Brussels, 30 October 2012

Memo | Online Travel Reimbursement Request (OTRR)

Dear COST Action Members,

In order to facilitate the process of participant reimbursements and avoid duplicate encoding in e-COST, the COST Office is now introducing an Online Travel Reimbursement Request (OTRR).

This online-form will allow each participant to directly encode the expenses incurred in relation to the attendance of COST Action meetings into e-COST, as well as to centralise the supporting documents linked to the request, by scanning them and attaching them to the online reimbursement request.

In order to simplify the process, the maximum eligible number of nights and the maximum number of meals will be calculated automatically using the travel information encoded by the participants, the flat rate indicated by the Grant Holder while creating the meeting. Meals provided by the Local Organizer will have to be deducted by the participants. As a reminder, the maximum number of nights is limited to the number of meeting days attended plus one (before or after the meeting).

Typically, and in order to include any expenses on the return journey, the OTRR is to be submitted only in after the meeting took place. Please note that you will still need to print the latest version after the electronic submission, sign and send it as original, together with original supporting documents, by post to the Grant Holder in charge of the Action. For electronic tickets and other electronic documentation (e.g. Google maps itinerary), it is sufficient to upload them in e-COST.

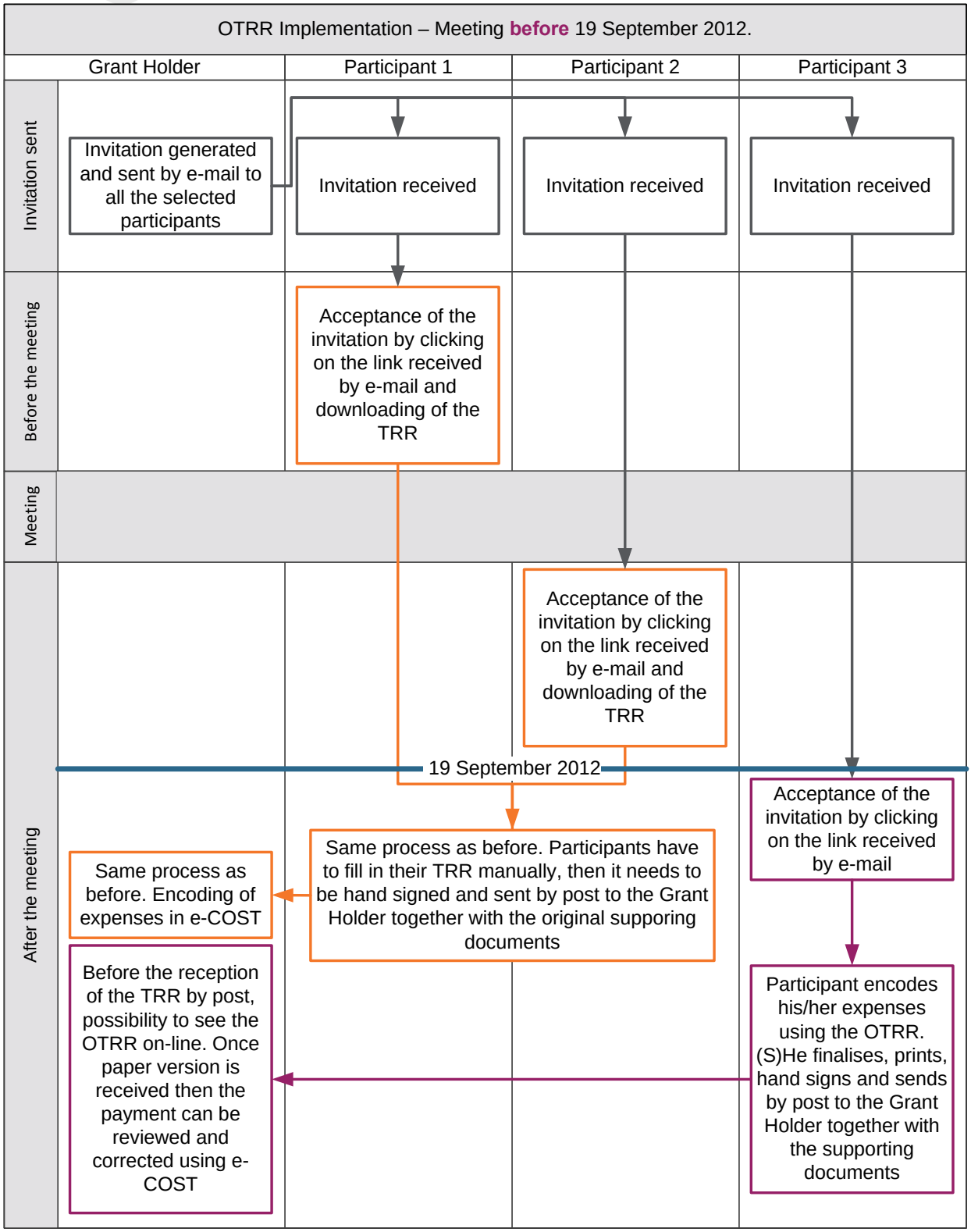
On the first day after the meeting, participants will receive an automatic reminder to fill in the travel reimbursement request. Another reminder will be sent after 30 and 53 calendar days; however, the software blocks any submission of travel reimbursement request after 60 calendar days after the end date of the meeting as any request submitted after this deadline is NOT eligible.

The new Online Travel Reimbursement Request is now available in e-COST since 19 September 2012. From this date on, all participants who had not yet downloaded the Travel Reimbursement Request for a particular meeting (in the past and for any future meetings), will need to use this new feature. You will find attached the possible different scenarios which may apply to you in the Annex of this document. Please also find a short step-by-step guide on how to fill in this form attached.

In case of any difficulties with the form, please do not hesitate to contact either the e-COST Helpdesk or the Administrative Officer in charge of the Action.

Best regards.

