European Clinical Research Infrastructures Network (ECRIN)

ECRIN is a distributed research infrastructure – a distinct organisation that connects research facilities at multiple sites in countries across Europe and provides services for top-level clinical research. Switzerland is member of ECRIN since 2016 granting the Swiss researchers full access to ECRIN services and support. This clinical research infrastructure creates added value through access to expertise and patients, increasing the reach, diversity, and quality of clinical trials.

Context

Responding to the challenges and hurdles of conducting clinical research across borders, the European Union created in 2004 ECRIN and provided funding through the framework programmes FP6 & FP7 until 2015. In 2013, ECRIN transformed to the European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC), a legal status recognised by all EU member states. The legal status is designed to facilitate the establishment and operation of research infrastructures of European interest. Currently there are nine member countries (Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain) and two observer countries (Slovakia and Switzerland) sustainably funding ECRIN by their contributions. Member countries have access to the full range of ECRIN services, support and collaboration opportunities.

Organisation

Member countries have an academic scientific partner, usually a national clinical research infrastructure or network. In each member country, a European Correspondent (EuCo) provides the link between ECRIN, the scientific partner, and the member country. The ECRIN core team is based in France, and the collaboration with the countries is ensured through the EuCos. ECRIN’s governing bodies include the Assembly of Members, Steering Committee and Network Committee, regulated in the ECRIN statutes.

Clinical research support

Through the national academic partners, ECRIN provides information, consulting and services to researchers and sponsors in the preparation, validation and conduct of multinational clinical studies.

Support to clinical research projects: In the phase immediately preceding trial implementation, ECRIN can provide scientific & methodological evaluation as well as logistical assessments to proposals and grant applications. ECRIN provides support throughout the entire implementation of multinational research projects at not-for-profit rates upon approval of the ECRIN scientific committee. It offers investigators and project

ECRIN support throughout the life cycle of clinical research projects

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ECRIN Organisation
coordinators various trial management services through their national clinical research networks. These include (but are not limited to) protocol review, methodological support, advice and interaction with regulatory authorities, insurance issues, contracting, monitoring or data management. Instructions.

“ECRIN-on-board” initiative: applicants of member countries receive free advice and service for funding applications to help multinational, clinical research studies improve the quality of their applications (e.g., Horizon 2020, E-Rare). Procedures and timelines.

ECRIN portfolio and collaborative projects: In addition to its portfolio of nearly 60 multinational clinical trials, ECRIN contributes to various other collaborative consortia, initiatives and capacity building projects.

Data Centre Certification: ECRIN recommends the use of certified data centres for the multinational trials it supports. The ECRIN Data Centre Certification process certifies data centres providing high-quality, efficient and compliant data and information technology (IT) management for multinational clinical research. Process and Standards.

Tools
Researchers have access to a range of tools that facilitate clinical research in Europe. The freely accessible tools are developed and maintained by ECRIN and include:

ECRIN Campus: a central resource for information about clinical trial regulatory and ethical requirements, covering over 22 European countries. The Risk-Based Monitoring Toolbox provides information on tools available for risk assessment, monitoring and study conduct to enable researchers to create risk-based strategies for their study needs. Another tool includes the translational, interventional and epidemiological nutrition centre locator.

The Swiss ECRIN office
Switzerland is participating in ECRIN since 2008 with the SCTO and its CTU Network as the scientific partner of ECRIN. In December 2015 the ECRIN-ERIC Assembly of Members has approved Switzerland as observer country.

The Swiss Clinical Trial Organisation (SCTO), delegated by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), represents Switzerland in the consortium. The ECRIN EuCo for Switzerland is based at the SCTO and coordinates services and support nationally and internationally.

The national ECRIN office informs and advises about services of the scientific partner, e.g. for study protocol development, submission to competent authorities, monitoring, data management or pharmacovigilance and on the organisation of international aspects of study conduct.

Benefits for the Swiss researchers
As a sponsor or investigator conducting multicentre, multinational trials you are faced with the challenge to deal with diverse country-specific regulatory and administrative landscapes. ECRIN can support you to overcome these hurdles. Collaboration with ECRIN provides multiple advantages including full access to ECRIN management and consultancy services independent of the pathology concerned.

Moreover, sharing best practices and resources among national scientific ECRIN partners are major added values for the academic research community, saving potential costs.

The full portfolio of the successful projects receiving ECRIN support can be accessed at the www.ecrin.org website. To date there are 18 clinical trials supported in Switzerland.

Contacts

ECRIN Assembly of Members: Swiss delegate Annette Magnin, Managing Director SCTO (a.magnin@scto.ch)
Network Committee: Swiss Scientific Partner representative Dr Fabian Tay, CTC Zürich (fabian.tay@usz.ch)
ECRIN Correspondent for Switzerland: Dr Caecilia Schmid, Scientific Coordinator SCTO (c.schmid@scto.ch),
The scientific and other partners of ECRIN-ERIC are listed on the ECRIN website.

Swiss contribution: SERI (State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation, www.sbs.admin.ch)
Website: www.ecrin.org / Twitter: @ECRIN_ERIC

Swiss Clinical Trial Organisation

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