

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY
FOR
THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF RADIOLOGY**

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The American College of Radiology (ACR) has the fiduciary responsibility to hold the public trust in fulfilling its charitable mission. ACR meets this responsibility in abiding by applicable laws and regulations, and striving to foster professionalism and the integrity of professional judgment in support of its core purpose to serve patients and society by empowering members to advance the practice, science, and professions of radiological care. The purpose of this policy is to identify both actual and potential conflicts of interest (COIs), including perceptions, to ensure that ACR properly manages such conflicts. Disclosed actual, potential, or perceived conflicts do not necessarily disqualify an ACR interested person from serving on an ACR body or from participating in an activity or in making a decision for the ACR.

II. SCOPE

This policy and its implementation plans applies to all COI matters involving the ACR and its affiliates including but not limited to the American College of Radiology Association, the American College of Radiology Foundation, the American Institute for Radiologic Pathology (herein referred to as ACR), and all interested persons as defined below.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST** – A COI occurs whenever an interested person or someone with whom they have a close personal relationship has a direct or indirect interest or relationship, financial or otherwise, which may conflict or be inconsistent with the interested person’s duties, responsibilities, or independent judgment in any transaction or matter involving ACR.
2. **INTERESTED PERSON** – Any officer, chancellor or member of an ACR commission, committee or task force, or persons responsible for public or private research activities related to ACR, or any other person serving in an official ACR capacity.

Whereas certain interested persons are further defined in this policy as ACR Leadership and Key Persons, this group includes officers, members of the Board of Chancellors (BOC), Board members of ACR affiliates, Council Steering Committee members, and the Editor-in-Chief and Deputy Editor of the Journal of the American College of Radiology (JACR). The BOC Chair or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may from time to time identify others as ACR Key Persons for purposes of this policy.

Councilors or Alternate Councilors not acting in any other official ACR capacity are not deemed to be interested persons.

3. **CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP** – Any relationship with family members or any other relative or any other person close to you in a situation that may create an actual, potential or perceived COI. These relationships include:
 - Spouse
 - Domestic partner
 - Daughter
 - Son
 - Step-daughter
 - Step-son
 - Siblings
 - Parents
 - Grandparents
 - Grandchildren
 - Step-parents
 - Mothers and fathers-in-law
 - Fiancé

4. **FINANCIAL INTEREST** – Financial relationships of interested persons or those of their close personal relationships with any entity related to or doing business with ACR or to any activities associated with research, practice, or education, in the fields of diagnostic radiology, radiation oncology, interventional radiology, nuclear medicine and medical physics. Financial interests include such things as:
 - Salary
 - Consulting fees
 - In-kind donations
 - Honoraria
 - Speaker’s bureau payments
 - Equity interest
 - Ownership or intellectual property rights, including copyrights, patents, and royalties
 - Research grant funding
 - Reimbursement for travel or other expenses
 - Investment income such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds
 - Other payments viewed as compensation
5. **COMMERCIAL INTEREST** – any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients.¹
6. **REVIEW PANEL** – Individual ACR members and staff persons whom ACR has charged to administer this policy.
7. **COMPENSATION** – Direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors in aggregate received by interested persons and their close personal relationships.

IV. POLICY STATEMENT

All ACR interested persons must complete annually, and update if there are any changes to prior disclosures, a COI Questionnaire through ACR’s electronic system. **Interested persons must comply with this Policy to participate in ACR activities.** ACR may allow interested persons to provide COI disclosure information submitted through third party processes where noted in the following implementation plans.

V. MANAGEMENT OF POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Review Panels will use information disclosed under this policy to identify and manage actual, potential, or perceived COIs in accordance with this policy and the implementation plans described below. All affirmative disclosures will initially be reviewed by the ACR Legal and Compliance Review Panel who will decide whether disclosures require: 1) no further action, 2) implementation of a COI management plan, 3) disqualification from certain ACR activities, or 4) referral to a member-based subject matter expert Review Panel. Interested persons may appeal a decision made by the Legal and Compliance Review Panel. Subject matter expert Review Panel decisions are final.

VI. RESTRICTIONS ON CERTAIN COIS

Disclosure and management of actual, potential and perceived COIs and does not create a presumption of impropriety in the existence of these disclosures. An actual, potential, perceived COI may not necessarily disqualify an ACR interested person from participating in an activity or in making a decision for ACR. Under this policy, an interested person has a

¹ Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education. Definition of a Commercial Interest. ACCME Web site. <http://www.accme.org/requirements/accreditation-requirements-cme-providers/policies-and-definitions/definition-commercial-interest>. Accessed April 10, 2018.

disqualifying conflict only if a Review Panel determines that one exists according to procedures established by ACR.