COST-Office


OTRR Implementation – Meeting before 19 September 2012.
Grant Holder
Participant 1
Participant 2
Participant 3
Invitation sent
Before the meeting
Meeting
After the meeting
Invitation generated and sent by e-mail to all the selected participants
Invitation received
Invitation received
Invitation received
Acceptance of the invitation by clicking on the link received by e-mail and downloading of the TRR
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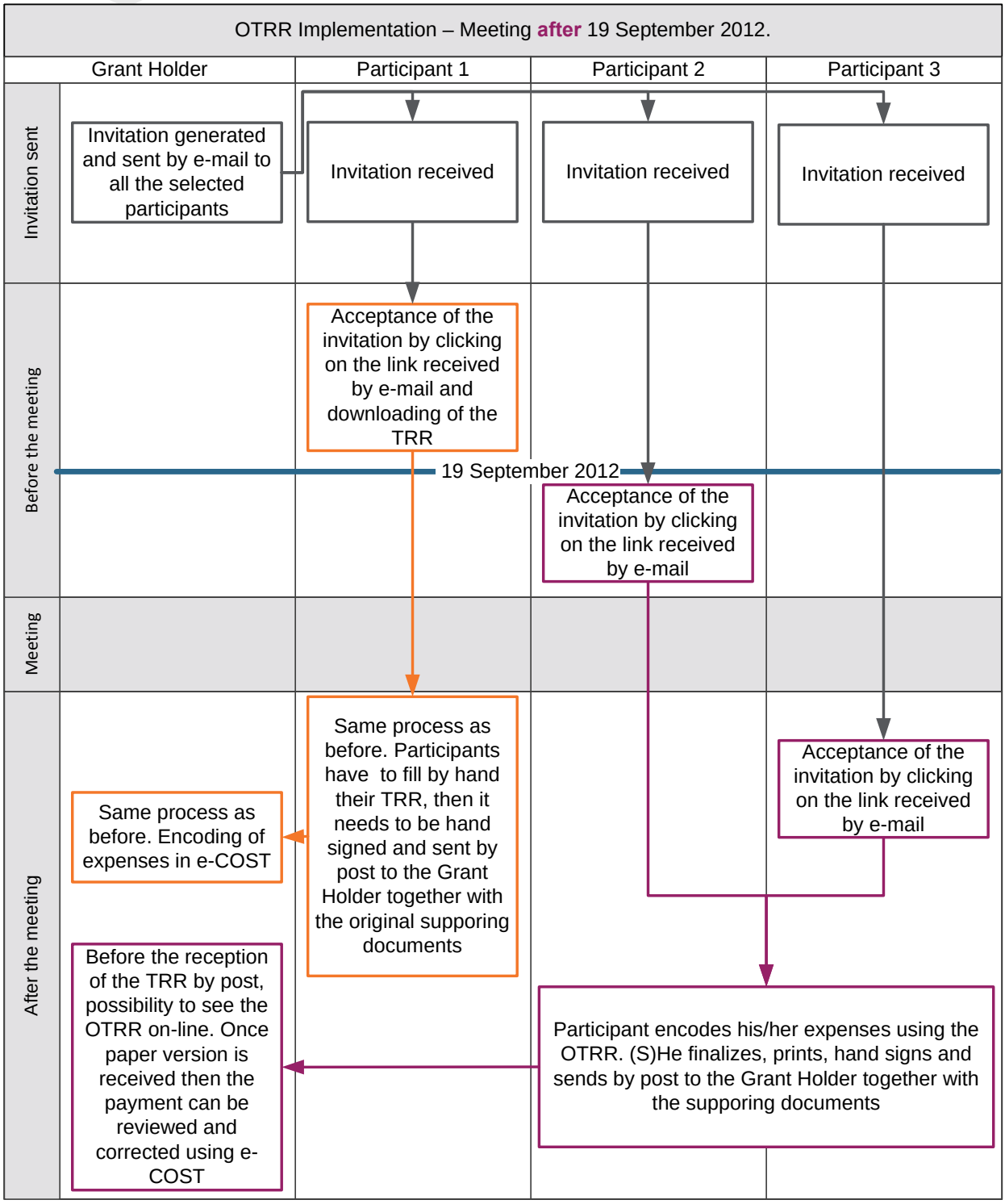
19 September 2012
Acceptance of the invitation by clicking on the link received by e-mail
Same process as before. Participants have to fill in their TRR manually, then it needs to be hand signed and sent by post to the Grant Holder together with the original supporing documents
Same process as before. Encoding of expenses in e-COST
Before the reception of the TRR by post, possibility to see the OTRR on-line. Once paper version is received then the payment can be reviewed and corrected using e-COST
Participant encodes his/her expenses using the OTRR. (S)He finalises, prints, hand signs and sends by post to the Grant Holder together with the supporting documents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Brussels, 30 October 2012

Memo | Guide for Submission of a COST Online Travel Reimbursement Request for COST Actions Participants

In this document, COST Action Participants will find a step-by-step guide (including print screens) detailing how to fill in the Online Travel Reimbursement Request (OTRR), released on 19 September 2012 and updated on 30 October 2012.

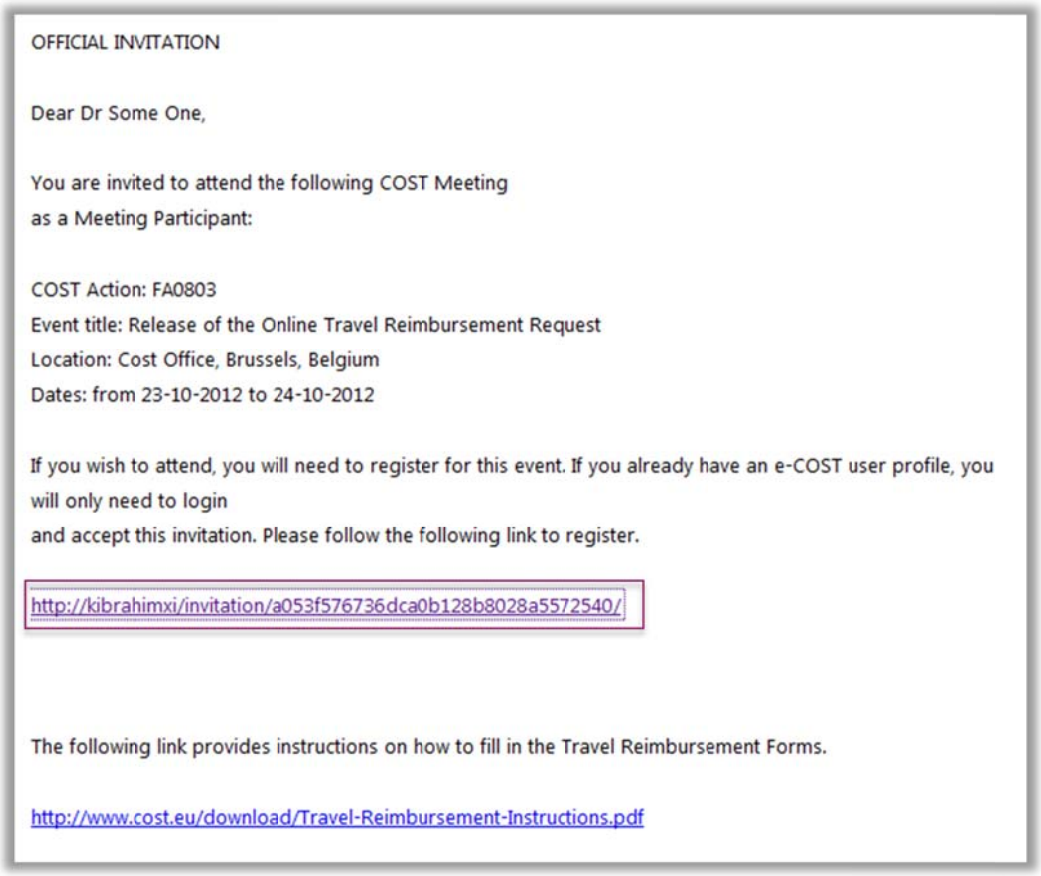
This guide is only applicable for claims provided by participants eligible and entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses while attending COST Action related activities.

More information for participants regarding the release of the OTRR can be found on the COST Website, or after login in e-COST.

The scenario used as an example in this guide concerns a COST Action Management Committee Meeting, from 23 to 24 October 2012, in Brussels, with 0 meals provided by the Local Organiser.

Participants eligible and entitled to reimbursement

The invited participants who are deemed eligible for reimbursement will receive the following automatic e-COST invitation:



OFFICIAL INVITATION

Dear Dr Some One,

You are invited to attend the following COST Meeting
as a Meeting Participant:

COST Action: FA0803
Event title: Release of the Online Travel Reimbursement Request
Location: Cost Office, Brussels, Belgium
Dates: from 23-10-2012 to 24-10-2012

