



Policy on Conflict

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The overall goal of establishing guidelines for managing possible conflicts is to maintain public confidence in the Society and to protect the stature of the Society by ensuring that the integrity of the decision-making processes by the leadership of the SVS is not biased by financial or professional interests.

As stewards of the Society, the leadership has an obligation to maintain the highest standard of conduct in the execution of their roles and responsibilities on behalf of the SVS. Conflicts of commitment, whether perceived or actual, may influence decision making and negatively impact the organization.

For more information, see our [Conflict FAQs](#) .

General Principles

SVS leadership is defined as any individual serving on the Board of Directors, councils, committees, task forces, ad-hoc committees or in any other volunteer capacity for the Society, its publications, Foundation or PSO. A conflict of interest or commitment is a circumstance or situation that is present when an individual's primary responsibility of providing unbiased and impartial decisions, judgments, or opinions on behalf of the SVS might be influenced by a secondary factor. Problems arise if the secondary interests influence or appear to influence the primary responsibility. Conflicts may be financial or may derive from leadership positions in other organizations where there is a potential for competition of interests.

The leadership of the SVS shall avoid conflict between the well-being of the SVS and their own personal financial gain or other responsibilities. This shall apply in fulfilling their obligations, making decisions, and expressing their views on behalf of the SVS. The following principles and guidelines address conflict of commitment. SVS leadership should:

- Place the interests of the SVS first while carrying out the duties and responsibilities of their SVS role.
- Be fair and respect the rights of others in performing their SVS responsibilities.
- Exercise due diligence and reasonable competence in conducting SVS business affairs, always acting with good faith and integrity.

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- Be supportive of the actions of the collective body that they are serving on even if they differ from their personal position, unless the actions are unlawful, unethical or otherwise improper.
- When conducting meetings, be inclusive and encourage open and candid discussion.
- Maintain confidentiality of meeting proceedings; do not share, copy, reproduce, transmit, or disclose confidential information or work in progress related to the business of the SVS (unless otherwise required by law or directed by the Board of Directors).
- Disclose potential conflicts as they arise in the conduct of SVS business and recuse themselves from discussion and/or voting on the matter as necessary.
- Adhere to the guidelines for financial relationships with industry included in this policy.
- Adhere to all other SVS policies related to the conduct of their roles and responsibilities on behalf of the SVS; this includes but is not limited to the SVS Anti-trust Policy, Whistleblower Protection Policy, and Policy Against Harassment.

FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDUSTRY

Society Leadership

- A. No SVS officer may have direct financial relationships with industry during his or her term of service.
- i. Officers include president, president-elect, vice president, secretary and treasurer.
 - ii. A direct financial relationship is a compensated relationship held by an individual
 - iii. Officers have six months to terminate any direct financial relationships after election to office.
 - iv. SVS officers may accept research support as long as grant money is paid to the institution (e.g., academic medical center) where the research is conducted, not to the individual. Research support, uncompensated services and other permitted relationships should nevertheless be disclosed to the Society.
 - v. Exceptions to any of the above may be appealed to the SVS Conflict of Interest and Professional Conduct Committee (Section XV) who will make recommendations to the Board of Directors.
- B. All individuals serving in a volunteer capacity as defined in the General Principles or staff capacity for SVS, its publications, Foundation or PSO will complete the SVS Conflict of Interest Form on an annual basis and prior to assuming their responsibilities. The Form will be reviewed by the SVS Conflict of Interest and Professional Conduct Committee.
- C. SVS officers, Executive Board and Strategic Board of Director members, VAM Program Committee, Postgraduate Education Committee, Education Committee, PSO Executive Committee, and PSO Industry Steering Committee members and other SVS leaders (e.g., JVS Editors, council and committee chairs) may attend but may not participate in Vascular Annual Meeting (VAM) satellite symposia or any promotional/marketing events held in the exhibit hall at VAM as speakers, moderators or other significant participants, as this gives the appearance that SVS is endorsing company product(s).
- D. The chairs and co-chairs of the VAM Program Committee, and Postgraduate Education Committee, and Education Committee may have no direct financial relationships with industry.
- E. The majority of the members of the VAM Program Committee, Postgraduate Education Committee, and Education Committee may have no direct financial relationships with industry.
- i. The threshold for an individual to be considered conflict-free is zero income.
 - ii. Individuals with more than \$50,000 in income in aggregate from industry may not serve on these committees.

