



CDRF CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

This policy provides guidelines for a code of conduct for everyone involved in the CDRF's research grant programme, including:

- Scientific and medical advisers, including members of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)
- External reviewers
- Applicants
- Trustees
- Staff

This policy aims to minimise potential conflicts of interest and to protect the CDRF and its employees from any perception, whether real or not, that the external interests and affiliations of its members could interfere with their ability to pursue the charity's objectives.

Definition:

- A conflict of interest is defined as any financial, personal, professional, or institutional interest of a Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) member or external peer reviewer that may, if undeclared, expose the CDRF's SAC to accusations of bias and inappropriate influence in peer review assessments, funding recommendations, or scientific advice to the CDRF.
- The notion of conflict of interest does not imply immoral action. Conflicts may arise from the facts rather than from fraudulent motivations. They do not inherently cause harm; instead, the ambiguity and potential for damage raise concern.
- SAC members and external peer reviewers are not required to declare all associations they may have outside the grant-giving functions of the CDRF capital. Individuals should report any relevant interests when dealing with or discussing a relevant matter.
- Relevant interests may include both financial and non-financial interests. The test of relevance is whether the interest could reasonably be considered to affect how an individual performs their duties. The test does not assess whether the interest will influence an individual's actions, but rather whether the public might reasonably believe that this may be the case.
- It is up to the individual, whether a SAC member or external peer reviewer, to determine if a conflict of interest may exist and, if so, to declare it. When considering such matters, one must take into account how things might appear to others. In all cases, the individual should err on the side of caution, declaring an interest if there is any possibility that a conflict of interest may exist.

Examples of conflict:

- **Financial conflicts** include any individual with a direct or indirect financial interest in a grant application submitted to the CDRF.
- **Applicant and co-applicant(s) conflict** - anyone listed as the main applicant or as a co-applicant(s) on a grant application submitted to the CDRF.
- **Collaborator conflict** - anyone listed as a collaborator, or who has recently collaborated with the named principal applicant and/or co-applicants in a grant application submitted to the CDRF.
- **Same institution conflict** - anyone who is employed at the same institution as the main applicant or co-applicant(s) listed on a grant application submitted to the CDRF.
- **Competition conflict** refers to any individual with interests that compete with a grant application under review, which could lead to a significant decision bias in their commitment to the CDRF.



Code of Conduct:

As a condition of participation, reviewers agree that documents and correspondence related to applications for funds and funding are strictly confidential and therefore:

- It must not be disseminated.
- Should not be discussed with anyone else during, before, or after the review process.
- If a reviewer has a vested interest - whether organisational, collaborative, personal, or otherwise - in the outcome of a grant application, they must declare it. The reviewer must refrain from evaluating the application or engaging in any discussions regarding the funding decision.
- Feedback to candidates, whether successful or unsuccessful, will be provided by the CDRF. SAC members and external peer reviewers must not, under any circumstances, give feedback directly to the candidate.
- Any printouts should remain secure and be disposed of properly after the decision has been made.
- Reviewers have the right to expect that their comments will be kept confidential by both the CDRF staff and other members of the review panel.
- Grant applicants will receive anonymised feedback.
- While the membership of the CDRF's SAC will be publicly available, the identities of reviewers for specific grants will remain confidential.

Resolving conflicts of interest.

- The CDRF recognises that most conflicts or potential conflicts will relate to a specific issue and, as such, will not impose any long-term restrictions on an individual's ability to work with the charity.
- In a small number of cases, significant conflicts of interest may arise that compromise an individual's ability to continue in their position as a reviewer. When such a situation concerns a member of the SAC or an external reviewer, the matter will be discussed by the Chair of the SAC along with a CDRF staff member. If agreement cannot be reached through this process, the case will be referred to the SAC Chair, whose decision should be considered final.
- In instances where an individual is uncertain about whether a conflict of interest exists, they should report this to the CDRF. The CDRF will discuss the matter with the individual as needed and will report to the Chair of the SAC, who will determine the appropriate course of action.
- If a person is concerned about a potential conflict of interest involving another member of the review committee, they should bring the issue to the Chair of the SAC.

Updating the Policy.

The CDRF will aim to review the policy every two years in consultation with the Board of Trustees.

I have read and agree to the COI policy.

Signed

Print Name

Date

Policy last updated: April 2025