



Your partner for the setup and
management of multinational
studies in Europe



Supporting clinical studies across borders

Our vision: to generate scientific evidence
to optimise medical practice

Our mission: to support the conduct
of multinational clinical studies in Europe

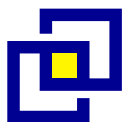
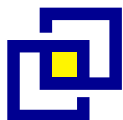


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ECRIN YOUR PARTNER FOR THE SETUP AND MANAGEMENT OF MULTINATIONAL STUDIES IN EUROPE

The European Clinical Research Infrastructure Network (ECRIN) assists academic sponsors and investigators as well as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to overcome the obstacles associated with multinational studies in Europe. Multi-country studies provide increased access to patients, resources, and expertise, which in turn can lead to more robust study results and a greater public health impact.



ECRIN is a sustainable, non-profit, distributed infrastructure that can accompany you in the preparation, setup, and management of your multinational study. The core services provided by its staff are certified ISO 9001:2015, meet regulatory requirements and ensure user satisfaction. Beyond the direct support to clinical studies, ECRIN has diverse services and tools to support you, including toolboxes to aid in study design, a regulatory and ethical database and a data centre certification programme to ensure that we can also offer high-quality data management for our studies.

ECRIN IN NUMBERS

2004 year of ECRIN project start

2013 awarded the ERIC status

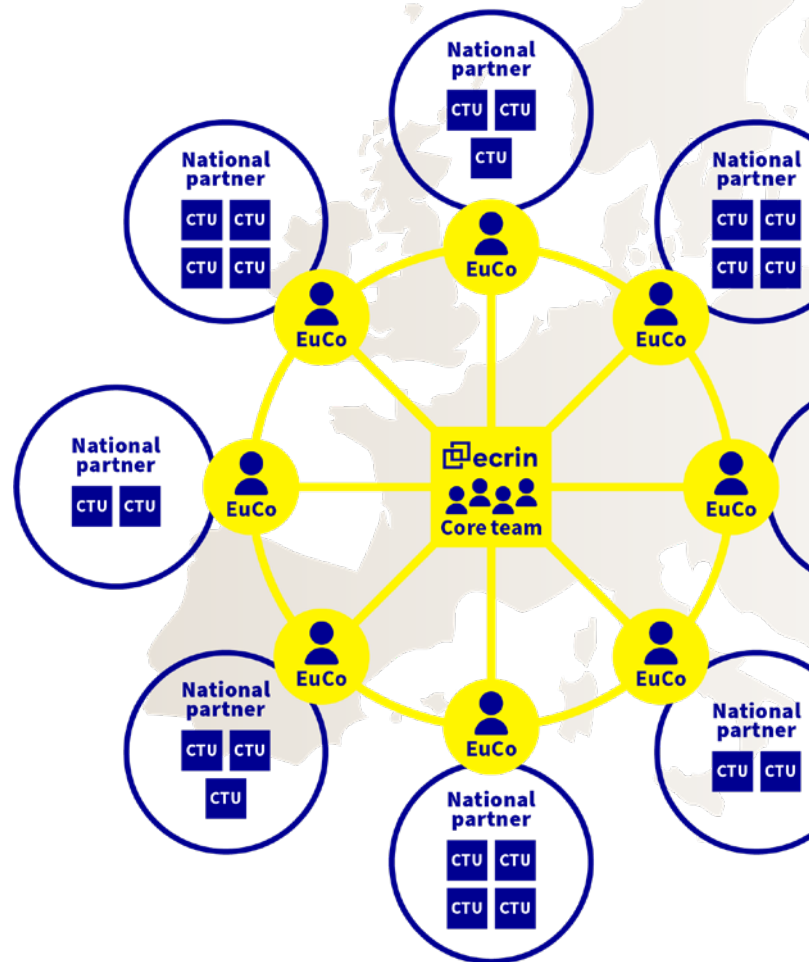
13 ECRIN Member / Observer countries

130+ clinical trial units

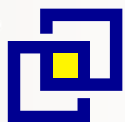
70+ trials in ECRIN's portfolio

6.5 average number of countries per ECRIN-supported trial

50+ projects to develop ECRIN capacity, tools and expertise



*EuCo: European Correspondent
CTU: Clinical Trial Unit*



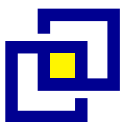
ECRIN UNITES NATIONAL PARTNERS

ECRIN's organisational model is based on country membership. ECRIN currently has 13 Member and Observer countries (Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Slovakia, and Switzerland).

