**SMART IRB**

The SMART IRB master reliance agreement replaces the need to have an individual Institutional Authorization Agreement (IAA).  The University of Missouri Kansas City (UMKC) is a participating institution of SMART IRB and this method can be utilized to complete the reliance process for a study being conducted with another SMART IRB participating institution.

Please review the list of [Participating Institutions](https://smartirb.org/participating-institutions/) to see if your collaborator is a member of SMART IRB. Additional resources are available on the [SMART IRB Learning Center](https://smartirb.org/study-teams/) webpage.

**How to Use SMART IRB for Reliance Agreements**

To request use of the SMART IRB master reliance agreement for the reliance process, a new study submission should first be submitted in eCompliance. ***We do not actively monitor the SMART IRB Online Reliance System, nor do we sign SMART IRB Letter of Acknowledgements via email.*** Please ensure that your eCompliance submission includes the following information for efficient review and processing:

* A drafted SMART IRB Letter of Acknowledgement OR inclusion of the SMART IRB Online Reliance Platform project ID (choose one).
* If the request is for UMKC to serve as the IRB of Record for an External IRB/Site, the protocol must address this in application and explicitly state which sites will utilize SMART IRB for the reliance process.
* If the request is for UMKC to cede review to an External IRB Request, the eCompliance application should reflect the name of the requested IRB of Record and that SMART IRB will be utilized for the reliance process.

Any questions regarding the feasibility of the UMKC IRB serving as the IRB of Record for a multi-site study or ceding review to an External IRB, should be directed to [umkcirb@umkc.edu](mailto:umkcirb@umkc.edu) .

**Using the SMART IRB Online Reliance System (Preferred Method)**

The SMART IRB online reliance system allows research teams to submit an electronic request to execute reliance under the terms of the SMART IRB master reliance agreement. The request is typically initiated by the lead study team whose IRB will be serving as the IRB of Record for all sites.

Each person requiring access to the online reliance system will need to submit a separate request for access to the system.

* Request Access: <https://reliance.smartirb.org/users/sign_up>
* Sign In: <https://reliance.smartirb.org/users/sign_in>

If you are a part of the lead study team, the next steps are required to proceed with the request in the online system:

* Basic information about the research (title of study and a brief description)
* Name of Principal Investigator
* List the engaged sites which are requesting to cede review to the IRB of Record
* Identify activities and study team personnel at each site
* Upload the research protocol and consent form templates

SMART IRB tutorial for “Investigator submits a request” can be found [here](https://smartirb.org/reliance/).

**Using the SMART IRB Letter of Acknowledgement (LOA)**

The SMART IRB Letter of Acknowledgement (LOA) allows research teams to utilize a paper or electronic document to execute reliance agreements under the terms of the SMART IRB master reliance agreement. This document follows a similar process as other types of reliance agreements. Each site will need to sign a separate LOA with the proposed IRB of Record.

Each institution that participates in SMART IRB typically has their own preferred template. Whichever site is the proposed IRB of Record will often request their template be used. The Northwestern template contains signatures lines and per our local process and we kindly request signature lines be added to any LOA template for our consideration:

* [SMART IRB Letter of Acknowledgment (LOA)](https://irb.northwestern.edu/docs/smart-irb-letter-of-acknowledgement_pi-last-name_external-institution_stu-number-reliance-18061.docx)

**Before Beginning Research Activities**

Reliance decisions in SMART IRB apply only to the determination of reliance and do not reflect IRB approval for the research project itself.  Approval for each collaborating institution must be obtained from the overall IRB of Record prior to beginning research with that site or its collaborators.

If the reliance request was initiated after the reviewing IRB approved the study, the addition of sites and/or collaborators will need to be specifically review and approved, which is usually accomplished via a modification to the existing study.

**UMKC Process**

Once a request is submitted:

* The Overall PI’s home institution evaluates the request
* A Reviewing IRB is identified
* Institutions express their willingness to rely and communicate local context information
* The Reviewing IRB reviews each institution’s decision and issues a determination