



The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Charitable Trust

Conflicts of Interest Policy

This policy sets out ways of working to mitigate and manage conflicts of interest (COI) in order to protect the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Charitable Trust (CSPCT) and those who work for it, from any perception, real or otherwise, that the external interests and affiliations of its committee members might interfere with their ability to work towards the furtherance of the charity's objectives.

All trustees have a legal duty to act only in the best interests of their charity. This policy sets out the appropriate steps to take in identifying, reporting and managing a COI in line with the Charity Commission's guidance document, 'Conflicts of interest: a guide for charity trustees'.

A COI is defined as any situation in which personal interests or loyalties could, or could be seen to; prevent an individual from making a decision only in the best interests of the charity.

This policy relates to the CSPCT's Scientific Panel, Education Awards Panel, Trustees, CSPCT officers, external referees, external reviewers and applicants.

1. Declaration of interests on appointment to the Trust Board or Panel

1.1 All panel members and trustees are obliged to disclose their interests on appointment to the charity and annually thereafter.

1.2 All trustees, panel members and peer reviewers have an individual personal responsibility to declare COI which affect them as soon as they become perceived

1.3 If an individual is concerned about a possible COI involving another member of a funding panel or trustee, then he or she should raise this with the panel / Chair of Trustees or CSPCT officer.

1.4 A register of interests will be kept by the charity (appendix 1).

1.5 Interests, which should be disclosed, include:

- a) Business interests which may cause the trustee potential financial or measurable benefit directly or indirectly through a connected persons such as:
- Equity interests (if worth £10,000 or more, or more than 1% of the total issued capital) in enterprises with involvement in pharmaceuticals, healthcare, biotech or related areas, or in any other enterprise that may have a real or perceived interest in the work of the charity. Third party investments (e.g. ISAs) should be held exempt from this.
 - Consultancies and other external appointments (paid and unpaid) with involvement in pharmaceuticals, healthcare, biotech or related areas, together with details of any remuneration or other benefits arising from these.
- b) Personal interests in which a conflict of loyalty or duty to another person or organisation could prevent the trustee from making a decision only in the best interests of the charity. Such as:
- The body that appointed them to the charity
 - The membership or section of the charity that appointed them to trusteeship
 - Another organisation, such as their employer
 - Another charity of which they are trustee
 - A member of their family
 - Another connected person or organisation

2. Managing a conflict of interest: Trustee Board

2.1 Trustees must consider the COI, record their rationale, and decision on how to best manage the conflict.

2.2 Trustees may decide to remove the conflict by:

- Not pursuing a course of action
- Proceeding with the issue in a different way so that a COI does not arise, for example by asking the conflicted individual to withdraw from relevant meetings, discussions, decision making and votes
- Not appointing a particular trustee/s or securing a resignation

3. Benefits to Trustees

3.1 Trustees can only benefit from their charity where there is an explicit authority in place before any decision concerning the trustee is made.

3.2 Benefits may include:

- Sell, loan or lease charity assets to a charity trustee
- Acquire, borrow or lease assets from a trustee for the charity
- Pay a trustee for carrying out their trustee role
- Pay a trustee for carrying out a separate paid post within the charity, even if that trustee has recently resigned as a trustee
- Pay a trustee, or a person or company closely connected to a trustee, for providing a service to the charity – this covers anything that would be regarded as a service and includes legal, accountancy or consultancy services
- Employ a trustees spouse or other close relative at the charity
- Make a grant to a service user trustee or a service user who is a close relative of a trustee
- Allow service user trustee to influence service provision to their exclusive advantage

3.3 The law says trustees can only benefit from their charity where there is explicit authority obtained in advance

3.4 Authority can come from:

- A clause in the charities governing document
- A statutory provision such as the power in the charity act which allow charities, in some circumstances to pay trustees for additional services they provide to the charity over and above normal trustee duties
- The commission
- The court

4. Preventing conflicts of interest: reviewing applications

4.1 Applicants

4.1.1. All applications are considered confidential by the Charitable Trust; this includes applications for awards and for direct funding.

4.1.2 All applications to the Educational Awards Panel are marked anonymously, with any identifying information removed from the application form (excluding place of education) prior to marking.

4.1.3 CSPCT officers will not disclose or discuss the content of any application submitted with any individuals outside the Trust except with peer reviewers.

4.1.4 Individuals will not review applications where there is a known COI. Guidance for how panel members may handle conflicts can be found in section 5.

4.1.5 Applicants should not, under any circumstances, directly approach members of the CSPCT Scientific Panel or CSPCT Trustees in connection with their (or another's) research application before funding decisions have been made and applicants notified.

4.2 Panel members and Trustees

4.2.1 The identities of Trustees and panel members (including panel observers) is not considered confidential. Names and affiliations of Trustees and panel members may be published on the CSP website and in other relevant documents.

4.2.2 Trustees, panel members, and external referees can expect their comments to be treated in confidence by CSPCT officers. Feedback provided to applicants will be anonymised for both successful and unsuccessful applicants.

4.2.3 No discussions regarding CSPCT applications should occur between Trustees or panel members except during the business of the meeting.

4.2.4 Panel members and serving Trustees should not, under any circumstances provide feedback directly to the candidate before the applicants have been notified of the outcome of the funding round through agreed channels.

4.2.5 Panel members and Trustees should refuse any direct applicant approaches for information or feedback on how a particular judgement was reached before the notification to applicants has been formally made.

