# Guidelines for Constances Research Consortia

## Why Research Consortia in Constances?

As increasing numbers of scientists initiate projects using data from Constances, it could be advantageous for scientists working in allied areas to join in a consortium. The advantages of a consortium are that investigators will share findings and analytic approaches and learn from one another. The synergies will create stronger and more interdisciplinary results. Investigators in a consortium will be better able to organize analyses so that they are integrated and non-overlapping rather than have investigators working in closely allied areas working on similar and overlapping analyses without knowing the results from others working in related areas.

## Definition of a Research Consortium

A consortium is a cluster of a limited number of research projects (typically 3-6) on a common well-defined scientific area, sharing some common methods (analytic methods, development of common measures…) and associating several teams. Each participating team is responsible of a project having its specific objectives, its own Constances subjects sample and dataset and its own methodology, at least partly based on tools shared within the consortium

Each consortium is responsible of its internal organization and functioning rules, which are independently defined by its members; however the rules for relationships between the consortium and the Constances team must be decided in common by both parties.

## Important remarks

- There is **no exclusivity in any area in Constances**; that is, scientists from outside an existing consortium can apply for Constances projects in the same scientific area than the consortium.
- The **Constances team remains fully responsible of the design and conduct of the cohort**, including the choice of data to be collected.

## Consortium project submissions

Here are general guidelines for approaching a Consortium application.

1. **Both the consortium as a whole and each individual project will be evaluated** by the Constances Scientific Committee (SC). Therefore each application should

have a scientific rationale that unites each project and a discussion of the synergies among projects in terms of scientific merit and/or logistical or pragmatic ease of analysis (shared analytic approaches, assessments and measurement, etc.).

2. The decision of the SC will be at the level of the project. Therefore it is possible that some projects will be approved and others will not.
3. Consortiums should generally have between 3-6 projects. Larger consortiums plans should be vetted to Constance PI's before submission. Consortiums may also share some "cores" that will help each of the projects. For instance, analytic cores, biobank cores, or other shared resources that enable each project to be more efficient should be identified and discussed in terms of overall efficiency. It will often be helpful to have an organizational chart and "model" or framework figure that illustrates the collaborations among projects and cores.
4. Governance and organization of the consortium should be defined, including the role and responsibilities of leading members of projects and leaders of the consortium, and the approaches to communication across projects.
5. All members of the consortium must come from institutions with appropriate human subjects assurance (INSERM, universities, etc.).

Preliminary conversations with the Constance teams are invited.

## Applications

The **overall consortium** should be described in 2-3 pages (plus references) with the overall scientific approach and aims, an explanation of how the consortium provides added value to the individual projects, as well as the organizational framework and approach to communication within the consortium.

**Each project** that is part of a consortium should observe the following approximate space guidelines:

- Background, justification, objectives: ½ page (plus references)
- Design , methodology, timetable: 3-5 pages
- Team description including summary of expertise, accomplishments: 1 page
- All study subjects or subset (if subset, its characteristics); list of variables needed: space as needed.