

ARVO Commercial Relationships Policy

Purpose

This Commercial Relationships Policy ("Policy") establishes the reporting procedures for financial relationships of journal authors and anyone in a position to influence the content of an ARVO meeting, conference, or other educational activity including but not limited to all program committee members, presenters, panelists, moderators, activity planners, organizers, directors, and compliance staff. The Policy is intended to promote transparency related to relevant financial relationships and ensure compliance with the [Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education \(ACCME\) Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education](#).

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 Board of Trustees believes that financial relationships should not prevent presentation or publication, but that the audience is entitled to know that relationships exist if they are relevant to the subject matter being presented. 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 directly provided or jointly provided by ARVO are required to provide disclosure of financial relationships pursuant to this Policy. Procedures to identify and mitigate relevant financial relationships are also employed for accredited continuing education (CE) activities, pursuant to ARVO's CE Policy on Identification and Mitigation of Relevant Financial Relationships.

Guidelines for ARVO meetings, conferences, and educational activities

All individuals in a position to influence the content of an ARVO meeting, conference or other educational activity must disclose all personal financial relationship(s) of any amount with ACCME-defined ineligible companies that existed within the past 24 months. This group includes but is not limited to all program committee members, presenters, panelists, moderators, activity planners, organizers, directors, and compliance staff. Disclosure must include the name of the ineligible company with which a financial relationship exists and the disclosure code that matches the nature of the financial relationship.

Disclosures will be collected prior to the start of the planning process for each meeting, conference, or other educational activity. Program committee members will disclose annually throughout their term of service. Presenters will disclose prior to content development. Moderators will disclose when accepting the invitation to moderate. Substitute presenters will submit an updated disclosure form as part of the substitution request. Compliance staff and any other individuals covered by the Policy will provide disclosure prior to their participation in the activity planning or delivery.

For accredited continuing education activities, the disclosed financial relationships will be reviewed by compliance staff to assess their relevancy to the presentation (see definition section below). If relevant, the relationship(s) will be disclosed to attendees/learners and compliance staff will work with the presenters to mitigate any potential conflicts of interests resulting from the relevant relationships.

Relevant financial relationships will be communicated to attendees and education participants in advance of the start of the activity and be available within the program materials, website and/or mobile app.

Additional guidelines for Annual Meeting abstracts

For submitted abstracts, which may become accredited scientific presentations at the Annual Meeting, the First Author is usually the presenter, so they are required to disclose all financial relationships.

In addition, it is the responsibility of the First Author of an abstract to obtain and submit financial relationship disclosures for each co-author before the abstract can be submitted. Co-author disclosures should only include those relevant to the abstract. Co-authors that are asked to serve as a substitute presenter will be required to update their disclosures to include all financial relationships with ACCME-defined ineligible companies before the substitution request will be processed.

Compliance staff will prepare a disclosure slide for each accredited session that displays the relevant financial relationships for each presenter and moderator assigned to the session. This disclosure will include the name of the ineligible company(ies) and the associated disclosure code(s). Presenters and moderators are to state orally their relevant relationships prior to the start of the session or their presentation/presentation recording, as appropriate. For poster presentations, staff will include a list of the submitted disclosures with the poster abstract.

Guidelines for ARVO journal authors

For ARVO journals, it is the responsibility of the First/Corresponding author to include a list of financial relationships relevant to the abstract, manuscript or other submission for all authors at the time of submission.

Oversight

Compliance with the Policy for all ARVO meetings, conferences, and other education activities and oversight of the procedures to identify and mitigate relevant financial relationships for accredited continuing education (CE) activities is managed by the Continuing Medical Education (CME) Committee on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

Compliance with the Policy within ARVO journals is managed by each journal's editorial board and editor-in-chief on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

Breach of policy

Conformity with this Policy is required without exception. For meetings, conferences, and educational activities, noncompliance will result in the removal of the individual from any role that could potentially influence the content of the activity such as serving on a program or planning committee or presenting at the activity. For journal submissions and publications, noncompliance will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Any attendee of an educational activity or reader of a journal publication may report an

actual or potential breach of this policy by contacting Education Staff, education@arvo.org or Journal Staff, journals@arvo.org, as applicable. Reports will be kept confidential and investigated promptly.

Definitions

Ineligible company

The ACCME defines an ineligible company as those whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

Financial relationship

Financial relationships are those relationships in which the individual receives 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 (any amount). Financial benefits are usually associated with roles such as employment/owner, 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.

Relevant financial relationships

Relevant financial relationships are financial relationships in any amount with an ineligible company which occurred in the 24-month period preceding the time that the individual was asked to assume a role influencing or controlling content of the accredited CE activity, and the content of the publication or educational activity is related to the products of an ineligible company with which the individual has a financial relationship.

Financial relationship disclosure code definitions

C (Consultant/Contractor) Indicates you are a consultant or independent contractor (including contracted research) for an ACCME-defined ineligible company.

E (Employment) Indicates you are an employee of an ACCME-defined ineligible company.

F (Financial Support) Indicates financial support received from an ACCME-defined ineligible company, in the form of research funding (even if the institution receives the research grant and manages the funds), grants, research materials or in-kind services (e.g., sample analysis).

I (Personal Financial Interest) Indicates you are an investor in a company or competing company, including an ACCME-defined ineligible company, other than through a mutual or retirement fund.

N (No Financial Relationship) Indicates there is no financial relationship to disclose.

O (Owner/Co-Owner/Founder/Co-Founder): Indicates you are an owner, co-owner, founder and/or co-founder of an ACCME-defined ineligible company.

P (Patent) Indicates you are an inventor/developer designated on a patent, patent application, copyright, or trade secret, whether 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 in any amount from an ACCME-defined ineligible company.

S (non-remunerative) Indicates you have position(s) of influence such as officer, board member, trustee, spokesperson, etc.

Approved: Board of Trustees May 2, 1991

Revised and approved by the Board of Trustees: May 7, 1992; April 30, 1994; May 9, 1998; May 4, 2000; June 22, 2006; April 30, 2008; June 23, 2009; June 9, 2011; April 13, 2015; October 16, 2019, September 20, 2021, October 4, 2021