



# Publications Policy

## Human Heredity and Health in Africa

### H3Africa

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[www.h3africa.org](http://www.h3africa.org)

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The H3Africa Consortium aims to publish its research findings widely and without unnecessary delay in order to optimize appropriate translation that will contribute towards improving the health of Africans and the world in general. This Publications Policy will guide this overarching aim by clarifying the specific objectives of the H3Africa Consortium and the processes to be followed in publication of its research. Implementing and interpreting this policy is the primary responsibility of the **H3Africa Steering Committee (SC)** who will be advised by a **Publications Group**, when necessary.

The SC will use a **Manuscript Concept Document** as a tool to promote publication, encourage collaboration, ensure transparency and avoid unnecessary duplication. This will also promote fair and equitable attribution of credits in authorship and acknowledgements to investigators, study participants and the funding organizations.

#### 1. Objectives

The Publications Policy aims to promote and facilitate the following objectives of the H3Africa Consortium:

- Timely dissemination of findings
- Fair and appropriate authorship and attribution of credits
- Equity in opportunity to earn authorship in consortium publications
- Transparency of planned publications to avoid overlap and encourage collaboration
- Encouragement of African-led publications without sacrificing the principles governing authorship practices
- Encouragement of open access publication
- Provision of opportunities for junior investigators on the continent
- Assurance of appropriate communication of publications
- Promotion of publications as a vehicle for implementing the data access policy of H3Africa

The H3Africa Consortium supports and encourages a variety of types of publication. All publications involving grantees (from one PI group or several) and the use of H3Africa resources will have the key authors listed and are expected to include the **“The H3Africa Consortium”** as an author at the end of the list of authors. Details for each category of publication are given in Table 1. The intention is to have a mechanism for tracking publications emanating from the Consortium, to assess the impact of the Consortium’s research for reporting purposes and to use this information when applying for additional funding.

The **Manuscript Concept Document** will be used as a tool for researchers to indicate their intention to publish specific manuscripts. Its use will promote transparency and information sharing within the consortium, and will help to avoid overlap while promoting collaboration. The intention is that

the **Manuscript Concept Document** (MCD) will encourage collaboration by allowing recognition of synergistic opportunities without being prescriptive. It will also form part of a quality assurance process to ensure valid scientific outputs for the Consortium. Participants in the H3Africa Consortium will complete the MCD as suggested in Table 1. See Appendix 1 for the MCD template (also downloadable from [www.h3africa.org](http://www.h3africa.org)).

Publications arising from collaborations between individuals or groups of H3Africa Consortium members and external partners will follow the process outlined in this policy. The criteria that will be considered are the scientific merit of the proposed publication, whether the appropriate attribution and acknowledgement is given and that the publication will not bring the Consortium into disrepute.

**Table 1: Categories of Publication with guidelines for authorship and the use of the MCD**

<b>Publication category</b>	<b>Authorship</b>	<b>MCD</b>	<b>Manuscript</b>
<b><i>H3Africa Consortium</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Marker paper:</b> Author shall be written as “The H3Africa Consortium” with the writing group and all members of the H3Africa Consortium listed alphabetically by groups and then by surnames at the end of the manuscript</li> <li>2. <b>Consortium-wide:</b> Members of the research and writing groups are listed as authors followed by “and The H3Africa Consortium”. All members of the H3Africa Consortium involved with the publication listed at the end of the manuscript according to groups and surnames, alphabetically.</li> <li>3. <b>H3Africa Consortium Working Group:</b> Authors followed by “and The H3Africa Consortium”. In a footnote or at the end of the manuscript, refer to the working group and other members of that group who did not meet the criteria for authorship.</li> </ol>	Yes	Submit to H3Africa Consortium Coordinating Centre for review by the SC prior to submission
<b><i>Multiple grantee group</i></b>	Authors followed by “as members of The H3Africa Consortium”. As more than one Grantee Group is involved, and many of their group members have participated in generating the resources, there will be an expansion of “The H3Africa Consortium”, either as a footnote or at the end of the manuscript to include the other H3Africa members who have been involved with the study, but do not meet the requirements for authorship.	Yes	Submit to Coordinating Centre following publication
<b><i>Single grantee group or intra-grantee group (e.g. single site)</i></b>	Authors followed by “for xxx Research Group, as members of The H3Africa Consortium”. There is no need to expand “the H3Africa Consortium” as all relevant authors will be included and an	No	Submit to Coordinating Centre following

	acknowledgement could be used to cover additional group members who have contributed to generating resources, but were not involved in this specific study (i.e. do not qualify for authorship).		publication
<b><i>Consortium Collaborations (including external partners)</i></b>	H3Africa Consortium members collaborating with external partners on a research project will ensure that an MCD is duly completed and submitted once a publication is mooted. The publication guidelines will be as above, either for a “multiple grantee groups” or a “single grantee group”, as appropriate.	Yes (multiple grantee group) No (single grantee group)	Submit to Coordinating Centre following publication

### ***Authorship Criteria***

Authors of all papers should meet the common criteria for authorship used by journals. Specifically, the individual: 1) must have made a significant contribution of scholarly effort in conception, design, data generation, or analysis; 2) should have been involved in drafting reviewing and/or revising of the manuscript; and 3) must have approved the manuscript prior to publication.

