

## **COST Academy- Sustainability of COST Actions Networking Event**

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### **Sustainability of COST Actions**

- Different ways to maintain, expand and leverage the initial COST network after the end of the COST Action
- It is not about continuation through funding of another COST Action

### **The ideas from the actions**

- PhD network
- Follow up with Horizon Europe
- Applying new grants including MCSA
- To have a stable and open research community with regular cooperation and exchange of Staff and students
- New COST action with new set-up goals, and projects to fund research with a limited number of participants
- Keep contact with stakeholders already engaged in the action participation in EU projects
- Establish an association organising events for researchers and participants
- Continued conferences, training schools
- Establish new initiatives, start-ups
- Sustainable discussion platform

<p><b>Motivation and strengths for sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To carry on research</li> <li>• Network maintenance</li> <li>• To finish what was started</li> <li>• To promote European values</li> <li>• Continuous collaboration</li> <li>• Widen international collaboration/curricula</li> <li>• Publications</li> <li>• Increased visibility</li> <li>• Impact on policy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academia dominated</li> <li>• Missing skill sets/stakeholders, who is responsible</li> <li>• What/how to prioritise</li> <li>• Who to select from the bottom-up?</li> <li>• Private funding, costs</li> <li>• Intellectual property (IP)</li> <li>• Legal responsibility</li> <li>• Sustainability from a business perspective</li> <li>• Bureaucracy</li> <li>• Time limits</li> <li>• Differences in motivation follow-up among the network members</li> <li>• Decision between the options</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant associations</li> <li>• Innovator grant</li> <li>• Continuous education (webinars, training schools)</li> <li>• Apply for funding, grants, Erasmus, Horizon, MCSA, smaller grants, and private funding</li> <li>• Societal impact</li> <li>• Deliverables as resources</li> <li>• Outreach and public engagement</li> <li>• Empowerment of network diversity</li> <li>• Work experience and reputation of COST action</li> <li>• Promote multacentral studies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Next steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no single way forward</li> <li>• Needs to be on the agenda</li> <li>• Dedicated team</li> <li>• Roles and processes</li> <li>• Define the vision</li> <li>• Establishing an entity and business plan, mapping resources</li> <li>• Establishing rules</li> <li>• Define a win-win relationship with academic associations/stakeholders</li> <li>• Outreach and public engagement</li> <li>• Online PhD schools</li> <li>• Doctoral networks</li> <li>• Another COST network</li> </ul>

### Examples from Actions

#### 1. “Building on scientific literacy in the evolution towards scientifically responsible Europeans (EuroScitizen)” turned into EVOKE.

- For research line: Remaining funds allocated to support new 12 research applications, 1 COST
- Dissemination of the results in multiple channels including press
- 1 EVOKE conference
- EVOKE as a legal entity (as an NGO)
  - problem: legal issues and banks
  - solution: Choosing a country to make it legal

**2. “Applications of MR imaging and spectroscopy techniques in neuromuscular disease: collaboration on outcome measures and pattern recognition for diagnostics and therapy development” turned into MYO-MRI, MYO-SHARE**

- A portal-streamlined approach to diagnosing patients with rare neuromuscular disease, sharing new imaging protocols and establishing guidelines for an online registry to create an [imaging atlas](#) for NMD.
- Problem: fight with bureaucracy

**3. “A European Network for Connective Tissue Calcifying Diseases” turned into INTEC (International Network on Ectopic Calcification)**

- An operational and centralized clinical database
- Updated guidelines and recommendations
- Webinars
- Biomarkers, end-points for routine and clinical trials
- National and international clinical trials
- Recommendations send to policymakers and patient associations
  - Challenges: keeping the network together with less money, empazing the network’s usefulness to your partners
  - Sustainability: link with pharmaceutical /industrial partners

**4. “Towards an International Network for Evidence-based Research in Clinical Health Research” turned into REPO4EU**

- Establishment of a new organisation
- Registered existing network as a nonprofit organisation in Norway
- Formulating strategy documents
- Negotiating with a candidate hosting institution
- Establishing a Founding Steering Committee to explore the best way forward
- Business model
  - Determining membership fees as funding resources, sponsorships, donations
  - Reasons for joining: collaboration, discounts for conferences, courses etc.
  - Challenges: non-profit organisation, difficult to decide fee, no sustained funding streams