DEVELOPING NEW SCIENTIFIC PROPOSALS AND CIRCULATION OF SCIENTIFIC DOCUMENTS WITHIN THE RESPOND CONSORTIUM

WI R1.0

Replaces	Author: RESPOND Secretariat	Approved by the RESPOND Scientific Steering Committee: Date (15-DEC-2023)	Effective by: Date (15-DEC-2023)

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Defining the development of new proposals

Defining routes and timelines for circulation of scientific documents within the RESPOND consortium[1]

2. RESPONSIBILITY

Moderators of the respective Scientific Interest Groups (SIGs)[1], operating under the RESPOND consortium, are responsible for:

1) Circulation of scientific documents to defined funders
2) Circulation of scientific documents to the SIG, Scientific Steering Committee (SSC), Working Group (WG) and funders according to the circulation flow outlined in procedures 3.a and 3.b
3) Upholding defined timelines for circulation

Scientific Interest Groups coordinators (as identified by the moderators) can be entrusted with the practical responsibilities of items 1) - 3). However, the overall responsibility of adhering to the WI will fall on the respective SIGs moderator.

The lead authors of a RESPOND project are responsible for:

1) Coordination of WG meetings
2) Forward a list of cohorts included in the analysis once a proposal has been approved
3) Complying with guidelines and timelines outlined in procedures 3.a and 3.b

3. PROCEDURES

a) New scientific proposals (see 7.3, Figure 1)

New scientific proposals are developed within a (smaller) core group. Once formulated, a RESPOND project proposal template and statistical analysis plan (SAP) is filled out (see 7.1 and 7.2.).

The proposal template consists of the following items:

- Project Title
- Writing Group (lead author on the manuscript)
- Background/Scientific Rationale
- Hypothesis
- Objectives
- Significance
- Feasibility
- Possible Limitations
- Study design/data required
- Timelines (including potential conference)
- Budget (itemized)
- conflicts of interest

Note: Statistical support can be requested for the item *Feasibility*.

The SAP consists of the following items:

- Research objectives
- Study design
- Study population
- Definitions
- Data analysis

Note: A new scientific proposal should be a well-defined and limited research question and should not stake out a broader scoped research area. (i.e., a proposal should roughly correspond to a single paper).

In the initial steps of development, the project proposal and analysis plan are discussed within the core writing group and with the moderators of the specific SIG.

Note: It is the SIG moderator's prerogative to dismiss or postpone a project at this stage of the proposal:

1. It is not scientifically sound
2. It is outside the scope of the SIGs scientific agenda
3. Is not feasible within RESPOND
4. There are analyses addressing the same question ongoing in one of the participating cohorts

If moved forward by the SIG moderators, the proposal is shared for review with:

- The respective SIG
- Community representatives
- Funders
- The respective WG* (if already formed)

* If needed, WG can be formed and/or made use of for specific expertise on a project or subject.
If not already established, SIG members interested in the respective project's topic are asked to sign up for a potential future WG, which can also include external experts if needed.

Note: Funders and community representatives are asked to nominate individuals for the future writing group at this stage

The proposal and SAP are revised following comments and the updated documents sent for review by two to three Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) members, preferably including one biostatistician. Based on the reviewer's suggestions, the SSC will accept or reject the proposal and SAP (see WI R2) in conjunction with an SSC meeting (every 2nd month) **.

Note: The SSC can ask for a revision of the proposal pending a final decision; see 7.3

****Note**: *As an exception, the proposal and SAP can in rare instances be approved via email consensus, if the SSC chairs agree, on a case-to-case basis.*

Once a project has officially been approved by the SSC, a final writing group is constructed by the RESPOND secretariat (see WI R_5).

Timelines:

- A minimum deadline for comments to both the proposal and the SAP of *14 days* is given – and preferably longer
- The revision of the proposal and SAP by the lead author(s) in accordance to comments and suggestions received should be expected to take at least 2-*3 days*. A document with replies to reviewers should be created for circulation
- A minimum deadline for review by the selected SSC members of *14 days* is given
    - If needed, the deadline is extended for additional *7 days*
- The proposal and SAP, replies to reviewers' comments and the reviews of the selected SSC members are sent to the SSC *7 days* prior to an upcoming meeting

***Note*:** The absolute min. time in total to have a proposal and SAP reviewed and approved is *35 + 2-3 days*.

b) Manuscripts, conference abstracts, and presentations (see 7.4 – 7.6, Figure 2 – 4)

Conference abstracts, presentations, and manuscripts share a common circulation route and are described under one.

