

Research Review Panel (RRP) Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Role and Scope of the Policy

Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis (APF) is guided by the Association of Medical Research Charities' (AMRC) principles of peer review: diversity, independence, proportionality, transparency, rotation and impartiality.

As a member of the Research Review Panel (RRP), you are being asked to provide independent and impartial advice without undue influence from other factors. Therefore, we ask that you agree to abide by the terms of this Conflict of Interest policy, prior to reviewing any funding applications.

This Conflict of Interest policy clearly articulates the type of conflicts that may arise in research funding, and specifies the actions you must take if you identify a conflict of interest, or think you may have a conflict of interest. The presumption is not that your actions will be influenced by any conflict of interest, but rather whether public perception could reasonably consider this a possibility.

2. Confidentiality

The contents of the application must remain confidential and may not be reproduced, stored or disseminated for any purposes beyond the review process. You may not discuss the content of applications with peers or the applicants themselves. Applicants should not approach you during the review process regarding their application – all correspondence will occur through the APF administrative process.

3. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

You must disclose a conflict of interest if **any** of the following statements apply:

- a) You work within the same department as the applicant.
- b) You interact regularly with the applicant in a professional or personal capacity.
- c) You have been a co-applicant with the applicant, within the last three years.
- d) You have been a student or supervisor of the applicant within the last three years.
- e) You are a close friend or relative of the applicant.
- f) You have a long-standing scientific or personal difference with the applicant.
- g) You are in a position to gain or lose financially from the outcome of the application (eg. holding stock in an industry partner company or a competitor).
- h) You are preparing a grant application which is similar to the submitted application.
- i) You have previously reviewed the application.
- j) You have collaborated or co-authored with the applicant within the last three years.
- k) You work at the same institution as the applicant.
- l) You feel there are other circumstances which may give rise to a conflict of interest.

4. Managing Conflicts of Interest

- 4.1. All RRP members must, on an individual application basis, consider and declare any conflict of interest. Panel members should declare the conflict as soon as is reasonably possible. All conflicts of interest must be raised with the APF Research Team and/or Chair prior to the panel meeting.
- 4.2. If any RRP member is applying for funding from APF, they must absent themselves from the meeting and will not be able to assign external reviewers. They will not be sent any paperwork relating to that funding round.
- 4.3. If an RRP member identifies a conflict of interest from statements 3.a) – i), they must not review the application and they must absent themselves from the meeting when that application is discussed. They will not be sent any paperwork relating to the application or have access to the discussions surrounding it.
- 4.4. If a panel member identifies a conflict of interest from statements 3.j) – l), they must inform the APF Research Team and/or the Chair. Your individual circumstance will need to be discussed with the APF Research Team and/or the Chair in the first instance. If it is agreed that the specific circumstances do not warrant exclusion from the reviewing process, a note of the potential conflict will be recorded for transparency.
- 4.5. The Chair of the panel is responsible for resolving areas of uncertainty. This may involve a whole panel discussion.
- 4.6. As funding decision makers, the Board of Trustees (in accordance with guidance from the Charity Commission) are subject to the same conflict of interest statements set out in point 3, a)-l).

5. Raising concerns about a conflict of interest

If a panel member wishes to raise a concern about another member not identifying a potential conflict of interest, they should report to the Chair. If the concern is regarding the Chair, the member should raise their concern with the Chair of Trustees.

I, the undersigned, have read and agree to the terms laid out in the Research Review Panel Conflict of Interest policy.

Name:

Institution (where applicable):

Date: