

The ArLAR Research Group – ARCH

Mission and Vision

Standard Operating Procedure

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Approved by the ArLAR Executive Council

Outline

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I- The ArLAR Bylaws regarding the Special Interest Groups (Article 7)

Article (7) ArLAR Special Interest Groups

- 7.1 These are the groups or committees formed by ArLAR after the approval of the Board of Directors to study a specific subject related to Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases, both in terms of scientific or awareness aspects.
- 7.2 Any member of the General Assembly may request forming a Special Interest Group and submit such request to the Chairman of the Scientific Committee, who shall notify the same to the Executive Council to be placed on the agenda of the next Board meeting.
- 7.3 The Board of Directors shall determine the duration of the Special Interest Group based on the programs submitted by that Group. It shall be for a period of three years renewable as long as the Group continues its work and prepares reports on its achievements.
- 7.4 The Special Interest Groups shall continue to operate as long as they submit annual reports at the Board meeting on their achievements.
- 7.5 The Special Interest Groups shall submit a detailed annual report on their work to the Chairman of the Scientific Committee four months prior to the meeting of the Board of Directors.
- 7.6 The Special Interest Groups may be terminated if they have not submitted detailed reports on their work within two consecutive years of the last meeting of the Board of Directors in accordance with Article 4.11.9 of the Articles of Association.
- 7.7 Functions of the Special Interest Groups:
- 7.7.1 Study one subject of Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases
 - 7.7.2 Develop awareness programs targeting patients in particular and the general public in general
 - 7.7.3 Conduct special research on a common disease among Member States and make recommendations for such disease to be circulated to Member States after the approval thereof by the Board of Directors
- 7.8 The meeting of the Special Interest Group shall be legally valid if it is attended by half of its members.

II- Mission and Vision of the ARCH

The ARCH was founded in June 2021 as a Special interest Group of ArLAR.

Vision statement

The ARCH aspires to lead collaborative rheumatology research in the Arab countries.

Mission statement

The missions of the ARCH are focused on four major pillars:

- **RESEARCH PROJECTS:** Plan and conduct research projects on behalf of the ArLAR to serve the interests of the patients with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases, living in the Arab countries.
- **QUALITY & INFRASTRUCTURE:** Support and promote high-quality collaborative research among the Arab countries and improve the research environment by ensuring compliance to international standards in both infrastructure & standard operating procedures.
- **MOTIVATION & SUPPORT:** Motivate and assist young researchers in the Arab countries to conduct successful and high-standard research projects.
- **RESEARCH NETWORKING:** Connect with the international rheumatology research teams, institutions, and companies to take part in their global clinical trials.

The ARCH values

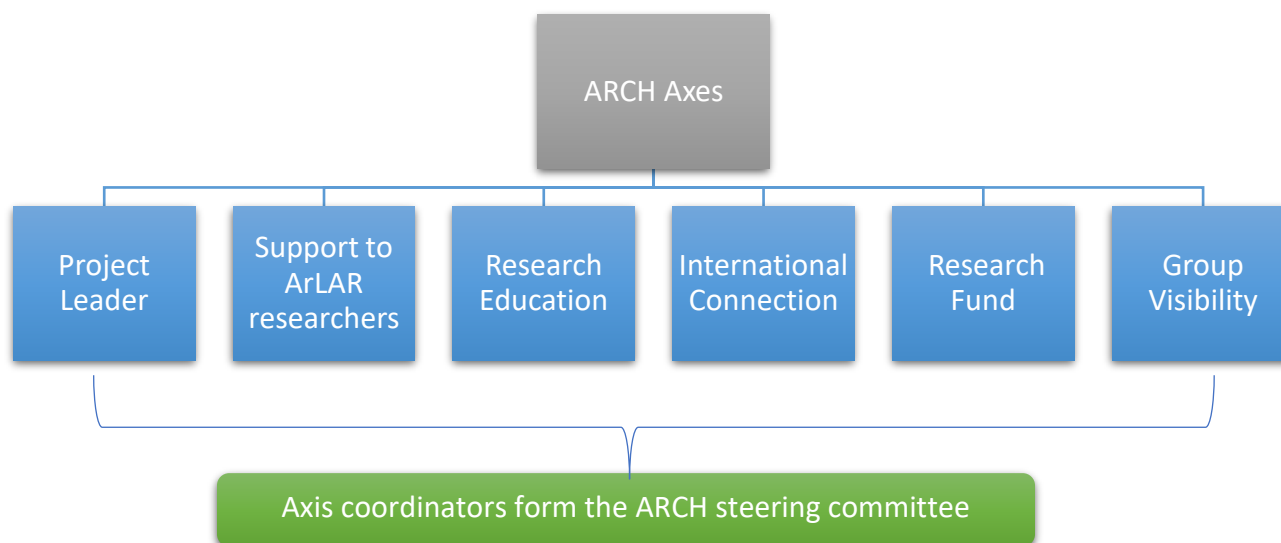
- **EXCELLENCE:** Pursue excellence in research from design to outcome, while ensuring a high-standard research infrastructure.
- **ETHICS & INTEGRITY:** Prioritize ethical conduct and integrity in research.
- **EDUCATION:** Invest in young Arab researchers enhancing their capabilities and capacities
- **MOTIVATION:** Inspire and motivate for research in the Arab region.
- **TEAMWORK:** Promote collaboration between researchers and clinical rheumatologists in the Arab countries.

III- Standard Operating Procedure of the ARCH

III-1 – ARCH Organigram

- The ARCH includes 16 voting members representing the 16 ArLAR countries.
- The members are assigned by their respective Societies based on their previous research activities within the Society.
- The ARCH members elect a president from the group for a period of three years.
- In case a new Society joins ArLAR, a new corresponding member will be recruited for the ARCH.
- The ex-officio members are non-voting members, appointed by the ArLAR research council to support and advise the ARCH.
- Each ARCH axis (Chapter III-2, Figure 1) is handled by a coordinator. The coordinators are nominated voluntarily, and in the case of multiple volunteers, they are elected by the ARCH members.
- The coordinators form the ARCH steering committee, which manages the day-to-day group operations.

Figure 1. ARCH Organigram



III – 2 – Axes of the ARCH

The missions of the ARCH are carried out following six axes (Figures 1 & 2):

1- ARCH – Project Leader

- The ARCH plans and leads research projects on behalf of ArLAR to serve the interests of patients with rheumatic diseases living in the ArLAR countries.
- Each ARCH member is encouraged to present a project to the steering committee. The committee reviews the project and takes a decision within two working weeks (accept/ amend/ reject). In case the steering committee considers it necessary, voting among all ARCH members is proposed.
- Multiple projects can be conducted simultaneously, each coordinated by one ARCH member.
- Projects conducted by the ARCH, approved by the ARCH steering committee, and serving the interests of the patients with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases living in the ArLAR countries, receive the label “endorsed by ArLAR.”
- Priority is given to collaborations between multiple ArLAR countries.
- Once the ARCH is well established, research themes are elaborated on a regular basis to guide a focused research plan.

2- ARCH – Support to researchers

- The ARCH offers support to researchers who wish to conduct research projects in their countries. The ArLAR countries members (research methodology (study design, data collection, data management, statistical analysis, and medical writing and publication).
- The support is offered by the ARCH members directly and/or through a collaboration\ of the researcher with experts who are recognized by ArLAR as experts in the particular research field.
- In case the project is presented by an ArLAR member from outside the ARCH and serves the interests of patients with rheumatic diseases living in the ArLAR countries, will be presented to the ARCH steering committee for the possibility of ArLAR endorsement. The steering committee will make the decision (accept/ amend/ reject) within two working weeks of the project submission. If the steering committee considers it necessary, voting among all ARCH members will be proposed.

3- ARCH – Education

- The ARCH organizes workshops to improve research skills among ArLAR members, with a special focus on young researchers.
- The workshops are planned at the beginning of each year and target the general themes of research methodology (study design, data collection, data management, statistical analysis) and medical writing and publication.

4- ARCH – International Connection

- The ARCH connects ArLAR members with international societies (ACR, EULAR, APLAR, ASAS...) and pharmaceutical companies running global trials.

- Any eligible international project is presented to the ARCH steering committee for voting on approval, amendment, or rejection of ArLAR endorsement.
- The decision of endorsement of the project will be made within two working weeks of the project submission. In case the steering committee considers it necessary, voting among all ARCH members is proposed.

