

HCSRN MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

This document describes the review process for organizations applying to become members of the Health Care Systems Research Network (HCSRN). Membership applications will be reviewed annually in the fall of each year.

Full membership occurs in two stages. The provisional first stage is “associate membership.” The associate membership level allows a site to pursue milestones before transitioning to full membership status. Associate members will have Governing Board voting rights and attend all Governing Board meetings. Associate members are not eligible to serve as Board officers or Executive Committee members. Associate members are expected to meet a set of threshold requirements within a period of 2 years to be considered for “full membership.”

This staged model provides an important opportunity to determine whether advancement to full membership will be mutually beneficial. Table 1 outlines the process for receiving and reviewing associate membership applications. Table 2 outlines the minimum requirements for transitioning to full membership.

Full and associate members are expected to share the mission, vision, and values of the HCSRN:

- **Mission:** To improve individual and population health through research that connects the resources and capabilities of learning health care systems.
- **Vision:** The Health Care Systems Research Network is the nation’s preeminent source of population-based research that measurably improves health and health care.
- **Values:** Scientific excellence. Innovation and creativity. Actionable research findings. Collaboration and teamwork. Transparency. Efficiency.

Table 1. Review Process for Applicants for Associate Membership in the HCSRN

Associate Member Application Process	1. Completed application packet is submitted to the Board Chair.
	2. The Board Chair forwards the application and supporting materials to the Executive Committee (EC)
	3. The EC designates an “applicant sponsor” to manage the relation and communications with the applicant organization during the review process.
	4. The sponsor and EC review the application to confirm the organization meets minimum requirements (See Table 2).
	5. If the applicant meets the minimum requirements, the sponsor contacts the organization to review the application and address any questions/concerns.
	6. The EC forwards to the Board the reviewed application and supporting materials, highlighting the particular strengths the applicant would bring, along with any weaknesses.
	7. The Board reviews the application materials and discusses membership.
	8. The Board Chair polls the Board members for their decision: A minimum 3/4 majority of Board members present (one vote per member organization) is required to accept a member. Refer to Article III, Section 3 of the HCSRN bylaws for more.
	9. The Board Chair notifies the applicant of the Board’s decision.
	10. The Board Chair designates Board member(s) to orient a new member organization.
Membership Application Process	When an associate member feels they have met the threshold requirements for full membership, the Board will vote on whether the associate member should transition to full membership status. If the Board does not approve the transition, it will provide the associate member with feedback on what steps it should take to improve.

Table 2. Minimum Criteria for Associate/Full Membership Status	
Associate Member Criteria	Full Member Criteria
Research Requirements	Research Requirements
Associate members must have a recognizable center/department devoted to research. The research entity should be staffed with investigators and research support staff with a focus on non-proprietary, public-domain research. Researchers/investigators are those fully dedicated and accountable to the member organization. The researchers/investigators should demonstrate a strong culture of collaboration. The research center should be able to access data about patient care. <i>(See Population and Data Requirements.)</i> Evidence of meeting the above requirements may be diverse, including publications, federal grant funding, and other sources of funding.	During the associate membership phase, investigators must have demonstrated a focus on public domain research and a strong culture of collaboration. Organizations must have demonstrated a commitment to sustaining and/or growing the research entity. Evidence of meeting the above requirements may be in the form of publications, federal funding, increase in number of investigators, etc.
Participation Requirements	Participation Requirements
Associate members are required to be responsive to and participate in HCSRN governance efforts to streamline processes and create resources to enhance the Network and project functions and operations. Members are required to contribute to the core infrastructure of the HCSRN by paying an annual assessment (adjusted annually). All members are required to participate in the HCSRN VDW. Participation in the VDW requires that member organizations keep local VDW files and protocols up to date; perform data validation and checking; participate in the VDW Implementation Group; and designate a site VDW data manager.	During the associate membership phase, organizations must have been responsive to and participated in HCSRN governance efforts to streamline processes and create resources to enhance the Network and project functions and operations. Associate members must have contributed to the core infrastructure of the HCSRN by paying their annual assessment(s) (adjusted annually). Associate members must be in the HCSRN VDW. They must have a designated site VDW data manager and have demonstrated progress in building and maintaining a site VDW.
Population and Data Requirements	Population and Data Requirements
Members must have access to data on a defined ¹ population. The source of data to characterize the defined population may be based on claims data, electronic health records (EHR), or a combination of the two when considering defined subgroups. Data on this population must be available to support the creation of a site Virtual Data Warehouse (VDW).	During the associate membership phase, organizations must have demonstrated the accessibility and availability of data on a defined population for a site VDW.
1 - An insurance membership population, primary care population, or general population sample for which data are accessible for research on all or almost all health care that was used by members of the population during defined periods of time.	