Flight Tracker Consortium Meeting

December 3, 2025

EDGE FOR SCHOLARS

www.edgeforscholars.org

https://redcap.link/flight_tracker

Meeting Agenda

FLIGHT TRACKER FOR SCHOLARS

Current Version:
v6.23.1

What's New?

Upcoming: "How I Use Flight Tracker" Corner
Flight Tracker's Logo Rebrand

Deep Dive: Cohorts

What's Next?

Educational Videos
PubMed Publication Error: Update
Happy Winter Holidays!

FLIGHT TRACKER FOR SCHOLARS

What's New?

“How I Use Flight Tracker” Corner

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- Project pivot: Greatest current need is **software education**
- A great way to educate is to teach each other
- I’m interested in how you’re using Flight Tracker
- Creating a **corner** on calls about “How I Use Flight Tracker”
- There are many ways to use Flight Tracker, and none is the only/best way to use it
- **Volunteers for coming months?**
  The odder the use case, the better!

Flight Tracker's Logo Rebrand

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- We're adjusting the Flight Tracker logo, font & colors to fit with other Edge for Scholars products
- We'll gradually modify the look-and-feel of Flight Tracker
  - Updated fonts, color palette & logo

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Deep Dive

Cohorts

Overview

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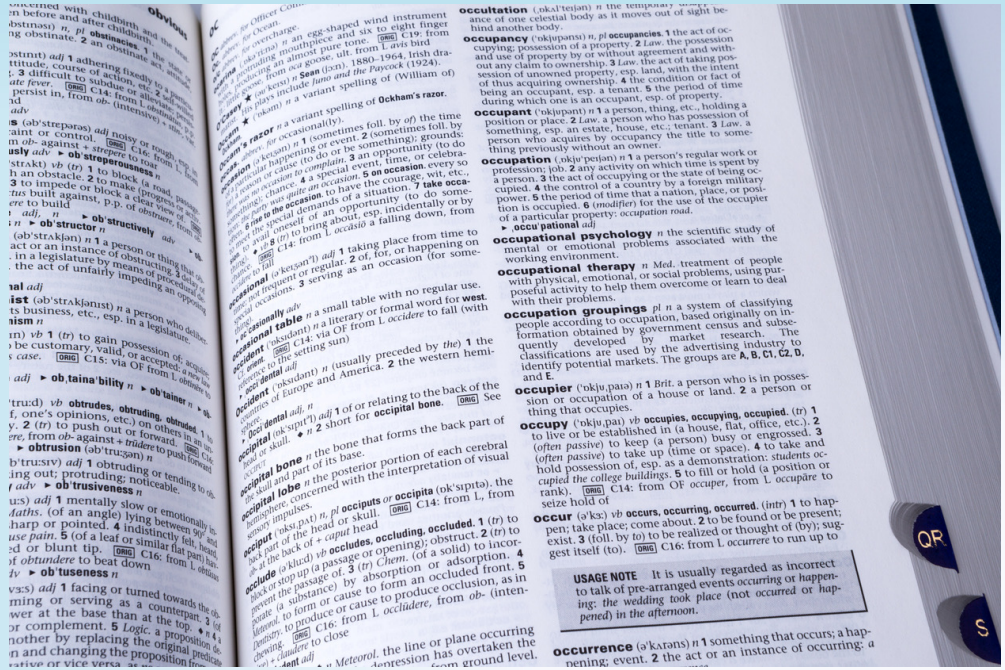
- Adding a Cohort by Traits
  - Person & Program Roles
  - Tips & Tricks
- Hand-Picking a Cohort
- Viewing Cohorts
- Using Cohorts
- Editing Cohorts Later
- Deleting or Renaming a Cohort
- Cohort Projects
- REDCap Reports

Definition

- For Flight Tracker purposes, a cohort is a sub-group of scholars defined by certain characteristics
- *E.g.*, class of 2024, class of 2023, faculty, staff, students, mentors, MDs, PhDs, women, men, grant recipients



