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Virtual Networking Strategy

COST Action CA16226

Indoor Living Space Improvement:
Smart Habitat for the Elderly

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The Virtual Networking Strategy (VNS) is aligned with the core networking principles of the Sheldon COST Action:

Openness	Transparency	Clarity

Following these core principles, the VNS establishes that:

- Opportunities will be made open to all participants and Early Career Investigators from International Target Countries will be especially encouraged to apply for Virtual Mobility Grants (VMG) and to participate in VMG activities.
- The Core Group provides reviews and approval/rejection for VMG applications (as approved by the Management Committee of the Sheldon COST Action). Feedback is provided to all applicants to improve their application in case of rejection, or to improve their plan in case of approval.
- The call for VMGs will clearly state the expectations of the application and of the VMG activities so applicants can create well-formed proposals with less stress.

Following these basic principles, Virtual Networking opportunities are expected support greater engagement through direct support for Action participants to organise online and offline activities to achieve the objectives of the Action.

Virtual Networking Strategy

The Core Group will determine the priorities of the VMG's should address and establish a budget, to be approved by the Management Committee. As a starting point, the priorities of the VMGs should be completing the remaining work that was initiated in Working Group 4 on Solutions for Ageing Well at Home, in the Community and at Work.

To communicate this information, a clearly defined open call for VMG applications will be created, published, and shared with Action Stakeholders. The open call will include:

- Definition of virtual mobility tools
- Context for the work (e.g., WG4 objectives, Action objectives)
- Precise expectations and requested outcomes
- Assessment guidelines and criteria
- An explanation of the submission procedures.
- Contact information for follow up.

The call for applications should be widely distributed to Action stakeholders and other interested parties via email lists, word of mouth, and social media.

During the open call period, the VNS manager will be responsive to questions and available to support applicants in the development and submission of their applications. The goal should be to ensure the applications are suitable to the call and in suitable quality for review by the Core Group.

During application review, the VNS manager will summarise and share applications with the Core Group for their review and voting. The VNS manager will collect the results and make the final decision based on the consensus recommendation from the Core Group. The VNS manager will recuse themselves from scoring process in the event an application comes from a close colleague or directly affects their institution. The VNS manager implement the consensus recommendation (approve or reject) in the e-COST system, allowing the grant holder to proceed with approval.

The VNS manager will coordinate with successful applicants and related working group leaders to provide support in building participation and in executing the VMG. During this time, the VNS manager will liase with the VMG recipient to ensure information for reporting is being collected and will support the applicants in preparing quality reports which can then be sythensized into a final VNS report. VMG recipients will be requested to present the process and results of their activities at the final CA16226 conference or in a special webinar/workshop should the conference not be possible.

The VNS manager will observe and follow all COST guidelines, be familiar with the Virtual Networking Support Tools as described in the Vademecum, and behave in a professional manner towards applicants, Action members, and VM participants, and VM Participants.

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