656a6942ef77e70b0cd2f96e9266fec>

Meeting number: 2730 587 2876

Password: MWxHpY38ed3

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ACTION Status at date:

- Action parties: 31 COST countries
- CSO approval: 04/06/2019
- Start date: 02/10/2019

i. Agenda and Materials

The MC meeting agenda is in Annex 1. The MC meeting was organised to take some necessary decisions and indications following previous MC meeting.

ii. Participants and Hosting Team

Meeting was hosted in Ljubljana (SLO). Participants are listed in attendance list (attached online by GHM who was present at meeting).

iii. Pre-requisites for the Decision Making

During the meeting, the participants acknowledged and agreed to comply with the Rules of Procedure for the MC from Annex I COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment (COST 134/14: <https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2019/11/COST-134-14-REV-4-Action-management-monit-and-final-assess.pdf>)

Before any decision was taken, the Action Chair (AC) verified that the minimum of 2/3 (21) of the parties present; the necessary quorum to approve decisions was achieved (20 members present in Ljubljana, 1 connected online through Webex platform) allowing the MC meeting to officially take place in accordance with Article 9 of the Rules of Procedure for the MC (see <https://www.cost.eu/uploads/2019/11/COST-134-14-REV-4-Action-management-monit-and-final-assess.pdf>).

1) Welcome to participants, verification of the quorum and adoption of agenda

MC meeting started on time. The AC (Demetrio Milea) welcomed the participants, including those who connected online at link sent via email to MC parties not physically present in Ljubljana.

According to Pre-requisites of point iii., 31 Member Countries are parties of the Action (plus 2 NNC representatives). Quorum is represented by 21 Members

Member		Member		Member	
Albania (AL)	A	France (FR)	P	North Macedonia (MK)	P
Austria (AT)	A	Germany (DE)	P	Poland (PL)	P
Belgium (BE)	A	Greece (EL)	A	Portugal (PT)	P
Bosnia and Herzegovina (BA)	P	Hungary (HU)	P	Romania (RO)	A
Bulgaria (BG)	P	Iceland (IS)	A	Serbia (RS)	P
Croatia (HR)	P	Ireland (IE)	P	Slovakia (SK)	P
Czech Republic (CZ)	P	Italy (IT)	P	Slovenia (SI)	P
Denmark (DK)	A	Lithuania (LT)	P	Spain (ES)	P
Estonia (EE)	A	Malta (MT)	A	Switzerland (CH)	P
Finland (FI)	P	Moldova (MD)	A	Turkey (TR)	P
				United Kingdom (UK)	O

P = Physically present; O: Online Present; A = Absent

Members present were: 21

Members absent were: 10 plus the 2 NNC representatives.

AC announced that quorum was reached to have a regular meeting, and for approving decisions. As such, AC declared that MC Meeting could officially take place and that all votes and decisions taken will be approved instantly.

AC acknowledged all MC Member Representatives who were present, either physically or online, for their great efforts in support of the Action and for their sense of responsibility.

Concerning absent members, AC informed that he received explanations from some members, who could not attend either for serious institutional and/or personal issues, while some other members were not able to connect to the platform to attend online.

Nevertheless, AC could not avoid to mention the absence and/or lack of interest of some Member Representatives, which causes systematic difficulties in Action Management, in relation to delays in approving decisions that cannot be done instantly, but need time because of the e-vote required timing.

AC reads the Agenda (Annex 1), previously sent by email to all MC Members.

AC launched the vote for the Adoption of Agenda.

Agenda was unanimously adopted.

2) Information to the MC

a. Recap of the minutes of the last meeting, e-votes and matters arising since the last meeting

Minutes of previous MC meeting were already approved by MC members through e-vote.

Any matter was brought to discussing by any of the participants.

b. Core Group: report from the Core Group, including delegated decisions

CG meeting was held immediately before MC meeting. Main topics were related to the management of the Action, especially in relation to deliverables from various WGs for current and next GP, networking activities for next GP, eventual request of deadline extension of the Action, WBP for next GP(s). CG gave mandate to AC to report and discuss these indications during MC in relative points of MC Meeting Agenda.

c. Action Membership: New Specific Organisations and COST Members represented in the MC

At present time, no requests for new MC memberships were received.

d. Action Participation: WG membership and applications, New MC members/Observers and provisional substitution.

AC reminded MC about new WG membership and application procedures, recommending people who did not apply yet to do it asap.