Use Case: A Story

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- Recently, we were asked who we should be recruiting to succeed at Vanderbilt… **What do the data say?**
- We compared how our MD-only's were performing vs. MD-PhDs and vs. PhDs
- We made a cohort to view statistics of each
- Then we made a table to compile key statistics
- We presented the data to department chairs who were interested in who we should recruit to strategically succeed

Adding a Cohort by Traits

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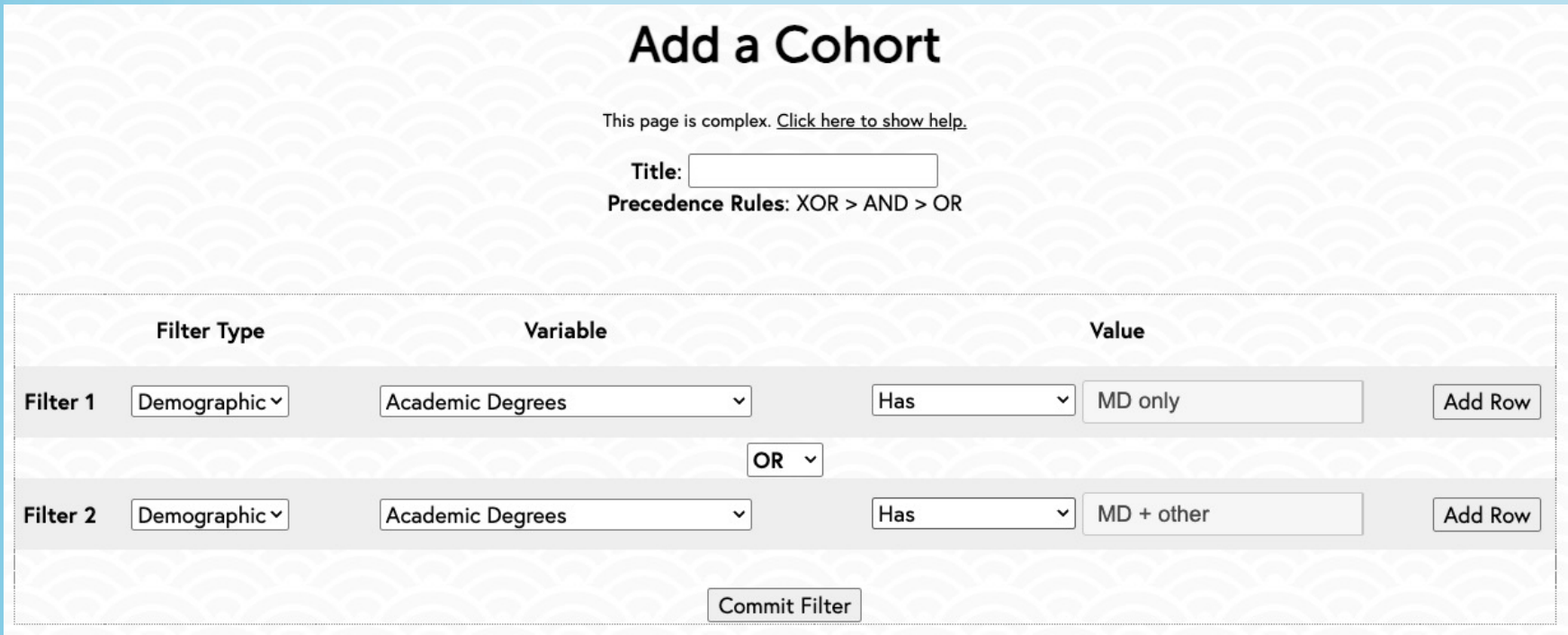
- "Add/Modify a Cohort" page



Adding a Cohort by Traits: Options

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- Demographics
- Grants
- Publications
- Resources

