

**AMERICAN THORACIC SOCIETY
POLICY GOVERNING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN
THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY, ATS MEMBERS, AND NON-MEMBERS
WHO PARTICIPATE IN ATS ACTIVITIES**

I. Underlying Principles:

- A. The American Thoracic Society (ATS) is committed to the prevention and treatment of diseases caused by the use of tobacco. Therefore:
1. The ATS and its members, staff and activities will not support activities of the tobacco industry that promote the public's exposure to tobacco products, because the inhalation and oral use of tobacco products and byproducts has been proven to cause and/or aggravate a wide spectrum of diseases and conditions.
 2. The ATS:
 - A. does not invest in tobacco entities (as defined in section II, A.);
 - B. does not accept for its journals any research that has been funded by tobacco entities;
 - C. does not accept for its journals any research submitted by an author that has currently, or had within the 12 months prior to submission, a relationship with a tobacco entity;
 - D. does not accept for its conferences any research that has been funded by tobacco entities;
 - E. does not accept as a planner or oral presenter for its conferences, or as a Society leader (as defined in section III, A.), anyone who has a current relationship with a tobacco entity, or has had one within the preceding 12 months;
 - F. calls upon its members and non-members who participate in ATS activities not to accept relationships with tobacco entities, and to disclose present or past relationships with tobacco entities.
 3. The ATS will inform its members, its staff, any non-members participating in ATS activities, its partnering societies, and the public at large of this position.
 4. The ATS will work with partnering societies and organizations that do not have a comparable policy to resolve any differences as they affect co-sponsorship of specific projects and activities. If any differences regarding the involvement of individuals on these projects or activities who have relationships with the tobacco industry cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the ATS, the ATS will not co-sponsor the specific project or activity.
- B. The ATS's knowledge and management of an individual's conflict of interest due to a relationship with the tobacco industry relies on the self-disclosure of ATS members and other participants in ATS activities. This disclosure is achieved through ATS procedures for disclosure of conflict of interest and the efforts of the Society's Officers; Board members; Editors; Chairs of ATS Assemblies, committees, task forces, and scientific and educational programs; and ATS staff to carry out this policy according to established ATS procedures.

II. Definitions of Relationships with the Tobacco Industry:

- A. An ATS member, or a non-member who participates in the ATS-sponsored activities outlined in this policy, has a conflict of interest whenever he/she has a relationship (financial or non-financial, as described in section IIB) with a tobacco entity, or its affiliates and subsidiaries, that benefits either the ATS member/non-member or the tobacco entity in its promotion of tobacco products that have been shown to cause and/or aggravate disease. For the purposes of this policy, tobacco entities are defined as including the following:
1. Any company engaged in the manufacture of a tobacco product that has been shown to cause and/or aggravate disease;
 2. Any affiliate or subsidiary of such a company for which it may be reasonably concluded, as a result of publicly available information, that the affiliate or subsidiary's ownership, activities, and/or image benefits the sale of a tobacco product that has been shown to cause and/or aggravate disease;
 3. Any foundation for medical research or medical education that is primarily funded by one or more tobacco entities (with exception of foundations established for research and prevention of tobacco-caused disease as a result of court-supervised settlements with tobacco entities, and in which tobacco entities have no other involvement);
 4. Any advocacy group that receives tobacco industry support to either (a) promote the use of a tobacco product that has been shown to cause and/or aggravate disease, or (b) impede policies to prevent tobacco-caused disease.
- B. Examples of activities that define a relationship with a tobacco entity for an ATS member or non-member who participates in ATS-sponsored activities (both hereinafter called "individual") include but are not limited to the following:
1. Employment by a tobacco entity;
 2. Service as a consultant to or spokesperson for a tobacco entity;
 3. Service on a Board or Advisory Board of a tobacco entity;
 4. Lecture fees (honoraria) paid to the individual by a tobacco entity;
 5. Expert testimony on behalf of a tobacco entity;
 6. Receipt or pending receipt of a tobacco entity-sponsored grant including contracted research;
 7. Receipt or pending receipt of patents from a tobacco entity;
 8. Receipt or pending receipt of royalties from a tobacco entity.

III. Requirements for Disclosure of Tobacco Industry Relationships:

- A. Wherever ATS requires declaration of potential conflicts of interest as a condition for participation in official ATS activities, individuals must disclose to ATS any present or past relationships with a tobacco entity (as defined in sections IIA and IIB) since January 1, 2000, including present and past ownership of stocks or options of a tobacco entity (other than mutual funds), and those of their spouse or life partner.

