



## Conflict of Interest

# Conflict of Interest

The overall goal of establishing guidelines for managing possible conflicts of interest 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. Because of the influence of their positions, the leadership of the SVS must be particularly sensitive to the issue of actual or perceived conflict of interest.

For more information, see our Conflict FAQs .

## General Principles

SVS leadership is defined as any individual serving on the Board of Directors, councils, committees, work groups or in any other volunteer capacity for the Society, its publications, Foundation or PSO. Conflict of interest 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 of interest 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 of interest 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.

## Society Leadership

- No SVS officer may have direct financial relationships with industry during his or her term of service.
  - Exceptions to any of the above may be appealed to the SVS Conflict of Interest

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- Committee (Section XV) who will make recommendations to the Board of Directors.
- 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.
- Officers have six months to terminate any direct financial relationships after election to office, or before the first meeting of the Board of Directors, whichever is first.
- 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.
- Officers include president, president-elect, vice president, secretary and treasurer.
- All individuals serving in a volunteer 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 Committee.
- SVS officers, Board of Director members, VAM Program Committee and Postgraduate Education Committee members may attend but may not participate in Vascular Annual Meeting satellite symposia as speakers, moderators or other significant participants, as this gives the appearance that SVS is endorsing company product(s).
- SVS officers, Board of Director members, VAM Program Committee and Postgraduate Education Committee member and other SVS leaders (e.g., JVS Editors, council and committee chairs) may not participate in any promotional/marketing events held in the exhibit hall as speakers, moderators or other significant participants.
- The chairs and co-chairs of the VAM Program Committee and Postgraduate Education Committee may have no direct financial relationships with industry.
- The majority of the members of the VAM Program Committee and the Postgraduate Education Committee may have no direct financial relationships with industry.
  - The threshold for an individual to be considered conflict-free is zero income.
  - Individuals with more than \$50,000 in income in aggregate from industry may not serve on either committee.
  - 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.
  - Chairs who wish to serve have six months to terminate any direct financial relationships after appointment.
  - 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.
- 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.
- The majority of the members of the writing group/committee may have no direct financial relationships with industry.
  - The threshold for an individual to be considered conflict-free is zero income.
  - Individuals with more than \$50,000 in income in aggregate from industry may not serve on a writing group/committee.
  - 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.
  - Chairs who wish to serve have six months to terminate any direct financial relationships after appointment.
  - 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.
- SVS staff members 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.

- 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 Guidelines for Conflict of Interest. During discussions involving industry where a potential conflict of interest with an attendee exists, the individual should recuse themselves.

## SVS Publications Leadership

- JVS Editors may have no direct financial relationships with industry during their terms of service.
  - “JVS Editors” include the senior editors, associate editors and assistant editors for both the Journal of Vascular Surgery and the JVS Venous and Lymphatic Disorders.
  - All authors and reviewers of submissions to JVS are expected to follow the instructions for authors and editorial policies established by JVS.
- Editors of the Rutherford textbook and VESAP may have no direct financial relationships with industry during their term of service.
  - The threshold for an individual to be considered conflict-free is zero income.
  - 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.
  - Editors should terminate any direct financial relationships within six months of their appointment.
  - 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.
  - Exceptions to any of the above may be appealed to the SVS Conflict of Interest Committee (Section III) who will make recommendations to the Board of Directors.
- 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 Committee.

## Conflict of Interest Guideline Implementation

- SVS will appoint a Conflict of Interest Committee.
- Members of this Committee will themselves be free of conflicts of interest and have no industry relationships.
- Responsibilities of this Committee include the following:
  - 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.
  - 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 Committee will serve as the final arbitrator for any unresolved conflicts of interest.
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - 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.
- The Committee will review the Guidelines for SVS Management of Relationships with Industry

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and 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.