VII. COMPLIANCE

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from ACR service. Noncompliance includes failure to disclose an actual, potential, or perceived conflict that arises during the course of service to the ACR, submission of an incomplete, inaccurate or misleading disclosure, failure to report any changes to an already disclosed actual, potential, or perceived conflict or the failure to comply with a management plan.

VIII. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR ACR LEADERSHIP AND KEY PERSONS

To exemplify ACR's core purpose, ACR Leadership and Key Persons must ensure the integrity, independence, and objectivity of all ACR activities by always acting in ACR's best interest and exercising sound judgment, free from personal interests or divided loyalties. ACR Leadership and Key Persons must maintain a high standard of loyalty and fairness to ACR and avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest in carrying out their ACR responsibilities. ACR Leadership and Key Persons must avoid using their position with ACR for personal gain or advantage, or to obtain a favored status with any group.

Therefore, ACR Leadership and Key Persons must complete annually, and update if there are any changes to prior disclosures, a COI Questionnaire through ACR's electronic system. ACR Leadership and Key Persons must disclose financial and other interests and relationships to identify actual, potential, or perceived conflicts. Disclosures must extend to interests in, and relationships with, any individual or entity that may be involved (real or perceived) in matters affecting ACR. In addition, ACR Leadership and Key Persons must disclose service (with or without compensation) as an officer, director, or trustee of any professional or advocacy organization relating to science or healthcare.

Personal and business-related speaking engagements (including lectures at educational institutions, presentations at medical society or association meetings, or participation on panels) must not reflect adversely on ACR, nor should they give rise to a conflict of interest. ACR Leadership and Key Persons must disclose their ACR affiliation to the sponsoring entity and intended audience when providing written or oral presentations (personal or business-related). For personal written or oral presentations that are not related to ACR activities, it should be clear that you are representing yourself and not ACR. Such outside activities should not entail disclosure of ACR's proprietary or confidential information.

As with speaking engagements, outside business activities must not compete with or reflect adversely on ACR or give rise to a conflict of interest. ACR Leadership and Key Persons must disclose service as a board member (paid or unpaid) of another organization. ACR Leadership and Key Persons may only serve as a board member of another organization which may have an actual, potential, or perceived COI with ACR, if an approved management plan is in place.

IX. CONFLICT OF INTEREST IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR ACR PRACTICE PARAMETERS, TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND APPROPRIATENESS CRITERIA AND ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES (collectively referred to as “Parameter Activities”)

ACR promotes the development of parameter activities on consensus building and scientific evidence in a manner that minimizes the risk of actual or perceived bias.

Therefore, ACR will not permit corporate sponsorship, educational grants, charitable contributions, support of research grants, or other direct corporate support of parameter development activities or their updates. ACR will not permit company support for the printing, publication, and distribution of parameter activities or their updates.

A particular company’s support of ACR’s overall mission-based activities is not considered direct support of parameter activity development.

ACR may decide not to permit committee/panel members with a COI to draft text or vote on committee/panel recommendations.

ACR will require that all Parameter development committee or panel members are free of unmanaged COIs relevant to the subject matter of the Parameter.

ACR may allow interested persons under this implementation plan to provide COI disclosure information submitted through third party processes.

X. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION (CME) ACTIVITIES, EDUCATIONAL GRANTS, AND MEETINGS

Since its inception, ACR has maintained a tradition of scientific integrity and objectivity in its educational activities. As an accredited provider of continuing medical education (CME) for physicians, ACR offers CME in accordance with the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) Standards for Commercial Support.

Therefore, in order to preserve this integrity and objectivity, all individuals participating as directors, planners, reviewers, speakers, moderators, faculty, authors, staff, and editors in an ACR educational activity and/or scientific publication, or an activity jointly sponsored by ACR, must participate in the ACR annual COI process. COI disclosures are not intended to prevent individuals with relevant financial relationships from participating in CME activities.

Additionally, ACR requires that participants in all CME certified ACR educational activities including but not limited to media-written, video, web or live lectures or discussions must be informed, before their participation, of the individual contributor’s relevant financial relationships, or the fact that none exist, with commercial interests producing, marketing, reselling, or distributing healthcare goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients. ACCME defines “relevant financial relationships” as financial relationships in any amount occurring within the past 12 months that may create a conflict of interest. COI disclosures may be made public in connection with all ACCME activities and published works. ACR intends that such relationships be identified openly to participants in all CME certified ACR educational activities so that they may form their own judgments about the presentation of materials and the presence of commercial bias with full disclosure of the facts.