Note: A detailed result summary of analyses must be presented within the writing group and WG or SIG preferably *before but could also be with* an abstract *or* manuscripts are circulated for comments (if an abstract precedes a manuscript). A result summary can be attached to a draft abstract for discussion in the WG or SIG, preferably in conjunction with an upcoming meeting.

Note: The described guidelines apply to any format of presentation (e.g. posters, poster presentations, oral presentations

Note: Timelines for conference abstracts/presentations differ from timelines of manuscripts.

When the core writing group reaches a consensus about a conference abstract/presentation or manuscripts form, it is shared with:

- SIG
- WG
- Writing Group
- Funders

The abstract/presentation/manuscript is revised based on the comments received and hereafter shared as final information, along with a point-by point reply to the comments, to the

- SIG
- WG
- Writing group
- Funders

The SSC must approve the final version of conference abstracts/presentations and manuscripts before these are submitted. For conference abstracts/presentations, the approval can be provided per email given that ***the final version, along with replies to reviewers'*** comments, is circulated at least seven days prior to submission. A final version of a manuscript should be presented at an SSC meeting for approval before

submission. However, in rare instances and if endorsed by the SSC chairs, a final version of a manuscript can be approved via email.

Timelines:

- Conference abstracts/presentations: A minimum deadline for comments of *7 days* is given – and preferably longer
- Manuscripts: A minimum deadline for comments of *30 days* is given – and preferably longer
- The revision of the abstract/presentation/manuscript by the lead author(s) in accordance to comments and suggestions received should be expected to take at least 2-3 *days*. A document with replies to reviewers should be created for circulation
- The abstract/presentation/manuscript and replies to reviewers' comments are sent to the SSC *7 days* prior to submission or an upcoming meeting

Note: The absolute min. time in total to have reviewed and approved abstract/presentation is *14 + 2-3 days*.
The absolute min. time in total to have a reviewed and approved manuscript is *37 + 2-3 days.*

The replies to peer reviewers after submission of a manuscript and the revised manuscript are circulated to the writing group with a minimum deadline of *14 days*.

Note: Manuscripts revised following peer review at specific journals do not routinely need the SSC's renewed approval unless the conclusion is substantially changed, evaluated by the senior author. In case of doubts, the moderators of the specific SIGs should be consulted.

c) Management of drug specific findings within the RESPOND Study

In case of analysis yielding drug specific findings, these are handled as described in Appendix 1.

d) Declaration of Conflict of Interest Statements

All co-authors, including individual from pharmaceutical company funding RESPOND, are required to disclose their conflicts of interest (COI) for all submitted manuscripts. In addition, a written COI statement should also be included on all submitted projects.

e) Funding, Data Sharing, Ethical and Disclaimer Statement

When required by journals, the following statements listed in d) I-III should be writing in full, into the manuscript whenever relevant:

I. Funding Statement

For journals requiring a funding statement in the abstract section of a manuscript, such as Lancet HIV, the text from the website https://www.chip.dk/Research/Studies/RESPOND/Study-group should be written, in full, in the manuscript.

Note: For journals where a specific notion of the role of funding sources is required, the following text is to be used in full:

"As per RESPOND governance, funders of the study were also academic collaborators, and employees or associates could be included as co-authors if they met the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors criteria. However, funding bodies (including employees and associates hereof) were not in a position to veto study design, data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, or writing of the manuscript".

II. Date Sharing Statement

"The RESPOND Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) encourages the submission of concepts for research projects. Online research concepts should be submitted to the RESPOND secretariat (respond.rigshospitalet@regionh.dk); for guidelines on how to submit research concepts see the RESPOND governance and procedures point 6. The secretariat will direct the proposal to the relevant Scientific Interest Group, where the proposal will initially be discussed for scientific relevance before being submitted to the SSC for review. Once submitted to the SSC, the research concept's scientific relevance, relevance to RESPOND's ongoing scientific agenda, design, statistical power, feasibility, and overlap with already approved projects will be assessed. Upon completion of the review, feedback will be provided to the proposer or proposers. In some circumstances, a revision of the concept might be requested. If the concept is approved for implementation, a writing group will be established consisting of the proposers (up to seven people who were centrally involved in developing the concept), representatives from RESPOND cohorts, and representatives from the Statistical Department and Coordinating Center. All individuals involved in the process of reviewing these research concepts are bound by confidentiality. All data within RESPOND from individual cohorts are de-identified. The present RESPOND data structure and a list of all collected variables and their definition can be found online. For any inquiries regarding data sharing, please contact the RESPOND secretariat (respond.rigshospitalet@regionh.dk)."