Each Member and Observer country hosts a European Correspondent (EuCo). EuCos are national ECRIN staff members, who are clinical research experts with extensive knowledge of the national and European clinical research landscape.

They coordinate the clinical study portfolio and work closely with the national scientific partner (i.e. a network of clinical trial units, CTUs) and with their colleagues at the Paris-based core team and across Europe.

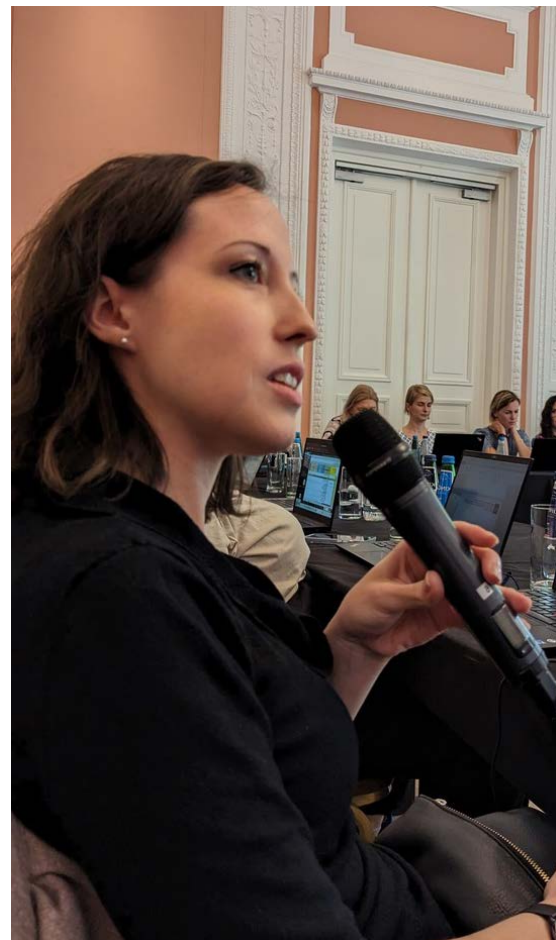




OVERVIEW OF CLINICAL OPERATIONS

ECRIN's clinical operations provide expertise and services to support the preparation, setup, and management of investigator-led, academic and SME sponsored multinational studies in ECRIN Member and Observer countries.

Multinational studies require access to experts and patients in multiple sites across countries, while complying with local regulations and requirements. All these elements act as obstacles impeding the study implementation. Our services help you to overcome these challenges and cover the provision of general information and assistance with the planning, including the preparation of the funding application, through to operational coordination. Operational coordination services are available to sponsors and investigators from across Europe (beyond ECRIN member countries). Figure 1 provides a more detailed look at ECRIN's clinical operations services.





GENERAL INFORMATION

- Outline roles and responsibilities
- Available funding sources
- Eligibility for funding and ECRIN support
- Regulatory inquiries



PLANNING

- Study design and methodology
- Regulatory, ethical, and insurance requirements
- Funding application support
- Task distribution for multinational study management and selection of qualified CTUs
- Cost evaluation
- Protocol peer review
- Strategies for site selection and patient recruitment



OPERATIONAL COORDINATION

- Study management and coordination
- Regulatory and ethical submission
- Monitoring
- Vigilance
- Data management
- Statistical analysis



RISK ASSESSMENT

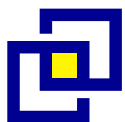
Assessment of feasibility, resources, and strategies for mitigation



EXPERTISE & OVERARCHING SUPPORT

Support to sponsor and investigator throughout the maturation and execution of their ideas

Figure 1. ECRIN Clinical Operations Services



WE ARE THERE FOR YOU STARTING AT THE IDEA STAGE

General support is provided for initial project development and call identification.

ECRIN can provide general information on questions related to the setup of a clinical study as well as the types of available European funding and how to apply (strategy, timelines, etc). Once the investigator / sponsor has identified an appropriate funding opportunity for the proposed study, they work with their national EuCo to request access to ECRIN's clinical operations.

