

## Life Sciences Discovery Fund Conflict of Interest Policy on External Reviews

The Life Sciences Discovery Fund Authority (LSDF) engages external experts to assist in evaluating grant applications, funded grants, and its own programs. Integral to the success of these reviews is the requirement that they be conducted without bias. Expert evaluators must not have personal, professional, or financial interests that are likely to conflict with their ability to perform an unbiased review.

This conflict of interest policy is established to ensure that LSDF's external review contractors, including entities coordinating expert reviews, and reviewers (hereafter referred to jointly as "reviewers") perform their services in an impartial and unbiased manner. For the purposes of this policy, a "conflict of interest" is defined as any personal, professional or financial interest that may be reasonably perceived to bias the reviewer's judgment. Reviewers shall disclose any potential conflicts of interest they may have prior to performing reviews on behalf of LSDF. All conflicts of interest associated with a review must be disclosed at the time that such conflicts are first recognized. When a conflict of interest has been declared, a reviewer must recuse him or herself from further review of the conflicted subject matter unless otherwise authorized by LSDF.

To guide reviewers about whether or not they have a conflict of interest, the following non-exhaustive examples of conflicts are presented.

1. **Affiliations** with a grant applicant organization; an organization listed as a co-applicant, collaborator or service provider in a grant application or funded grant; or an organization otherwise under review place a reviewer in a conflict of interest situation. A reviewer is deemed to have a conflict if he or she:

- is currently employed at the organization;
- is currently providing service to the organization as a consultant or advisor;
- was previously employed by the organization within the last 12 months;
- is being considered for employment by the organization;
- has a formal or informal reemployment arrangement with the organization;
- is currently a member on a visiting committee or other advisory group at the organization;
- holds any office, governing board membership or relevant committee chairpersonship in the organization;
- is currently enrolled as a student at the organization; or
- has received an honorarium, award, gift or favor that is not insubstantial from the organization within the last 12 months.

2. **Relationships** with an investigator, project director or other person associated with an LSDF grant application, funded grant, or program under review place a reviewer in a conflict of interest situation. A reviewer is deemed to have a conflict if he or she has one or more of such relationships:

- family relationships such as spouse, child, sibling or parent;
- business or professional partnership relationships;
- close personal friendships;
- relationships that have included long-standing personal or professional differences;
- past or present professional relationships such as thesis advisor or thesis student; or
- collaborative relationships on a project, book, article, report or paper within the last 48 months.

3. **Financial arrangements, regardless of their value**, that may reasonably be affected by the work underlying a proposal, funded grant, or program under review place a reviewer in a conflict of interest situation. Such arrangements may include stocks, bonds, investments, partnerships, royalties, or intellectual property interests.

4. **Competing interests** arising from affiliations or financial arrangements with individuals or entities involved in solving a problem using an approach that may reasonably be deemed to be competitive with that of a grant applicant place a reviewer in a conflict of interest situation. A reviewer is deemed to have a conflict if he or she:

- has an affiliation of any sort (see 1 above for examples) with an organization that is a commercial market competitor of an organization under review;
- has a financial arrangement (see 3 above for examples) with an organization that is a commercial market competitor of an organization under review; or
- is personally involved with a technology, method, or other approach that may reasonably be deemed to be competitive with that of a grant applicant.

For the purposes of this policy, interests of the following persons, to the extent the reviewer is aware of such interests, are to be treated as if they were those of the reviewer: spouse, partner, dependent child, or relative living in a reviewer's immediate household.

Reviewers are required to report to LSDF any conflict of interest of which they are aware, including, but not limited to, those described above. Except under unusual circumstances, any reviewer who has declared a conflict of interest may not participate in the review of the conflicted subject matter. In exceptional cases, LSDF may decide that the need for special expertise of the reviewer outweighs any possible bias posed by a potential conflict of interest.

All reviewers must sign a pre-review statement indicating any conflicts of interest that they have, and must also sign a post-review statement that they did not participate in the discussion or review of any grant application, funded grant, or program with which they have a conflict of interest.

## Conflict of Interest Declaration and Certification for Expert Reviewers *“Competition name”*

In performing expert reviews on behalf of the Life Sciences Discovery Fund (LSDF) you are subject to the Fund’s policy regarding conflict of interest (see attached). You must review the policy and sign this certification both prior to and after performing reviews for LSDF.

The conflict of interest policy is intended to ensure that individuals performing expert reviews on behalf of LSDF do so in an impartial and unbiased manner. As a reviewer you must disclose any potential conflicts of interest you may have in performing reviews on behalf of LSDF at the time that such conflicts are first recognized. When you declare a conflict of interest, you must recuse yourself from review of the conflicted subject matter unless otherwise authorized by LSDF. If you have any questions about what constitutes a conflict or about the policy, please contact Alden Jones, 206 456 9581 or [alden@lsdfa.org](mailto:alden@lsdfa.org).

### Conflict of Interest Declaration and Certification

I have read and I understand the attached LSDF Conflict of Interest Policy on Expert Reviews.

I have read the examples of affiliations, relationships, and financial arrangements that place me in a conflict of interest situation and I make the following conflict of interest disclosures (please list the grant application’s or grant’s LSDF ID number and principal investigator’s last name for each disclosure; enter “none” if you have no disclosures):


To the best of my knowledge, beyond what I have disclosed above, I have no affiliation, relationship, or financial arrangement that presents a conflict of interest or would prevent me from performing my review duties in an impartial manner. I understand that I must contact LSDF if any additional conflict arises during my service. I further understand that I must sign and return this certification statement to LSDF before I serve.

Reviewer’s Name (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Conflict of Interest Declaration and Certification for Expert Reviewers *"Competition name"*

### Post-review Certification

I did not participate in the discussion or review of any grant application or grant for which I had a conflict of interest.

Reviewer's Name (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_