



# Frequently Asked Questions



**The Asia Pacific League of Associations for Rheumatology** introduced its Center of Excellence certification programme in 2016, to increase the level of scientific rigor and clinical excellence among regional institutions, support local physicians understand the best research and clinical practices in rheumatology, and improve care for a vast number of patients in Asia Pacific.



1	<b>Why is a collaboration such as APLAR important in Asia?</b>	Through APLAR, experts in rheumatology will be able to network with a huge number of rheumatologists, internists, orthopaedic surgeons, clinical immunologists, psychiatrists, physical and occupational therapists, paediatricians, and researchers from allied disciplines across the region. In addition, members are able to share and discover the latest in research, patient care, and programmes for patient advocacy and empowerment.
2	<b>What are the benefits of being an APLAR-certified Center of Excellence?</b>	This certification would be a honourific title, with recognition by APLAR of the quality of the Center, thereby raising its profile and prestige.

3	<b>What are the criteria for application?</b>	Centers should be located in Asia Pacific, focused on rheumatology, and demonstrate high standards in clinical, educational and/or research skills.
4	<b>How are the centers evaluated and who will be making the selections?</b>	Centers should submit a completed application form before Each member of the Evaluation Committee will rate how the application addresses each listed criteria to provide an overall rating. The committee then selects the centers with the top scores to be awarded as Centers of Excellence.
5	<b>Our institution only focuses on patient care. Can we still apply to be a Center of Excellence?</b>	Yes, you can opt to be specifically certified as a Center for Excellence for research.
6	<b>Our Center is just 2 years old. Are we eligible?</b>	Yes, if you meet the criteria for application.

7	<b>Is this application open to private centers?</b>	Yes, if you meet the criteria for application.
8	<b>Can we nominate centers that are not our own?</b>	We welcome nominations from our national member organisations. We will invite the nominated centers to apply as each center would have to submit its own application. You may also forward the application form to the center. However the centers are requested to submit a letter of recommendation from their national society. If the centers are not able to receive the endorsement from their national society, they may approach Past Presidents.
9	<b>Can more than one center per country apply for this certification?</b>	Yes.
10	<b>If its country of origin is not part of APLAR, can the center still apply for this application?</b>	No.

11	<b>Is there a quota on the number of centers that will be certified?</b>	3 – 5 centers will be certified every year.
12	<b>How long can a Center of Excellence hold the title?</b>	3 years. After this period, the center can reapply for certification.
13	<b>What is the closing date for submissions?</b>	
14	<b>When will the results be announced?</b>	The Center of Excellence titles will be awarded during the APLAR conference in September and the results published on APLAR's website.
15	<b>Will applications be open annually?</b>	Yes
16	<b>Is there a limit to the number of centers that a member national organisation can nominate?</b>	No

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**Can national member organisations participate as observers if they are not actively involved in the application or evaluation process?**

Yes. We welcome nominations from our national member organisations. The steering committee will invite the nominated member to observe the evaluation process and give feedback so that the process can be improved in the future.

**For application and further information, email us at [secretariat@aplar.org](mailto:secretariat@aplar.org).**

You can submit your completed application form and national society's endorsement letter (if you are not able to receive the endorsement of your national society, you may approach Past Presidents) to [secretariat@aplar.org](mailto:secretariat@aplar.org) AND post the original hard copies to:

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