

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Approved by the Board of Regents November 10, 2016

The American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (“ACAAI”) is dedicated to advancing the study of allergy, asthma, and immunology. To accomplish that mission, ACAAI provides support, directly or indirectly, for a variety of activities in the areas of research and education. The integrity of ACAAI, and the activities it undertakes, depends on the avoidance of conflicts of interest, or even the appearance of such conflicts, by the individuals involved in those activities.

At the same time, ACAAI recognizes that the elected and appointed leaders of ACAAI, as well as other individuals acting on its behalf, also have significant professional, business and personal interests and relationships. Therefore, ACAAI has determined that the most appropriate manner in which to address actual, potential or apparent conflicts of interest is initially through liberal disclosure of any relationship or interest which might be construed as resulting in such a conflict. Disclosure under this Policy should not be construed as creating a presumption of impropriety or as automatically precluding someone from participating in an ACAAI activity or decision-making process. Rather, it reflects ACAAI’s recognition of the many factors that can influence one’s judgment and a desire to make as much information as possible available to other participants in ACAAI-related matters.

**Disclosure**

Any individual involved in an ACAAI activity or decision-making process shall disclose any conflicting or potentially conflicting personal, professional or business interest he or she may have, directly or indirectly, with the affected activity or decision. Potentially conflicting interests may relate to ACAAI’s programs and services (e.g., educational courses, research grants, journal matters) or its operations (e.g., contracts with third parties).

In particular, participants in ACAAI-related activities are obligated to disclose the positions they hold or relationships they have within ACAAI and with other organizations or entities that may conflict, directly or indirectly, with their ACAAI activities. They also have an obligation to disclose any financial interest in, or other relationship with, an entity having a “commercial interest” in the activity. A commercial interest may exist not only where the entity’s products or services are under consideration by ACAAI, but also where the entity’s products or services are in competition or potential competition with those under consideration. By the disclosure of such interests, the Board of Regents or its designee(s) will be in a better position to determine whether the participant may have an interest in conflict with the interests of ACAAI.

ACAAI primarily is concerned with potential conflicts of interest involving those individuals participating directly in ACAAI-related activities. Potential conflicts of interest also may arise, however, if an individual with whom the participant directly shares income (e.g., a spouse, minor child, or business partner) or a third party whose interest may affect the participant’s decision-making (e.g., a sibling or adult child) has an interest in, or relationship with, an entity having a commercial interest in the activity or matter under consideration. As a result, participants should disclose not only their own interests or relationships but also those of their spouse or minor children. In addition,

participants should disclose interests or relationships held by others that may affect their decision-making, but only to the extent they are aware of such information. Participants are under no obligation to determine the nature of every interest held by a sibling, business partner, etc. if they have no independent knowledge of such interests.

Comparable principles apply to participants' obligations to disclose research grants received by the institution(s) with which they are affiliated. In addition to grants received for their own research, participants are presumed to know what grants have been received by other members of their department engaged in allergy, asthma, or immunology research. Therefore, those grants also should be disclosed. In contrast, participants have no affirmative obligation to ascertain the nature of grants received by others in their institution. If they are aware of such grants, however, those also should be disclosed.

In general, participants should err on the side of disclosure if in doubt as to whether it is required under the Policy. Examples of relationships or interests which should be disclosed include:

Positions in ACAAI - All positions currently held or sought in ACAAI (e.g., Board of Regents or committee member, officer, editor, course or publication contributor), as well as any other current or proposed relationship with ACAAI (e.g., service provider, paid consultant) must be disclosed.

Relationships with Other Organizations/Entities - Any leadership role in, or other relationship with, another organization or entity (e.g., board member, committee member, advisor, journal contributor) directly or indirectly related to ACAAI or allergy, asthma, or immunology must be disclosed.

Employment - Any current or proposed full- or part-time employment, as well as any employment within the previous twelve months, must be disclosed.

Consultancies - Any current or proposed consulting arrangements, as well as any consulting performed or paid for within the previous twelve months, must be disclosed.

