**How to Submit a Manuscript Proposal**

# DEADLINE INFORMATION:

New proposals are due at noon Pacific Time on Monday the week of the next Publications Committee (PC) teleconference. Refer to the “PC Meetings and Paper Submission Deadlines” subheading at the very top of the main PC Web page for teleconference dates and deadlines.

Given the amount of work involved, PC will follow a stringent policy of not reviewing proposals and pen drafts submitted after the deadline until the next cycle. (Deadlines remain as stated regardless of any holidays.)

# Proposal submissions that don’t meet the following criteria will not be processed for review until the required information is received. This could delay review until another PC meeting!

**IMPORTANT ISSUES/PREPARATION FOR NEW PROPOSALS:**

**New proposals must be submitted to** [**ann.chang@ucsf.edu.**](mailto:ann.chang@ucsf.edu)

Please use the “MASALA Analysis Proposal Submission Form” to submit a paper proposal to the PC.

New proposals should be no more than 2-4 pages in length, excluding the references. **Proposals exceeding 4 pages will not be accepted.**

PC Committee members adopted a PC policy that requires authors to include the study name (The Mediators of Atherosclerosis in South Asians Living in America) at the end of their paper title. The only exceptions to this policy are when the Journal restricts the number of words allowed in the title or the paper combines data from multiple studies.

# All coauthors must have seen and approved the manuscript proposal prior to submission.

The MASALA Steering Committee recommends that you to keep the author list to <10 people, with 3 maximum from a single institution, and only include co-authors who are directly involved in the study conception, analysis, provision of critical input, and those who were responsible for the original study methods, data collection, cleaning and harmonization. Main study proposals with more than 3 authors at one site requires justification from the first author. Ancillary study proposals with more than 4 authors at one site requires justification from the first author. First authors are asked to explain how each coauthor will contribute to the paper. (Examples include data collection, analysis or help writing the paper.) Both Main and Ancillary study proposals can only have an additional author from the same site (maximum 4 authors for Main study proposals and 5 for Ancillary study proposals). These maximums include the analyst.

* When a paper proposal is based on an ancillary study (regardless of when the “protected” period has finished), the main author should be strongly encouraged to invite the PI of the ancillary study to join the writing group.
* Papers based on ancillary studies should always be classified as “ancillary”, even after data transferred to the main database.
* In all papers based on ancillary studies, the funding agency should be acknowledged.
* Events: Inclusion of major adjudicated outcomes or events
* Longitudinal: Analysis of repeated measures over time without inclusion of clinical events
* Cross-Sectional: Analysis of associations at one point in time
* Methods

For each paper proposal, MASALA PC requires a Senior MASALA author who will act as the responsible, sponsoring author (ideally from the same site). PC expects that the Senior MASALA author will be an experienced MASALA investigator and familiar with PC policies and procedures. The Senior MASALA author is responsible for advising the first author concerning these procedures and MASALA PC deadlines for submission of abstracts, proposals and manuscripts. (This role is only for the MASALA review process. Once a pen draft receives MASALA approval, any member of the writing team can assume the corresponding author role for submission to a journal.)

The PC Coordinator will review the proposal to verify that the proposal format has been followed. Proposals that are too long or have too many authors from the same site will not be accepted. They will need to be edited by the first author before resubmitting via the MASALA online method.

If the proposal requires the use of **MESA data** for comparison to the MASALA data, the PI of the proposal will need to submit the same proposal to both the MASALA and MESA studies for PC review by each study. The guidelines for proposals for both studies are similar so the same proposal can be submitted simultaneously to each study.

# STEPS IN THE SUBMISSION/REVIEW PROCESS FOR NEW PROPOSALS: STEP 1

Review previously approved proposals and MASALA published manuscripts for potential overlap with your proposal. Please check with Ann Chang (**ann.chang@ucsf.edu)** or the MASALA investigator who is sponsoring your proposal to make sure there is no overlap with other approved proposals.

* 1. If there is a possible overlap, indicate on the form which (if any) proposals/manuscripts could potentially overlap with your proposal.
  2. Describe how your proposal is different from those with potential overlap (if any) in the proposal.