III. Ethical Statement

"Participants are consented to share data with RESPOND according to local requirements. Participants are pseudonymised at enrolment by assigning a unique identifier by the participating cohort before data transfer to RESPOND. According to national or local requirements, all cohorts have approval to share data with RESPOND. Ethical approvals are obtained, if required, from the relevant bodies for collection and sharing of data. Data are stored on secure servers at the RESPOND coordinating centre in Copenhagen, Denmark, in accordance with current legislation and under approval by The Danish Data Protection Agency (approval number 2012-58-0004, RH-2018-15, 26/1/2018), under the EU General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679)."

IV. Disclaimer Statement

In the acknowledgements of all papers, the following statement should be included:

"The content of RESPOND publications is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of any of the listed institutions or funders"

4. DEFINITIONS AND MATERIALS

a. Flow charts depicting the circulation of scientific documents can be found at:

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b. The RESPOND Scientific proposal form can be found at:

https://chip.dk/Research/Studies/RESPOND/Study-documents

c. The master template for The RESPOND Scientific proposal form can be found here:

P:\RH\HJE\LUKKEDE MAPPER\CHIP\S DREV - EUROSHARE\RESPOND\RESPOND - OPERATIONS-MONITORING\MANUSCRIPTS AND PUBLICATION\PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

d. Master sketches of the graphical overview of the circulation flow can be

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E. An overview of SIG moderators and contact information can be found here:
P:\RH\HJE\Lukkede Mapper\CHIP\s drev EUROSHARE\RESPOND\RESPOND\Contacts\Partners RESPOND

5. REFERENCES

1. The RESPOND Study Group. How to RESPOND to Modern Challenges for People Living with HIV (PLWHIV): A New Cohort Collaboration. How to RESPOND to Mod Challenges People Living with HIV A New Cohort Collab 2019

2. CHIP, RESPOND study, Outcomes with Antiretrovirals SIG. https://www.chip.dk/Research/Studies/RESPOND/SIGs/Outcomes-with-ARVs

6. HISTORY LOG – CHANGES PERFORMED

Appendix 1:

Management of drug specific findings within the RESPOND Study

- Identification and highlight of potential drug specific finding, should be raised by the pharmaceutical academic representatives in RESPOND as early as possible, preferably at the stage of a project proposal. Flagging a potential specific finding may, however, occur at any time during a RESPOND project. The RESPOND leadership should consider the potential of drug specific findings for all new RESPOND projects.

- Identification of potential drug specific findings are intended to allow the pharmaceutical representatives the opportunity for in-depth discussion of the RESPOND data, to understand the findings before release in the public domain and to report to regulatory authorities. As part of this process, if needed, the pharmaceutical representatives may identify additional persons with a specific area of expertise to include in the discussion.

- RESPOND leadership, rather than the RESPOND working group, will lead the discussion of the specific findings with Pharma. Additional analyses to explore and/or conduct sensitivity analyses will be considered as appropriate.

- The collaborative process between pharmaceutical companies and RESPOND leadership will provide the opportunity for Pharma to discuss findings in the context of existing clinical trial data and pharmacovigilance activities. Pharma will not be able to prevent the publication of any data from RESPOND nor change the substance of any such findings.

