**Becoming an eMERGE Network Affiliate Member**

**eMERGE Affiliate Membership Description**

The application for eMERGE affiliate member is open to all academic, non-profit and government organizations that are interested in participating in an open process, to facilitate genomic research in biorepositories with electronic medical records and application of genomic results to clinical care. Membership is conditional on agreement and adherence to the criteria for participation described below.

Private sector and/or for-profit entities that wish to become eMERGE affiliate members will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure compliance with applicable National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI), National Institutes of Health (NIH) and federal government legal-, ethical-, and conflict of interest-related policies. Offers by third parties, including eMERGE affiliate members, to participate or provide cost-free or in-kind services to the eMERGE Network will also be assessed on a case-by-case basis by NHGRI.

Benefits of affiliating with the eMERGE Network may include:

* Access to eMERGE data prior to public release, abiding by the eMERGE data sharing agreement and publication policies
* Access to Network-developed tools and guidelines, both published and beta versions
* Shared expertise in multidisciplinary areas
* A rich, collaborative environment with network sites, including workgroup participation when necessary

eMERGE Affiliate Membership has two distinct categories, distinguished by the affiliate’s capacity to deploy network phenotypes across their subject cohort (required: at least dense array genomic data coupled to deep EHR data).

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| **eMERGE Affiliate Categories** |
| **Criteria for:** | **Non-Clinical Affiliate** | **Clinical Affiliate** |
| Participation  | Desire/willingness to engage eMERGE investigators and participate in the Network. Contributes complementary or special expertise  | Has genotype and phenotype data; Able to develop, validate, and deploy phenotyping algorithms; willingness to engage eMERGE investigators and participate in the Network  |
| Evaluation  | Applicants’ expertise; Proposed research is of interest to and within scope of eMERGE  | Applicant’s genomic dataset (if applicable); Proposed research is of interest to and within scope of eMERGE  |

**eMERGE Affiliate Application Process**

An investigator who is interested in applying for affiliate membership to the eMERGE Network should provide the required information for the appropriate affiliate category in no more than three pages.

The application will be submitted to the eMERGE Coordinating Center for pre-review. Pre-review will ensure that the application is complete and research interest and proposed project ideas appear to be in scope for the eMERGE Network.

The application will then be reviewed by the eMERGE PI Workgroup for acceptance into Affiliate Membership. Evaluation for affiliate membership will include a determination that:

* Applicant has the requisite expertise to participate in the Network;
* (desirable) Applicant brings complementary expertise not found in eMERGE that will expand network capabilities;
* Proposed research is of interest to and within scope of eMERGE;
* Required genomic datasets are available (***for Clinical Affiliate Applications only***);
* Number of algorithms (preferred minimum = 2, more are desirable) the applicant will be willing to implement warrants Network affiliate membership (***for Clinical Affiliate Applications only***);
* Quality and accessibility of EMR data is commensurate with current members (***for Clinical Affiliate Applications only***); and
* Subject population diversity enriches the Network (***for Clinical Affiliate Applications only***).

Applicants will be notified as quickly as possible once a determination has been made or if there are questions from the PI Workgroup that must be addressed in order to move forward.

**Affiliate Membership Responsibilities**

1. Agreement to adhere to Network policies, guidelines and agreements, including the eMERGE Data Use Agreement and data submission policies.
2. Agreement to participate fully in eMERGE Network activities, including attending Steering Committee meetings and working group calls and contributing to the products of these groups.
3. Agreement from each participant to contribute significantly to the project, bringing his/her particular expertise to bear on accomplishing the goals of the Network in a timely manner. Participation in the Network should consist of more than submission of data to the Network and should include substantial intellectual contributions to the Network.
4. Agreement from each participant that s/he will not disclose confidential information obtained from other members of the Network.

***Additional responsibilities and criteria for membership may be added upon recommendations of the eMERGE Steering Committee, External Scientific Panel, and NHGRI.***

***Please note: Phenotypes and algorithms are validated/implemented on a priority basis. Therefore, the eMERGE Network is not obligated to validate/implement an affiliate member’s phenotypes and algorithms, and vice versa.***

**eMERGE Non-Clinical Application Information Required**

1. Provide a concise research summary with:
* Specification of expertise, data or capabilities that complement but are not currently available in eMERGE (if any)
* Outline of proposed project(s) – including details related to:
	+ rationale for how the proposed project(s) address(es) eMERGE Network goals;
	+ data needed or requested;
	+ evidence of proposed project funding: a statement from an authorized Institutional Official stating that funds are available to conduct the proposed research.
1. Provide evidence that proposed projects are consistent with participants’ informed consent and the research has received appropriate IRB approvals.
2. Provide evidence of funding: a statement from an authorized Institutional Official stating that funds are available to conduct the proposed research.
3. Provide Statements of Agreement to meet Affiliate Membership Responsibilities

**eMERGE Clinical Affiliate Application Information Required**

1. Provide a concise research summary with:
* Description of subject cohort available for analyses (see table 1 for format)
* Specification of available genomic and phenotyping data (see table 2 for format)
* Existing and planned phenotyping (if any)
* Existing and planned association, risk, or other analyses (if any)
* Clinical implementation projects proposed (if any)
* Rationale for how the proposed project(s) address(es) eMERGE Network goals
1. Provide evidence that proposed projects are consistent with participants’ informed consent and the research has received appropriate IRB approvals.
2. Provide evidence of funding: a statement from an authorized Institutional Official stating that funds are available to conduct the proposed research.
3. Provide Statements of Agreement to meet Affiliate Membership Responsibilities

**Table 1: Cohort Description**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Count** | **% Female** | **Median Age** | **% EA** | **% AA** | **% Hisp.** |
| ***Male*** | ***Female*** |
| **Overall** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Study 1** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Study 2** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Etc, as needed** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Table 2: Data Description**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Count** | Data Type | Platform | % Hisp. | % EA | % AA | % Asian | Comments |
|  | Dense genotyping |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Exome Array |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | WES |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Targeted Sequencing |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | WGS |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Reporting**

Affiliate membership will be reviewed yearly by the eMERGE Steering Committee and the External Scientific Panel.