

VASCERN Summer School 2025

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Candidate Information Booklet





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Introduction

VASCERN is the European Reference Network (ERN) that aims to improve and homogenize the care of patients with rare multisystemic vascular diseases throughout across Europe.

These rare and complex diseases include arterial diseases (affecting aorta to small arteries), arteriovenous anomalies, venous malformations, lymphatic disorders, and neurovascular diseases, requiring a multidisciplinary approach to care.

Established in 2017, VASCERN is funded by the European Commission and based at the Hôpital Bichat in Paris (Assistance Publique - Hôpitaux de Paris, APHP). Its coordinator is Guillaume Jondeau, Professor at the University of Paris Cité.

VASCERN consists of six Rare Diseases Working Groups (RDWG), each specializing in specific diseases or groups of diseases.

- **Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia (HHT-WG)**, focuses specifically on HHT.
- **Heritable Thoracic Aortic Disease (HTAD-WG)**, covers aortic diseases such as Marfan syndrome or Loeys-Dietz syndrome.
- **Medium-Sized Arteries (MSA-WG)**, focuses on vascular Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (vEDS).
- **Neurovascular Diseases (NEUROVASC WG)**, focuses CADASIL and Moyamoya angiopathy.
- **Pediatric and Primary Lymphedema (PPL WG)**, covers structural or functional disorders of the lymphatic system.
- **Vascular Anomalies (VASCA-WG)**, focuses on conditions such as capillary malformations, venous malformations and severe/rare infantile hemangiomas.

An additional subgroup, the **European Patient Advocacy Group (ePAG)**, was created consisting solely of patient representatives.

Members of these RDWGs meet regularly to produce training resources and recommendations for doctors and patients. VASCERN aims to:

- **Improve medical knowledge** by sharing experience, conducting clinical trials and creating registries.
- **Raise awareness** about the diseases among stakeholders, general practitioners, school doctors and the general public.
- **Improve the quality of family counseling**, reduce care gaps.

VASCERN is a **network in expansion**, continually striving to increase the number of European countries included in the network. Since its inception, new affiliated partners, full HCP members, and patient organizations and advocates from unrepresented countries have joined. Currently, VASCERN covers **23 European countries**, as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Map of European countries covered by VASCERN.

To support this goal, VASCERN will implement an active policy, leveraging patient knowledge, outreach activities, and scientific relationships among experts to help new centers from unrepresented countries join the network in the future. Communication and outreach campaigns targeting these countries and their rare disease communities are also planned.

To ensure a sustainable network, new projects are being considered, particularly in training and knowledge sharing. These include professional exchanges between centers, developing a Moodle platform for online training, and engaging with future European doctors. In this context, a summer school for interns and medical students aligns with our expansion strategy to disseminate the network's objectives to the next generation of doctors in Europe.

The logo features a stylized sunburst or starburst graphic in yellow and orange, positioned to the left of the text. The text 'VASCERN Summer School 2025' is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with 'VASCERN' on the top line, 'Summer' on the second line, 'School' on the third line, and '2025' on the fourth line.

VASCERN Summer School 2025

The Summer School is an educational activity organized by VASCERN to introduce young doctors to rare vascular diseases and ensure the network's objectives are passed on to the next generation of healthcare professionals.

VASCERN organized its first Summer School in 2024, receiving 260 applications from medical students and residents across 25 European countries. Due to this success, VASCERN decided to organize a second edition.

The VASCERN Summer School is partially funded by the **ERASMUS+ Blended Intensive Program (BIP)**, following a hybrid format that combines a short-term physical mobility abroad with a mandatory virtual component.

The program begins with a 15-week online segment, including e-learning activities, webinars and workshops on various diseases, psychology, research and genetics. These virtual sessions allow students to interact with each other and experts of the network, providing a theoretical introduction to rare vascular diseases while fostering future professional connections. The onsite part of the Summer School will last 6 days in Paris, focusing on the different types of vascular diseases covered by VASCERN.

Participants from different universities in Europe can join and attend the courses given by the experts of the network. The target group for the program includes:

- Medical students (undergraduate, master, PhD)
- Medical residents from different universities in Europe
- Post-doctoral researchers

The objective of the VASCERN Summer School is to achieve the broadest European geographical coverage, connecting countries without a national plan for rare vascular diseases to the network and its activities. Our goal in the search for participants and partner institutions is to target underrepresented countries that are not part of our network. This is the case of Central and Eastern Europe: Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Slovakia, etc.

With this program, we expect to raise awareness about rare vascular diseases among the participants, as well as making them enthusiastic about being future experts of these diseases.



Key Dates and Application Process

The VASCERN Summer School 2025 will be conducted in two parts. The online part will run from February 3 to May 30, 2025. The on-site part will take place in Paris from Monday, September 15 to Saturday, September 20, 2025.

