

SCALLOP Consortium Agreement

This document outlines the terms of reference for the oversight, governance, code and conduct within the SCALLOP consortium

Background

Genetic determinants of plasma protein concentrations aka pQTLs can provide new insights into regulation of molecular pathways and provide tools to assess biomarker causality using Mendelian Randomization.

The SCALLOP consortium members aim to collaborate to identify novel genetic determinants for plasma protein concentrations measured using the Olink PEA technology. The basic assumption is that each of the participating members are PIs (or closely connected to PIs) of human sample collections in which analyses of plasma proteins using the Olink PEA technology and genome-wide genotyping have been performed.

The consortium members will share summary statistics from genome-wide SNP association analyses of plasma protein concentrations in the respective participating study collection with the intention of analysing data jointly for the discovery of new genetic loci linked to plasma protein concentrations

Essential collaborative principles

Consortia work has become common practice and many researchers have experience of such collaborative frameworks. In SCALLOP, the basic rules are similar as in other consortia, with the key principles being

- 1. Open and transparent communication of activities within the consortium and disclosure of closely related work outside of it**
- 2. Equal opportunities for contributions across participating members**
- 3. Equal access to data**
- 4. Adherence to common practices for conference presentations and authorships as outlined in the text below**

Requested feedback should be provided in a timely fashion, and urgent issues should always have room to be discussed at the following SC meeting

Governance

The organisation will function in a democratic, transparent and coordinated way. Regular meeting invites will always be sent to all of the consortium members unless a member has requested to leave the consortium.

Policies

Cohort PIs will retain all rights to their own data. The members retain the right to terminate their participation in SCALLOP at any time, after which data will be removed from the system within a month. If a combined analysis has already progressed to a final version, and manuscript preparation is underway, the results will remain as are, even in the event of termination, but no future joint analyses will be conducted on that specific dataset.

Only summary statistics are shared for meta-analysis. In future, the consortium may expand by a) joining of additional members, b) analyses of individual level data or c) association with clinical data. Any expansion of the remit will need to be agreed on by all consortium members and is likely to be agreed on project-by-project. All additional members will need to agree to the present consortium agreement

Data sharing

SCALLOP previously hosted summary statistics from participating cohorts at the TRYGGVE server, which also enabled analysts to remote access and analyse data. As of 2020, TRYGGVE is no longer offering the service we require, and projects after that date have typically involved transferring of summary data to the lead group for data QC, harmonization and meta-analysis.

Industrial collaborators

SCALLOP is open for industrial and academic collaborators, and thus supports collaborations between the industry and academic groups. University researchers contemplating a collaborative project with an industry partner may wish to exchange proprietary information which and therefore shall require to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), also referred to as a Confidential Disclosure Agreement (CDA), Proprietary Information Agreement (PIA), or similar outside of the current Consortium Agreement.

Analyses and results

A work plan is submitted to the Project Coordinator of the SCALLOP consortium as a separate document and will be followed once approved by all consortium members.

If the need arises, summary statistics from individual SCALLOP cohorts may be moved and analysed at local secure servers managed by a SCALLOP PI. The group responsible for the SCALLOP subproject will let the other PIs know if and when that is needed.

All results from SCALLOP analyses will be made publically available in due course through publications. In the spirit of open access, the consortium will strive to make the full summary SNP data available.

Summary statistics should be released to the SCALLOP PIs *who contributed data* to a specific meta-analysis upon request.

Publications and Authorship

A publication plan will be developed by the principal research group and may be modified based on the results following the agreement from the members. Publications should be prepared and submitted without delay after the results have been reviewed and approved by the contributing groups/authors. The standard and widely accepted criteria for authorship on scientific papers (ICMJE criteria <http://www.icmje.org>) will be followed. These require: a) substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND b) drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND c) final approval of the version to be published; AND d) agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Study collection PIs will generally meet these conditions and be named authors when their data were used. Other authors shall be included as appropriate given their involvement in that project. The order of authors and number of authors per study cohort will be decided upon amongst consortium members. A typical number of authors per cohort is 3-4. The general principles apply that more prominent positions and additional people as co-authors are given to cohorts participating actively in statistical analyses, follow-up studies of identified loci and drafting of manuscript(s) emerging from the collaboration. Shared first- or senior authorships may be given if warranted by the amount of work into the project. Contribution of data only is unlikely to qualify for shared senior authorship.

The authorships policy for manuscripts that build on early access SCALLOP summary statistics is to include co-authors from the group(s) conducting the meta-analysis and inclusion of the SCALLOP banner. Furthermore, the Vancouver guidelines for authorship shall apply for publications.

Presentations prior to publication (i.e. conferences and conference calls) need to be approved by the contributing groups/authors in advance. Abstracts, posters, and presentations to be submitted for conferences should be circulated to the PIs and co-authors at least one week in advance of the submission date in order to allow the co-authors time to review. Feedback should be returned promptly. **No response within a set period of time indicates approval.** All groups and institutions that participate in SCALLOP shall have equal opportunity to lead sub-projects within the consortium.

Ancillary projects that are conducted using the early access to summary data from a SCALLOP meta-analysis *should be discussed and approved at a SCALLOP Steering Committee meeting.* This process relies on trust and transparency. We acknowledge that it can be difficult to determine the origin of a novel finding; i.e. whether the meta-analysis results were necessary or whether it could have emerged from an individual cohort. Therefore, our general policy will be “if in doubt, disclose”. Potential conflicts with other manuscripts within SCALLOP should be resolved at a SCALLOP SC in the first instance.

The overall success rate of collaborative work shall be summarized in publication rates and in average impact factor and presented at SC meetings.

Digital presence and social media

The official SCALLOP home page www.scallop-consortium.org* currently contains only superficial information about the study cohorts. It was decided that additional information such as study size and Olink proteomics panels are included there.

Information about SCALLOP consortium is also available at www.olink.com/our-community/scallop/ and mirrors information from the consortium's home page.

SCALLOP core team retains the right to announce new publications through the dedicated social media channels set up for the consortium.

Approval

Approval of this agreement is provided by sending an email to the SCALLOP project coordinator with the wording "I agree to the principles for the SCALLOP consortium as described in the consortium agreement".