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iii. A direct financial relationship is a compensated relationship held by an individual that should generate an IRS Form W-2, 1099 or equivalent income report.

iv. Chairs who wish to serve have six months to terminate any direct financial relationships after appointment.

v. Chairs and committee members may accept research support as long as grant money is paid to the institution (e.g., academic medical center) where the research is conducted, not to the individual. Research support, uncompensated services and other permitted relationships should nevertheless be disclosed to the Society. The chairs and co-chairs of the guidelines and measures writing groups should have no industry relationships.

G. The chairs and co-chairs of committees or writing groups related to guideline development, document oversight, performance measures or outcomes may have no direct financial relationships with industry.

H. The majority of the members of the writing group/committee may have no direct financial relationships with industry relevant to the subject matter of the Guideline. If a member discloses a direct financial relationship with industry for a product not related to the subject matter of the document, this still constitutes a conflict of interest.

i. The threshold for an individual to be considered conflict-free is zero income.

ii. Individuals with more than \$50,000 in income aggregate from industry may not serve on a writing group/committee.

iii. A direct financial relationship is a compensated relationship held by an individual

iv. Chairs who wish to serve have six months to terminate any direct financial relationships after appointment.

v. Chairs and writing group members may accept research support as long as grant money is paid to the institution (e.g., academic medical center) where the research is conducted, not to the individual. Research support, uncompensated services and other permitted relationships should nevertheless be disclosed to the Society.

I. SVS staff members, including Foundation, SVS publications, and the PSO staff are prohibited from having any direct financial relationships with industry; in addition, SVS staff members must adhere to the SVS Vendor Gift Policy included in the SVS Employee handbook.

J. At the beginning of SVS leadership meetings (meetings of the Board of Directors, councils, committees, etc.), the President/Chair will review the Conflict of Interest disclosures of attendees and will remind participants of the SVS Policy on Conflict. During discussions involving industry where a potential conflict of interest with an attendee exists, the individual should recuse themselves.

SVS Publications Leadership

A. JVS Editors may have no direct financial relationships with industry during their terms of service.

i. "JVS Editors" include the senior editors, associate editors and assistant editors for the Journal of Vascular Surgery, the JVS Venous and Lymphatic Disorders, JVS Cases and Innovative Techniques, and the Vascular Science Journal

ii. All authors and reviewers of submissions to JVS are expected to follow the instructions for authors and editorial policies established by JVS.

B. Editors of the Rutherford textbook and VESAP may have no direct financial relationships with industry during their term of service.

i. The threshold for an individual to be considered conflict-free is zero income.

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ii. A direct financial relationship is a compensated relationship held by an individual that should generate an IRS Form W-2, 1099 or equivalent income report.

iii. Editors should terminate any direct financial relationships within six months of their appointment.

iv. Editors may accept research support as long as grant money is paid to the institution (e.g., academic medical center) where the research is conducted, not to the individual. Research support, uncompensated services and other permitted relationships should nevertheless be disclosed to the Society.

v. Exceptions to any of the above may be appealed to the SVS Conflict of Interest and Professional Conduct Committee (Section III) who will make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

C. All editors will complete the SVS Conflict of Interest Form on an annual basis and prior to assuming their responsibilities. The Form will be reviewed by the SVS Conflict of Interest and Professional Conduct Committee.