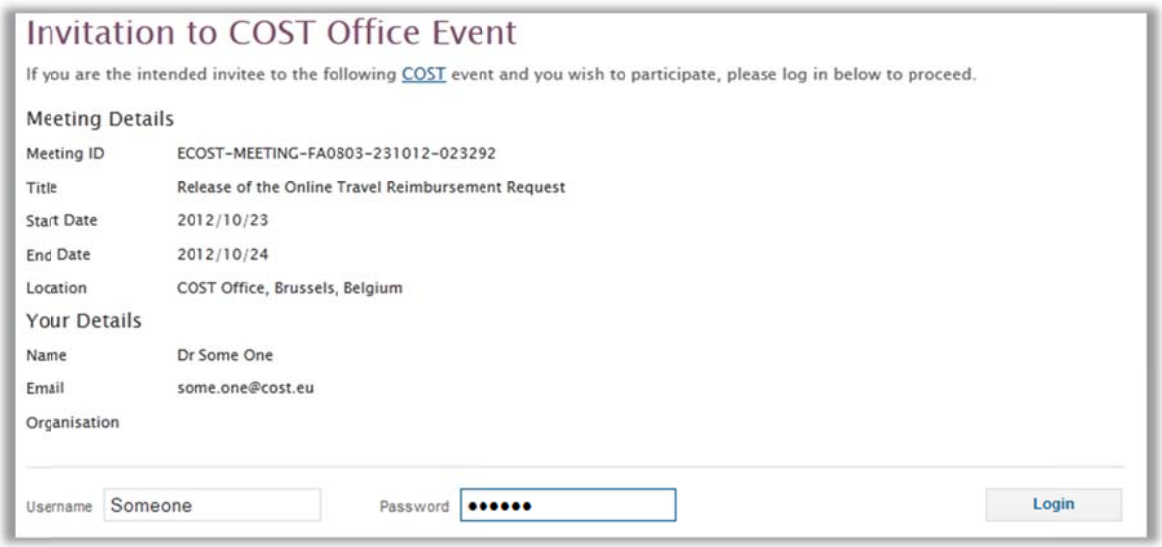
If you wish to attend, you will need to register for this event. If you already have an e-COST user profile, you will only need to login
and accept this invitation. Please follow the following link to register.

http://kibrahimxi/invitation/a053f576736dca0b128b8028a5572540/

The following link provides instructions on how to fill in the Travel Reimbursement Forms.

http://www.cost.eu/download/Travel-Reimbursement-Instructions.pdf

By clicking on the link provided in the invitation, the participant will be re-directed to this page:



Invitation to COST Office Event

If you are the intended invitee to the following COST event and you wish to participate, please log in below to proceed.

Meeting Details

Meeting ID	ECOST-MEETING-FA0803-231012-023292
Title	Release of the Online Travel Reimbursement Request
Start Date	2012/10/23
End Date	2012/10/24
Location	COST Office, Brussels, Belgium

Your Details

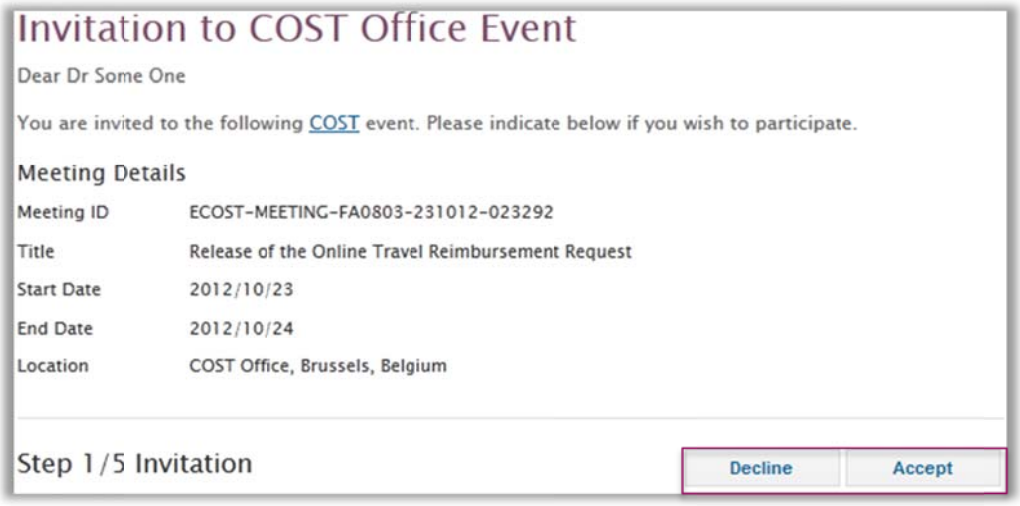
Name	Dr Some One
Email	some.one@cost.eu
Organisation	

Username Someone Password •••••• Login

After login, the participant has to follow 5 steps, taking into consideration ideally, step 1 should be done before the meeting, that steps 2 to 3 can be done either before or after the meeting and that step 4 and 5 can only be done after the meeting took place.

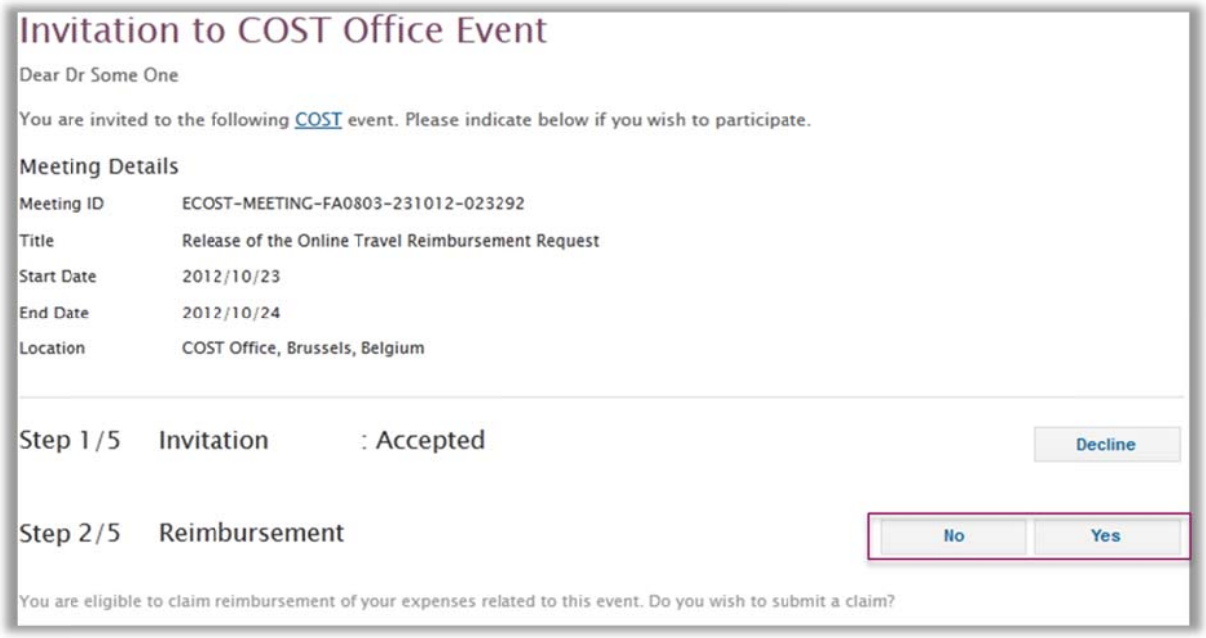
Step 1/5 - Invitation

In step 1, the participant is asked to accept or decline the invitation.



