The Health Research Portal

Web System User-manual

Investigator Version

Preface & Recommendation

The Health Research Portal (HRP) is an integrated online health research management system that offers substantial benefits for all stakeholders in health research. The Portal aims to improve accountability, efficiency and quality of health research conducted in a country by providing information on all ongoing research and hence increasing transparency and by streamlining the ethics review process.

The Portal can be used to:

- **Submit research proposals** for review to one of the ethics committee of the country, 24x7, from anywhere. Researchers need to register on the Portal. Once registered, you will have a permanent account and be able to submit research proposal in a paper-less way and to track the review status of your proposals.

- **Search ongoing and completed health research** from the launch of the system onwards through a publicly accessible research registry. No registration or log-in is required to search the ongoing research.

- **Access complete research reports** for the researches started since the launch, once the research is completed.

- **Access information on all the applicable guidelines, rules, and regulations** related to health research.

- **Access a “Researchers’ Directory”** containing information on the national and international researchers doing research in the country.

The HRP is designed like a social network; most of its contents and features are available only to registered users. Once registered each user possesses one or multiple roles such as investigator, secretary of a committee, reviewer... You can only choose yourself to have the investigator role. The other roles are assigned or by the administrator of the system, or by a secretary of a review committee.
Here is a short description of each role:

- **Investigator**: The investigator role allows you to submit research proposals to a review committee. You will then be able to track the review process of your proposals as, once approved, submitting the post-approval documents related to your research (completion report, protocol amendment, raw data...). You have full access only to your own proposals. You may not be yourself one of the investigators of the research; this role will not restrain you to submit proposals in behalf of the investigator(s). You will however be the key person in relation with the ethics committee.

- **Secretary**: The secretary role allows you to manage your ethics committee, the review of the proposals and to organize meetings. You have full access only to the proposals submitted to your committee.

- **Committee Member**: The committee member role allows you to review the research proposals as to get information about your committee meetings. You have full access only to the proposals you have been assigned to review by your secretary and the proposals subject to your committee meetings.

- **External Reviewer**: The external reviewer role allows you to review the research proposals you have been assigned to. You have full access only to these proposals.

- **Coordinator**: The coordinator role allows you to generate reports about every proposals submitted to the HRP. You do not have full access to any proposals.

In order to make your training easier, this user’s guide will use screenshots of the website. A glossary is present at the end of this manual.

We strongly recommend you to always pay attention to your notifications. These ones possess a lot of information addressed to you and not always specified with another way.

For a global comprehension of the Health Research Portal please refer to the operating diagram in the back cover of this user-guide.
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I. COMMON AREAS

1.1 NAVIGATING THE SYSTEM

All the WebPages of the Health Research Portal are composed of the same header, access point to the main WebPages of the portal (frame 1 of the above example), and right column (frame 3 of the above example).

The variable part of all WebPages, which contains specific information, is therefore at their centre (frame 2 of the above example). On the top of this part is your current position in the arborescence of the website. The second line is the title of the webpage.
I.1.1 The Header

The header is the access point to the main WebPages of the website. This header, present on the top of absolutely every WebPages of the website, is composed of various “tabs” (main links). Click on one of this tab to access to the concerned main webpage:

- **Home**: You will access the Home Page of the website. It contains the welcome message and last announcements made by the committees.
- **Governance & Policies**: This webpage contains divers information concerning the different policies in the country: like the Ethics Review Committee(s), the Standard Operating Procedures or User Guides for the system.
- **Log In**: If you possess an account within this website you can log in through this webpage.
- **Register**: If you don’t possess any account within this website you can register through this webpage.
- **Research Registry**: Via this tab you can access to all the past & ongoing health researches in the country.
- **Announcements**: By clicking on this tab you will access to all the announcements made by the Ethics Review Committee(s).

If you possess an account within this website and are "logged in", the header slightly change:

The tab "User Home" replaces the two tabs "Log In" and "Register". This new tab allows you to access to all the functionalities gave to your account. As an example, if you are an investigator/researcher and want to submit a research proposal, you should find a link on this webpage.
I.1.b The Right Column

If you possess an account, the Right Column allows you to log in/out within the website.