It is recommended to reach out to ECRIN early in the development process for maximum impact.





GENERAL INFORMATION

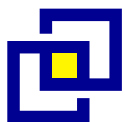
- Outline roles and responsibilities
- Available funding sources
- Eligibility for funding and ECRIN support
- Regulatory inquiries



EXPERTISE & OVERARCHING SUPPORT

Support to sponsors and investigator throughout the maturation and execution of their ideas

Figure 2. ECRIN's Clinical Operations – General Information



WE SUPPORT THE PLANNING OF MULTINATIONAL STUDIES

ECRIN can support investigators and sponsors in ECRIN Member and Observer countries to prepare EU funding proposals, regardless of their level of experience with such applications.

The extent of ECRIN's participation in proposal preparation will depend on its role. While information may be freely provided to all, ECRIN can also be involved in designing and completing certain elements of the proposal related to the clinical study, if it is associated as a project partner / provider of study management services.





PLANNING

- Study design and methodology
- Regulatory, ethical, and insurance requirements
- Funding application support
- Task distribution for multinational study management and selection of qualified CTUs
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- Strategies for site selection and patient recruitment



RISK ASSESSMENT

Assessment of feasibility, resources, and strategies for mitigation

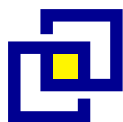


EXPERTISE & OVERARCHING SUPPORT

Support to sponsors and investigator throughout the maturation and execution of their ideas

Figure 3. ECRIN's Clinical Operations – Planning





HOW DO I ACCESS ECRIN'S CLINICAL OPERATIONS SERVICES?

ECRIN's advice and support for the proposal phase are funded by its Member and Observer country contributions and come at no cost to the investigator / sponsor from ECRIN Member and Observer countries whose projects involve at least two ECRIN countries.

Access to ECRIN operational services is based on scientific excellence. The ECRIN Scientific Board (SB) ensures that the project meets these criteria. The SB Collaboration Committee provides quick answers to proposals on ECRIN's capacity to support the development of funding applications and the study design.