AC informed MC that, due to their impossibility to attend MC meeting, the following members were provisionally substituted, just for the present meeting:

- 1) Antonio Bianchi, ITALY, substituted by Tarita Biver

- 2) Matteo Tegoni, ITALY, substituted by Carmelo Sgarlata
- 3) Natalia Busto, SPAIN, substituted by Alvaro Martinez-Camarena

e. Budget status: summary from the Grant Holder.

GH informed MC that almost all budget allocated for GP3 will be spent for planned activities.

f. Update from the COST Association.

CA18202 SO, Monica Perez-Cabero, and AO, Carmencita Malimban were present to meeting. Both gave a presentation to audience about novelties concerning the administration and management of Action, as well as on the status of Action itself.

3) Follow up and discussion on the

a. Action management: structure, leadership positions and other supporting roles. Mandates to the Core Group (if applicable)

AC informed participants that all leadership positions are now reported on COST official CA18202 webpage (<https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA18202/>) as well as in NECTAR official webpage (<https://cost-nectar.eu/>).

AC inform MC that, due to the new structure of COST Actions, the new position of Grant Awarding Coordinator has been created, who should take care of the awarding and management of Grants. This position should merge and replace the old positions of STSM Coordinator and ITC Conference Grant Coordinator. Grant awarding Coordinator position was assigned by default to AC. However, due to the excellent work done by actual STSM (Matteo Tegoni) and ITC Conference Grant (Emel Yildiz) Coordinators, AC propose to MC to maintain those two positions and, at the same time, to assign officially the role of Grant Awarding Coordinator to Matteo Tegoni.

AC launched the vote for the maintenance of STSM and ITC Conference Grant Coordinators for Matteo Tegoni and Emel Yildiz, respectively, and to assign the position of Grant Awarding Coordinator to Matteo Tegoni.

Proposal was unanimously approved by MC.

AC thus asked if there was any other proposal for changing any leadership position within Action.

Alvar Martinez-Camarena announced that, during WG5 meeting, Natalia Busto asked to resign from her role of WG5 leader for personal reasons, and that WG5 proposed him as new WG5 leader and Emanuele Zanda as new co-leader.

AC thus launched vote to appoint Alvar Martinez-Camarena and Emanuele Zanda as WG5 leader and co-leader.

Proposal was unanimously approved by MC.

Successively, Arunas Ramanavicius announced that, for personal reasons, he would prefer to resign from the role of WG3 leader, proposing Marija Bester-Rogac as new WG3 leader and keeping Slobodan Gadzuric as WG3 co-leader.

AC thus launched vote to appoint Marija Bester-Rogac as WG3 leader and to maintain Slobodan Gadzuric as WG3 co-leader.

Proposal was unanimously approved by MC.

b. Implementation of the COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy

As confirmed by SO during her speech, COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy is very well implemented by NECTAR CA18202 Action.

c. Grant Awarding by the Action

AC informed MC that Grant Awarding process is going on in a very positive and fruitful way. For the present GP3, 19 STSMs have been completed/assigned, and 2 ITC Conference Grants Awarded.

d. Progress of each working group

WG leaders/co-leaders of each of the 5 Action's WGs informed MC about their activities for GP3. Particular attention was given to the progress of deliverables expected for the end of GP3 for each WGs, as well as planned activities and deliverables for upcoming GP4. All planned deliverables will be provided within the end of GP3. MC gave mandate to AC to collect from WG leaders/coleaders the expected deliverables and WGs planned activities for next GP4, and to report them on the new GP4 AGA/WBP. WG leaders/co-leaders agreed to provide those data in written form ASAP, and not after the end of September, in order to allow AC to prepare all required documents for next GP4 in due time.

e. Science Communication Plan

AC invited SCM and WG5 leader to refer about the Science Communication Plan and Dissemination activities. Scientific results obtained within the Action have been published in peer reviewed and high impact journals, both regular and open access, properly acknowledging COST Association and NECTAR CA18202. An updated list is reported in Action webpage (www.cost-nectar.eu). Overall, Science Communication Plan, as well as Dissemination Activities, are well implemented and no particular changes were suggested. SCM and WG5 leader just underlined again the importance of collaborations and "publications" within Action's aims and between at least three Action's members (i.e. 3 Countries), with the aim of strenghtening the network, as well as the importance of Dissemination Activities.

f. Progress on MoU Objectives, WG tasks, deliverables, and Goals for the current GP

AC remembered MC what are MoU general objectives, as well as the GP3 goals and deliverables. On the basis of reports provided by WG leaders and Coordinators/Managers about the status of the Action, with special reference to GP3, the progress of the Action in terms of fulfillment of on MoU Objectives, WG tasks, deliverables, and Goals for the current GP can be considered as highly satisfactory, especially taking into account all the issues caused by pandemics. AC also showed the PR2, paying particular attention to the sections related to Action's achievements and activities to complete.