Step 2/5 - Reimbursement

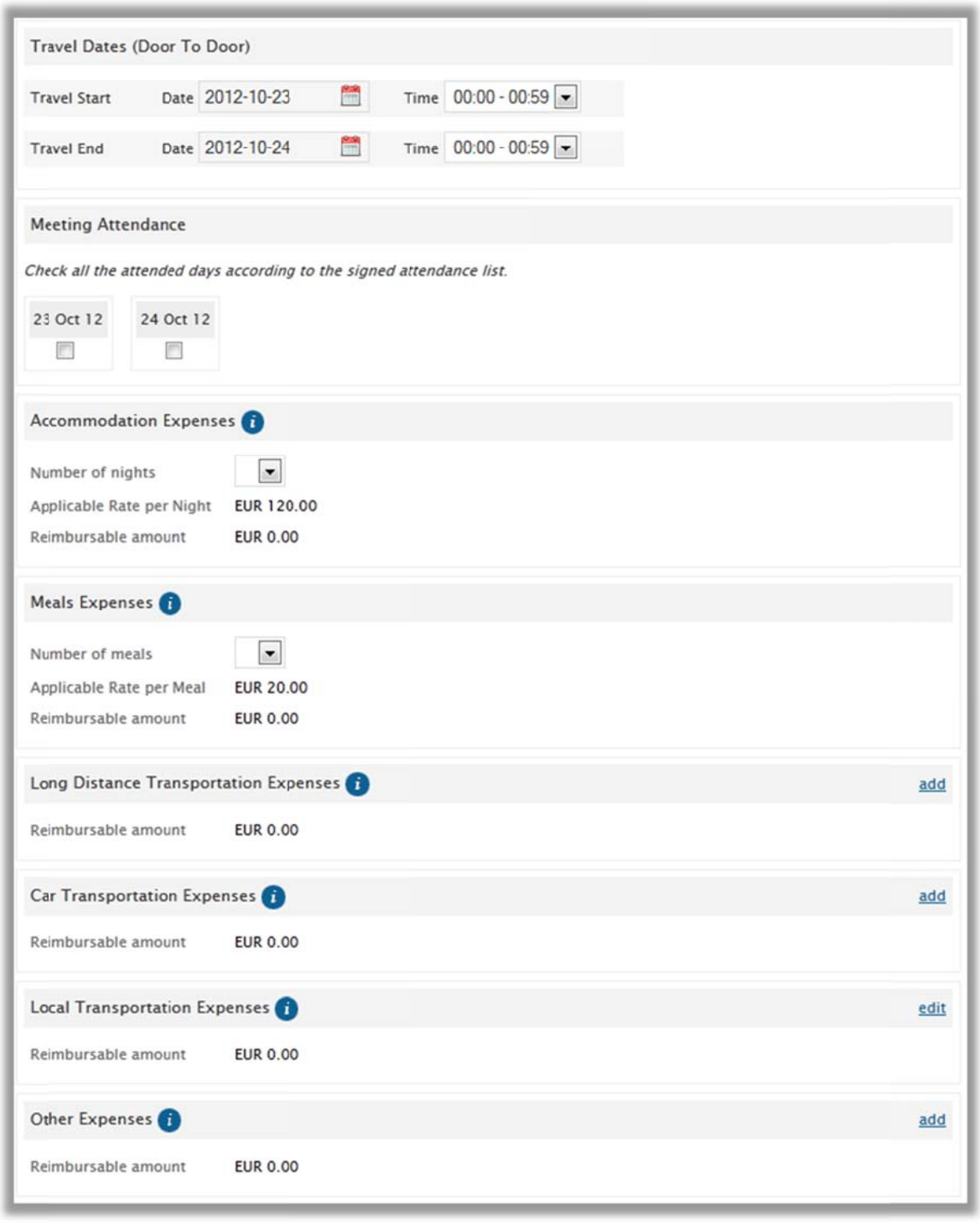
In step 2, the participant can start to fill in the claim immediately. When selecting "YES", the claim appears and can be updated. The system will record any modification made by the participant from the step 2 to 5. The participant can only finalise the request and submit it to the Grant Holder after the meeting. It is advisable that the participant completes the request only after the meeting. When selecting "NO", the participant will have the possibility to re-access to this page (by following the link provided in the invitation) to fill in the request later. The claim **must** be submitted **within** 60 calendar days after the end date of the meeting - otherwise the claim will ineligible.



Step 3/5 – Travel Information and Expenses

Step 3 concerns the actual encoding of expenses.

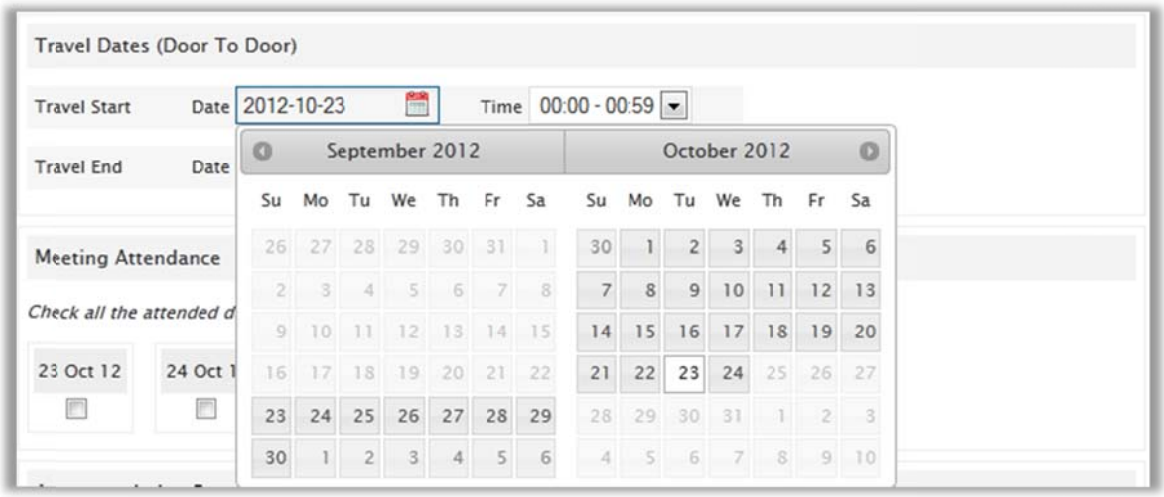
For the purpose of this guide, the scenario described is as follows: a participant attends a Meeting in Brussels from the 23 to 24 October 2012, and is affiliated with a Swiss institution. To attend the meeting, the participant is leaving from Berlin to Brussels and then flying back home to Switzerland.



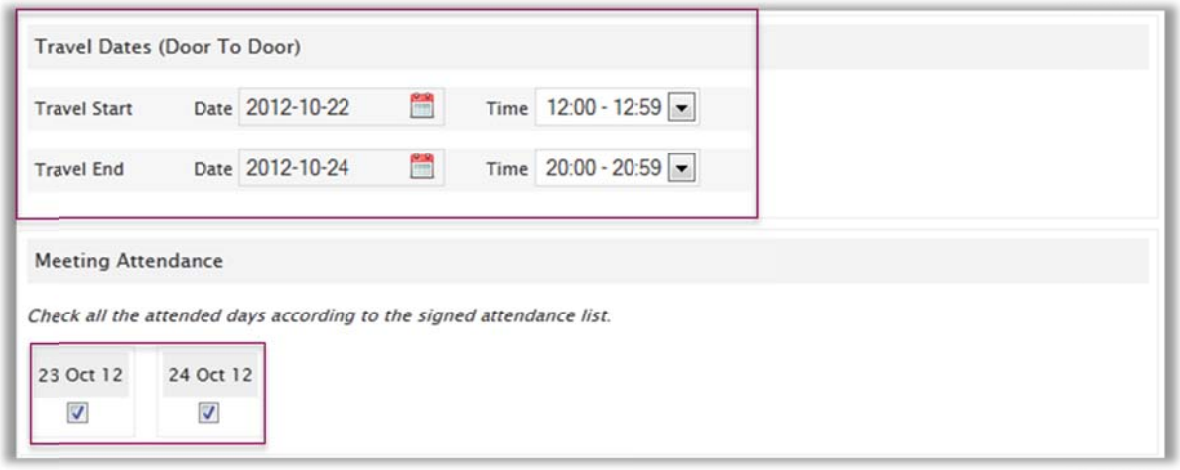
The participant has the possibility to update each category of expenses.

- **Travel Dates and Meeting Attendance**

Travel start date and travel end date are automatically populated with the meeting dates and are editable. The drop down menu allows the participant to select the departure time (from home/ starting location) and the arrival time (back home/arrival location) as well.



The participant needs to complete the attendance to the meeting by selecting the date(s) for which the attendance list has been signed. Travel information and attendance to the meeting are necessary to calculate automatically the maximum number of nights and the maximum number of meals eligible to be reimbursed to the participant.



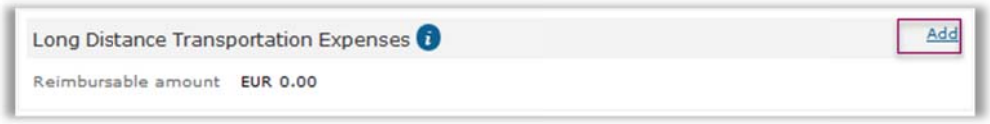
- **Accommodation and Meals Expenses**

The applicable rate is the same here as the one specified by the Grant Holder while creating the meeting. Using the available drop down menu, the participant selects the number of nights and meals to be reimbursed.