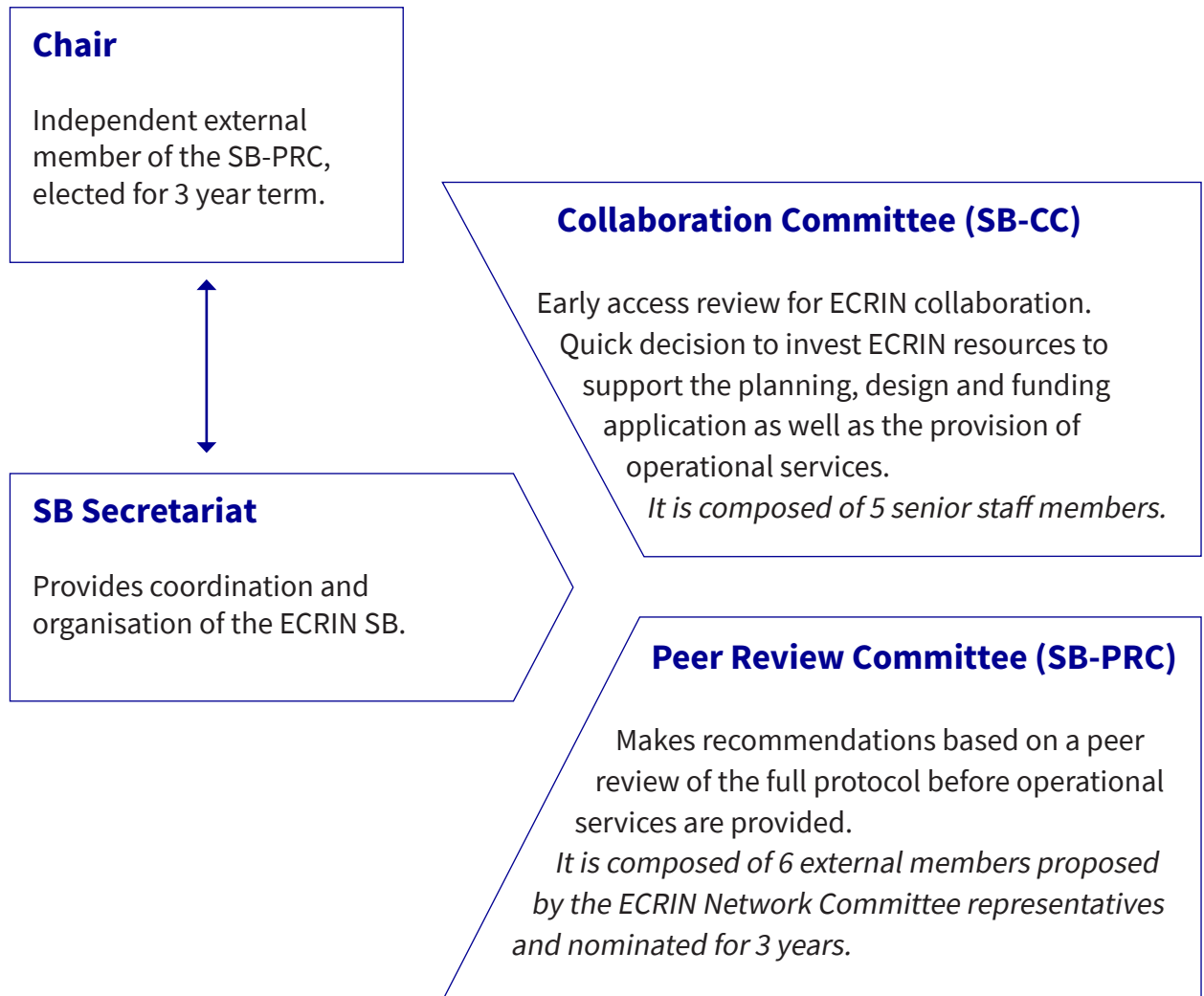


Figure 4. The organisation of the ECRIN Scientific Board (SB) with its two committees, Collaboration Committee (CC) and Peer Review Committee (PRC). Access to ECRIN services relies on the validation of one of the two depending on the status of the project.



5 working days



Initial idea or project summary presented by the national EuCo to SB-CC



Weekly meetings to make quick decisions



(4-8 week process)



Submission



Reviewers selected (2 SB-PRC experts)



Peer review



Feedback letter



Collaborating in the development of EU funding applications

ECRIN works directly with investigators and sponsors to provide advice and information on:

- The facilities that have the capacity and services needed to manage the study as well as to provide contact with investigational networks in participating countries (especially those that are ECRIN Members or Observers).
- Additional proposal / study design elements including multinational clinical study management, regulatory, ethical and insurance requirements, appropriate study methodology, cost of ECRIN study management services, logistical and financial feasibility of proposed plans, work package architecture, potential impact, management, governance, consortium composition, and more.

- The most suitable task distribution and work organisation for the completion of the proposal, based on application deadlines.

The timeline for ECRIN support varies depending on the length of time between the call issue and the deadline, the stage at which the investigator / sponsor contacts ECRIN, and the maturity of the project when ECRIN is contacted. We are best able to support a project when integrated directly as a beneficiary or partner in the project.

Coordination between actors

ECRIN's EuCos act as the link between the sponsor and service providers (i.e., national networks and CTUs) in different countries, ensuring smooth coordination, communication, organisation, and support throughout the funding application process and

beyond. How exactly do EuCos interact with the principal investigator (PI) / sponsor and national networks?

Initially, the PI / sponsor contacts the ECRIN EuCo in their country. In most cases, this will be the ‘coordinating EuCo’, and this person will be the PI’s

or sponsor’s unique point of contact throughout the project.

The coordinating EuCo liaises with the EuCos from the other participating countries who are connected with the national scientific partner in their respective countries.