To log in you need to type your username and your password in the appropriate fields. Please click on the "Log In" button to validate your data. Before clicking on this button you can choose to check the "Remember me" box by clicking on it. This allows your computer to remember your username and password. We strongly recommend you to check this box ONLY on your personal computer.

If you don't possess any account within the website, please click on the "Go to Registration" link in the bottom of this right column for registering into the website.

Once logged in you can log out anywhere you are by clicking on the "Log Out" link present on the right column. We highly recommend you to log out each time you leave your computer.

Above the "Log Out" link, the "My Profile" link allows you to access to all your information and to modify them (your mail address, phone number, password...).

Under the user’ information is the notification section. A notification is a short personal message addressed to you. By clicking on the "View" link you access to all your notifications. The message in brackets on the right of the link specifies the number of notifications you never read. In the opposite example the user, with the user has 4 unread notifications. We recommend you to always be careful to read your notifications.
1.2 Home Page

This is the home page of the Health Research Portal.

After a brief introducing message the Home page of the website shows the latest announcements made by the Ethics Review Committees. Please click on the title of one of the announcements or on the “More...” link to know more about it. You can access to all the announcements with the “More Announcements...” link.
1.3 Governance & Policies

The “Governance, Policies, and Procedures for Health Research” main web-page gives you information on the diverse governance and policies about health research in the country, and about this web system.

By Navigating using the header links (Please refer to the above screenshot) you should be able to obtain information about:

- The Governance of Health Research
- The Ethics Review Committees and their policies
- How to obtain grants
- The diverse documents shared to you (Standard operating procedures, User manuals for this system...)
- And the contact and links
1.4 LOG IN

Before any actions as an Investigator, a Secretary or a Reviewer, you need to “log in” the website. To “log in” allows the website to understand who you are and therefore which possibilities to offer you.

You need to type your username and your password in the appropriate fields. You will then need to validate these data by clicking on the “Log In” button.

Before clicking on the “Log In” button you can choose to check the “Remember my username and password” box by clicking on it. This allows the computer you are using to remember your username and password. If you want so, we strongly recommend you to check this box ONLY on your own personal computer.

If you don't remember your username or password please click on the “Forgot your password?” link.

If you don't have any username or password (i.e. if you are not registered into the Health Research Portal) you can register by clicking on the “Go to Registration” link.
I.4.a Registering

To register into the Health Research Portal you are requested to fill this form. A star (*) denotes a required field.

Are required fields:

- The username. It must contain only lowercase letters, numbers and hyphens/underscores. A username is a name that uniquely identifies someone on a computer system. It is the only information in this form that will not be able to change.
- The password. It must be at least 6 characters. A password is a string of characters used for authenticating a user on a computer system. In order to verify you entered the desired password you are request to enter it twice (once in each password field).
- Your first name.
- Your last name.
- Your email address (you are also requested to enter it twice).
- The validation: Please enter the characters that appear in the image above this field.

Before finishing your registration, two options are available.

- If you want to receive a confirmation email including you username and password please check the “Confirmation” box.
- If you plan to use the Health Research Portal as an Investigator (i.e. for submitting proposals) please check the “Investigator” box.
- If you plan to use the Health Research Portal as a reviewer, please enter your reviewing interests. This will greatly help the review committees on their work. Please validate each interest by pressing the "Enter" or the "Comma" key.

For finishing the submission please click on the “Register” button. If you want to leave this page without registering please click on the “Cancel” button.
I.4.2 Forget your password?

If you forgot your username or your password you can reset it on this subpage (click on the “Forgot your password?” link into the “Log In” main webpage).

Enter your email address in the appropriate field (the one you used to register within the portal) and click on the “Reset Password” button. A confirmation email will be sent to your email address.

This confirmation email contains a link, if you really want to reset your password, please click on this link.
By clicking on the link you directly arrive on the above webpage. This is just to confirm you that your password has been reset and send with a new email to your email address.

For the rest of this explanation, we will call the password included in this email "resetPassword". You can now go to the Health Research Portal and try to log in.

