

Wellbeing of Women Conflict of Interest Policy

Wellbeing of Women aims to ensure that it receives expert advice in research matters and that grant applications are assessed objectively and impartially. The charity is very appreciative of the time given by members of the medical and scientific community who agree to sit on the Wellbeing of Women's Research Advisory Committee.

The purpose of this document is to minimise the potential for conflicts of interest arising and to protect the charity 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.

This policy relates to the Wellbeing of Women Research Advisory Committee (RAC), subcommittees and other selection panels of the charity, their chairs and other members. It will be reviewed if necessary every two years, in consultation with the board of Trustees.

Members of the Wellbeing of Women Research Committee should:

1. familiarise themselves with the RAC Remit
2. declare any external personal or business interest which may be, or may be perceived to be a source of conflict with the interests of the charity. A register of interests will be kept up to date by the charity.
3. ensure the confidentiality of policy documents, grant applications, reviews and the identity of reviewers and not disseminate or discuss such matters with others outside the committee. All documents should be disposed of securely following meetings.
4. refer any applicant seeking advice about administrative matters either before or after a RAC meeting to the Research Grants Manager. Committee members may provide technical advice on an application to a prospective applicant, but should then report that they have done so to the Committee Chair.
5. declare a potential conflict of interest to the Committee Chair and to the Research Grants Manager prior to a meeting, or during a meeting as soon as the existence of a conflict becomes apparent. A conflict of interest may arise in the following situations:
 - The individual concerned, or a relative¹ is an applicant on the funding proposal
 - An applicant on the proposal is a business partner of the individual
 - An applicant on the proposal is a member or employee of the same institution² as the individual concerned.

In such situations an individual should absent themselves from the meeting while the proposal concerned is being discussed.

¹ For the purposes of this document, "relative" includes, but is not limited to, a spouse (current or past), children, siblings and parents.

² For the purposes of this document, federated institutions (e.g. the University of Wales or the University of London) should not be regarded as a single institution.

In certain situations, an individual may be excluded from discussion of a proposal at the discretion of the Committee Chair. Examples of such situations include:

- The individual concerned can be seen as a direct competitor of the applicant; i.e. they are currently being funded or are currently applying for funding on a project of a similar nature to the proposal under discussion
- The individual has acted as an external referee, or on a funding panel/committee in respect of the proposal under discussion at a time when the proposal was being discussed by another funding body.
- The individual has collaborated or published with the proposal applicant within the past three years.

6. be aware that when applicants are informed of the outcome of their applications, they will be given an anonymous version of the external assessors' and RAC members' comments, and may also be given a summary statement of the discussion relevant to their application at the RAC meeting. Information which might identify the comments of individual Scientific Medical Advisory Panel members or referees will not be revealed.

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