

Researchers who are interested in using data for research purposes can apply for access to the ABCD data, for analysis of the available biological material, or for data to be collected in conjunction with the ABCD data. Applications that are approved are considered subprojects in the ABCD study. Subprojects are expected to contribute to the study scientifically as well as economically (in the form of a bench fee or in manpower). All subprojects must have a principal investigator (PI) with scientific responsibility for the project. For each subproject, a contract will be written between the ABCD study and the institution with which the PI of the subproject is affiliated. Such contract gives the right to study one or more research questions for a defined limited period of time.

How to apply

To apply for access to data or material of the ABCD study, researchers should send a research proposal to the principal investigator of the study, dr. Tanja Vrijotte (t.vrijotte@amc.nl).

Research proposals have to include:

- name and affiliation(s) of the PI
- if it concerns a PhD or Master project, name and affiliation(s) of the student
- short project description (1-2 pages): background, research questions, methods including dataset to be used or data to be collected, and plan for statistical analysis
- if it concerns the use of blood samples: proposed analyses, laboratory where performed and required amount
- publication plan
- timetable
- budget including proposed contribution to planning or data collection of the ABCD study (economical or practical)

Applications are reviewed by the management team of the ABCD study, with the following considerations taken into account:

- research question(s) within the general aim of the ABCD study
- scientific quality and originality
- usefulness for preventive or curative medicine and care
- contribution (administrative, practical, economical) to planning and/or data collection

If a researcher wants to apply for financial support from one or more funding agencies in order to conduct a subproject based on data from the cohort, the ABCD study can give conditional rights to the researcher in advance. This creates a commitment that will last until the outcome of the application is known.

Access to existing ABCD data

If an application is accepted, access is granted to the ABCD datafiles, to the extent required for the proposed research. Therefore, required study variables will be sent to the PI in the form of a SPSS datafile. For information on the study variables available, applicants can contact Noekie van Lieshout (n.vanlieshout@amc.nl), +31-(0)20-5661252.

No exclusive rights to the data are given. If a research question has overlap with primary research questions within the ABCD study (i.e., research questions of PhD students and principal investigators of the ABCD study), access may not be granted. However, collaboration can be discussed. If the research questions of two or more external researchers overlap, the researchers are requested to collaborate or to discuss a division of the areas of interest.

Access to biological samples

As opposed to data from questionnaires, which can be reused, biological material is a limited resource. In addition to the above-mentioned considerations, the following criteria apply to proposals to conduct new measurements in blood samples from the ABCD biobank:

- the research question cannot be answered by using biological samples from other sources
- costs of the laboratory analyses are covered by the applicant's institution
- the applicant agrees with the limitation of ownership: the ABCD study is owner of the results from the laboratory analyses and results may be reused for other scientific purposes. However, the applicant retains the first right to address a research question based on the data
- proposal includes information on the amount of material required and gives specification of the laboratory qualifications
- proposal includes information on the consent procedure if measurements do not fall within the general permission obtained from participants

New data collection

Applications for data that are not yet collected will be considered under the following conditions:

- additional data collection does not interfere with the (planned) data collection of the ABCD
- study, in terms of the medical-ethical permission, participant's permission, time schedule or
- the burden for participants
- costs of the additional data collection are covered by the applicant's institution
- the applicant agrees with the limitation of ownership: the ABCD study is ownership of the
- data collected and data may be reused for other scientific purposes

Expected contributions if access is granted

As part of the contract, the subproject must contribute to the ABCD study, financially or otherwise (manpower for administrative and practical work). The contribution requested is negotiated on a case to case basis.

Rules for publication and presentation

For each subproject, rules for publications and presentation will be included in the contract. Results from subprojects shall not be submitted for publication before permission is obtained from the ABCD project management. In all manuscripts the ABCD study should be properly mentioned and the presentation of data should be in line with the conditions given. A member of the ABCD project team should be included as a co-author on all manuscripts. The co-author of the ABCD study will comment on drafts of articles within a 14-day deadline. All publications must refer to the data collection being part of the Amsterdam Born Children and their Development study and must mention the principal aim (to investigate the association of maternal lifestyle, psychosocial and medical conditions with children's health at birth as well as in later life, with specific attention to ethnic differences) and the principal institution where the study is based (Academic Medical Centre Amsterdam).

Results of subprojects may be presented at conferences and symposia, at the initiative of the external researcher or at the request of the ABCD management team. Presentations shall not be given before the management team is informed. In all presentations the ABCD study should be properly mentioned and the presentation of data should be in line with the conditions given.