Once on the login page of the Health Research Portal (or you can use the right column), on the username field, you should provide your username, on the password field, you should provide the "resetPassword", the password included in the email of the precedent step. Please click on Login.
Because you asked to reset your password, the first time you login the above page appear. It is for suggesting you to choose your own new password:

A) On the username field, you should provide your username.
B) On the current password field, you should provide the "resetPassword"..
C) On the new password field, you should provide the new password you desire. You are free to choose any password you want. We will call it "newPassword"
D) On the repeat new password field, you should provide again "newPassword". You should type exactly the same as in the step E.
E) Please click on save.

If you don't have any username or password (i.e. if you are not registered into the Health Research Portal) you can register by clicking on the "Go to Registration" link on the right column.
1.5 RESEARCH REGISTRY

You may search health researches or investigators registered in the Health Research Portal using this main webpage. By default it will show you the researches webpage. You can always switch between the registry of investigators and the registry of researches by using the links "Research" and "Investigators" on the top of the page.

1.5.a RESEARCHES

The search engine allows you to search a past of ongoing research by typing a title or keyword(s). It also allows you to frame your search by dates, geographical area or status of the research. Take note that even though a combination of search criteria refines your search, each of them can be used alone and none of them will start a global research.

Once your search criteria settled, a click on the “Search” button launch the search and display the results.

If you want to launch a fresh research, you can clear the criteria by clicking on the link "Clear Fields".
Results are presented in the form of a table composed of 6 columns: the title of the research, the key implementing institution, the geographical area(s), the research field(s), the dates of the research and the status. By clicking on the title of a research you can access its information.

If the research has been completed, you can download its final report by clicking on the "Download Final Report" link on the right of the concerned research.

You can export the results of your search in a ".csv" format by clicking on the "Export Search Results" link.

Once you clicked on the "Export Search Results" link, a new part of the webpage appears. This one allows you to “customize” your exportation. Please check the fields you would like to export (click on the concerned box) and click on the "Export" button. You can hide this new part by clicking on the "Hide Export Options" link.
1.5.2 INVESTIGATORS DIRECTORY

The investigators directory shows you a list of all the investigators registered into the HRP. These investigators are grouped by email. Therefore, if an investigator has been registered with multiple emails, this one will be presented multiple times in the list.

You can search a specific investigator by the first letter of his/her last name. If you wish so, please click on the concerned letter. By default, all the investigators are shown.

By clicking on the name of an investigator, you will access his/her details, including links to all the research proposals registered in this system where he/she is involved.
1.6 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Through this page you can access announcements made by the Ethics Review Committees. They are ordered from the most recent to the oldest. By clicking on the "More..." link you can access to the whole announcement.
II. INVESTIGATOR

II.1 USER HOME

Once "logged in", this webpage is available anywhere you are on the website by clicking on the "User Home" header tab. All the features related to the investigator role (submitting proposals, tracking reviews, submitting post-approval documents, accessing meeting information...) will be accessible through this header tab. On your "User Home" main page you have different action possible:

- You can access to your submissions by clicking on the "Investigator" link.
- The "Drafts" link shows you how many draft proposals you have. By clicking on it you will also access to your draft proposals. If you don't have any archived submissions this link is inactive.
- The "In Review" link shows you how many researches currently under review you have. By clicking on it you will access to your researches under review as to track their review. If you don't have any under review researches this link is inactive.
- The "Ongoing" link shows you how many ongoing researches you have. By clicking on it you will also access them and being able to submit your post-approval documents (completion report, protocol amendment, etc...). If you don't have any submissions this link is inactive.
- The "Completed" link shows you how many completed researches you have. By clicking on it you will access them. If you don't have any completed researches this link is inactive.
- You can submit a new proposal by clicking the "New Submission" link.

The “My Account” section allows you to edit your profile information, to change your password or to log out.
II.2 Your submissions

This is the “Proposals” webpage of an Investigator. When you log in you access directly to this webpage. By default it shows your draft proposals. The top part of this webpage allows you to switch between the different categories of your proposals. The categories are the same as those describe in your “User Home” with a new category: "Archive". Are considered as “Archived Proposals” your not approved proposals, your withdrawn researches and the completed researches you decided to send to this category.

In case of a lot of submissions you may search a submission by using the searching tool on the top of this page. Type a keyword/title and/or frame your search by dates and launch your search by using the “Search” button.