Royalties - Any royalties or similar payments to an individual, or entity, that are currently being paid or have been paid (in the past twelve months) or are about to be paid, must be disclosed.

Ownership Interests - Any ownership interests (including stock options but excluding indirect investments through mutual funds and the like) in a company, must be disclosed. In addition, any other ownership interests in an entity having a commercial interest in an activity or matter under consideration by ACAAI must be disclosed.

Honoraria - Honoraria or other compensation, paid or about to be paid, for seminar presentations, speeches, or appearances must be disclosed for the previous twelve months.

Research Funding - Receipt of funds for conducting research must be disclosed, including research funding where the institution gets the grant and manages the funds and the person is the principal or named investigator on the grant.

### **Disclosure Form**

Integral to the implementation of the Conflict of Interest Policy is the ACAAI Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form, a copy of which is attached, which shall be considered a part of the Conflict of Interest Policy and must be submitted by any individual participating in an ACAAI activity. Initially, a participant's obligation to report actual, potential or apparent conflicts is discharged by completing the Disclosure Form. Participants remain under a continuing obligation, however, to report such conflicts as they arise, including those that were not reported on the Disclosure Form, but which later become relevant to the ACAAI activity in which they are involved.

For example, an individual appointed to serve as editor of an ACAAI publication is not expected to anticipate all the conflict situations that may arise during the course of that appointment. If, however, the editor is asked to review an article submitted for publication that could affect, directly or indirectly, an entity in which the editor has a financial or other interest, the editor has an obligation to disclose the potential conflict to the Board of Regents, or its designee(s), before becoming involved in a review of the article.

Disclosure Forms shall be kept on file at the ACAAI Executive Office for a period of six (6) years, unless otherwise determined by the Board of Regents.

### **Implementation Procedures**

All participants in ACAAI-related activities must comply with the ACAAI Conflict of Interest Policy. It is the responsibility of the disinterested members of the Board of Regents or designated committee chairs, editors, etc. to apply and abide by this Policy. And, inasmuch as the Policy is stated in general terms, they should use their best judgment in doing so.

In order to facilitate implementation of the Conflict of Interest Policy, the Board of Regents or its designee(s) shall determine, based on the disclosure form and other relevant information, when an individual engaged in, or about to engage in, an ACAAI-related activity or other matter under consideration has an actual, potential, or apparent conflict of interest requiring some response by ACAAI. Specifically, subject to the procedures set forth herein, the Board of Regents or its designee(s) may require any action they deem appropriate, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Disclosure of the interest to the other participants in the decision- or policy-making body (e.g., committee, editorial board).
- (2) Written and, in some cases, oral disclosure of the interest (e.g., to an audience receiving the results of clinical research or at scientific or educational sessions).

- (3) Recusal from voting on a matter and limitation of the individual's participation only to the provision of factual information of benefit to the group discussion.
- (4) Complete recusal from a portion of a meeting or from other consideration of the subject matter.
- (5) Replacement of the individual in the affected position or activity.

In most instances, disclosure of the conflicting or potentially conflicting interest will itself suffice to protect ACAAI's interests. In other words, once such a conflict is fully disclosed to the relevant parties, the Board generally will be able to evaluate the possible influence of the disclosed interest. However, in other situations, disclosure alone is not deemed to be sufficient. In situations where disclosure does not adequately deal with actual or potential problems, additional action, including denial of participation in the affected activity or consideration of the matter, may be necessary. In all such situations, the Board of Regents or its designee(s) will weigh all of the facts and circumstances and determine what is in the best interests of ACAAI.

The Board of Regents has charged the Executive Committee with having primary responsibility for interpreting and applying this Conflict of Interest Policy. As such, the Executive Committee will regularly review all conflict of interest disclosure forms and will be available to provide advice to ACAAI committees, task forces, members, or staff on managing conflicts of interest including, without limitation, policies, practices, and procedures on disclosure, recusal, and/or denial of participation.