The accepted principles governing assignment of Lead (First) Author and Senior (Last) Author should be followed while promoting African-led publications and opportunities for junior investigators.

PIs will follow rules of “fairness” in authorship attribution when selecting members for inclusion of authors in the expanded group authorship sections, being mindful of the contributions of all their group members. This will be left to the discretion of the PIs, but they are encouraged specifically to facilitate contributions from young scientists and inclusion of scientists dedicated to this project and funded through H3Africa. It is important to help build the careers and reputations of our talented young scientists and thereby to expose them to future opportunities.

The Steering Committee will be assisted by a Publications Group when there is a dispute regarding authorship that cannot be resolved by the PIs and/or Steering Committee, and when negotiations are needed between PIs in cases where there is significant overlap between proposed research publications.

## **2. Process**

The following operational process is envisaged to streamline the objective of timely publication and maximizing the research outputs (read in conjunction with Table 1):

- a. Authors identify a study which is likely to result in a publication and complete the MCD template (downloadable from [www.h3africa.org](http://www.h3africa.org)) with as much detail as possible.
- b. The MCD is submitted to the Coordinating Centre for H3Africa via an internet-based process.
- c. Receipt is acknowledged and the MCD is sent to the Steering Committee for comment.
- d. The Steering Committee acknowledges and a member is nominated to provide feedback to the submitting author within 10 days of receipt.
- e. Possible outcomes:
  1. Steering Committee approves

2. Steering Committee recommends revision and/or possible collaboration(s) and the researchers agree, a revised MCD is submitted
  3. Steering Committee refers MCD to the Publications Group for comment and advice
  4. If necessary the Publications Group becomes involved, and following dispute resolution, the revised MCD is submitted
  5. Steering committee rejects the proposed publication
- f. Once approved, the MCD appears on the H3Africa webpage and is accessible to Consortium members using their login details.
  - g. Members of the Consortium may contact the lead author or PI of the grantee group to explore possible collaboration or potential “value add”
  - h. In the case of Consortium papers, the draft manuscript is sent to the Coordinating Centre and they forward it to the PIs for comment and feedback within 10 days
  - i. For all other papers, authors must notify the Coordinating Centre when the manuscript has been accepted for publication and send the title, author list, abstract and journal name. Once published, the lead author or PI sends an electronic reprint (pdf) to the Coordinating Centre.
  - j. Authors work with the Steering Committee, their institutions, funders and collaborators to plan dissemination of the contents of the publication including potential press releases, other media events and engagement with H3Africa Study participants, if relevant.
  - k. All publications are to be listed on the H3Africa Publications page of the H3Africa website with a link to the article if it is open access, or a link to the H3Africa intranet where it will be accessible as a pdf file to Consortium members only.

### **3. Publications Group**

The Publications Group will act in an advisory capacity to the Steering Committee of the H3Africa Consortium.

Role and Responsibilities of the Group:

- To advise on resolutions when authorship disputes, that cannot be resolved by the PIs or the Steering Committee, arise
- To facilitate negotiations between PIs when overlaps are identified

Appointment of the Publications Group:

The Steering Committee will request nominations for the Publications Group from among H3Africa grantees, their active research collaborators and the H3Africa grantors, and choose on the basis of prior experience and a track record of working in research groups or consortia. The Group will have three members who will be requested on an *ad hoc* basis to provide their expertise. Members will be replaced as and when deemed necessary. They may draw on the participation of additional consultants as needed. The recommendations will be made in writing and a record kept by the H3Africa Coordinating Centre.

### **4. Additional Considerations**

#### ***Confidentiality***

Protecting the confidentiality of the study participants is of primary concern. Publications will describe aggregate data in accord with the informed consent provided by participants.

#### ***Nomenclature to describe populations***

Appropriate and accurate descriptions, as described in the Nomenclature section of the H3Africa Consortium Resource, should be used when describing the participants in the studies and should be used in a standardised format throughout the publications. Each publication should include these descriptions in the participant section. The descriptions should include self-identified ethnicity, primary language spoken (where appropriate), and geographic location of the participants.

### ***Acknowledgement and fair attribution of credits***

The H3Africa Consortium, participants and funders need to be appropriately acknowledged in all publications emanating from the use of Consortium resources (samples, data and additional materials). Acknowledgements of the H3Africa Consortium should be included in all Consortium publications and also in publications by External Partners. Below are **some recommended examples** of wording for appropriate acknowledgement. These should be included in all publications as is, or in a modified form, as appropriate, to fit the journal requirements.

