



**Australian  
Clinical  
Trials  
Alliance**

# Clinical trial network membership structure

*Guidance for CTNs*

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## PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This document will assist clinical trial networks (CTNs) to develop their membership structure.

## ROLE OF ACTA IN DEVELOPING CLINICAL TRIAL NETWORK MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Australian Clinical Trials Alliance (ACTA) is providing advice to assist CTNs to make decisions on the most appropriate membership structure. The generic advice provided by ACTA should be considered and applied by each CTN taking into account the specific individual circumstances and needs of the CTN. The following principles are integral to successful CTN operations.

- Decisions should reflect good governance practices including transparency, identification and management of conflicts of interest, and rules that are applied consistently.
- A recognition of the multidisciplinary roles in potential membership and their contributions to a successful CTN.
- The CTN membership structure should be both representative of and responsible to its members.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the contributions of ACTA CTN members and members of ACTA's Efficient and Effective CTNs Reference Group in the preparation, development and review of this document.

## USE OF THIS DOCUMENT

ACTA requests that the following acknowledgement is included in any CTN operational processes that are developed and documented using knowledge gained from this document. This will assist ACTA in identifying the usefulness and impact of this document in creating efficient and effective processes for CTNs.

"[name of CTN] acknowledges the contribution of ACTA to the development of operational processes within our network (reference: clinical trial network membership structure)".

## DISCLAIMER

The information in this document is for general guidance only. ACTA does not make any representations or warranties (expressed or implied) as to the accuracy, currency or authenticity of the information provided.

## DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Changes made to document	Author
1.0	26 November 2018	First version	MS, KG

## TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACTA	Australian Clinical Trials Alliance
CTN	Clinical Trial Network

## CLINICAL TRIAL NETWORK MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Consider the membership categories the CTN may offer, and the benefits associated with each type of membership category. The types of membership and benefits should be clearly defined and made publicly available (e.g via the CTN website).

- **Individual** – single or multiple categories e.g. full, associate, affiliate. Some CTNs restrict applications for full membership to certain criteria, e.g. individuals or clinicians with a certain level of clinical trial experience and may also require a track record of successful research. Associate membership tends to apply to interested individuals and other research personnel (such as statisticians, pharmacists, study coordinators, data managers and research nurses). Affiliate membership may apply to employees or affiliates of industry, government organisations, colleges and societies. Some CTNs provide honorary or life membership, usually in recognition of contribution to the CTN.
- **Site or institution** – Some CTNs offer membership by group such as recruiting sites.

## CLINICAL TRIAL NETWORK MEMBERSHIP FEES

The approach to membership fees also differs. Some charge substantial amounts, while others charge only a nominal fee to cover some administrative duties. For CTNs that have categories of membership, fees charged often vary by category. Some CTNs charge members to attend CTN meetings, while others offer free registration.

## PROCESS FOR MEMBERSHIP APPROVAL

The nomination requirements and the approval process should be considered and documented. For example, will a primary nomination and secondary nomination be required from existing CTN members, is a process required whereby all new members are approved by an Executive Committee, or will this approval process only apply to certain categories of membership. Consider also whether the nomination and approval process will be completed online or by paper forms and where decisions regarding approval of membership will be documented (e.g Executive meeting minutes). Consider also whether membership will be enduring, or if it is renewed for a defined time period. Renewing memberships within a defined time period provides an opportunity during the membership renewal process for membership records to be clarified and updated if required. The cost of maintaining a membership database and tracking incomplete or failure of renewal can be substantial and should be considered in decision making about membership approval and renewal process and in setting the membership fee structure.

## MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP

Consider the frequency, the format (e.g focus on clinical trials or disease area education) and the location of meetings. Consider whether invitation to these meetings will be open to all CTN membership categories, and if it will also be open to individuals who are not CTN members. It is common for a CTN to hold an annual or biennial meeting open to a large component of the membership. Typically, clinical trials proposed for CTN endorsement and updates to clinical trials are presented at these meetings, although the agenda may also include sessions to communicate relevant advances in disease areas, other areas relevant to clinical practice, or brainstorming sessions to generate new ideas or areas for clinical research.

## **COMMUNICATIONS TO MEMBERS**

Consider the format of membership communications and the preferred method for important items, e.g email, letter, social media, newsletters, annual report.

### **Use of membership mailing list**

Consider and document procedures regarding the following:

- Restrictions on use of the list
- Availability of members' details to the membership, the general public and affiliate organisations and procedures for confidentiality (e.g email use of Bcc)
- That appropriate consent for using members' details in this way have been obtained (consider privacy laws)