CHIP, Copenhagen, April 2022

ATTACHMENTS

7.1 Proposal template
7.2 Statistical analysis plan
7.3 Figure 1 circulations of documents related to a new proposal
7.4 Figure 2 circulations of conference abstracts
7.5 Figure 3 circulations of conference presentations/posters
7.6 Figure 4 circulations of manuscripts

FIGURE 1 CIRCULATIONS OF DOCUMENTS RELATED TO A NEW SCIENTIFIC PROPOSAL

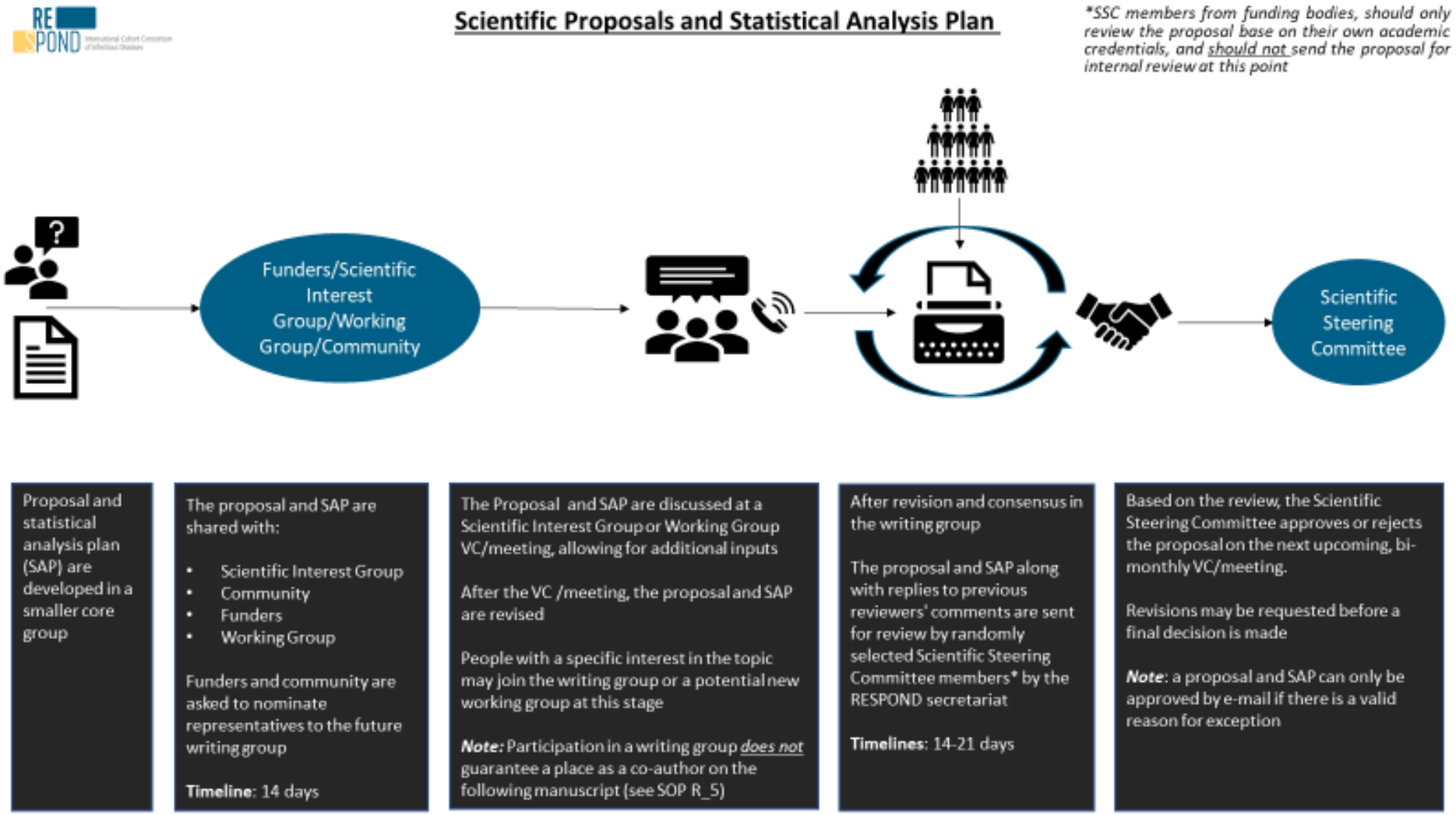

FIGURE 2 CIRCULATIONS OF CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

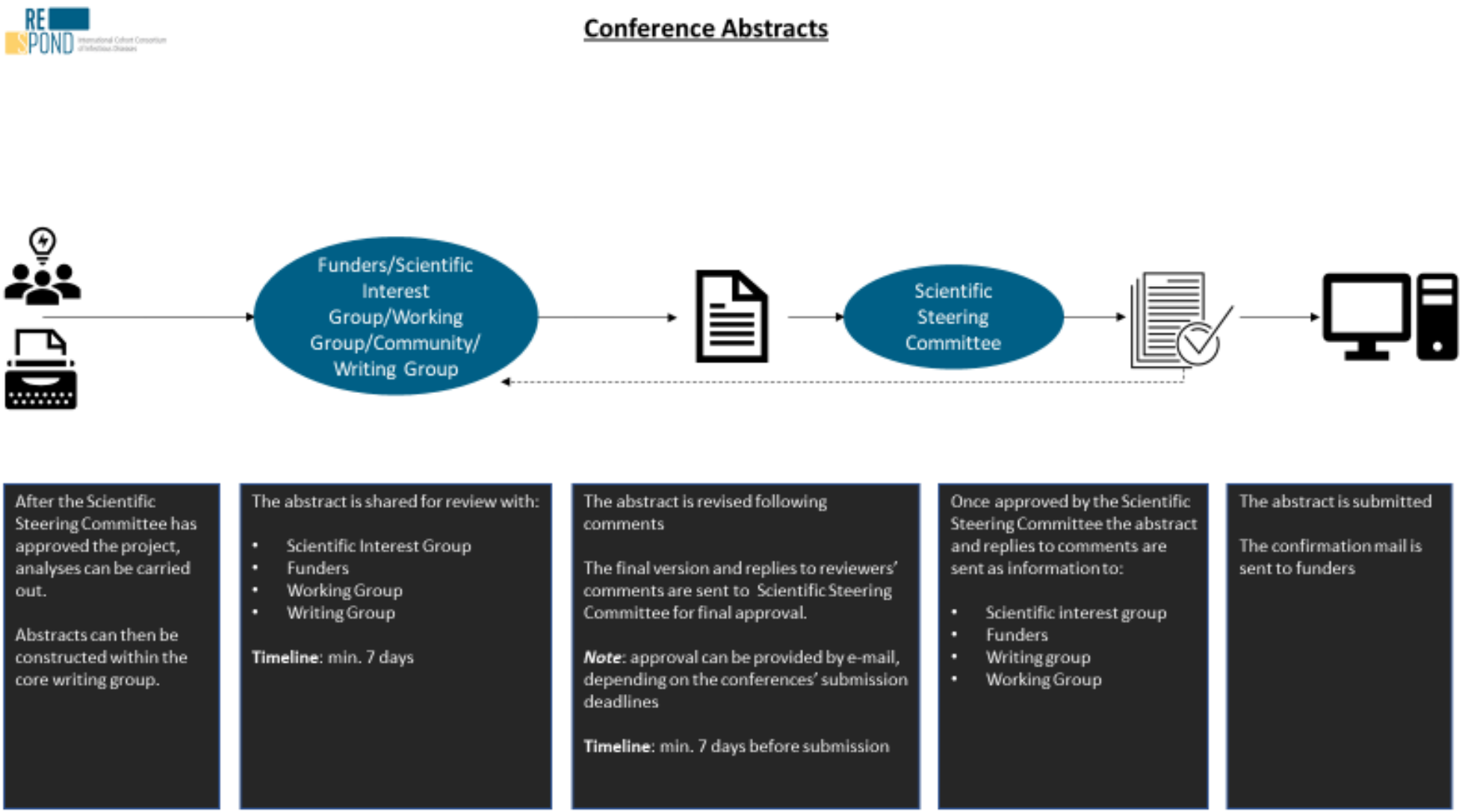

FIGURE 3 CIRCULATIONS OF CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS/POSTERS

