

MMRU Scientific and Ethical Clearance Application Process

Every research conducted in Masanga Hospital needs to be approved by the Masanga Medical Research Unit (MMRU) - Scientific Review Committee (SRC). The committee consist of currently seventeen doctors and professors including two Sierra Leonean professors who are committed to safeguard the quality of every research in Masanga to be in line with the Sierra Leone National Research for Health Policy -Ministry of Health and Sanitation. MMRU-SRC working in close collaboration with the Sierra Leone Ethics and Scientific Review Committee (SL-ESRC). MMRU-SRC approval is a pre-requisite for the Sierra Leone ethics committee to consider the proposal.

These are the four steps to note as you prepare to submit your application:

1. Submit the proposal by email to:
ika.masangahospital@gmail.com (MMRU General Manager) and
m.p.grobusch@amsterdamumc.nl (SRC Chair and Director, MMRU).

Note that the template submission form is available via the MMRU General Manager, and best to be submitted as word.doc so that the running registration number can be added by us. Whether submitted as pdf or word.doc, we will turn all original documents into pdfs before them being sent to SCR members.

2. MMRU-SRC members will send their reviews and a decision letter in a very tight turnaround times of 7 business days.

Note that submission to the two recipients above to submission to the SRC and compilation of feedback and compilation might take another couple of days but we strive for immediate action; however, we strive for a maximum of 14 days in any case in the 'worst case', 7 days 'best case' scenario from you submitting until receipt of notification.

3. Depending on the decision letter, if the proposal is accepted, MMRU-SRC will send an approval letter.

Note that if the SRC decision is a re-submission, this should be then re-submitted as in step #1. Authors can proceed to submit the proposal with the MMRU-SRC approval letter to the Sierra Leone Ethics and Scientific Review Committee (SLESRC) or submit the application via MMRU General Manager.

Note that the letter to the National Ethics committee needs to state that SRC clearance has been obtained.

4. MMRU General Manager can help to submit the ethical clearance application to the Sierra Leone Ethics and Scientific Review Committee (SLESRC) and make sure that the application is following the most recent guidelines from SLERC. Note that if the submission is done by the investigators themselves, still, the MMRU General Manager shall still be copied into those deliberations.

Note that the National Ethics Committee, to our experience to date, works very diligently, and that in uncomplicated rules, notifications within a month are rather the rule than the exception – but if revisions are needed, this might prolong the process.

VERY IMPORTANT: Without exception, no project can start without full written SRC clearance and subsequent ethical clearance. These processes work formidably swiftly in international comparison, but appropriate time including possible delays to re-submission procedures needs to be accounted for when planning projects, and that commitments made by proposing investigators to any party regarding a study start date cannot overrule these processes.

For any proposal, MP Grobusch can be contacted, if wanted, for advice during pre-submission/preparation of a proposal for SRC clearance ahead of submission (with allowance for turnaround time) for counselling re: any formal and scientific aspects of a proposal.



Martin P. Grobusch

28 November 2022

SRC Head and Director, MMRU