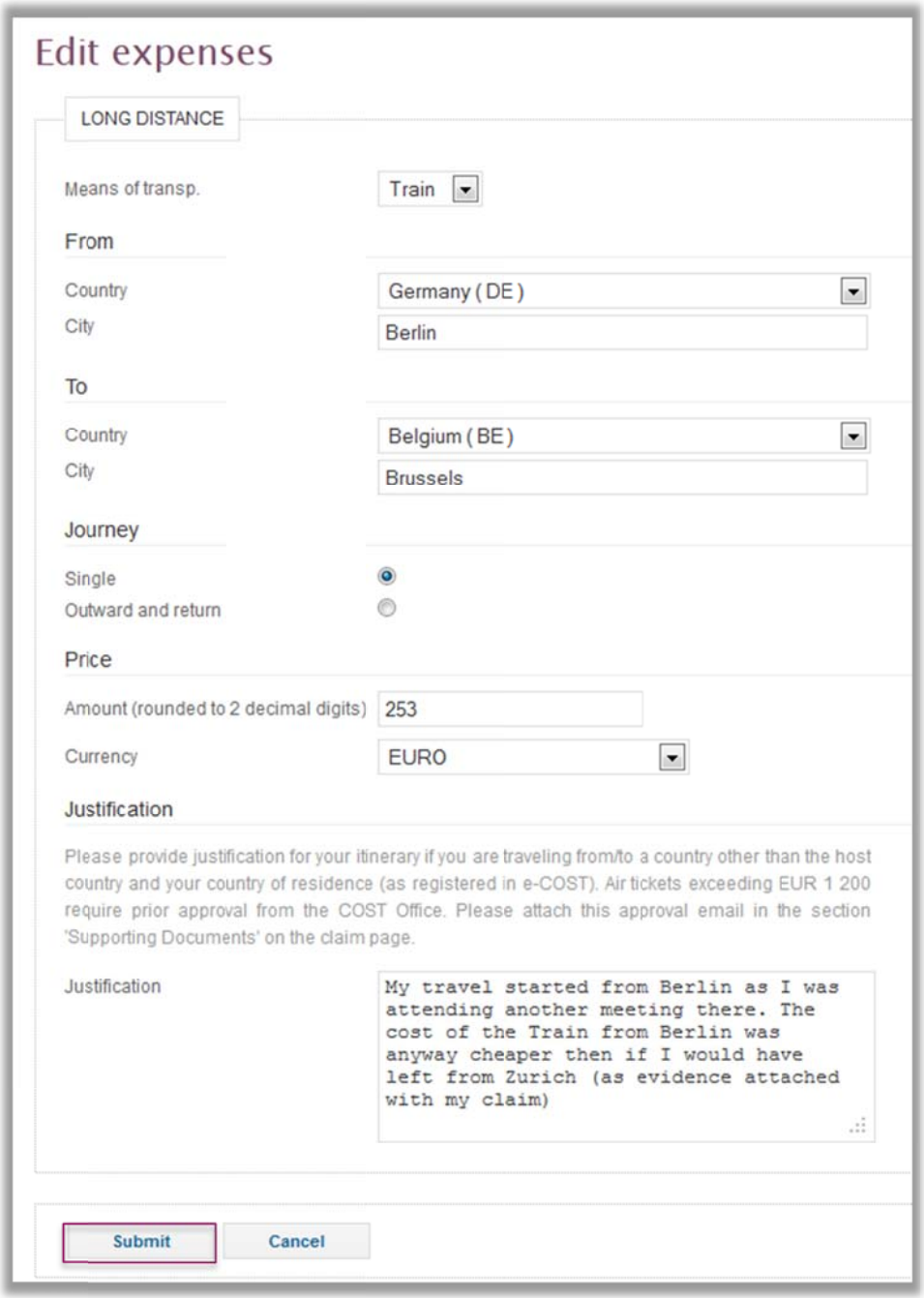
Meals provided by the Local Organiser are automatically deducted from the reimbursement to individual participants. It is the responsibility of the participant to deduct any additional meal(s) being offered.

- **Long Distance Transportation Expenses**

In this section, the participant may encode any long distance travel expenses necessary to attend the meeting by clicking the “Add” button.



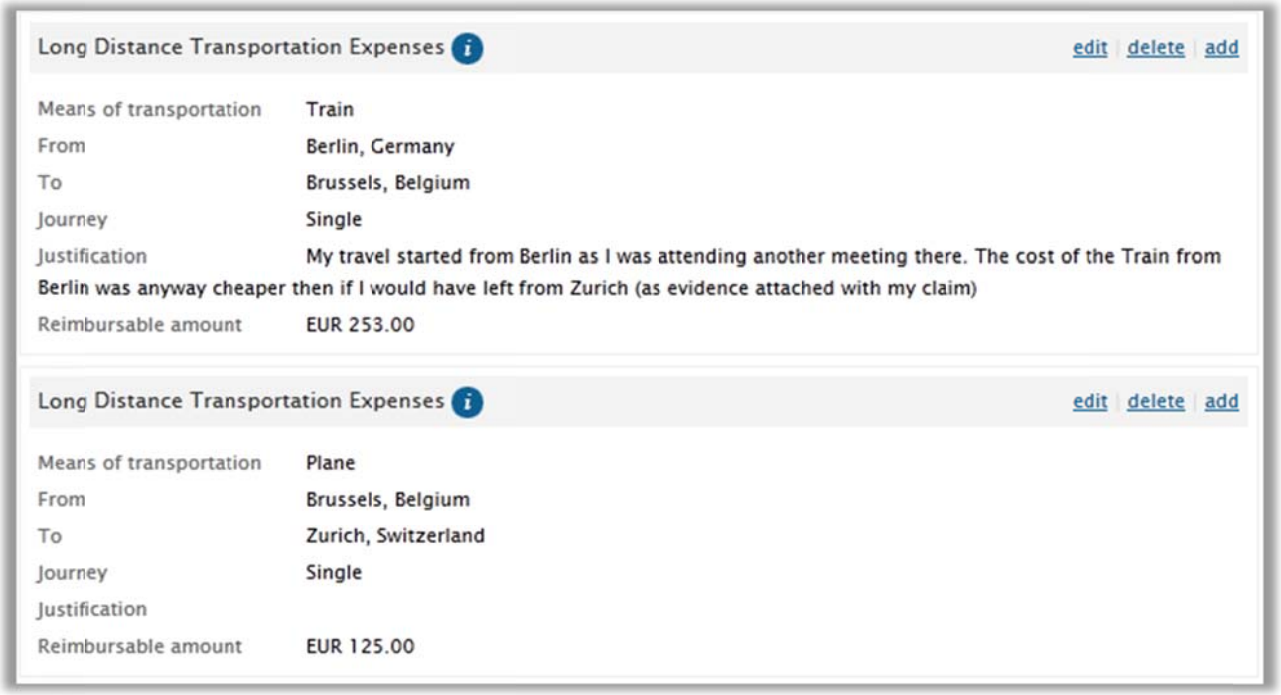
The participant needs to specify the means of transport using the drop down menu, the itinerary, and the amount to be reimbursed. Each leg of the travel has to be encoded separately. Therefore, once the first leg is completed, you have to click on the “Submit” Button at the bottom of the page.



As the example above requires a justification (*in this case, the participant is not travelling from his home country but from Germany*) the system will ask for it. In case, the derogation requires a MC approval or a COST Office approval, it must be uploaded as supporting document in the relevant section further below.