If you are a medical student (undergraduate, master's, or PhD level), a medical resident, or a post-doctoral researcher at a European university, and you are interested in learning more about rare vascular diseases, you are eligible to apply for the VASCERN Summer School. The application process is as follows:

Beginning of September – End of October 2024

Submit your application by completing the following two steps:

- Fill in the survey: [VASCERN Summer School 2025 Application](#).
- Download your survey contribution and email it to erasmus@vascern.eu. **Please note that your application will only be considered if you send your survey contribution by email.**

The documents required are:

- Updated CV,
- Motivation letter,
- Certificate of school enrollment or diploma certificate (if you have already completed your studies),
- Last year's academic transcript.

The application deadline is October 27, 2024

Early November 2024

Applications will be reviewed and selected by the Selection Committee, which consists of six VASCERN experts and one patient representative.

End of November 2024 - Beginning of December 2024

- Applicants will be informed of the results.
- Selected participants will need to contact their universities to complete the Learning Agreement and obtain information on the mobility grant.

Participation must be confirmed by January 13, 2025.



Academic Information

The structure and organization of the VASCERN Summer School must fulfil the requirements of the ERASMUS+ Blended Intensive Programs.

In terms of academic accreditation, the content provided during the activity (both the online module and the on-site activity) must be equivalent to **3 ECTS** credits. Therefore, the program will have a total duration of **76 hours**, which will be distributed as follows:

- **Online module: 30 hours**
- **Summer School: 40 hours**
- **Evaluation: 6 hours**

The program and the equivalence in terms of ECTS are reflected in the ERASMUS+ Learning Agreement, which is signed by the participant, the sending and the receiving institutions before the start of the exchange.

The purpose of the Learning Agreement is to ensure a transparent and efficient preparation of the exchange and ensure that students receive recognition for the activities successfully completed abroad.

The Learning Agreement (provided by the sending institution as a part of the BIP) contains all the learning outcomes that the student is expected to achieve during the exchange. All parties who sign it commit themselves to comply with all the agreed arrangements, ensuring that the student receives recognition for the study carried out abroad without any further requirements.



Program Overview

Online Module (30 hrs)*

February 3, 2025 to May 30, 2025

Module 1: Introduction (1 hr 30 mins) – Week 1

Module 2: Methods (1 hr 30 mins) – Week 2

Module 3: Translational Research and Genetics (17 hrs) – Weeks 3-10

Easter Break from 14th to 21st April 2025

Module 4: ePAG and Patients Organizations (1 hr 30 mins) - Weeks 11-12

Module 5: Patient Therapeutic Education (1 hr) - Week 11-12

Break from 1st to 9th May 2025

Module 6: Psychology (4 hrs) - Week 13-14

Module 7: Final module (1 hr 30 mins) – Week 15

* Please note that the program may be subject to change based on the lecturer's availability.

Onsite Module (40 hrs)*

Day 1: Monday, September 15, 2025

8:45-9:00 : Welcome & Introduction

9:00-16:10: Heritable Thoracic Aortic Disease (HTAD) (6 hrs)

16:10-16:30: End of the HTAD Course / Break

16:30-18:30: Medium Sized Arteries (MSA) – PART I (2 hrs)

Day 2: Tuesday, September 16, 2025

9:00-13:15: Medium Sized Arteries (MSA) – PART II (4 hrs)

13:15-14:15: End of the MSA courses / Lunch break

14:15-17:30: Neurovascular diseases (NEUROVASC) – PART I: CADASIL (3 hrs)

Day 3: Wednesday, September 17, 2025

9:00-12:15: Neurovascular Diseases (NEUROVASC) – PART II: MOYAMOYA ANGIOPATHY (3 hrs)

12:15-13:15: End of the NEUROVASC courses / Lunch break

13:15-17:30: Vascular Anomalies (VASCA) – PART I (4 hrs)

Day 4: Thursday, September 18, 2025

9:00-11:10: Vascular Anomalies (VASCA) – PART II (2 hrs)

11:00-11:15: End of the VASCA course / Coffee Break

11:15-18:30: Pediatric and Primary Lymphedema (PPL) (6 hrs)

Day 5: Friday, September 19, 2025

9:00-16:30: Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia (HHT) (6 hrs)

Day 6: Saturday, September 20, 2025

9:30-13:00: Final activity on Psychology - role-plays with patients and doctors (3 hrs 30 mins)

13:00-13:30: Final activity (30 mins)

13:30: End of the VASCERN Summer School

* Please note that the program may be subject to change based on the lecturer's availability.

Evaluation (6 hrs)

To ensure that participants of the VASCERN Summer School have fully assimilated the program's content, a final examination will be conducted. Details about the exam format (whether a written report, final exam, quiz, etc.) will be provided soon. Regardless of the format, the evaluation process will last 6 hours, including the estimated time for student preparation.



Practical Information

The on-site summer school will take place at the Amphithéâtre Chiray of the Hôpital Bichat (Paris). The hospital is located in the 18th arrondissement of the city (46 rue Henri Huchard) and it is easily accessible by:

VASCERN will propose several accommodation options near the hospital. The exact address and details of the hotels will be communicated later.



Contact Information

If you would like to apply for the VASCERN Summer School and/or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at erasmus@vascern.eu. or visit our [website](#).