

Call for expressions of interest to join the Cochrane India Network

April, 2020



1 Introduction

Cochrane's work in India has been capably led for many years by the Cochrane South Asia Centre, based at the Prof Bhoosham V Moses Centre for Evidence- Informed Healthcare and Health Policy at Christian Medical College, Vellore. Following the closure of Cochrane South Asia in 2019, we have an opportunity to launch a new chapter in Cochrane's activities in India by establishing a new, open, collaborative Network. An internal review of Cochrane's structures carried out in 2016 highlighted that a single Center approach for a country the size of India has many limitations, and that a Network of multiple groups based across the country is a better model to deliver a wider range and expanded scale of Cochrane activities, share collaboration across and between institutions, and create greater impact of that work in diverse regions and different contexts.

A consultative meeting was held in Delhi in February 2020, involving twenty individuals that have actively engaged with Cochrane and Cochrane in India for many years. The meeting aims were:

- To discuss Cochrane's work to date in India and the opportunities and challenges for Cochrane in India;
- To discuss the vision and strategic objectives of a Cochrane Network in India.

Participants discussed the challenges and opportunities for a Cochrane India Network, and reached a consensus that the establishment of a Cochrane India Network would indeed be a good way forward to strengthen evidence-informed health care and decision making in India. Participants emphasised the need for the Network to be open and inclusive and truly collaborative.

This document further outlines the process and timelines for the two-stage application process for establishing a Cochrane India Network.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this Call for Expressions of Interest is to invite India based institutions to indicate their interest to join the Cochrane India Network as a Cochrane Affiliate. This will be a two-step process:

1. Submitting an expression of interest (this current open call);
2. Following review of the expressions of interest received and on invitation: Preparing a full application and strategic plan outlining the detailed contribution of an institution to the Cochrane India Network.

1.2 Responsibilities of institutions joining the Cochrane India Network

The functions of Cochrane Geographic Groups (of which a Cochrane Network is one form) are described [here](#). Cochrane is now calling for institutions to express their interest to join the Cochrane India Network as an **Affiliate**. An Affiliate **needs to fulfil** the following key functions:

- To promote Cochrane and its work in India;
- To support and develop the community of Cochrane members in India;
- To disseminate Cochrane Systematic Reviews locally based on stakeholder networks, the media and other communication channels.

In addition, an Affiliate may decide to take up functions of Associate Centres and full Centres, but there is no obligation to do so.

1.3 Responsibilities of Cochrane Central Executive Team to Cochrane India Network

The detailed responsibilities of the Cochrane Central Executive to Cochrane's Geographic Groups is outlined [here](#). Cochrane will establish a [Collaboration Agreement](#) with the approved Affiliates.

1.4 Eligibility criteria

The following **institutions** are eligible to submit their expression of interest (individuals cannot submit an expression of interest but are advised to visit the [Join Cochrane pages](#) on our website to find ways in which they can contribute to our work):

- Be India based;
- Have demonstrable skills, experience, resources in (the various components of) using and disseminating evidence, evidence synthesis and systematic reviews for informed decision making in health;
- Be committed to contribute to the Cochrane India Network, demonstrated by example activities the institution proposes to contribute;
- Have no conflict of interest. (Click [here](#) for Cochrane policy on conflict of interest for Cochrane Groups.)

Cochrane will not accept multiple applications from one institution. If several departments from one institution are interested in joining the Cochrane India Network, they are requested to submit one joint expression of interest.

1.5 Assessment criteria

All expressions of interest will be reviewed against the eligibility criteria. All eligibility criteria need to be fulfilled.

In addition, Cochrane will review expressions of interest using the following review criteria:

1. Motivation to join the Cochrane India Network;
2. Existing collaboration with Cochrane;
3. Available resources (financial and in-kind) to contribute to the Cochrane India Network;
4. Unique contribution the institution can make to the Cochrane India Network.

1.6 Review process

The review process of the expressions of interest will be led from Cochrane's CEO Office. The team at the CEO's Office will be supported by a team of India based collaborators.

1.7 Timelines

Please send expressions of interest to [Sylvia de Haan](#) by June 30, 2020, using the template (see page 5) as guideline.

The expressions of interest will be reviewed by 31 July, 2020, using the eligibility and assessment criteria.

The selected institutions will be contacted in August and requested to prepare a full application. The full application should include an [application form](#), an [Affiliate strategic plan](#), letters of support (especially from the institution that will host the Affiliate), and a declaration of interest completed by the proposed director(s) of the Affiliate. The deadline for preparing a full application is 31 October 2020. The full applications will be reviewed by 30 November 2020. The institutions will be notified of the outcome of the review in December 2020.

2 Expressions of interest template

Please submit a 2 to 3 page (without annexes) expression of interest, addressing the following questions:

1. Contact details:
 - Institutions name:
 - Address:
 - Website:
 - Name of contact person:
 - Email:
 - Phone:
2. What is the current involvement of the staff in your institution with Cochrane?
3. Why would your institution like to join the Cochrane India Network?
4. Please describe the skills, experience and resources of your institution in the (various components of) using and disseminating evidence, evidence synthesis and systematic reviews for informed decision making in health.
5. Provide examples of activities your institution would be able and willing to contribute to the Cochrane India Network.
6. Describe the resources (in-kind as well as financial) your institution would have available to support the proposed activities.
7. What would be the unique contribution your institution can make to the Cochrane India Network?
8. Please provide any additional information about your institution that is of relevance to Cochrane's work in India.

Annex: Signed [conflict of interest statement](#) by proposed Director(s) of the Cochrane Affiliate.