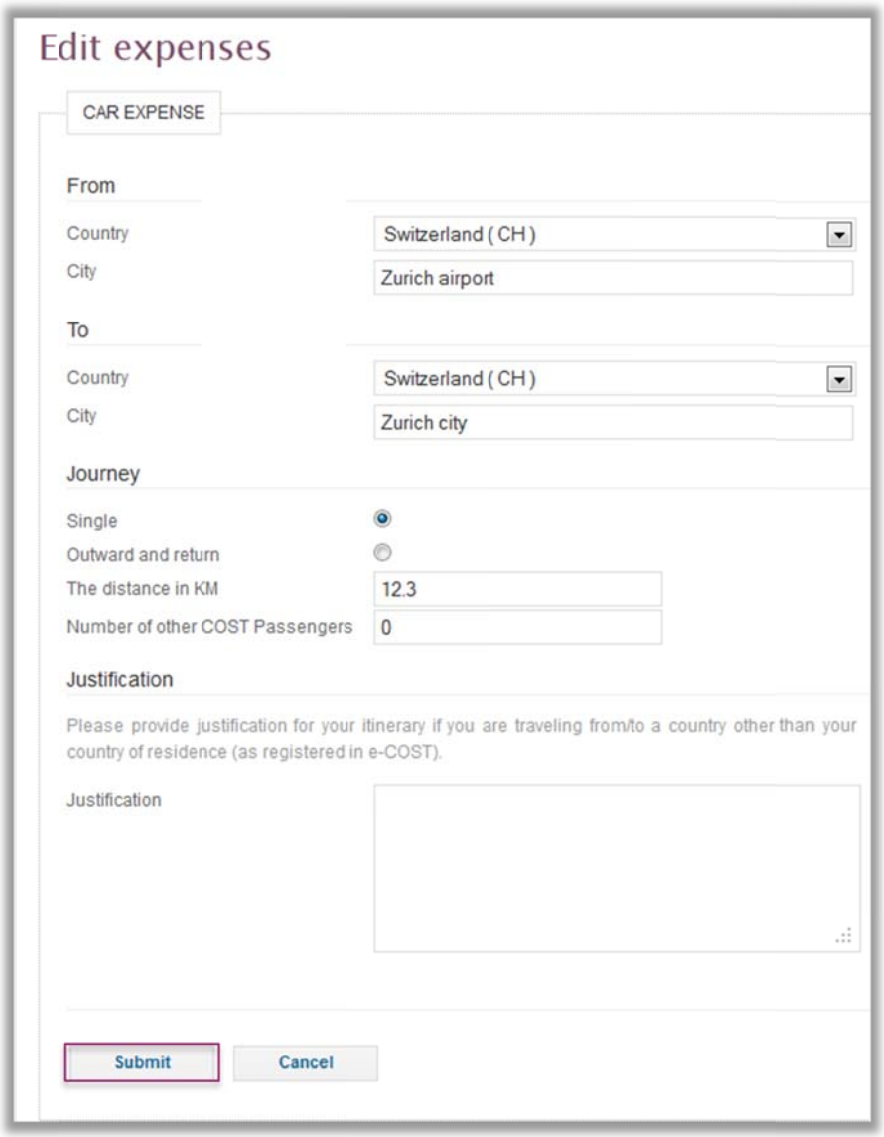
A mentioned above, if the participant needs to modify, delete or add another leg of travel, then the participant has to click on one of the button highlighted in the print screen below:

Using the example provided, the Long Distance Travel section is completed as follows



- **Car transportation expenses**

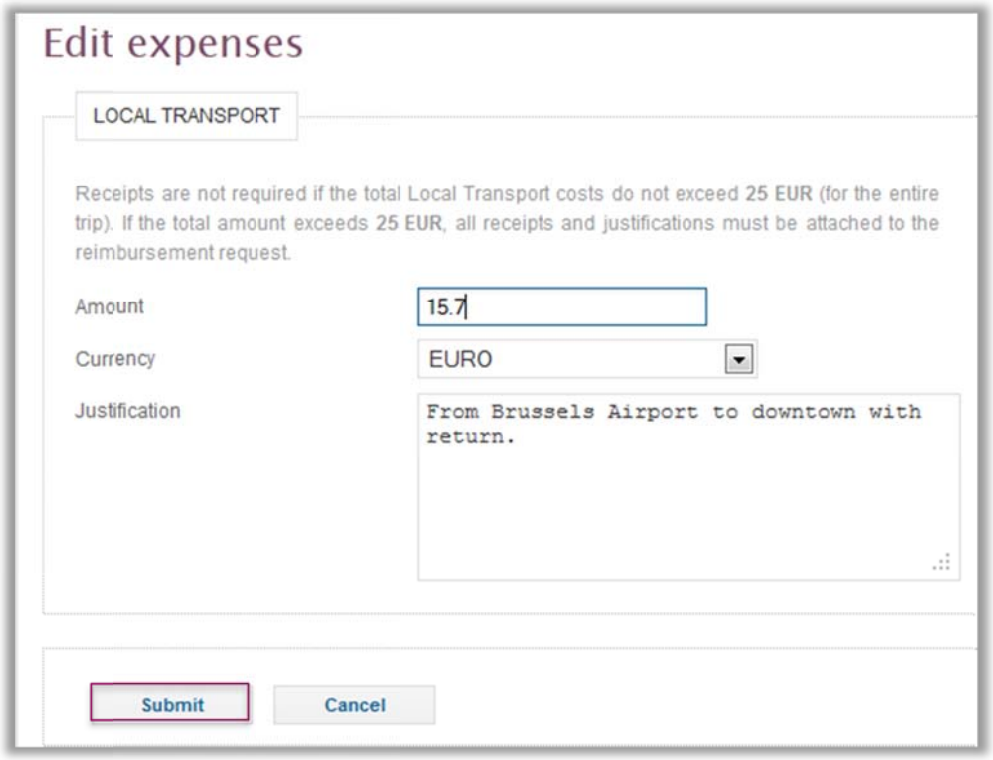
Car travel expenses are reimbursed based on the distance (in kilometres) travelled by the participant. The system automatically calculates the related total amount in EUR. The proof of distance must be uploaded in the supporting document section (further below). As usual, to add Car Transportation Expenses, the participant needs to click on the add button.



Once completed, the participant needs to click on the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page.

- **Local transport expenses**

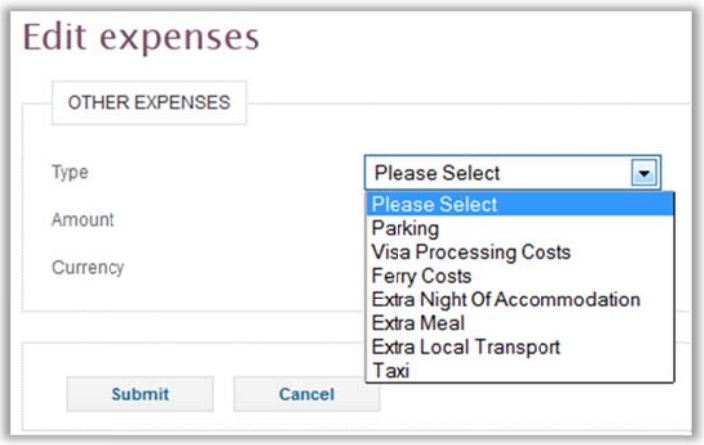
The encoding of Local transport expenses is the same as for the other categories. Participant need to click on “Add” and then need to complete the screen as shown below:

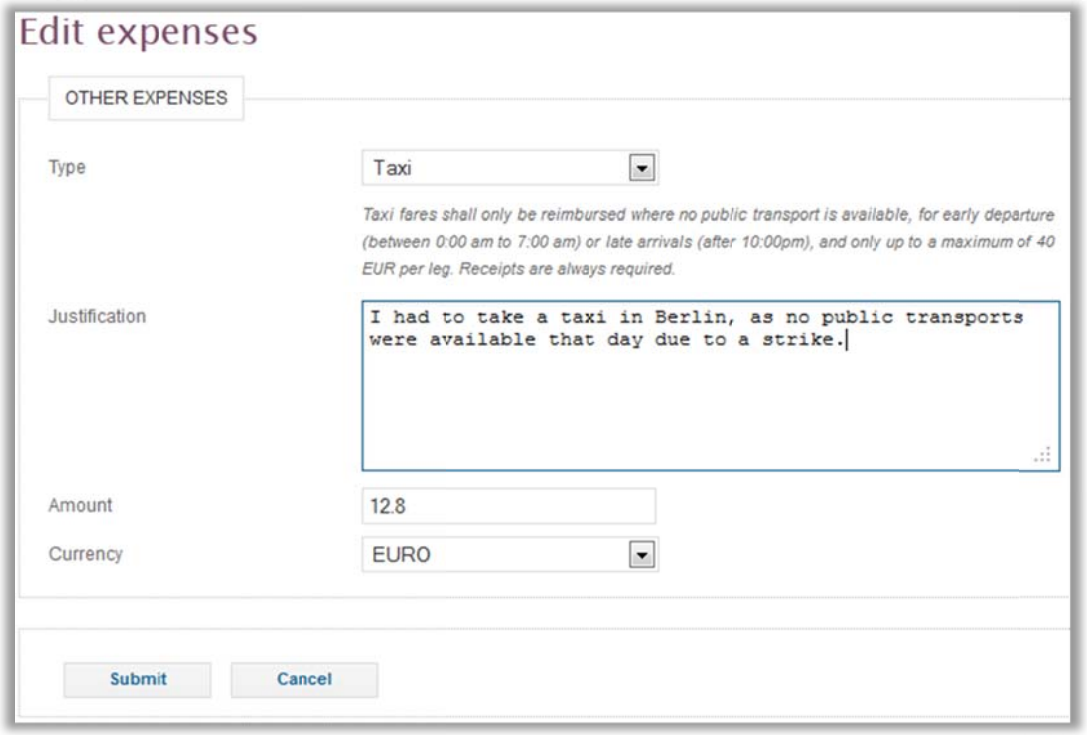


In case local transport expenses amount to less than EUR 25, no receipts or tickets are required for reimbursement. If the claimed amount exceeds EUR 25, justifications and receipts must be provided together with the request.

- **Other Expenses**

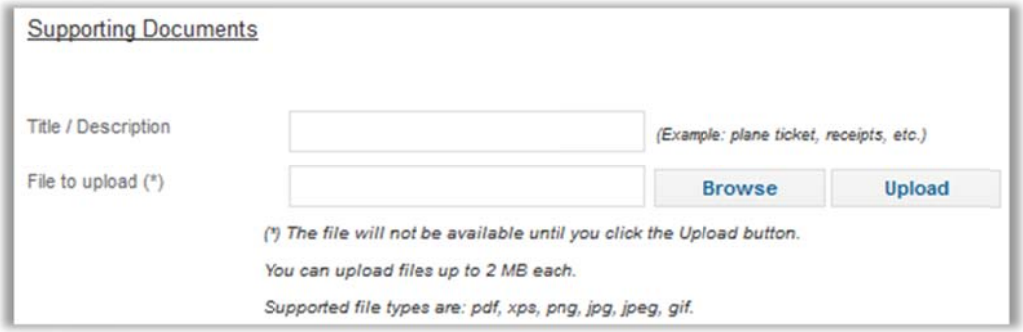
A list of pre-defined other expenses is populated in the drop down menu. Depending of the type of other expenses encoded (taxi, additional night, additional meal etc.) a text box will appear to allow the participant to justify the request. The justification encoded at this stage will also appear in the Financial Report of the Action as well as in the TRR to be manually signed. An extra night and extra meal will be automatically based on the flat rate encoded by the Grant Holder while creating the meeting.





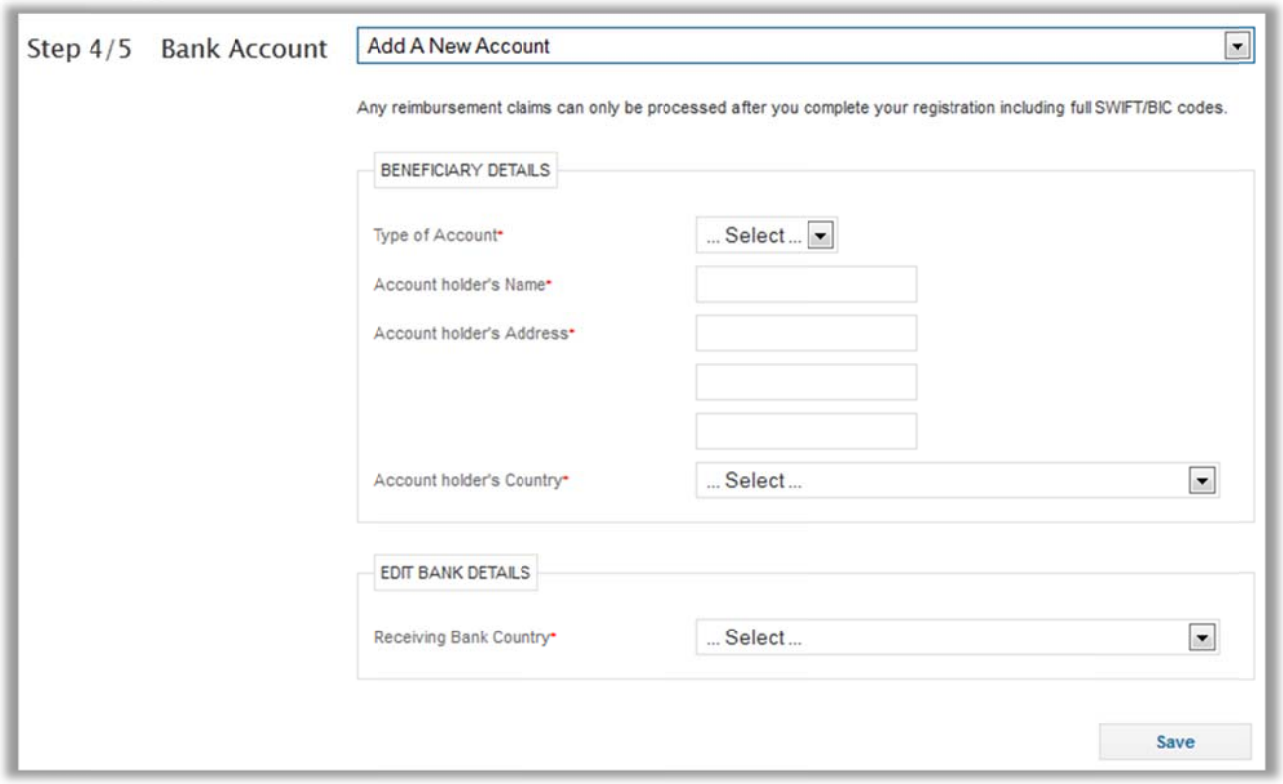
- **Upload Supporting Documents**

After completing the request, and **before** final submission to the Grant Holder**,** the participant has the possibility to upload any email/justification linked to the expenses claimed, as well as any supporting document (airplane ticket, transport receipt etc.) by clicking on the Browse button at the bottom of the page (supported files types are: pdf, xps, png, jpg, jpeg, gif). For electronic tickets and other electronic documentation (e.g. Google maps itinerary), it is sufficient to upload them in e-COST, there is no need to also send them by post.