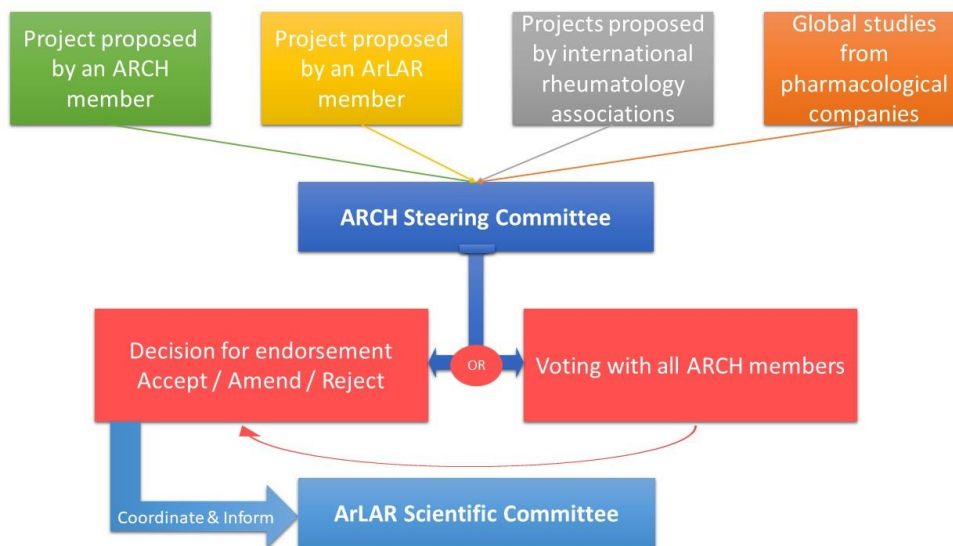
5- ARCH – Funding

- Once the ARCH is established and functional, it will create the ArLAR Research Fund and have a regular dedicated fund from the ArLAR incomes such as congresses and other ArLAR activities after approval by the Executive Council.
- To receive funding, any project is reviewed by the ARCH steering committee. In case the steering committee considers it necessary, voting among all ARCH members is proposed.
- The funding decision needs to be approved by the ARCH steering committee and the ArLAR president or an ArLAR Executive Council representative.

6- ARCH – Visibility & Networking

- The ARCH ensures the visibility of its activities through social media, mailing lists ... and others means provided by ArLAR.
- The ARCH steering committee and the ArLAR president or an ArLAR executive council representative approve the visibility material.
- The ARCH shall inform the ArLAR Scientific Committee about the research activities and projects and ensures a good coordination with the other ArLAR committees and SIGs for the projects that may be of interest to several groups

Figure 2. Research projects conducted and facilitated by the ARCH



III-3 – Meeting and reports

- The steering committee has regular meetings (once monthly) to run the ARCH activities.
- The ARCH group meets every three months for brainstorming and planning the quarterly activities.
- In-between the meetings, the official communication with the whole group, is maintained through emails.
- For urgent matters, WhatsApp group communication will be used.
- The ARCH presents an annual report of its activities to the ArLAR executive council.
- The ARCH shall coordinate with the Scientific Committee and keep it informed about all its scientific projects in a timely manner. The Scientific Committee will supervise the work of all SIGs and coordinate between the different SIGs' projects.

III-4 – Members’ duties

- The ARCH members are expected to inform their respective societies about the ARCH activities.
- The ARCH members are expected to participate in ARCH projects through writing or reviewing manuscripts. Authorship on the ARCH publications will only be possible if the member fulfills the ICMJE (International Committee of Medical Journals editors) authorship criteria.
- The ARCH members should disseminate the ARCH activities, such as surveys, studies, educational workshops... in their respective societies. The dissemination plan and material (emails, social media, phone messages...) are provided by the ARCH steering committee.
- The ARCH members are expected to attend the quarterly meetings actively. If they fail to do so without a valid excuse on three consecutive meetings, the corresponding Society will be asked to designate another delegate.
 - Each ARCH member is encouraged to present a research project to the steering committee.
 - In all cases of litigation, the ArLAR Executive Council is requested to take the appropriate actions.