- B. An exception is the policy of the ATS Journals for manuscript submission and acceptance, which states that "as part of submitting an article, authors are required to disclose any relationship with the tobacco industry or its affiliates and subsidiaries that benefited any of the manuscript authors or the tobacco industry in its promotion of tobacco products. The Journal also continues its policy of not accepting contributions that are funded by tobacco industry sources, and does not accept any contribution submitted by an author or co-author that has currently, or had within the 12 months prior to submission, a relationship with a tobacco entity."
- C. Effective with 2014 disclosures, the ATS also requires disclosure of involvement with e-cigarette entities (manufacturers of e-cigarettes and/or related trade or advocacy organizations). Such involvement does not automatically exclude a person from ATS roles, unless the e-cigarette entity is tobacco industry-related.

IV. Implications of this Policy for ATS Members and ATS Activities:

- A. Individuals known by ATS to have a present (current) relationship with a tobacco entity, as defined in sections IIA and IIB, or to have had such a relationship within the past twelve months, will not:
1. Be nominated or serve as an ATS *Officer, ATS Board Member, or Chair or Chair-elect of an ATS Assembly, Committee or Task Force.*
 2. Serve on any other *official ATS committee*;
 3. Serve as an ATS *Editor.*
 4. Be accepted for *publication in ATS journals.* The ATS does not accept for its journals any research that has been funded by tobacco entities or submitted by an author or co-author that has or had within the 12 months prior to submission a relationship with a tobacco entity.
 5. Serve as an ATS *Deputy Editor, Associate Editor, Guest Editor, or member of an ATS editorial board.*
 6. Serve on *Assembly planning, nominating and program committees.*
 7. Serve as a *planner, chair or moderator, or presenter for ATS scientific and educational programs.* (The ATS International Conference and other ATS programs for which abstracts are accepted do not accept research that has been funded by a tobacco entity, but may choose to accept for poster presentation the work of an author or co-author that has or had within the past ten years another relationship with a tobacco entity, as long as that relationship is disclosed as part of the conference or program's disclosure requirements.)
 8. Serve on a *writing committee of an ATS statement or guideline.*
 9. Serve as an ATS *reviewer*, including but not limited to, ATS grant proposals, documents, journals, websites, and abstracts.
 10. Be a recipient of *ATS recognition awards.*
 11. Serve as an *official spokesperson* for the ATS or *official representative* of the ATS.
- B. Ownership of tobacco stocks or options (excluding mutual funds, unless a tobacco-sector fund) prevents the individual from participating in any of the ATS activities listed above. The individual becomes immediately eligible for participation, however (assuming there are no other tobacco industry relationships as defined in sections IIA and IIB), if he/she permanently divests himself/herself of all such holdings a minimum of 30 days before beginning participation. In some circumstances, divestiture may be requested by a nominating group

and expected to occur before selection or nomination of the individual for participation. Past ownership of tobacco stocks or options (excluding mutual funds, unless a tobacco-sector fund) does not automatically exclude an individual from participation in the ATS activities listed above but will be considered by a nominating group in determining the appropriateness of selecting the individual.

- C. A spouse or life partner's relationship with the tobacco industry or stock/option ownership will not be considered as grounds for automatic limitations on the individual's participation in ATS activities as specified in this policy.
- D. ATS Officers, Editors, nominating committees, and others responsible for the nomination or appointment of individuals to ATS positions, or for acceptance of oral presenters at ATS conferences or manuscripts published within ATS journals, should (1) consider an individual's past known tobacco relationships, and (2) determine whether the past involvement, even if no longer existing, is of such significance to be perceived as a conflict of interest that compromises the appropriateness of the individual for nomination or appointment, or has compromised scientific integrity to the extent that the person responsible concludes that the individual should not be appointed or the manuscript should not be accepted.

V. Procedures for Implementation of this Policy

Procedures for implementation, interpretation, and adjudication of this policy shall be developed by the ATS Ethics and Conflict of Interest Committee or its staff, or in the case of use by ATS Journals, by the ATS Publications Policy Committee or its staff, and are subject to review by the ATS Ethics and Conflict of Interest Committee and ATS Executive Committee.