Step 4/5 – Bank Account

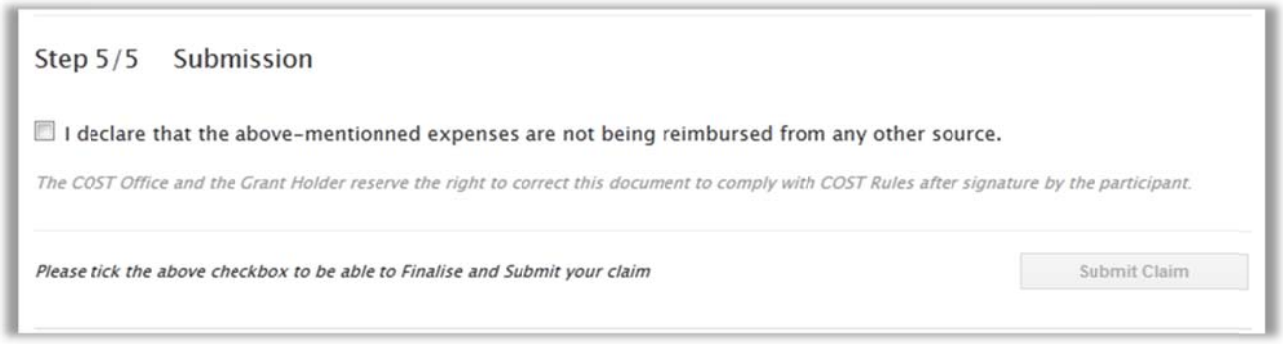
For Step 4, once all the expenses had been recorded and the supporting documents have been uploaded, the participant needs to select the bank account to which the payment should be transferred. If the participant has already encoded his/her bank account in e-COST it is available in the drop down menu. Otherwise, or if wanted, the participant has the possibility to add a new bank account at this stage.



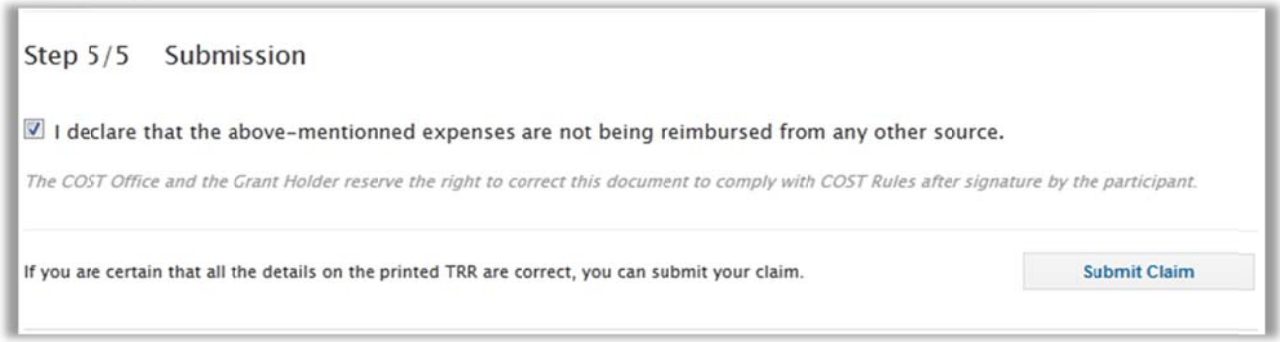
After completion of the step 4, it is now possible to preview the completed TRR. This allows the participant to review the request before submitting it to the Grant Holder.

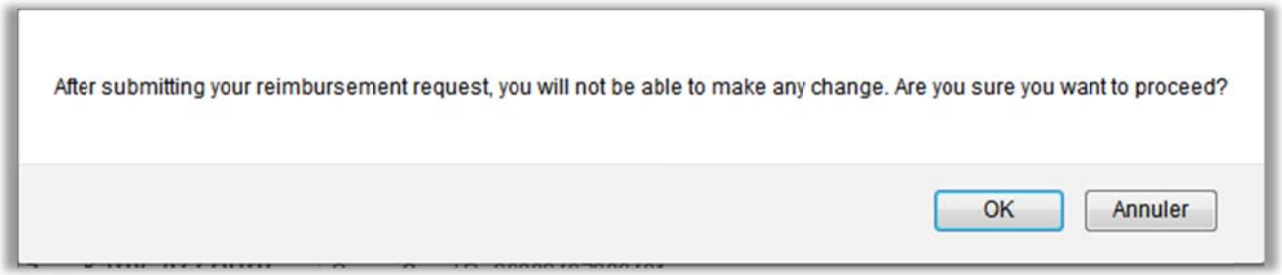
Step 5/5 – Submission

If everything is correctly encoded and uploaded, then the participant has to certify that the expenses claimed here are not being reimbursed by any other sources by ticking the box next to the declaration

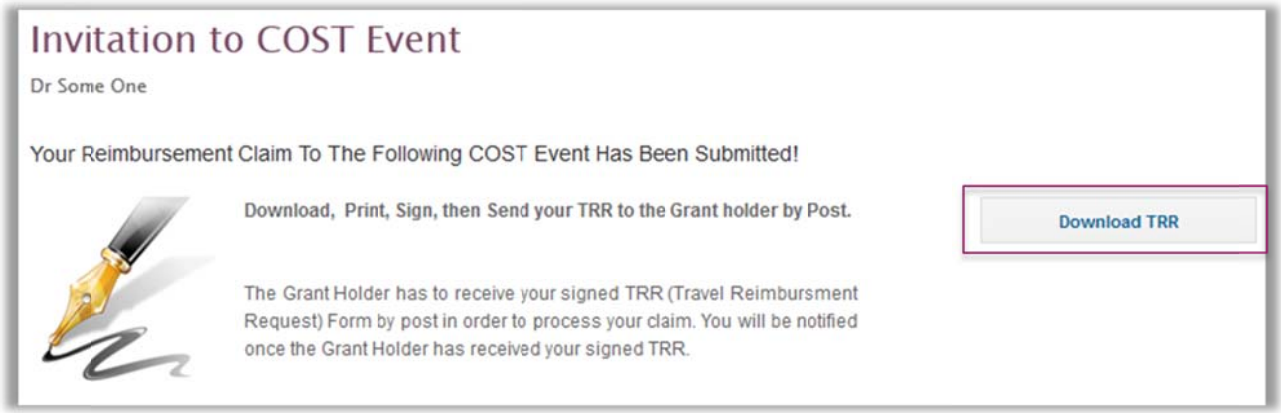


As soon as the box is ticked, the button “Submit Claim” will be available which will allow participants to submit the Online Request to the Grant Holder. Once submitted, the participant cannot modify the request anymore.





Once submitted, the participant is informed that the OTRR has been submitted to the Grant Holder. The participant is asked to download the final version of the TRR, to print it, to sign it and to send it by surface mail to the Grant Holder, together with the original supporting documents.



Once the Grant Holder has confirmed the reception of the signed TRR and the original supporting document by surface mail, the participant will be receiving an automatic e-mail.

Dear Dr Some One,

The Grant Holder for the following meeting/training school, has indicated receipt of your signed claim form.

You will no longer be able to make any online change to the submitted claim or the bank account which you indicated that you would like to be reimbursed on.

COST Action: FA0803
Meeting Title: Release of the Online Travel Reimbursement Request.
Meeting Dates: from 23-10-2012 to 24-10-2012
Location: Cost Office, Brussels, Belgium

The confirmation of the reception of the signed TRR by the Grant Holder creates automatically the payment linked to the request. As soon as the Grant Holder confirms the processing of the payment to the participant in e-COST, an automatic e-mail is sent to the participant mentioning the amount paid (including any modifications introduced by the Grant Holder) as well as the payment details.

Event Details	
COST Action:	[FA0803]
Date:	2012-10-23 to 2012-10-24
Place:	COST Office
Event Reference:	ECOST-MEETING-FA0803-231012-023292
Bank Transfer Details	
Beneficiary	Dr Some One
Amount EUR	EUR 743.96
Account Holder Name	Some One
Account Holder Address	**********
Account Holder Country	**********
Bank Name	Belfius
Bank Country	Belgium
IBAN	**********
SWIFT	**********

For any questions concerning problems with the new Online Travel Reimbursement Request, please contact the Grant Holder or submit a help request to ecost@cost.eu.