### ***Suggested wording:***

“We are grateful to the participants of the H3Africa Consortium who have agreed to share their biological samples and data. To the groups who collected, processed and analyzed the samples and data, to provide accurate information to make this study possible. We acknowledge the contributions of the National Institutes of Health (USA) and Wellcome Trust (UK) who have provided the core funding for the H3Africa Consortium and PIs for their willingness to share this resource. This publication is the work of the authors, <<insert list>>, who serve as guarantors for the contents of the paper and does not represent the views of the H3Africa Consortium or their funders. This research was specifically funded by <<insert>> and the <<NIH Grant number or Wellcome Trust number, where appropriate>>.”

“We acknowledge the role of the H3Africa Consortium in making this research possible though the sharing of..... (data, knowledge, samples or funding). The National Institutes of Health (USA) and Wellcome Trust (UK) have provided the core funding for the H3Africa Consortium and more information is available at << add URL>>. This research was specifically funded by <<insert>> and the <<NIH Grant number or Wellcome Trust number, where appropriate>>.” The views expressed in this paper do not represent the views of the H3Africa Consortium or their funders.”

## **5. Abstract policy**

Abstracts submitted to Conferences for oral or poster presentations constitute significant outputs for the H3Africa Consortium and also play a role in building our reputation. To ensure good scientific quality and recording of H3Africa Consortium outputs without unnecessary delays, the following guideline should be followed in alignment with the recommendations in Table 1, above.

Abstracts involving the work of more than one grantee group, or the entire consortium, should be submitted for review prior to submission. Abstracts that only report on research findings from a single grantee group or a collaboration with a single grantee group, do not need to be reviewed prior to submission. However, all accepted abstracts must be submitted to the H3Africa Coordinating Centre.

Process for submission of abstracts that report on H3Africa Consortium-wide research or multiple H3Africa grantee group research:

- Presentations are encouraged and should appropriately attribute credit to the Consortium

- Care should be taken not to disclose significant H3African Consortium findings ahead of publication (i.e. prior to a paper being *in press*, at the time of the submission of the abstract)
- Abstracts do not require a Manuscript Concept Document prior to submission
- Abstracts must be submitted to the H3Africa Coordinating Centre at least 10 days prior to the closing date for abstract submission
- Abstract review will be overseen by the Steering Committee and responses will be given within 4 working days (to allow resubmission should this be necessary)
- The Steering Committee may request slides and posters of any presentation
- Authorship should conform to the standards of the policy with the last “author” being The H3Africa Consortium (there is no need to expand authorship for the purpose of the abstract)
- All presentations and posters should include the H3Africa logo and appropriate acknowledgement

Individuals giving oral presentations are encouraged to use the H3Africa Consortium “opening” and “closing” slides. These will include the H3Africa logo and appropriate acknowledgement of the role of the Consortium. They are available from the H3Africa website.

## **6. Media Communication Policy**

To ensure appropriate responses in the media by members of the Consortium, press releases on research arising from the H3Africa Consortium in Consortium-wide studies should be approved by the Steering Committee and the funders before release. This would also allow coordination of press releases across countries, so that the date and time of the lifting of embargoes occur simultaneously. Consortium members should be available to deal with media enquiries and interviews.

In addition, requests may be made to authors of multi-group, single group or external partnership publications to prepare a summary of the research findings that could be used as a press release in different countries, or to include in reports to funders and for future applications for support. These requests may come on recommendation of the Steering Committee or Publications Group.

## **7. Recording Research Outputs from the H3Africa Consortium**

The Steering Committee will be responsible to develop and maintain a process for the recording of published manuscripts, conference abstracts and other H3Africa products. Whenever possible, manuscripts and products will be deposited in a controlled access archive. Links to all published papers in the public domain will be provided.

### **Appendix 1 - Manuscript Concept Document template**

Appendix 1:

**H3Africa Consortium Manuscript Concept Document**

<b>Submission Date of Concept Document</b>	Document number:	
	Resubmission:	Yes / No
	Previous number:	
<b>Project Title</b>		
<b>Communicating Person: Name, affiliation and contact details</b>		
<b>Tentative Lead Investigator (first author)</b>		
<b>Tentative Senior Author (last author)</b>		
<b>All other authors</b>		
<b>Projects/Groups Involved</b>		
<b>Background / Significance</b>		
<b>Outline of Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main Scientific Question</li> <li>• Samples to be used</li> <li>• Data to be Used</li> <li>• Analysis Plan</li> </ul>	
<b>Identification of possible overlapping H3Africa studies</b>		
<b>Target Journal</b>		
<b>Milestones**</b>		

\*\* This section should include: Timeline for completion of project, including approval, project duration, first and second draft of the paper and submission.