

## Marie Curie Research Committees Declaration of Interest Policy Guidelines

### Introduction

Part of our commitment to being a fair and transparent funder of research is that those involved in funding decisions do so in an independent manner and declare any interest they have which might see them benefit personally or academically from a funding decision. Marie Curie has a separate [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) for applications considered by our Research Committees

Our declaration of interest policy explains what type of 'interest' should be declared, when and how to declare such interests, and how such declarations will be dealt with, so they do not prejudice the activities or reputation of the Charity. Individuals should be aware that it is their personal responsibility to declare their interests to the Marie Curie Research Management Team in writing, and to immediately notify them in writing of any changes.

### 1. Why do we have a Policy?

Any individual who controls the Charity and influences the activities of the Charity and its Group has an obligation to act:

- (i) In the best interests of the Charity and the maintenance of its reputation;
- (ii) Not for his/her own private interest or gain;
- (iii) In accordance with the Charity's governing documents, such as the Memorandum & Articles of Association;
- (iv) To avoid situations where there may be a potential conflict of interest between the Charity's interests and those of the individual.

Interests need to be declared in writing and registered since circumstances can arise where an individual's professional, personal or family interests and/or loyalties may conflict or be perceived to conflict with those of the Charity. Such conflicts, if not identified and managed, can create problems such as:

- Inhibiting free discussion;
- Allowing influence or control over the Charity's activities by an individual who is not independent of his/her personal interests;
- Decisions or actions being taken that are not in the interests of the Charity;
- Risking the perception that the Charity may have acted improperly, thus damaging its reputation.

The Charity's governing documents require the disclosure and management of interests to ensure no one party can exercise undue influence or will receive an unauthorised financial benefit (direct or indirect) from their association with the Charity.

### 2. Who must complete a Marie Curie Research Committees Declaration of Interest(s) ('Declaration')?

All members of Marie Curie's Research Committees/Boards/Panels and any *ad hoc* group which controls or influences Marie Curie's research funding decisions.

### 3. What interests should be declared?

The Declaration of Interest(s) form lists the types of professional, commercial, political, private and other interests/benefits you should declare to comply with the Policy.

By declaring all such interests it is possible for the Charity to decide which interests could be seen as, or which could give rise to, a conflict of interest.

### 4. When should a Declaration be completed?

The Declaration needs to be made: (i) Upon your appointment; (ii) Updated at least annually; and (iii) When any changes occur. To be effective, the Declaration must be signed and dated by the person making it (an electronic signature is sufficient), and received by the Marie Curie Research Management Team.

### 5. What should I do if I am unsure whether to declare a matter as an 'interest'?

If you are not sure what to declare, or whether or when your Declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution – “when in doubt, declare”. To ensure that you comply with the Policy, as a general guide please ask yourself “*Are there any circumstances in which this interest could prejudice, embarrass or damage the activities of the Charity?*” If the answer is “Yes” you should declare the interest.

**6. Who will keep the Register of Interests?**

Interests (and any conflict arising) will be recorded in the Register of Interests, which will be maintained by the Marie Curie Research Management Team.

**7. Disclosure of Interests, Conflicts & Benefits**

The Register of Interests (including any recorded conflicts) will be open to inspection by the Charity’s Auditors, statutory regulators and other parties as authorised by the Charity’s governing documents. If an individual completing the Declaration requests that any information should not be disclosed without prior notice, any such request must be agreed by the Marie Curie Research Management Team.

Where an individual making a declaration is connected to a party involved in the supply of a service or product to the Charity, this information may also be fully disclosed in the Annual Report and Accounts if required by the Charity’s Auditors.

**8. Will data protection legislation apply?**

The information provided in the Declaration will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act or equivalent legislation applying from time to time. Data will be processed only to ensure that the individual acts in the best interests of the Charity. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose without the individual’s prior consent.

**9. Who will review the Register of Interests and decide if a conflict exists?**

Completed Declarations will be reviewed by the Marie Curie Research Management Team to identify potential conflicts and to decide how to address them.

In the event that the conflict cannot be resolved by the Marie Curie Research Management Team, it will be referred to a Conflicts Review Panel made up of the Chair of the meeting, the Deputy Chair or their nominee, a representative of the Marie Curie Research Management Team and such other persons as the Review Panel jointly nominates. The Panel may obtain independent professional advice. The decision of the Review Panel will be final.

In the case of unavoidable or repeated conflicts of interest between the Charity and an individual that may, in the opinion of the Review Panel, harm the reputation of the Charity, the individual may be asked to either surrender the interest that is giving rise to the conflict or resign from their position with the Charity.

Conflicts of interests affecting an employee of the Charity will be addressed in a manner that is consistent with that individual’s contract of employment and in accordance with the employment policies in place in the Charity from time to time.

**10. What do you do if a conflict of interest arises?**

Before, or at the beginning of any meeting, you must declare any potential conflict of interest which may arise in relation to matters on the agenda e.g., a specific applicant or application (see our policy [here](#) which outlines how this will be dealt with).

**11. Further information and queries**

Please contact the Marie Curie Research Management Team for further information and/or any queries at [research.info@mariecurie.org.uk](mailto:research.info@mariecurie.org.uk).

## Declaration of Interest Policy

The Policy requires that:

- (a) Any individual who controls or influences the activities of Marie Curie's Research funding must declare his/her interests, whether paid (for example; directorships or employment) or unpaid (for example; voluntary positions), together with any benefits, services, hospitality or gifts received in connection with his/her role in Marie Curie's Research Committees;
- (b) A Declaration of Interests should be completed in writing upon appointment and thereafter annually in the form prescribed and attached to this Policy. It should also be declared orally at any meetings where a conflict of interest may arise. Any changes to the Declaration should be notified in writing to the Marie Curie Research Management Team as soon as the interest arises;
- (c) The Chair of the meeting should provide confidential advice to any individual making a Declaration if required. If requested by the Marie Curie Research Management Team, the Chair will also review the Declarations to identify any real or perceived conflicts of interest and will decide how they might be dealt with, consulting with others as necessary;
- (d) All individuals should check the separate [conflicts of interest policy](#) relating to assessment of specific applications and declare any conflicts or suspected conflicts as outlined in the separate policy;
- (e) The Marie Curie Research Management Team should maintain a Register of Interests declared, including any conflicts which have been identified;
- (f) Any individual with an interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting must declare their interest to the meeting in advance. On occasions where an interest is identified at the beginning of a meeting the Chair of the meeting will then decide whether that individual should withdraw during the discussion and, if not, whether the individual should be entitled to score and/or vote on the matter under discussion;
- (g) Guidelines explaining why the 'Declaration of Interest Policy' is required, and the steps to be followed to ensure compliance with the Policy, should be issued to all those individuals required to make a declaration of interest(s); and
- (h) The Policy should be periodically reviewed to ensure it satisfies Legal and Regulatory requirements, and those of Marie Curie