4.2.6 On occasion, named members of a panel may provide specific feedback at the request of an applicant, if a particular issue arises and it is deemed reasonable and fair to do so. In these instances, the panel Chair will make such declarations.

4.3 External/Peer reviewers

4.3.1 Peer reviewer identities are not disclosed to applicants but are disclosed to panel members, except where there is a COI.

4.3.2 Peer reviewers should be aware that their reviews will be shared with the applicants. This feedback will be anonymised. Peer review scores will also be disclosed to the authors of the application, if requested. Again, these will be anonymised.

5. Identifying and Managing conflicts of interest: Scenarios and procedures

5.1 It is essential that the personal and institutional interests of those involved in reviewing applications do not influence the decision-making process. All those involved share responsibility for ensuring this. Accordingly, it is important that Trustees, panel members or observers and peer reviewers are aware of what constitutes a potential or actual COI as set out in this policy.

5.2 Trustees and panel members are expected to declare any potential or actual COI relating to individual funding decisions to the panel/Board Officer before the meeting wherein they will be discussed, or during the meeting as soon as the existence of a conflict becomes apparent.

5.3 Panel members have a responsibility to return, or to confirm destroyed, any documents they receive related to an application for which they are confirmed as conflicted. Panel members must declare a COI in the following scenarios:

5.3.1 Where they are the applicant / co-applicant / supervisor

- i. When a Trustee or panel member is an applicant, co-applicant or supervisor, s/he must declare an interest and withdraw from any consideration of that application. That member does not receive documents pertaining to the application, learn the identity of its referees, receive its referees' reports, and does not score the application. He or she must retire from the meeting when the application is assessed. Details of discussion of that application must be removed from any papers the individual in question receives.
- ii. Where the Chair of the panel is an applicant, co-applicant or supervisor on a grant application, s/he must declare an interest and should not be involved in chairing discussions regarding that award round. The Vice-Chair will chair the meeting in these instances to prevent any undue influence. In the absence of the Vice-Chair, the panel will elect another of its members to Chair.
- iii. They may be told the outcome of the discussion at the meeting but must wait for the formal written outcome letter from the CSPCT before sharing

this decision with anyone outside the meeting. Assessors' comments (both internal and external) will not be available to the panel member concerned, either within their agenda papers or as tabled papers.

5.3.2 Where they are a collaborator

Active collaborators in the proposed research are also considered conflicted and must follow the procedure as outlined in 5.3.1. Historical collaboration i.e. a collaboration in the last 4 years with an applicant maybe considered a COI and this will be discussed with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Panel. If a historical collaboration is considered a conflict then the same procedure as outlined in 5.3.1 will apply

5.3.3 Work in the same institution as the prospective applicant

Panel members from the same institution as the research team should leave the room if they are closely associated with the department or unit concerned. In many cases, panel members from the same institution will be asked to leave the room as a matter of course. In some circumstances, where there is no close association, the decision whether or not this represents a significant COI is guided by discussion with the CSPCT officer and Scientific Panel Chair. A current or recent past line management relationship is always seen as a COI and they must follow the procedure as outlined in 5.3.1.

5.3.4 Competitive and commercial interests

Panel members could be seen as a direct competitor of the applicant and should declare a COI if the following situations applies:

- They are funded or applying for funding on a similar project to the application under discussion
- They have published with the applicant within the past three years
- They have worked with an individual in the past three years,
- They hold an external appointment in the same institution,

If they should declare an interest, they should withdraw from the meeting for that application as per process described in section 5.3.1.

5.3.5 Personal relationships

Where panel members have a close personal relationship with an applicant they should declare an interest and leave the room when the application is under consideration as per the process described in section 5.3.1.

Appendix 1:

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Charitable Trust

Declaration of interests form

All interests that might unduly influence an individual's judgment and objectivity in the conduct of CSPCT business should be declared. If in doubt, please declare all interests.

Interests to declare include:

- a) Business interests which may cause the trustee potential financial or measurable benefit directly or indirectly through a connected persons such as:
 - Equity interests (if worth £10,000 or more, or more than 1% of the total issued capital) in enterprises with involvement in pharmaceuticals, healthcare, biotech or related areas, or in any other enterprise that may have a real or perceived interest in the work of the charity. Third party investments (e.g. ISAs) should be held exempt from this.
 - Consultancies and other external appointments (paid and unpaid) with involvement in pharmaceuticals, healthcare, biotech or related areas, together with details of any remuneration or other benefits arising from these.

- b) Personal interests in which a conflict of loyalty or duty to another person or organisation could prevent the trustee from making a decision only in the best interests of the charity. Such as:
 - The body that appointed them to the charity
 - The membership or section of the charity that appointed them to trusteeship
 - Another organisation, such as their employer
 - Another charity of which they are trustee
 - A member of their family
 - Another connected person or organisation

I.....(name).....,(position within CSPCT).. declare that I have read and understood the CSPCT Conflicts of Interest Policy and in accordance with the policy have recorded any potential or actual conflict of interest below

Known interests (at date of signing) to be declared:	
Signed	Date

I am aware that failure to declare relevant interests may result in a committee member being required to stand down.

I declare that should any conflict of interest arise during my term that might influence judgment and objectivity in the conduct of CSPCT business I will declare this immediately to the Chair of Trustees and CSPCT officer.

Signature	Date
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Data Protection Act 2018 – The information submitted will be held by the CSPCT. This information may be held in computer form in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.