- Lots of variables available under each
  - Dropdowns: Has or does not have
  - Dates: On, Before, After
  - Email domain: Has, does not have, contains
- Can combine multiple variables

Adding a Cohort by Traits: Combinations

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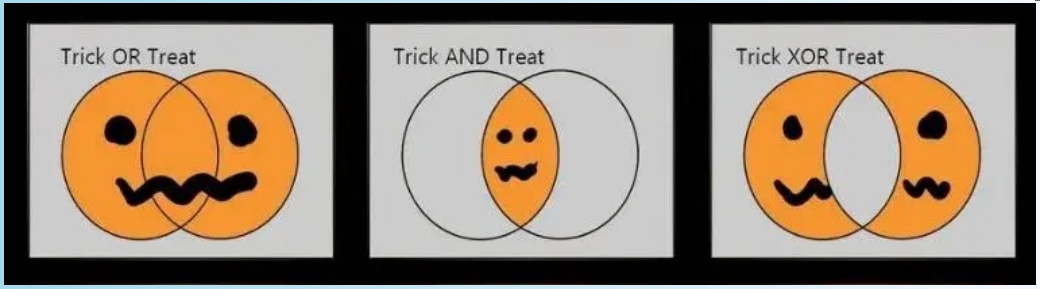
- Combine rows via Boolean logic: AND, OR, or XOR
  - Google provides a lot of training on Boolean logic
- Precedence:
  - XOR = Exclusive OR = only one can be true
  - AND = both must be true
  - OR = at least one must be true



Person & Program Roles

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- Sometimes, you want to make a cohort based on a trait that Flight Tracker does not provide…

Solution: Person & Program Roles provide ways to track people with customized traits

You configure the options/labels for these fields

- Person Roles are dropdowns: select only one
  - You can make up to **SIX** Person Roles
- Program Roles are checkboxes: able to select more than one
  - As a multiselect, only **ONE** Program Role field is needed

Person & Program Roles

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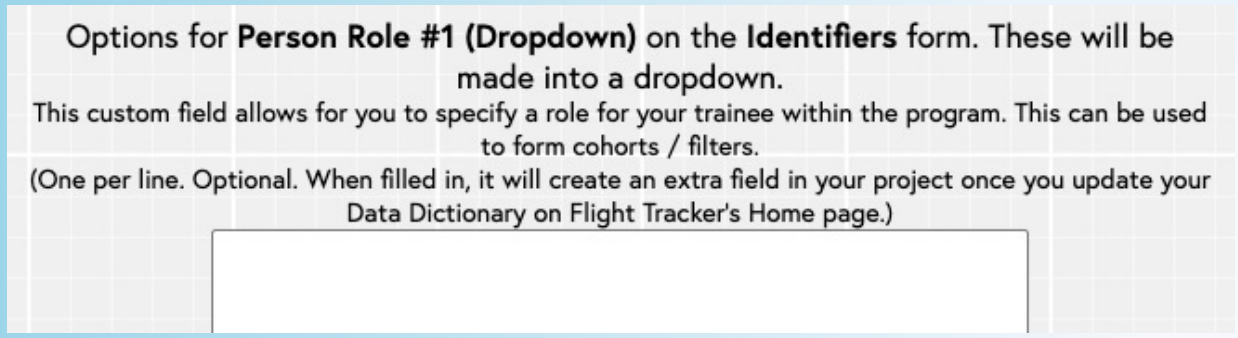
- In the General menu → Configure Application page [or the cog in the upper-right], you can set up a Person or Program Role
- Fill in data on the **Identifiers** form in REDCap
- If you do so, you can create a custom cohort based on the role
- *E.g.*, class of 2024, class of 2025, faculty, student, mentor, leader & other project-specific needs



Cohort Design: Tips & Tricks

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- Use email domain as a proxy to tell whether they're at your institution
- Start/End of Training Program refers to the field on the Identifiers form
- Whether someone received a certain grant can be powerful
- Remember: All ANDs are processed before ORs!

