

Strategy on virtual networking for the IRENE COST Action

Action number: CA18118

Grant period: 1st May 2020 – 31st October 2021

Virtual Networking Support Manager: Hendrik Knoche (DK)

The **strategy focuses on development, spreading and coordinating new networking tools**, which will lead specifically to: 1) further development of cooperation between IRENE COST members when face-to-face meetings are impossible, 2) creating opportunities for early stage careers to benefit from the IRENE COST Action despite the international mobility is limited, 3) development of new partnership with industry, academy and supranational organisations, which can bring new expertise to IRENE Network, so we can achieve the IRENE COST Action goals faster. 4) In the strategy we also stress the need of virtual or hybrid activities towards patients, who are important beneficiaries of the IRENE COST Action outputs. The strategy encourages IRENE COST members and other scientists to follow this strategy and to apply for grants, which can help them to achieve required outputs.

The pandemic situation has led to rapid development and uptake of new virtual tools, which inspired us to focus not only on virtual tools for running and developing the IRENE COST Action, but also on identifying new virtual tools for stakeholders (physicians and patients), which can be developed in future in case of obtaining appropriate funding.

An open call with detailed information on the Virtual Mobility Grants will be disseminated within the IRENE COST Action. It will be published on the Action's website and all Action participants will be notified through an email campaign and in the IRENE newsletter.

The evaluation process for awarding Virtual Mobility Grants will take place after careful consideration of all applicants and their proposals and after discussion with the Management Committee.

Supporting and advising successful applicants of the Virtual Mobility Grants will take place by appointment through teleconferencing software or email communication.



Members of the Action, with greater emphasis on participants from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs) and MC Observers from Near Neighbour Countries (NNCs), will be prompted to make use of Virtual Mobility Grants periodically via emails and newsletters.

The strategy on virtual networking shall be published on Action's website.

Foreseen plan for coordinating and reporting planned Action virtual events

Virtual Networking Support Manager will:

- support the Management Committee in the planning of virtual events and collaboration activities,
- provide an organizational or technical support of virtual events if needed,
- assist in the selection of hosts and speakers for the virtual networking events and collaboration activities,
- support the hosts in preparation and coordination of virtual events,
- provide support in selecting the most appropriate and cost-efficient virtual tool for a specific needs of each virtual event,
- keep records of each virtual event and how it contributed to the COST Action objectives.

The Action benefits resulting from virtual and hybrid networking activities

1. Despite the most of members are intensive care physicians, now occupied by extra clinical work because of COVID-19 pandemic, the communication and cooperation of IRENE members stays vital thanks to **establishment of new virtual tools** for communication and data sharing (shared documents and mind maps for developing and discussing new research ideas). Early Career Investigators are supported by the virtual tools as well.

2. The consortium develops **new essential partnership** with representatives of industry, universities and supranational organizations. New cooperation with universities and IT and legal companies will be developed. Representatives of these universities and private companies will bring new expertise in IT and Data Management to develop comprehensive solutions for stroke care improvement.

3. Within the IRENE network, a group of members works on a vision how to further improve the quality of European healthcare systems by expanding and improving the platform for continuous monitoring, evaluation and improvement of stroke care quality – RES-Q (REgistry



of Stroke care Quality). Intensive collaboration via virtual means is essential in order to propose specific procedures and solutions. These efforts will result to a joint **submission of the Horizon Europe grant application** by an IRENE COST Action consortium. The preparation of the grant will be led by Prof. Robert Mikulik (Action Chair) and Assoc. Prof. Hendrik Knoche (VNS Manager, WG 3 Leader). The Horizon Europe grant proposal will follow IRENE COST Action goals and can potentially bring funding for AI-based tools for healthcare.

4. **New virtual tools for patients after stroke and stroke physicians** will be identified by IRENE Network together with new partners, as well as new research topics.

The Strategy was prepared by VNS Manager – Hendrik Knoche, 2021