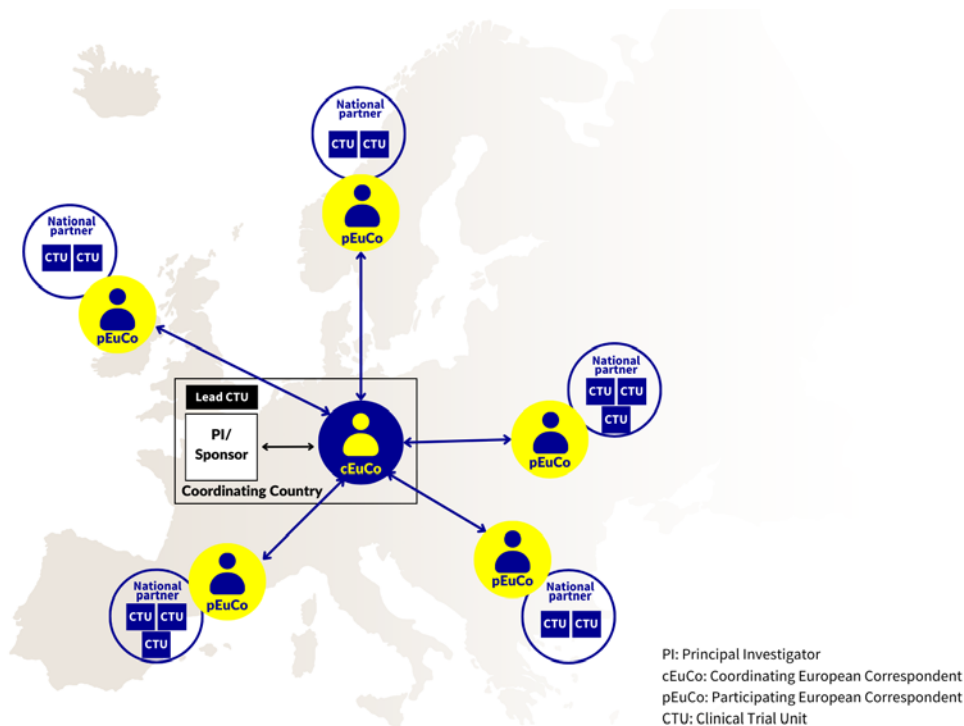
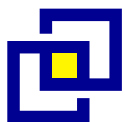


Figure 5. ECRIN’s Coordination Model with PI / Sponsor



PROVISION OF SERVICES TO ENSURE SMOOTH IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT

During project implementation, ECRIN offers various study management services, accompanying sponsors, investigators and project coordinators all the way from protocol finalisation to study close out.

ECRIN coordinates these services, performed by CTUs, in ECRIN's Member and Observer countries and across Europe. These CTUs are part of the national networks (for more information, see the next section).

All CTUs involved in ECRIN projects are selected based on the location of the investigational sites, their competencies / expertise, and the availability of resources. Before entering into collaboration, and before any service provision can start, ECRIN requests its CTUs to complete a self-assessment sheet to ensure GCP compliance, quality and capacity.





OPERATIONAL COORDINATION

- Study management and coordination
- Regulatory and ethical submission
- Monitoring
- Vigilance
- Data management
- Statistical analysis



RISK ASSESSMENT

Assessment of feasibility, resources, and strategies for mitigation



EXPERTISE & OVERARCHING SUPPORT

Support to sponsors and investigator throughout the maturation and execution of their ideas

Figure 6. ECRIN's Clinical Operations – Operational Coordination

More specifically, ECRIN's operational coordination services include:

• **Study management and coordination:**

With experienced staff, ECRIN and lead CTUs can coordinate multinational studies and ensure overall management. National CTUs can provide local project management in their own countries.

• **Regulatory and ethical submission:**

Support the submissions via the Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS) for trials compliant with the Clinical Trial Regulation (CTR):

ECRIN can coordinate the preparation of national documents needed for the central submission and inform the sponsor of national specificities.

Submissions to competent authorities and ethics committees for clinical investigations on medical devices and other types of clinical studies: ECRIN

can manage submissions to regulatory and ethics authorities (and, if applicable, other authorities) in participating countries, ensuring that timelines are respected and avoiding delays.

• **Monitoring:** All tasks related to monitoring such as training of the monitors, on-site visits, reporting and remote monitoring can be handled by ECRIN across country sites.

• **Vigilance:** ECRIN can provide central vigilance for clinical studies or clinical investigations and adverse events reporting.

• **Data management:** ECRIN-certified data management centres, which are compliant with ECRIN standards, are available for data management in multinational trials.

• **Statistical analysis:** ECRIN can provide a statistical analysis and statistical report.



Coordination and communication are at the core of ECRIN's operational services

During study implementation, CTUs typically provide operational services according to the task delegation list agreed upon with the sponsor.