Hand-Picking a Cohort

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- "Hand-Pick a Cohort" page
- Allows you to pick individuals instead of picking a trait
- Alphabetical order
- Check a name to include in the cohort

Viewing Cohorts

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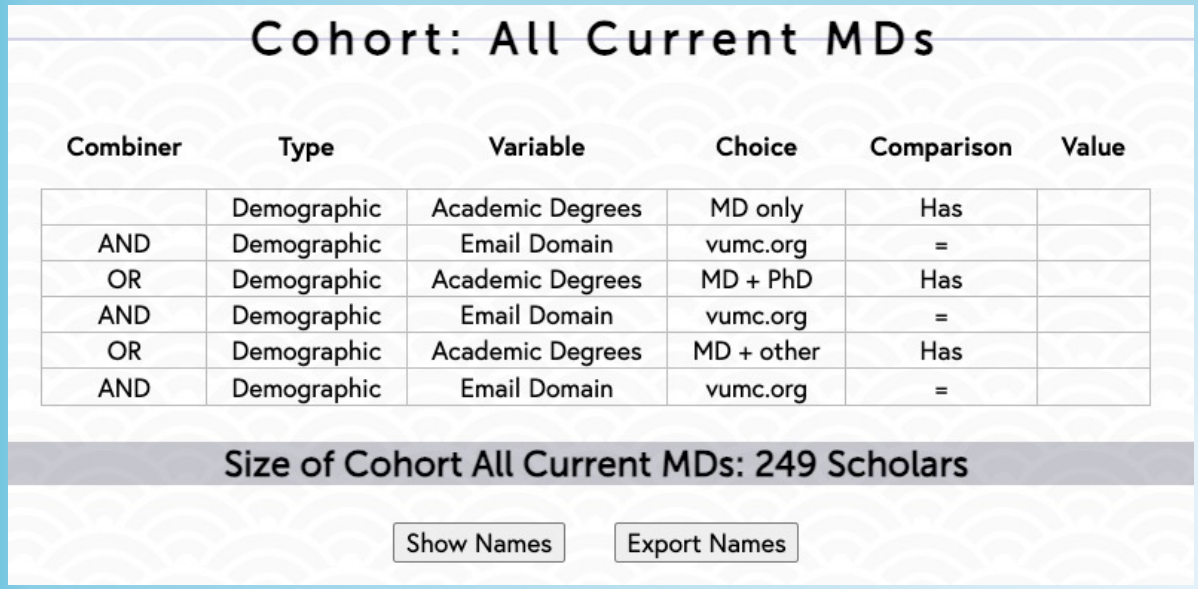

Cohort: All Current MDs

Combiner	Type	Variable	Choice	Comparison	Value
	Demographic	Academic Degrees	MD only	Has	
AND	Demographic	Email Domain	vumc.org	=	
OR	Demographic	Academic Degrees	MD + PhD	Has	
AND	Demographic	Email Domain	vumc.org	=	
OR	Demographic	Academic Degrees	MD + other	Has	
AND	Demographic	Email Domain	vumc.org	=	

Size of Cohort All Current MDs: 249 Scholars

Show Names Export Names

- Open the “View Existing Cohorts” page
- Show Names
- Export Names to a Text document

Using Cohorts

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- Cohorts are on every Flight Tracker page for data analysis
- Changing a cohort will limit the data analysis to only that sub-group of records in the cohort
  - It's as if the remaining scholars didn't exist
- Cohorts are NOT on REDCap pages [more in four slides…]

