

Conflicts of Interest Policy

Background

The object of the charity is the promotion of research into the treatment of burns, wounds and scarring. Restore supports pioneering research into the clinical problems created by these conditions. The emphasis of the research is rooted in the challenges faced by medical staff working with patients in plastic surgery units.

Restore relies heavily on, and is greatly appreciative of, the goodwill and willingness of those members of the medical and scientific community who give generously of their time. These individuals act as advisors and participate in its processes by sitting on its various committees and panels.

Restore aims to ensure that it receives expert and appropriate advice in research matters and that it sets an appropriate research strategy that enables the charity to meet its primary objectives. It also aims to ensure that research proposals are assessed objectively and impartially.

As part of its commitment to impartiality and the integrity of the peer review and advisory processes, Restore has set down a *Code of Conduct* and a *Conflicts of Interest Policy* for its fellows, trustees, officers, the members of the Scientific Advisory Committee and peer review panels. The purpose of both documents is to protect and preserve the integrity of its committee and panel members, advisors and its processes.

If Restore has reason to believe that a trustee, officer or member of a committee or panel member has breached this *Code of Conduct* or the *Conflicts of Interest Policy*, then he or she may be asked to step down from the committee, panel or their position in the charity, as appropriate.

1. General

- 1.1 This policy relates to all trustees, staff, advisory committees and other panels of the charity, their chairs and other members.
- 1.2 The purpose of this document is to minimise the potential for conflicts of interest arising and to protect the charity and those who are appointed within it from the possibility, actual or perceived, that the external interests and affiliation of its committee members might interfere with their ability to work towards the furtherance of the charity's objectives.

1.3 The charity recognises that the majority of conflicts that arise will relate to a particular issue and as such will not present any long term restrictions on an individual's ability to sit on its committees or panels.

1.4 A committee or panel member must not misuse information gained in the course of serving on the committee or panel for personal gain, nor seek to use the opportunity of serving on the committee or panel to promote their private interests or those of connected persons or organisations.

1.5 Committee and panel members must understand and accept that they are appointed as individuals and not as representatives of organisations by which they are employed or with which they have significant contracts.

2. Declaration of interests

2.1 Any persons covered by this policy must declare any declarable external interest on their appointment to the charity, and annually thereafter. A register of interests will be kept up to date by the Clerk to the Trustees.

2.2 Interests which should be disclosed by such individuals include:

i) equity interests (if worth £100,000.00 or more, or more than 1% of the total issued and paid up 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) are exempt from this.

ii) consultancies and other external appointments (paid or unpaid) in areas which may have a real or perceived interest in the work of the charity.

iii) any previous or existing connection or collaboration with any university or hospital department or laboratory from which an application for funding is received.

iv) any previous or existing connection or collaboration with an individual from whom an application for funding is received.

2.3 The individual should adhere to the spirit of this document and declare any other interests which may, or may be perceived to influence their judgement.

2.4 The requirement to disclose these interests also extends to any interests of a similar nature held by an individual's spouse or minor children.

3. Discussion of Proposals

3.1 All discussions, details of applications, presentations, meeting papers, related documents, correspondence and the names of external reviewers, are strictly confidential and should not be discussed with persons outside the review process. Committee and panel members undertake to keep all such documents secure and to dispose of them securely after decisions have been reached.

- 3.2 Discussions of a proposal between members of a committee or panel which occur outside a committee or panel meeting should be declared to the chair of the committee or panel as the case may be.
- 3.3 Committee members should not discuss committee deliberations or the peer review process directly with applicants, unless specifically requested by the Chair.
- 3.4 If a committee or panel member is approached by an applicant for technical advice on an application then he or she may provide advice but must report this to the committee or panel chair. They may subsequently be asked by the chair to absent themselves from a discussion of the application concerned.
- 3.6 Information and advice sought on an application on administrative grounds should be referred to a member of the charity's staff.

4. Resolution of Conflicts of Interest

- 4.1 A committee or panel member shall make a declaration of interest at any committee or panel meeting where such an interest relates specifically to a particular issue under consideration. Such declaration shall be recorded in the minutes whether or not the member withdraws from the meeting.
- 4.2 A committee or panel member should be automatically excluded from participation in any funding decision in which he/she has a direct or indirect interest.
- 4.3 The charity has discretion to exclude an individual from discussion of any proposal in which it considers that a conflict or perception of conflict may arise.

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