



PUBLICATION POLICY

NAKO GESUNDHEITSSTUDIE GERMAN NATIONAL COHORT (NAKO)

VERSION 6.0 / JANUARY, 2026

Applies to Applications submitted on or after 1 January 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy describes the framework for scientific publications based on data or biosamples of the German National Cohort (NAKO).



NAKO is a long-term project, which was initially designed by many scientists in 18 collaborating study centres who also coordinated the data collection and quality assurance efforts of the project. The study design of this multidisciplinary, population-based cohort study is described in [German National Cohort C. et al. \[2014\]](#) and [Peters et al. \[2022\]](#). More detailed descriptions of the framework, methods and subprojects can be found at www.nako.de/research.

All publications arising from the use of NAKO data and biosamples must be based on a research proposal that has first been approved by the “NAKO Use & Access Committee” and subsequently been accepted by the NAKO Board of Directors [for more details see [NAKO Use and Access Policy](#)].

The work of the individuals and funders building the NAKO needs to be acknowledged as outlined below.

2. AUTHORSHIP FOR SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

2.1. General considerations

Authorship is determined based on international rules as formulated by the “International Committee of Medical Journals” (www.icmje.org), and all authors should fulfill the following criteria:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
3. Final approval of the version to be published; AND
4. Agreement to be accountable for important 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.

All authors carry responsibility for fulfilling these criteria as well as for the specific content of the publication, either entirely or in parts. Position on the publication author list shall reflect contributions to the specific research question. The final author list will be composed based on the fulfillment of the ICMJE authorship criteria.

2.2. Author and coauthor responsibilities

Each primary scientific group that has requested and been granted NAKO data access, is encouraged to contact appropriate NAKO investigators, because persons involved in the establishment of the entire study or specific instruments can contribute valuable insights to the planned analyses and safeguard authors not involved in the study from major errors in setting-up and conducting data analyses.

A list of study PIs and experts for NAKO examination modules and instruments along with contact information can be found here: www.nako.de/scientificleaders and www.nako.de/expertgroups. All approved data and biosample use requests are posted and can be reviewed on the following website: www.nako.de/research-projects.

It is recommended to contact relevant NAKO investigators.

The main applicant named in the data application form is responsible for organizing the communication within a data analysis project and the subsequent authorship group, e.g., by organizing video conferences, providing status updates and coordinating input by coauthors/group members to the ongoing analyses and writing process.

The main applicant coordinates project communication, collaboration, and authorship activities.



After a first complete draft of a manuscript is finished, the corresponding author must send this draft to all co-authors at least four weeks prior to a manuscript submission or at least two weeks prior to presentations at scientific conferences. The final version of the manuscript has to be circulated prior to submission with a short deadline (recommended at least 7 days). All authors have to declare their agreement with the submission, by written (e.g., email) notice to the corresponding author. At the discretion of individual co-authors, the agreement with submission can be declared in advance, based on a preliminary version. If an author did not formally declare the agreement to submission until the deadline, silent agreement can be assumed, if this option has clearly been indicated in the announcement of the final version.

Send first draft to co-authors: 4 weeks pre-submission, 2 weeks pre-conference

2.3. Exemptions / special use cases

There may be exemptions from the co-authorship rules listed above when data, biosamples, or analytes have been generated in dedicated projects not part of the main NAKO study program, and which are organized and/ or financed by individual investigators or groups of investigators, including so-called “Level 3” projects.

In such instances, the initiating investigator[s] of this subproject have an exclusive right to use these data for a limited period of time as specified in the use and access agreement. However, the investigator[s] may share these data with other users.

In ambiguous situations, the decision about whether or not and which exception of the authorship rules will be granted is made by the scientific project management (publications@nako.de).

For exceptions, please contact publications@nako.de

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND FUNDING INFORMATION

All publications based on the German National Cohort (NAKO) must acknowledge the study and must include both, its German and the English name.

German: **NAKO Gesundheitsstudie**
English: **German National Cohort (NAKO)**

The following statement must be included in the Acknowledgement section of the manuscript in order to acknowledge the contribution of all NAKO representatives who have substantially contributed to the conception, funding and conduct of this study as well as to the infrastructure development, data collection and quality assurance:

“We thank all participants of the German National Cohort (NAKO) and the staff of this research initiative. Members and affiliations of the NAKO Investigator Consortium can be accessed via www.nako.de/principal-investigators.”

In addition, all publications based on the NAKO must include the following funding information or an appropriate equivalent:

English: *This project was conducted with data (Application No. NAKO-XXXX) from the German National Cohort (NAKO) (www.nako.de). The NAKO is funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR) [project funding reference numbers: 01ER1301A/B/C, 01ER1511D, 01ER1801A/B/C/D and 01ER2301A/B/C], Federal States of Germany and the Helmholtz Association, the participating universities and the institutes of the Leibniz Association. We thank all participants as well as the staff of NAKO.*

All publications must contain the Acknowledgement.

German: *Dieses Projekt wurde mit Daten (Nutzungsantrag Nr. NAKOXXXX) der NAKO Gesundheitsstudie durchgeführt (www.nako.de). Die NAKO Gesundheitsstudie wird durch das Bundesministerium für Forschung, Technologie und Raumfahrt (BMFTR) [Förderkennzeichen 01ER1301A/B/C, 01ER1511D, 01ER1801A/B/C/D und 01ER2301A/B/C], die Bundesländer und die Helmholtz Gemeinschaft*

Please check that the spelling of NAKO is correct and that the funding reference numbers are mentioned.

gefördert sowie durch die beteiligten Universitäten und Institute der Leibniz-Gemeinschaft finanziell unterstützt. Wir danken allen Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmern der sowie den Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeitern der NAKO Gesundheitsstudie.



Finally, NAKO should be mentioned in the abstract of each publication.

5. TRACKING OF PUBLICATIONS

All publications must be documented by the NAKO e. V. Thus, information about acceptance and a pdf [or other format] of the published / accepted manuscript must be sent to the NAKO Central Office (publications@nako.de) by the first or last author in a timely fashion.

Send accepted
publication info / PDF to
publications@nako.de.

6. CLOSE

This publication policy v6.0 variant 1 is effective for all data applications that are submitted after January 1st, 2026.

GOOD TO KNOW

- German National Cohort (NAKO) is registered in the German Clinical Trials Register (DRKS) under the identifier DRKS00037328. Recommend wording: *Trial registration German National Cohort (NAKO): DRKS00037328*
- If you would like to mention the application portal for NAKO data in your manuscript, we recommend the following wording: *Data availability statement: NAKO data can be obtained via an electronic application portal www.nako.de/transferhub*
- For "Ethics approval" we recommend the following wording: *The German National Cohort (NAKO) is performed with the approval of the relevant local ethics committees and is in accordance with national law and with the Declaration of Helsinki of 1975 [in the current, revised version]. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants.*