You also have on this page a link to start a new submission: "Click Here".
According to which category you are, different columns are displayed on the list of your proposals:

- **PROPOSAL ID**: The identification code of your proposal *(for more information see chapter: Miscellaneous – Understanding Proposal’s ID)*.
- **DATE OF SUBMISSION**: The date when you submitted your proposal.
- **TITLE**: The scientific title of your proposal. Please click on the title of a specific proposal to access its specific information.
- **REVIEW ROUND**: The last round of review of your proposal.
- **STATUS**: The review status of the last round of review.
- **ACTION**: Diverse actions you can undertake like submitting a progress report, the final report, a protocol amendment...
II.3 Submitting a New Proposal

You are able to submit a new proposal by using the "New Submission" link in your "User Home" webpage or by clicking on the "Click Here" under "Start a new submission" in your "Proposals" webpages.

A new submission goes through a five stages process. In all the steps of the submission process, a star ("*") denotes a required field and a question-mark ("[?]") indicates information on mouse over.

II.3.a Step 1 – Starting the Submission

This page is the first step of a new submission. For reviewing the proposal, the health authority in the country might request you to provide diverse information or document (i.e. final report of the research study, the raw data no later than 12 months of completion of data
collection/field work through this system...) These are requirements for submitting a proposal. Please read them carefully and check the boxes if you agree.

The “Investigator Guidelines” are here to remind you of the documents you may need to provide with your proposal. Please note that a missing document can result in the non-approbation of your research proposal.

If multiple ethics committees are using this web platform, you will be requested to choose to which committee you want to submit your research proposal.

Your proposal will then be saved into the database as a draft proposal. It will appear in the “Draft proposals” category of the “Proposals” webpage and you will be able to continue the steps of the submission whenever you want. As a “draft” proposal, your submission will not be accessible by anyone.

Please also keep in mind that you can always navigate between the completed steps and correct your information using the links on the top of each step (please refer to red frame of the above example).

If you want to leave this page without saving please click on the “Cancel” button.

II.3.b Step 2 – Entering the Metadata

During the step 2 of the submission of a proposal you will be asked to fill the main proposal’s metadata. The main proposal’s metadata is made up of 3 different parts:

Investigator and Co-INVESTIGATOR(s)

These data concern the investigator of the research. You are asked to fill the name, middle name, last name, e-mail fields and the phone number of the investigator. Most of the time the investigator is the user logged in: you. Therefore to facilitate your work into this webpage the Health Research Portal automatically fill these fields with your data. If you are not the investigator either if these data are incorrect please correct them by clicking on the desired field.
You may want to add co-investigator(s) for the research. For adding a co-investigator please click on the "Add a Co-Investigator" button. You can add up to 5 co-investigators.

In this case, please fill up the information concerning the Co-Investigator of your research. You can delete a co-investigator by clicking on the "Delete Co-Investigator" Button.

Title and abstract and proposal details

These data concern main explanations of your proposal as its titles, abstract, keywords etc.

Depending of your responses, some required fields may appear (i.e. student research, human subjects involved...).

For some other fields you are able to add as much information as you want (i.e. Research Fields or Districts involved).

In this case please click on the “Add another…” link under the concerned field or selection menu.

Don’t forget that more explanations are available on mouse over.
Source(s) of Monetary or Material Support

These data concern your source(s) of monetary or material support for your research.

Like the previous section, depending of your answers, some required fields might appear.

If your funding source is not listed:

- please select “Key Implementing Institution” at the end of the drop down menu if your funding source is same as your key implementing institution.
- Otherwise, please select “Other” and provide the details.
Risk Assessment

You should be careful when completing this last section. By doing so, it helps you to understand all the risks related to your proposal.

Click on the "Save and continue" button for saving your proposal and continuing this submission. Like all the steps of the submission process, once your proposal saved you can get back to it whenever you want.

If you want to leave this page without saving please click on the "Cancel" button.
II.3.c Step 3 – Uploading the main proposal file.

In the third step of a new submission you must upload the main proposal file:

Please follow the instructions on the screen in order to upload your file. If no file has been uploaded the “Save and continue” button doesn’t appear.

