

# Commercial Relationship Index

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# ARVO Commercial Relationships Policy

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This ARVO Commercial Relationships Policy (“Policy”) is for the purpose of disclosure and identification of potentially relevant conflicts of interest (COI). It applies to ARVO journal authors and anyone in a position to influence the content of an ARVO educational activity. The Policy is intended to clarify and simplify the reporting procedures with respect to financial interests of authors and educational activity planners, directors, presenters, and moderators in order to promote transparency related to potentially relevant COI and compliance with the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) Standards for Commercial Support.

## Rationale for Disclosure

Bias in research, presentation and publication can arise from various forms of self-interest. The desire for professional recognition is inherent in academic activity, often with the indirect fringe benefits of increased stature and authority, academic appointment or promotion, more patient referrals, higher income, more travel, or other perquisites. These potential rewards for academic success can be strong sources of bias. They are omnipresent and should not be overlooked or excused, however intangible they may be.

More tangible financial benefits can also accrue to the First Author or Co-author in some cases. The ARVO Board of Trustees believes that financial interests should not prevent presentation or publication, but that the audience is entitled to know that such interests exist. Therefore, authors of abstracts, articles and other communications published in ARVO journals, as well as Presenters at the ARVO meeting (including poster sessions) and other educational activities provided or jointly provided by ARVO are required to provide disclosure of financial interests pursuant to this Policy. Management and resolution of COI is also employed for continuing medical education (CME) activities, pursuant to ARVO’s CME Policy on Identification and Resolution of Conflicts of Interest.

## Oversight

Compliance with COI identification, resolution and disclosure for CME accredited activities, is managed by ARVO’s CME Committee on behalf of the ARVO Board of Trustees. The Commercial Relationships Committee manages disclosure procedures for all non-CME activities on behalf of the ARVO Board of Trustees. Either committee can recommend action for non-compliance, which may include disqualification. Concerns about the adequacy of disclosures in publications and presentations should be directed to the CME committee or the Commercial Relationships Committee through the ARVO Office.

## Guidelines

ARVO journal authors and individuals in a position to influence the content of an educational activity must disclose any relevant financial and other relationship(s) for themselves and/or their spouse or life partner, relevant to the subject matter of their publication or presentation. This disclosure must include the name of the organization with which a commercial relationship exists and the nature of the relationship, within the past 12 months. All disclosure information is published within the ARVO journals and communicated to education participants in advance of the start of the educational activity, and published in relation to the educational activity.

It is the responsibility of the First, Corresponding, or Presenting Author to assure that each Co-author is aware of the Policy and to list on the abstract, manuscript, or poster any relevant commercial relationships code(s). For ARVO journals, disclosures will be collected at time of submission and published with the manuscript or other communication, if accepted. For each abstract, manuscript submission and presentation, the First/Corresponding Author must also disclose the name of the organization with which a commercial relationship exists for the First Author and each Co-author. Each Paper Presenter is to orally state and display on a slide at the beginning of the presentation all relevant commercial relationship codes, as well as the name of the organization(s) with which a commercial relationship(s) exists for the First Author and each Co-author. At a poster presentation, the presenter must display the relevant commercial relationship(s) code(s) and the name of the organization(s) with which a commercial relationship(s) exists for the First Author and each Co-author. Conformity with this Policy is a requirement.

CME activity planners and directors must disclose all financial relationships and not limit disclosure to the subject of an individual presentation or publication

## Definitions

**Commercial Interest** — The ACCME defines a commercial interest as any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on patients.

**Financial Relationship** — Financial relationships are those relationships in which the individual benefits by receiving a salary, royalty, intellectual property rights, consulting fee, honoraria, ownership interest (e.g., stocks, stock options or other ownership interest, excluding diversified mutual funds), or other financial benefit. Financial benefits are usually associated with roles such as employment, management position, independent contractor (including contracted research), consulting, speaking and teaching, membership on advisory committees or review panels, board membership, and other activities from which remuneration is received, or expected. ARVO considers relationships of the person involved in the publication/education activity to include financial relationships of a spouse or partner.

**Relevant financial relationships** — Relevant financial relationships are financial relationships in any amount which occurred in the 12-month period preceding the time that the individual was asked to assume a role controlling content of the CME activity, and those which relate to the content of the publication or educational activity for which disclosure is taking place. ARVO considers financial relationships to create conflicts of interest when individuals have both a financial relationship with a commercial interest and the opportunity to affect the content about the products or services of that commercial interest through the publication or educational activity.

## Disclosure Codes Definitions

Category Code Specific Financial Interests

- F** (Financial Support) Indicates financial support received from an ACCME-defined commercial interest, in the form of research funding, grants, research materials or in-kind services (e.g., protein sequencing).
- I** (Personal Financial Interest) Indicates you are an investor in a company or competing company, including an ACCME-defined commercial interest, other than through a mutual or retirement fund.
- E** (Employment) Indicates you are an employee of an ACCME-defined commercial interest.
- C** (Consultant) Indicates you are a consultant for an ACCME-defined commercial interest.
- P** (Patent) Indicates you are an inventor/developer designated on a patent, patent application, copyright, or trade secret, whether or not the patent, copyright, etc. is presently licensed or otherwise commercialized, or could be in competition with the technology described.
- R** (Recipient) Indicates you have received gifts, honoraria, travel reimbursement, patent royalties, or any other financial compensation valued in any amount from an ACCME-defined commercial interest.
- N** (No Commercial Relationship) Indicates there is no commercial relationship relevant to the subject matter of the abstract/article/presentation.
- S** (non-remunerative) Indicates you have position(s) of influence such as officer, board member, trustee, spokesperson, etc.

Revised and Approved: Board of Trustees, April 13, 2015