4) Planning

a. Revision of Work and Budget Plan of the current GP

AC informed MC that, for current GP, almost all planned activities have been completed, and the allocated budget almost entirely spent according to WBP for GP3.

b. Draft plans for the following GP and Action extension

AC informed MC that he has been informed by SO that allocated budget for next GP4 should be around 149k€ including FSAC, but that there is the possibility to request an extension (GP5) for further 6 months

(end of Action on April 30th, 2024), with a dedicated budget in addition to that of GP4. However, this request should be officially made to COST Association upon MC approval. As such, after a fruitful discussion about the utility and opportunity to make the extension request, AC launched vote to request an extension of NECTAR CA18202 till April 30th, 2024.

Proposal was unanimously approved by MC.

As a consequence of the approval of the request for the extension, and based on expected budget for GP4, AC made two proposals for the GP4 activities and consequent budget plan.

Proposal A was mainly considering the 4th European NECTAR Conference, 5 WG meetings, 1 TS, around 16 STSM, 2 ITC Conference Grants, with budget approximatively divided as follows:

A. COST Networking Tools	
(1) Meetings	85'000.00
(2) Training Schools (TS)	15'000.00
(3) Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)	24'000.00
(4) ITC Conference Grants	2'000.00
(5) COST Action Dissemination	2'500.00
(6) Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities (OERSA)	700.00
(7) VNT	0.00
B. Total Science Expenditure (sum of (1) to (7))	129'200.00
C. Financial and Scientific Administration and Coordination (FSAC) (15% of B)	19'380.00
Total Grant (B+C)	148' 580.00

Proposal B was mainly considering the same activities, but excluding the 4th European NECTAR Conference (to postpone to GP5 as “final meeting”) and dedicating a slightly higher budget to STSM (around 20), with budget approximatively divided as follows:

A. COST Networking Tools	
(1) Meetings	75'000.00
(2) Training Schools (TS)	19'000.00
(3) Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)	30'000.00
(4) ITC Conference Grants	2'000.00
(5) COST Action Dissemination	2'500.00
(6) Other Expenses Related to Scientific Activities (OERSA)	700.00
(7) VNT	0.00
B. Total Science Expenditure (sum of (1) to (7))	129'200.00
C. Financial and Scientific Administration and Coordination (FSAC) (15% of B)	19'380.00
Total Grant (B+C)	148' 580.00

AC underlined that, according to previous decisions concerning the importance of “in-presence” activities, no budget to VNT was dedicated.

AC launched vote to opt for “Proposal A” or “Proposal B”.

MC, voted for “Proposal B”, except for Serbia, who voted for “Proposal A”. MC approved “Proposal B”.

c. Upcoming activities

Based on decision taken, AC asked mandate to MC to properly plan, in agreement with CG (and WG leaders in particular), the locations of next in-presence activities (WG Meetings, TS), launching vote.

MC unanimously approved to give mandate to AC.

5) Monitoring and Reporting to the COST Association

Due to the presence to meeting of both SO and AO, who followed the whole discussion, no other matter arose concerning this point.

6) AOB

No other point was found to be relevant to be further discussed.

7) Summary of MC decisions

From the 31 COST Member Countries of the Action, 21 (twenty one) were present and represented by their corresponding MC members. MC meeting was valid to make proposals and take and approve decisions, summarized as follows:

- **Decision 1:** Agenda of the meeting was adopted.
- **Decision 2:** Maintenance of STSM and ITC Conference Grant Coordinators for Matteo Tegoni and Emel Yildiz, respectively, and assignment of the position of Grant Awarding Coordinator to Matteo Tegoni..
- **Decision 3:** Alvar Martinez-Camarena and Emanuele Zanda appointed as WG5 leader and co-leader.
- **Decision 4:** Marija Bester-Rogac appointed as WG3 leader and Slobodan Gadzuric confirmed as WG3 co-leader.
- **Decision 5:** Action Extension request approved.
- **Decision 7:** Draft of WBP (Proposal B) approved.
- **Decision 8:** Mandate to AC to plan locations of next events.

8) Closing

In conclusion, AC thanked all people present for their active participation to the meeting, acknowledging the excellent work done by everybody.

Meeting was officially closed.

List of Annexes

- Annex 1 – Agenda

Minutes prepared by:

- *Action Chair*
- *Action Vice-Chair*

COST Action CA18202: "Network for Equilibria and Chemical Thermodynamics Advanced Research"

Management Committee Meeting

Draft Agenda

26/08/2022 at 16:30 CET

Face to face, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology (FCCT), University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

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