



## **American Society for Nutrition MODEL DISCLOSURE FORM FOR CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

As a recommendation to the American Society for Nutrition (ASN) from the 2019 Blue Ribbon Panel report “Best Practices in Nutrition Science to earn and Keep the Public’s Trust,” ASN was asked to develop a comprehensive conflict of interest disclosure statement that covers financial and other conflict of interest sources to serve as a model in nutrition science for potential use by ASN members, other stakeholders, and ASN staff.

### **DISCLOSURE FORM KEY FACTORS TO CONSIDER**

#### **Definition of Conflict of Interest**

For the purposes of the model disclosure form, conflicts of interest are financial, intellectual, or personal interests that may affect or appear to affect an individual’s ability to remain objective when serving in a role for the benefit of an organization. A conflict of interest may exist when personnel, a director, officer, board, committee, or task force member has a relationship with a third party or intellectual or personal interests that may be reasonably perceived as creating dual loyalties that may influence their ability to act objectively in the best interest of an organization. Additionally, a conflict of interest may exist when personnel, a director, officer, board, committee, or task force member has a financial, intellectual, or personal interest in the outcome of an organization’s actions which may result in an improper gain or advantage for that person or another organization. Conflicts of interest are not specifically limited to the interests of the individual in the role, but also include the interests of those with whom the individual has substantial shared financial or personal interests, such as a close family member (e.g., spouse, child, parent).

#### **Time Period for Conflicts of Interest**

Only current activities and interests or those that have occurred within the past three years (thirty-six months) are considered to be conflicts of interests for the purposes of the model disclosure form. Interests that do not currently exist, such as expired (older than 36 months) previous interests or possible future interests, and which cannot be reasonably expected to influence current behavior are not considered conflicts of interest. In the event that a possible future interest becomes a current interest, it should be reported at that time. While serving in this role, relevant conflict of interest disclosures should be updated periodically, annually at a minimum, and whenever new potential conflicts arise. Updates should be provided by secure electronic communication (encrypted or password-protected) to the designated staff member.

#### **Conflict of Interest Management**

Conflicts of interest may prevent an individual from serving in a role as personnel, a director, officer, board, committee, or task force member. However, when a conflict of

interest is unavoidable and is promptly disclosed, a person with a conflict of interest should still be considered so long as the conflict of interest is made publicly available. Individuals with a conflict of interest should recuse themselves from voting on issues and from participating in discussions related to the subject matter and issues in question. If a conflict of interest is not promptly reported, the individual with the conflict of interest may be disqualified from serving in their intended role.

Immediate disclosures may be needed at the committee level as new issues arise. All committee members should be given the opportunity to disclose relevant conflicts of interest prior to discussion of that topic and the committee will discuss and determine whether to include or recuse the member from the discussion. The decision to include must be unanimous to act upon. The governing body of each institution/organization may review such decisions as needed.

## MODEL DISCLOSURE FORM AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION

- *Include all relevant information. Relevant is defined as anything related to the specific activities, responsibilities, subject matter, or issues addressed in the role in question or if it may be of interest to other stakeholders. When in doubt, err on the side of including information.*
- *Include all relevant current activities and interests and those that have occurred within the past three years (thirty-six months).*
- *Include the interests of those with substantial shared financial or personal interests, such as a close family member.*
- *Update annually at a minimum and whenever new potential conflicts arise.*

### **PART I. Personal Information**

Ensure that full name is used and that contact information is likely to be current for at least one year.

**I-A) Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I-B) Contact Information:**

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### **PART II. Background Information**

Relevant background information is predominantly found in a CV and considered non-confidential. It reflects information about affiliations, knowledge, personal beliefs, and experiences as they relate to the activities, responsibilities, subject matter, or issues that are germane in serving as personnel, a director, officer, board, committee, or task force member or in other similar roles. Information is considered relevant if it is related to the specific activities, responsibilities, subject matter, or issues addressed in the role in question or if it may be of interest to other stakeholders concerning the individual's suitability for the role. When in doubt if information is considered relevant, err on the side of including it.

**II-A) Organizational Affiliations:** Report all *relevant* organizational relationships. This includes both business and volunteer relationships. Relationships are considered a state of affairs existing between two or more parties having dealings.

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**II-B) Government Service:** Report all *relevant* service with any government entity at the local, state, or national level. When considering relevance for government service, a key consideration is whether decision making related to the activity or role in question was involved as a government employee, contractor, or committee member.

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**II-C) Research Support:** Report all information regarding *relevant* research support including source, duration, and amount. This includes both public and private research support and includes financial support, as well as other forms of research support such as in-kind support and honorariums.

SOURCE	DURATION	AMOUNT

**II-D) Public Statements and Positions:** Report all *relevant* public statements and positions made or contributed to. Public statements include all relevant publications, presentations, speeches, or any other publicly shared written or verbal statements and positions that indicate a strong opinion relating to the specific activities, responsibilities, subject matter, or issues addressed in this role.

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**II-E) Other Relevant Information:** Report any other *relevant* information that was not addressed above that may constitute an actual or potential source of bias. This includes any aspect of background or present circumstances that may give the appearance of a conflict of interest or impropriety to others.

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### **PART III. Specific Disclosures**

This portion of the model disclosure form details specific interests and activities that may be reasonably perceived as a conflict of interest (see definition and time period above). All potentially relevant information about the circumstances of the conflict of interest(s) should be

included. The interests of others who share substantial financial or personal interests such as a spouse, partner, dependent child, employer, or clients should also be included. If any of these parties have interests that may be directly affected by the subject role or vice versa, it should be shared.

**III-A) Financial and Commercial Interests:** Report any financial investments, holdings, or any other financial interests that may be directly affected by the outcomes of decisions or project activities to be completed in this role. This includes stocks, bonds, investments, partnerships, intellectual property like patents and copyrights, tangible property interests, research funding, and other forms of research support. If the support is in-kind, the nature of the support should be disclosed. If this position may control the development or content of any educational program or activity, please describe any commercial interests in any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services that are consumed by, or used on, humans. All relevant financial interests must be disclosed regardless of the amount.

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**III-B) Other Outside Interests:** Report holding any board, committee, or similar position of authority in any outside entity from which the organization secures goods or services, provides goods or services, or that may be harmful to the organization.

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**III-C) Outside Activities:** Report the provision of any directive, managerial, or consultative services to anyone known who does business with the organization, competes with the organization, or performs other services that could be viewed as in competition with the organization.

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**III-D) Gifts and Gratuities:** Report accepting gifts, honorariums, gratuities, travel compensation, or other favors that may influence or give the appearance of influencing your professional judgement in matters relating to this role in the organization.

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**III-E) Information:** Report any role or relationship that may result in the disclosure or use of confidential or proprietary information relating to the organization’s business for personal profit or to the advantage of individuals or entities other than the organization.

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**PART IV. Signature and Agreement**

By signing this form, you agree that you have disclosed any and all relevant information as of this date. Please contact the designated staff member (listed below) for any questions or concerns related to accurate completion of this form.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_