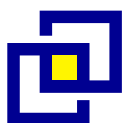
EuCos, in close collaboration with the Paris-based core team, ensure proper organisation of the services and follow-up until study completion. This service is ISO 9001:2015 certified to ensure strong accountability and respond appropriately to user needs. The EuCos play an active role in reassuring stakeholders that all the necessary steps are being taken to successfully implement the trial. In particular, EuCos:

- Act as the link between the sponsor's team, ECRIN national CTUs, other EuCos and the ECRIN core team.

- Follow the study and support the operational team in identifying and resolving issues as they arise.

The allocation of roles between CTUs (as members of the ECRIN national network), EuCos and the PI is illustrated in Figure 5. More details on the distribution of trial management services between CTUs can be found in the next section.





HOW CAN THE CTUS SUPPORT YOUR PROJECT: CTU TASKS

In ECRIN supported clinical studies, CTUs in ECRIN Member and Observer countries as well as all other participating countries, play a key role in study planning and implementation.

These CTUs are selected for a given study based on their resources and areas of expertise. They have also demonstrated their compliance with ECRIN quality standards. CTUs in ECRIN Member and Observer countries are part of ECRIN's national scientific partners and as such, they are ECRIN partners.

During the study, the lead CTU coordinates with participating CTUs (in both ECRIN Member / Observer and all other participating countries) to ensure the timely and efficient execution of tasks.

ECRIN's EuCos can provide follow-up and support as needed when feasible for certain activities. Over the next few pages is a list of the typical support, tasks that the lead CTU and all national CTUs can perform during preparation and, in particular, implementation.

The following table is a general allocation of tasks. However, the distribution of services within CTUs may vary according to the rules and specific procedures for each of the ECRIN national scientific partners and sponsor needs.

	Lead CTU	Participating CTUs
REGULATORY AND ETHICAL SUBMISSION		
<p>For studies compliant with the CTR via Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect, upload, and submit all documents in CTIS and then manage the questions and answers process in the system until the approval • Manage all subsequent modifications and notifications in CTIS until the end of the study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation and translation of relevant documents (informed consent form (ICF), questionnaires, etc.) requested for regulatory and ethical submission • Support the lead CTU / sponsor in the initial submission, questions and answers process in CTIS through to approval • Support the lead CTU / sponsor to manage all subsequent modifications in CTIS until the end of the study
<p>For other clinical studies and clinical investigations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of the submission process in all the participating countries • Manage the regulatory and ethical submission, questions and answers process until the approval in the coordinating country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation and translation of relevant documents (ICF, questionnaires, etc.) requested for regulatory and ethical submission in their country • Manage the regulatory and ethical submission, questions and answers process until the approval

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage all subsequent modifications and notifications until the end of the study in the coordinating country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage all subsequent modifications and notifications until the end of the study • Provision of information about national requirements for safety reporting • Notification of events and safety reports to national competent authorities and ethical committees
PROJECT MANAGEMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of core study documents: protocol, ICF, investigational medicinal product dossier (IMPD), investigator's brochure (IB), recruitment material, procedures, specific forms, etc. • Global coordination of resources and reporting with a quality management system in place • Investigation centre feasibility • Preparation and maintenance of the sponsor's trial master file (TMF) and Investigator site files (ISF) • Contract management (sponsor and hospital / investigator / pharmacy / laboratories/...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of the communication flow at the national level with the clinical sites and monitors • Support the lead CTU to perform the local centre feasibility • Support to the lead CTU / sponsor for contracting with sites • Preparation and maintenance of the national part of the TMF



Lead CTU	Participating CTUs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of the communication flow and study meetings with investigators, project managers, monitors, etc. • Organisation of a pathway for central distribution of investigational medicinal product (IMP) from sponsor to sites • Organisation of pathways for central laboratory / biobank with instructions for sites • Archiving of clinical study documents 	
MONITORING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of monitoring activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elaboration of the monitoring manual, • organisation of central staff training (web-based and / or on-site), • checking site readiness, • critical review of all monitoring reports, • regular communication between sponsor and national CTUs. • Local monitoring tasks (refer to National CTU) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in training(s) organised by the lead CTU: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initiation visit(s), including pharmacy visit, if applicable, • regular monitoring visits, including pharmacy visit, if applicable, • close-out monitoring visit(s), including pharmacy visit, if applicable. • Preparation and maintenance of ISF throughout the study • Remote monitoring, if requested • Communication with lead CTU, and clinical sites as well as support query resolution

