

Report on the Extended Stay Support Scheme for STACS 2024 (March 12-14, 2024) in Clermont-Ferrand, France

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1 Description

The Symposium on Theoretical Aspects of Computer Science (STACS) takes place each year since 1984, alternately in Germany and France. In 2024, it was organized at Université Clermont Auvergne in Clermont-Ferrand, France, by a committee chaired by Bruno Guillon and Mamadou M. Kanté.

Following the footsteps of a few other events (ICALP 2022, HIGHLIGHTS 2022, ETAPS 2023), the STACS 2024 program committee decided to propose an “Extended Stay Support Scheme” to the participants. The following is the scheme description displayed on the STACS 2024 website: https://stacs2024.limos.fr/extended_stay.html

We propose to the STACS 2024 attendees an Extended Stay Support Scheme (ESSS) aiming at enhancing scientific collaborations and diminishing the carbon footprint of scientific research activities. STACS 2024 attendees are encouraged to combine their visit to Clermont-Ferrand by collaborations with local researchers.

This support scheme is primarily intended for participants travelling long distances and must be combined with an attendance to STACS. Upon acceptance, research institutes involved in this mechanism may (partially) cover standard expenses (accommodation, living expenses and traveling fees, plane excluded) and will provide material support for research activities.

How to apply to the STACS 2024 Extended Stay Support Scheme? Application to the STACS 2024 Extended Stay Support Scheme is made by two persons, a visitor and a (future) local collaborator and should be sent to the contact person in the hosting research institute. The application should include:

- The name of the visitor (the STACS attendant) mentioning her or his affiliation, city and country of origin.
- The name of the (future) local collaborator.
- The dates of the visits.
- Few lines describing the subject of the collaboration.

Specific constraints:

- For applying, the visitor should attend STACS 2024.
- The travel between the conference location and the location of the extended stay should be “low-carbon” (train, bus, carpooling... NO plane)
- Dates of the visit do not have to be directly adjacent to the conference dates, as long as the applicant avoids traveling by plane in between.
- If too many applications are received, further criteria of selection may have to be applied, such as favoring long distance participants or applying a “first come first served” policy.

2 Process

A few weeks before the call for participation / acceptance notification was sent out, we started contacting potential partner labs. We usually contacted either a contact person we knew personally (or that we knew had been involved in an ESSS scheme before), or a combination of heads of labs / heads of potential host teams.

Upon their willingness to be part of the scheme, we put the list of labs + potential host teams, together with contact persons, on the website: https://stacs2024.limos.fr/extended_stay.html

The scheme was also advertized in the call for participation, and participants were encouraged to contact the teams they would be interested to visit.

The full list of partner labs and contact persons was:

- LIMOS (Clermont-Ferrand). Contact: Florent Foucaud
- LIP (Lyon). Contact: Nicolas Trotignon
- LIRIS (Lyon). Contact: Nicolas Bousquet
- IRIF (Paris). Contact: Thomas Colcombet
- LACL (Créteil). Contacts: Catalin Dima, Florent Madelaine
- LAMSADE (Paris). Contact: Cristina Bazgan
- LIGM (Marne la vallée). Contact: Gregory Kucherov
- LIPN (Villetaneuse). Contact: Florent Koechlin
- LIP6 (Paris). Contact: Fabrice Kordon
- LISN (Orsay). Contacts: Nathalie Aubrun, Benjamin Hellouin, Nicolas Thiéry
- LMF (Orsay). Contact: Dietmar Berwanger
- LIRMM (Montpellier). Contact: Christophe Paul
- LIFO (Orléans). Contact: Mathieu Liedloff
- G-SCOP (Grenoble). Contact: Louis Esperet
- LIG (Grenoble). Contact: Kim Thang Nguyen
- LABRI (Bordeaux). Contact: Nathanaël Fijalkow
- LIS (Marseille). Contact: Karoliina Lehtinen, Pascal Préa
- LORIA (Nancy). Contact: Horatiu Cirstea
- I3S (Sophia-Antipolis). Contact: Nicolas Nisse

3 Data from the STACS 2024 ESSS

The scheme has had a moderate success, in line with other schemes from recent years.

- 5 stays, by 3 different visitors (one of them did three stays!)
- Career status: 1 PhD student, 1 postdoc, 1 associate professor
- Gender: 2 female, 1 male
- Countries of origin: Germany, Germany, India
- visited labs: G-SCOP, LABRI, LIP6, LIS, LMF
- duration of the visits: 4 to 10 days
- 3 of the collaborations were new, 2 were pre-existing
- 3 of the visits would have happened anyway, 2 of them took place because of the ESSS

4 Remarks

- For this ESSS, the scheme was generally well-received by the host labs (only a couple of labs did not answer our emails).
- Most host labs agreed to fund (at least one) extended stay(s).
- Organizing the ESSS requires quite some emails to be sent back and forth to establish the list of host teams, but other than that the process is not very heavy.
- We recommend to use the contact details from this ESSS (but also, from ESSS of previous events), as these are the colleagues who have already participated in this.
- We believe that the number of participants benefitting from the scheme could have been larger. Many participants are young researchers, who might have time for an extended visit, but who might not dare to contact colleagues they do not know.

We suggest, as soon as the list of accepted papers is known, that members of the participating host teams explicitly invite some authors whose research could be interesting for them.

This requires a bit of advertisement from the contact people in the host teams. They can be encouraged explicitly to do this type of advertisement to their team members.

The local organizing committee is in the best place of benefitting of the scheme (since they also know the list of participants ahead of the conference), and could invite some selected participants. Sadly, we did not think of pro-actively inviting any participant for an extended stay!

5 Useful links

The general STACS website: <http://www.stacs-conf.org/>

Some previous ESSS schemes:

- <https://etaps.org/2023/esss/>
- https://icalp2022.irif.fr/?page_id=50#support
- <https://highlights-conference.org/2022/>