Once your file is uploaded you see it on the page. At this step you can upload only one file. You will be able to upload supplementary files during the step 4. If you want to replace the file uploaded please do same steps as before.

Click on the “Save and continue” button for saving your proposal and continuing this submission. If you want to leave this page without saving please click on the “Cancel” button.
II.3.d Step 4 – Uploading Supplementary Files

This optional step allows you to add supplementary files to your proposal.

You firstly need to select the type of file you want to upload. Selecting multiple options is possible by holding down the “CTRL” button of your keyboard (or “CMD” button if you are using a Macintosh) and clicking on desired options. If you select “Other” on this menu a new field appears on its right. In this case please specify the file type you want to upload.

As in step 3, for uploading a supplementary file you need to open a “Choose File” window by clicking on the “Browse” button, to locate your file and to upload it with the “Upload” button.

Each supplementary file uploaded will appear into the table above the “file type” selection menu:
In this example, 6 files have been uploaded. The table provide their title, their original file name and their date of upload. If ever you want to remove an uploaded file please you use the "Delete" link on the right of the table.

Click on the "Save and continue" button for saving your proposal and continuing this submission. If you want to leave this page without saving please click on the "Cancel" button.

II.3.E STEP 5 – CONFIRMING THE SUBMISSION

The step 5 of the submission process allows you to check every data you provided to the Health Research Portal before submitting your proposal to review. If you want to modify your data you can go back to any step you want by clicking on its name (see above screenshot).

This last step is composed of 3 main parts:

- The “Proposal Details” part sum up your proposal metadata provided in step 2
- The “File Summary” sum up your main proposal file and your supplementary files if you added some

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>File Summary</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>File Size</th>
<th>Date Uploaded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAIN PROPOSAL .pdf</td>
<td>Submission File</td>
<td>47KB</td>
<td>05-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY OF MY PROPOSAL.pdf</td>
<td>Supplementary File</td>
<td>10KB</td>
<td>05-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSENT FORM AND INFORMATION SHEET .pdf</td>
<td>Supplementary File</td>
<td>47KB</td>
<td>05-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTIONNAIRES .pdf</td>
<td>Supplementary File</td>
<td>47KB</td>
<td>05-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER ERC DECISION FOR MY PROPOSAL .pdf</td>
<td>Supplementary File</td>
<td>10KB</td>
<td>05-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR .pdf</td>
<td>Supplementary File</td>
<td>10KB</td>
<td>05-04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• If you would like to add a comment for the secretariat of the Ethical Committee you chose please fill the "Comments for the Secretariat" field.

You can submit your proposal to review by clicking on the "Finish Submission" button. But be careful. Once your proposal submitted you are not able to modify it anymore.

If you want to leave this page and to keep this proposal as a draft please click on the "Cancel" button. All data you entered will be saved and you will be able to finish your proposal by coming back to your “Submissions” webpage.
II.4 POST-SUBMISSION ACTIONS

Once your proposal submitted, diverse events can require you to operate the concerned actions through the Health Research Portal. This is the case if, for example, you need to resubmit your proposal to the committee, to submit you final report, or to amend your proposal.

II.4.1 RE-SUBMISSION

The committee in charge of reviewing your research proposal, your report or your amendment, might decide that your submission is incomplete (or required some revision) and you should re-submit it. In that case, your proposal is automatically placed in your "Draft Proposals" (please refer to the chapter "II.1 User Home").

For example, if the decision of the committee concerns the initial review of your proposal, you will be guided through the 5 steps of the submission process where you will be able to modify the metadata or the files of your research proposal. In contrast, if the decision concerns your progress report, you will be able to upload a new one.

II.4.2 POST-APPROVAL AMENDMENT

During the progress of your research, you might need to amend some of its protocol details. If this is the case, you need to inform the committee in charge of your research and seek a new approval.
Because you are currently doing your research, you will find it in your "Ongoing researches" (please refer to the chapter "II.1 User Home"). Under the "Action" column, you will see diverse links, including "Protocol Amendment". Please be careful to choose the correct research as this action cannot be undone.