Lead CTU

DATA-MANAGEMENT *

- Elaboration and maintenance of the electronic case report form (eCRF) and database
- Elaboration and maintenance of the data management plan (DMP)
- Performance of quality controls
- Data coding (adverse events (AEs), study medication, diseases)
- Import of data, for example: laboratory data, ECG data and / or imaging data
- Support to vigilance activities (serious adverse events (SAE) / serious adverse device events (SADE) reconciliation)
- Training for investigators and monitors
- Blind Data Review (BDR) and database lock

STATISTICS *

- Development of the statistical section of the protocol
- Elaboration of the statistical analysis plan (SAP)
- Organisation of the randomisation process (central system, randomisation list, reconciliation)
- Elaboration of statistical analysis:
 - Interim analyses
 - Final analysis
 - Reports for data safety monitoring board (DSMB) meetings
- Writing of the draft and final statistical report

Lead CTU	Participating CTUs
VIGILANCE*	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the safety section in the clinical protocol • Elaboration of the safety plan and specific forms • Set-up and maintenance of a vigilance System Master File • Development of a study-specific safety database (creation, validation, data processing, and data transfer at the end of the study) • Management of AE / SAE / suspected unexpected serious adverse reactions (SUSARs) or ADE / SADE / unanticipated serious adverse device effect (USADE) and safety periodic reconciliation • Preparation of meeting reports for the DSMB • Elaboration and submission of annual development safety update reports (DSURs) and other periodic reports as applicable • Reporting and submission management (via CTIS for the clinical studies compliant with the CTR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For clinical studies compliant with the CTR: all safety notifications are centrally managed via CTIS (lead CTU) • For clinical studies outside the scope of the CTR and clinical investigations see the regulatory tasks

* These services are centralised, they may not be hosted by the lead CTU and instead are carried out by an expert CTU.





ADDITIONAL SERVICES AND TOOLS AT ECRIN

ECRIN offers other services and also develops and contributes to freely accessible tools to support the conduct of multinational clinical research.



Data Centre Certification

ECRIN's Data Centre Certification programme is ISO 9001:2015 certified and was developed to audit European, non-commercial data centres using ECRIN IT / DM standards, to confirm their ability to provide compliant, effective, and efficient data management services for controlled clinical trials. The goal is to enhance high-quality data management services in non-commercial clinical trials and to contribute to the harmonisation of European practice in data management.



Training

Training is essential to ensuring that best practices are shared across our user communities. ECRIN and its national partners develop dedicated training and webinars for different stakeholder groups. These range from its CTU network, to investigators and sponsors, to consortia and affiliated partners in ECRIN supported projects.

TOOLS

The ECRIN tools to support multinational clinical research are available on the ECRIN website, and include, but are not limited to:



Regulatory and Ethical Database

ECRIN RED is a central resource for information about clinical trial regulatory and ethical requirements covering many different European countries and multiple study types such as clinical drug trials and clinical investigations of medical devices.



Risk-Based Monitoring Toolbox

The Risk-Based Monitoring Toolbox provides information on tools available for risk assessment, monitoring and study conduct, the institutions where they are used and other relevant details such as links and user feedback.



Paediatric Tools

A series of tools and procedures to support the setup and management of multinational neonatal and paediatric clinical studies in Europe.



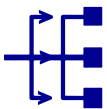
Rare Diseases Clinical Trials Toolbox

The toolbox aims to collect the accumulated knowledge, experience, and resources generated by previous projects and / or research infrastructures and other organisations into a practical and guided toolbox to help understand the regulations and requirements for conducting trials, with special focus on investigator-initiated trials for rare diseases.



Clinical Research Metadata Repository

The Clinical Research Metadata Repository is the free online tool to help scientific researchers find documents and data linked to a clinical research study, and to obtain information on the accessibility of those results.



Platform Trial Tools

The Platform Trial Tools include the Adaptive Platform Trial Toolbox which aims to collect the accumulated knowledge, experience, and resources (collectively termed as ‘tools’) from multiple projects and trials into a practical and guided toolbox to facilitate planning and conduct of future adaptive platform trials in any therapeutic area.



CONTACT

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