# STEP 2

Enter the following administrative summary information on the form:

1. Authors (including sponsor if first author is not a MASALA researcher)
   * All co-authors must review proposal prior to submission.
2. Title of publication/presentation
3. Type of paper (i.e. main paper, secondary paper, presentation etc.)
4. Introduction: Rationale and background, brief.
5. Objective
6. Introduction: Rationale and background, brief.
7. Research Hypothesis
8. Variables to be used in the analysis List variables to be used, sample inclusions/exclusions. **Please provide a full description of the participants, including the total sample size and any subsets of interest.** The requested variables must be NARROW and SPECIFIC to the proposed analysis. Variables should be listed by Exam and should not overlap from the same categories.
9. Indicate the statistical package will you use for the analysis (e.g., SAS, STATA, SPSS, etc)?
10. Description of all proposed analyses
11. For publications: the intended journal and timeline for submission
12. For presentations: the intended meeting, deadline for submission of abstracts and meeting dates.

# STEP 3

The PC Committee will review the proposal to ensure that the scientific area is clearly stated and can be addressed with the data and methods proposed.

After review and approval by the PC Committee, a paper proposal will be submitted to the MASALA Steering Committee for formal approval and nominations for additional Writing Group membership.

The PC Committee, in consultation with the Coordinating Center, will determine priorities for data analyses of manuscripts and abstracts to be performed by the Coordinating Center. A local paper (one in which the data analyses are not performed by the Coordinating Center) may start as soon as it is approved.

# SUBMISSION/REVIEW OF PROPOSALS WITH A CHANGE IN FOCUS:

Below are the requirements for review/approval of proposals with a change in focus. If a pen draft has already been approved, then see the third page of the “How to Submit a Pen Draft” document under the “Pen Draft Submissions” subheading on the internal PC Web page for additional instructions.

# STEP 1:

**A new (replacement) proposal with the change in focus must be submitted to the Coordinating Center (ann.chang@ucsf.edu).**

* **The author should also highlight changes from the originally-approved proposal. This can be done by shading the changed information or using tracked changes.**
* The author should clearly state in the submission form whether added data overlaps with other papers.
* Any changes in the original author list can be noted in the comments section as an authorship request.

# As stated above, justification for the change in focus needs to be provided in the comments section

**Review/approval notification and timeline for a proposal with a change in focus:**

* Once the required information has been received and processed by the PC Coordinator, the author will receive an e-mail confirming that the proposal has been sent to the PC Chair.
* The PC Chair will determine the process for electronic PC review on a case-by-case basis.
* Steering Committee (SC) review is not needed. However, each change in focus proposal (after receiving PC approval) will be sent as an informational item to the SC.
* Once PC review/approval is available, the PC Coordinator will send the author a status e-mail/memo with:
  + The new manuscript number (replaces the previously-approved manuscript in the database)
  + PC reviewer’s comments
  + Approval to move forward with analysis/work on a pen draft

# OUTLINE OF REVIEW PROCESS FOR POOLED/META-ANALYSIS PROPOSALS & PEN DRAFTS:

1. The proposal will still need to be submitted to the Coordinating Center per the usual procedures for review in a PC meeting.
2. Once PC approval is received, the author can begin work on the pen draft.
3. An informational copy of the proposal will be sent along with the PC comments to the Steering Committee (SC).
4. The pen draft should be submitted per the usual process with a note in the submission e-mail that it is a pooled/meta-analysis paper.
5. The pen draft will receive electronic PC review by a subset of committee members. The main focus will be to ensure that MASALA isn’t misrepresented and that there aren’t any major mistakes.
6. Once PC approval is received, the author can submit his/her manuscript to a journal.
7. An informational copy of the pen draft along with the PC reviewers’ comments will be sent to the SC.

# DISSERTATIONS REQUIRE AN APPROVED MASALA PROPOSAL:

Before MASALA data can be used in a doctoral dissertation, an author must have an approved MASALA proposal. This policy ensures that data isn’t claimed by another author.