PSO Leadership

A. The members of the SVS PSO Executive Committee may have no direct financial relationships with industry.

i. The threshold for an individual to be considered conflict-free is zero income.

ii. A direct financial relationship is a compensated relationship held by an individual that should generate an IRS Form W-2, 1099 or equivalent income report.

iii. SVS PSO Executive Committee members have six months to terminate any direct financial relationships after election to office.

iv. SVS PSO Executive Committee members may accept research support as long as grant money is paid to the institution (e.g., academic medical center) where the research is conducted, not to the individual. Research support, uncompensated services and other permitted relationships should nevertheless be disclosed to the Society.

v. SVS PSO Executive Committee members shall not serve on a Board or hold a leadership position for any medical device manufacture, whether compensated or uncompensated.

vi. Exceptions to any of the above may be appealed to the SVS Conflict of Interest Committee, who will make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

B. The members of the SVS PSO Industry Steering Committees may have no direct financial relationships with the company or companies sponsoring the Committee's Industry Study.

i. The threshold for an individual to be considered conflict-free is zero income.

ii. A direct financial relationship is a compensated relationship held by an individual that should generate an IRS Form W-2, 1099 or equivalent income report.

iii. Industry Study Steering Committee members have six months to terminate any direct financial relationships within six months of their appointment.

iv. Individuals with more than \$50,000 in income in aggregate from industry, not directly related to their Industry Study, will also be precluded from serving on an Industry Study Steering Committee.

v. Industry Study Steering Committee members during their terms of service may not accept direct support for research or other activities from the company or companies sponsoring the Committee's Industry Study. Uncompensated services and other permitted relationships should nevertheless be disclosed on the individual's

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Conflict of Interest Statement.

vi. Industry Study Steering Committee members shall not serve on a Board or hold a leadership position for medical device manufacturer related to their Committee's Industry Study, whether compensated or uncompensated.

vii. Industry Study Steering Committee members may belong to a division or institution that accepts unrestricted or educational funds and research grants as long as the grant money is paid to the division or institution (e.g., academic medical center), not to the individual.

SVS Policy on Conflict Implementation

A. SVS will appoint a Conflict of Interest and Professional Conduct Committee.

B. Members of this Committee will themselves be free of conflicts of interest and have no industry relationships.

C. Responsibilities of this Committee include the following:

i. Review annually all Conflict of Interest Forms of SVS officers, members of the board of directors, council and committee members, JVS editors, staff and any other SVS members in circumstances subject to company influence that could jeopardize the Society's integrity.

ii. Individuals with control over SVS CME content, including SVS staff, must comply with SVS procedures to identify and resolve all conflicts of interest prior to the CME activity being delivered to learners. The Conflict of Interest and Professional Conduct Committee will serve as the final arbitrator for any unresolved conflicts of interest.

iii. In situations where there is information that is at variance with disclosure information provided an individual, the Committee may request clarification from the individual and/or company.

iv. In situations where there is a significant conflict of interest that may impair the integrity of the SVS, the Committee will notify and advise the SVS Executive Committee.

v. In accordance with ACCME guidelines, an individual who fails to disclose relevant financial relationships will be disqualified from being a member of any committee with CME planning responsibility or oversight, including SVS Board, councils and committees. Those intentionally failing to disclose relevant financial relationships will be disqualified from holding any elected or appointed position in the society for a period of five years.

D. The Committee will review the Guidelines for SVS Management of Relationships with Industry and SVS Policy on Conflict of Interest at least annually and update them to be consistent with guidelines promulgated by other major organizations such as the AMA, ACS, CMSS, AAMC, IOM, AdvaMed, PHRMA and others.

E. At the beginning of all SVS, Foundation, PSO and publications leadership meetings (Councils, committees, ad hoc committees and task forces/workgroups), the Chair will remind participants of the SVS Policy on Conflict and ask members to recuse themselves if a conflict exists. This information should also be included on all meeting agendas as a reminder.