When a non-ACR-related individual is invited to participate in an ACR sponsored or co-sponsored activity, ACR will provide access to its COI policy for the individual to review and complete a COI Questionnaire through its electronic system prior to participation in the activity. As an additional condition of participation, each contributor must attest that his/her presentation and/or writings are based on the best available scientific evidence and will not promote a commercial interest.

ACR will retain control over the use of educational grants and implement safeguards designed to ensure that educational programs are non-promotional and free from commercial influence and bias. ACR will not solicit vendors' suggestions about program topics, speakers, or content. ACR will prohibit presenters from using company controlled presentation materials, and from using slides with company logos.

Commercial Support for CME Activities

Where the purpose of an ACR CME session is to demonstrate or train attendees in the safe and effective use of a particular drug, device, service or therapy, a balanced view of therapeutic options must be made available. Therefore, no single product or service will be over represented in the education activity when other equal but competing products or services are available for inclusion. If no other competing products or services are available, the information may be presented with a note stating that it is a new device.

A commercial interest shall not provide gifts or travel expenses to either speakers or attendees/participants in CME certified ACR educational activities. The ACR may choose to co-sponsor an educational program with a commercial interest but will not offer CME for this program. ACR may choose to accept an educational grant from a commercial interest to support a CME program, however, a commercial interest may not provide ACR with recommendations or services concerning instructors, authors or participants or other education matters, including content, from a commercial interest as conditions of an education grant.

XI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR JOURNAL MANUSCRIPTS

The mission of the Journal of the American College of Radiology (JACR, or "the Journal") is to fill the gap for information on health services research and policy, clinical practice management, training and education, and leadership. In order to maintain public trust in the scientific process and the credibility of JACR published articles, ACR requires that all COIs pertaining to the planning, implementation, writing, peer review, editing, and publication of scientific work are disclosed according to the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) standards.

Therefore, the JACR requires all authors to disclose any conflicts of interest on the ICMJE form at the time of manuscript submission.²

XII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR INDUSTRY RELATIONSHIPS

Industry collaborations can be a productive driver of scientific discovery and technological innovation, and have been a major historical contributor to the translation of discoveries and

² For full-text online access, visit JACR's website at <http://www.jacr.org/content/authorinfo>.

innovations into the clinic with a major positive impact on scientific advancement and improvements in public health, wellness, and productivity. However, the public is appropriately concerned that such relationships, in certain cases, have the potential to introduce bias into discoveries and patient care and can thus negatively affect the public good. Since 2013, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have mandated that medical device and pharmaceutical manufacturers report their payments to physicians and teaching hospitals, which are collected in the publically available “Open Payments” database.

In order to maintain the public trust, manage the perception and true presence of COIs, and preserve the integrity of the scientific process. All interested persons who have collaborations with industry must annually complete a COI Questionnaire through ACR’s electronic system.

XIII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

The development of new devices and pharmaceuticals and increasingly sensitive and quantitative methodologies for the diagnosis, monitoring, and treatment of human disease is dependent on partnerships among industry, academia, and government. Collaborative academic-industrial research relationships are especially vital to continued progress in technology-driven fields like radiology. It is also essential that these relationships are guided by integrity, transparency, and consideration for the public trust. By disclosing actual, potential, and/or perceived COIs before beginning research activities, the researcher and ACR can work together to preserve public trust in the integrity of such activities and prevent outcomes that may be harmful to either party or the public.

ACR participates in numerous federally supported grants through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other federal agencies. ACRIN, RTOG Foundation, IROC and other ACR research activities receiving funding through NIH must comply with federal COI requirements.³ All federally mandated disclosures will be captured through the annual ACR COI process as required in this Policy.

Therefore, all interested persons who participate in research activities on behalf of ACR will be required to disclose all private (non-federally supported) significant financial interests and efforts related to research through the ACR Financial Conflict of Interest in Research Policy⁴. These include, e.g. serving as key personnel on research grants and contracts, serving on scientific advisory boards, and personal external biomedical research relationships in which they hold royalties, equity, or licensing interests. For human research sponsored by ACR, the principal investigator shall agree to abide by the human research review requirements of his/her home institution, and shall disclose any patent, equity or licensing interest in associated technology. ACR interested persons thus shall uphold the integrity of the research and protection of human subjects.

ACR may allow interested persons under this implementation plan to provide COI disclosure information submitted through third party processes.

³ The Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), 42 CFR, Part 50, Subpart F, “Promoting Objectivity in Research”, is applicable to research funded by the Public Health Service (PHS) of the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

⁴ Form, ACR ADMIN P100 AF B - ACR Confidential Financial Disclosure (Version 2, January 2013) is available at <https://www.acrin.org/RESEARCHERS/POLICIES/CONFLICTOFINTERESTPOLICY>.