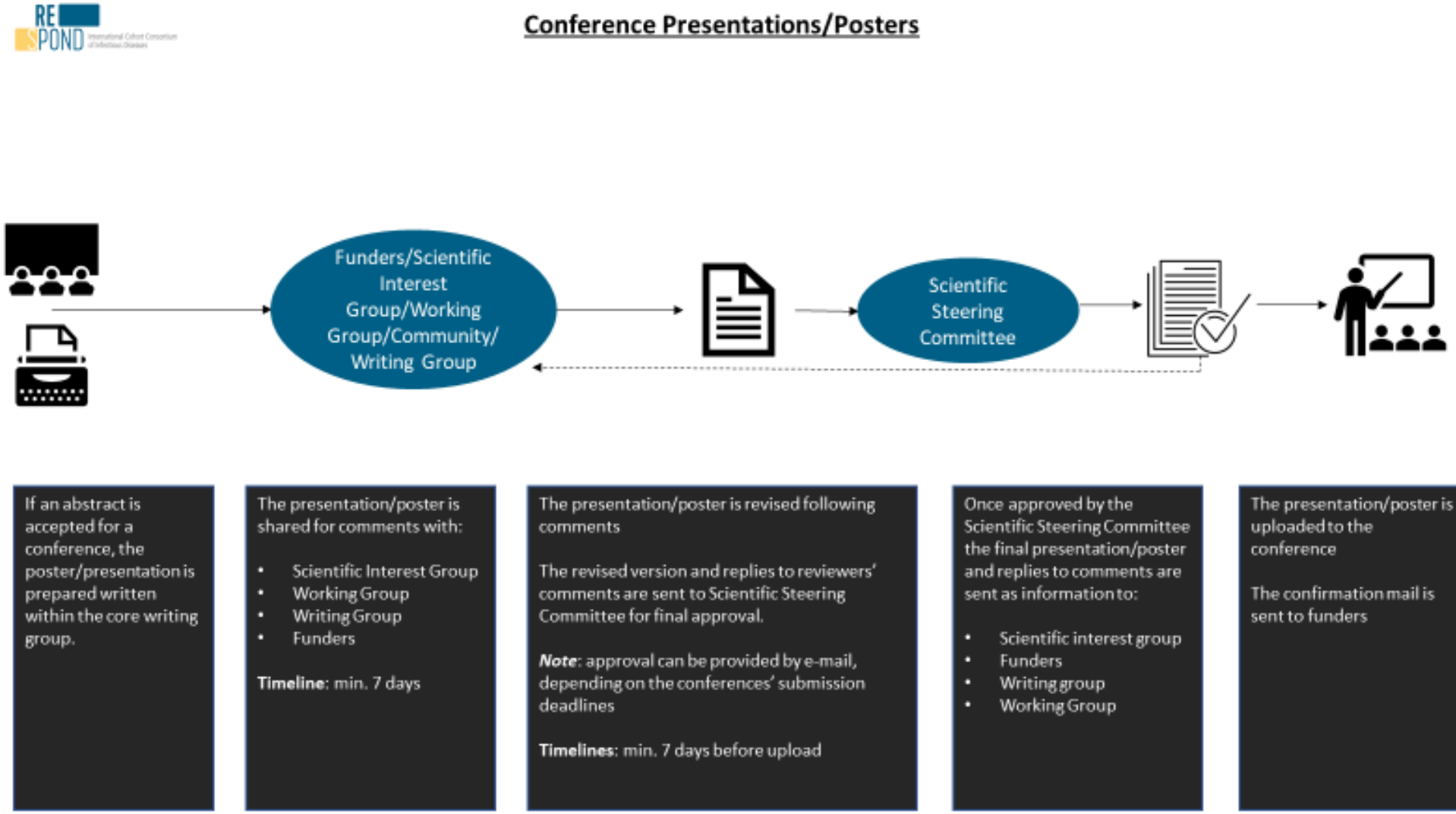

FIGURE 4 CIRCULATIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts

**Manuscripts revised after peer-review at journals, do not require renewed approval by the Scientific Steering Committee, unless the conclusion of the analysis has changed substantially, as judged by the senior author*

A manuscript is written within the core writing group.

The manuscript is shared for review with:

- Scientific Interest Group
- Funders
- Working Group
- Writing Group

Timeline: min. 30 days

The manuscript is revised following comments

The final version and replies to reviewers' comments are presented at the next upcoming, bi-monthly Scientific Steering Committee VC/meeting, for final approval.

Note: approval *cannot* be provided by email

Timeline: final manuscript and replies to comments need to be circulated as supporting meeting document min. 7 days before VC/meeting

Once approved by the Scientific Steering Committee the manuscript and replies to comments are sent as information to:

- Scientific interest group
- Funders
- Writing group
- Working Group

The manuscript is submitted

The submitted version of the manuscript and the confirmation mail is sent to funders

Once accepted for publication, a final version of the accepted manuscript is sent to funders*