The protocol amendment consists in going through the 5 steps of the submission process again and modifying the metadata and/or files. However please be careful to the guidelines provided on the of the steps. You might be required to upload additional documents or to provide specific information. Once the step 5 completed, your research will go through a new round of review by the concerned committee. You will therefore find it on your "Proposals under review" category.

II.4.c Progress / Final report

During your research or at its end, you will need to provide to the committee in charge a progress or a final report.

Because you are currently doing your research, you will find it in your "Ongoing researches" (please refer to the chapter "II.1 User Home"). Under the "Action" column, you will see diverse links, including "Progress Report" and "Final Report". Both of these links will redirect you to the upload page of report. Before uploading the report, please read carefully the instructions provided by your committee.

Only one document can be uploaded. If your report is composed of multiple documents, please merge them into one before the upload.

Once uploaded, your research will be subject to a new round of review by your committee.
Special considerations for the final report:

Once your final report approved, this one will be automatically made publicly available through this system. Although you will then have the possibility to modify it, we recommend you to ensure the quality of your report.

Because your research is now completed, you will find it under your "Completed researches".

**II.4.D MODIFYING YOUR FINAL REPORT**

This chapter considers that your previous final report for the concerned research has been approved by your committee. If not, please refer to the chapter "II.4.A Re-submission".

Because your previous final report has been approved, you will find your research under your "Completed researches" category *(please refer to the chapter "II.1 User Home")*. Under the "Action" column, you will see diverse links, including "Modify Final Report". You will be requested to upload your new final report. Once this one submitted, it will be subject to a new round of review by the concerned committee.

**II.4.E WITHDRAWING A PROPOSAL**

If your research is considered as a "Draft", "Under Review" or "Ongoing", you are able to withdraw it. Under the column action of the concerned category you will find a link "Withdraw". You will be requested to provide a report and/or to specify the reason of this withdrawal.
III GLOSSARY

Account Having an account within a website means you are registered into. The website has information about you and is able to identify you if you provide your username and password.

Arborescence A website is build like a document with chapters and subchapters. It therefore possesses a hierarchical structure: an arborescence.

Chat room A specific page on a website where users can communicate.

csv A comma-separated values (CSV) file stores tabular data (numbers and text) in plain-text form. The CSV file format is very simple and supported by almost all spreadsheets and database management systems.

Download To transfer data from a server or host computer to one’s own computer or digital device.

Exportation To format data in such a way that it can be used by another application. An application that can export data can create a file in a format that another application understands, enabling the two programs to share the same data.

Icon A picture on a screen that represents a specific file, directory, window, option or program.

Link In this case, an element that connects one part of the website to another, typically activated by clicking on a highlighted word at a particular location on the screen.

Log In The process of identifying oneself to a website, usually by entering one’s username and password.

Log Out The process of ending the identification of oneself by a website.

Metadata Data about the containers of data.

Mouse Over In this case, information appearing when the user moves or “hovers” the pointer of the mouse over a particular area of the website.

Notifications Formal announcements send to a particular user or group of users.

Portal A website that brings information from diverse sources in a unified way.

Submission A submission of a research proposal.

Tab On a website, a button redirecting to one of the main webpage. A tab is present in every pages of the website and always at the same place on the screen. Usually a group of tabs are placed in the border of the window.

Upload To transfer data from one’s own computer or digital device to a server or host computer.

Username A unique sequence of characters used to identify a user on a computer system.
The Health Research Portals
Operating Diagram

I. Submission
II. Ethics Review
   A. Full review
   B. Expedited Review
III. Research Outputs

I. The Investigator sends the proposal to the ERC.
II. The Secretary ensures that the proposal is complete.
III. The Secretary chooses a type of review.
    1. If exempted, the proposal is automatically approved.

A. The Secretary assigns one or two reviewers for a primary review.
B. The primary reviewer(s) summarizes the proposal for the committee meeting.
   1. The Secretary sends the results to the Investigator.
   2. The Secretary sends the results to the Investigator.

B. The Secretary assigns one or two reviewers to review the proposal.
   1. The Investigator communicates the outputs of the research.
      No later than 12 months of completion of data collection/field work, the Investigator might request an extension of time.

I. INVESTIGATOR
S. SECRETARY
R. REVIEWER
E. EXTERNAL REVIEWER

Action
   Possible Action
Documents