Editing Cohorts Later

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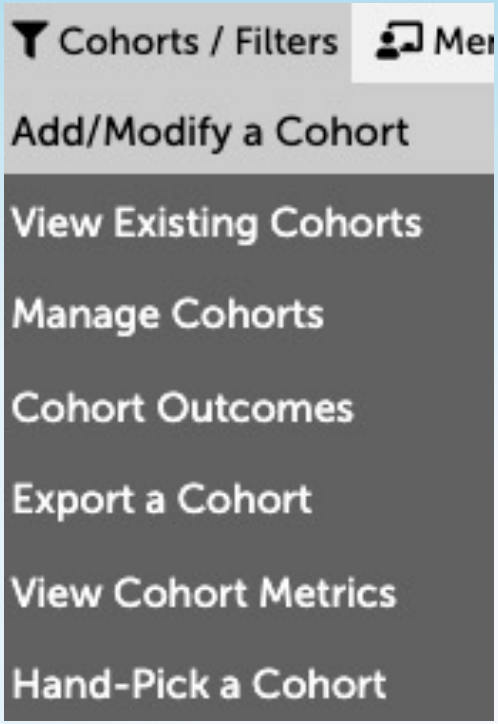
- Open the page to “Add/Modify a Cohort” or “Hand-Pick a Cohort”
- Select the prior cohort
- Modify the logic or the checkboxes
- Click save



Deleting/Renaming a Cohort

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	Cohort Size	Delete	Rename	Make Cohort Project
Last CDA >= 2015	306 Scholars	X	Rename	API Key with Import/Export Rights
Last CDA >= 2018	238 Scholars	X	Rename	API Key with Import/Export Rights
NCI	56 Scholars	X	Rename	API Key with Import/Export Rights
Female URMs	61 Scholars	X	Rename	API Key with Import/Export Rights
Active Ks	108 Scholars	X	Rename	API Key with Import/Export Rights
Current Newman	108 Scholars	X	Rename	API Key with Import/Export Rights

- Open the “Manage Cohorts” page
- The red **X** will delete the cohort
- Rename will re-title the cohort
- The API Key will create a Cohort Project [more on next slide]

Advanced: Cohort Projects

- A Cohort Project is a separate, **read-only** Flight Tracker project that contains records from only one cohort
- Flight Tracker copies a cohort's data once per week [Mondays]
- Helpful to subdivide a project so that sub-group leaders can view their data without viewing others'
- Being read-only, cohort projects do NOT need to do wrangling
- *E.g.*, the Vanderbilt Newman Society administrates several K12s, and we provide leaders with access to their own data
- *E.g.*, the Dept. of Medicine wants divisions to see their own data

Limitation: REDCap Reports

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- The one place cohorts will NOT work is in REDCap Reports
- **Workaround**: You can create your own logic in the Filter in Step 3, especially using the summary instrument
  - *E.g.*, use `summary_degrees` to filter for MDs

Recap

FLIGHT TRACKER FOR SCHOLARS

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Feedback

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What went well? What more do you want to know?

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What's Next?

Educational Videos

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- https://redcap.link/flight_tracker_ed
- Transcripts for:
  - Steps to Get Started
  - NIH Training tables
  - Scholar Portal Administration
  - Using Your Flight Tracker Profile on the Scholar Portal
  - Mentee-Mentor Agreements [**video up now!**]
- Cohorts coming next!
- As soon as rebranding happens, I aim to add videos for each of these topics
- **Are there other topics you need?** Let me know. I'm happy to prioritize your needs.

PubMed Data Pull Error: Update

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- Flight Tracker Error: “Searching PubMed for [name] returned 9999 PMIDs…” on Tuesdays
- First occurred in October, during the government shutdown
- Andrew & I think we’ve untangled the problem & found a solution
- The fix will be out in **v6.23.2**, within the next week

Happy Winter Holidays!

FLIGHT TRACKER FOR SCHOLARS

I'll send out invites for 2026 Flight Tracker meetings soon…

Support Resources

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Forum: Flight Tracker Community
Free accounts available

Monthly Troubleshooting Call
3rd Wednesday, December 17, 1pm CT

Monthly "Newbie" Call
Wednesday, December 10, 12.30pm CT

Monthly Getting Started Workshop
Friday, December 12, noon CT

Type your email in the chat for more info

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