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## Guidelines for Submission of ATS Assembly/ Committee New & Renewal Project Applications

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### *PHASE 1: APPLICATION SUBMISSION*

1. Applications must be submitted electronically on the ATS website. **Please note that late submissions will not be accepted.** Please contact [Miriam Rodriguez](#), Managing Director, Assembly, Research and Award Programs to discuss any questions regarding the proposal process.
2. **Project Committee Members:**
  - The Chair or Co-Chairs of the project (or at least one Co-Chair, if a joint project with another society) must be a member of ATS.
  - Members of the project committee will be chosen by the project Chair or Co-Chairs once the project has received ATS approval. (Exception: projects intended to result in a clinical practice guideline [CPG] are subject to specific conflicts of interest standards, and ATS must review and approve prospective CPG panel members before the project begins. See below.)
3. **Disclosure and management of potential conflicts of interest (COI)** Conflicts of interest(COI) are direct personal financial or intellectual relationships with a company that has a business interest in the subject matter of the project. Disclosure and management of COI is an integral part of ATS project development because COI can lead to biased generation or assessment of evidence and misinform healthcare decision makers. Medical professional societies are obliged to rigorously manage potential COI, particularly in the development of official documents that affect health care. Therefore, the ATS requires that:
  - a. For all proposed projects, ATS must have on file (by time of consideration of this application) an up-to-date disclosure of any potential conflicts of interests (COI) of the proposed project chair or co-chair relevant to the project’s subject matter. Disclosure-to-ATS occurs through the annual online disclosure form available at the ATS COI Website (<https://convey.aamc.org/>) Please note:
    - i. If you filed a disclosure form previously due to another ATS activity (such as the International Conference), please return to the ATS COI Website to revise your disclosure to make sure that the scope of your disclosures there includes anything relevant to the project you are proposing here.
    - ii. If you haven’t yet completed the COI form or have any COI related questions, please contact John Harmon at [ethicsoffice@thoracic.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@thoracic.org) or 212-315-8611.

- b. All projects intended to result in an ATS clinical practice guideline (CPG) must meet additional conditions outlined in the ATS [Policy for Management of Financial Conflicts of Interest in the Development of ATS Clinical Practice Guidelines](#). These include:
- i. Once a project has been accepted-in-concept by ATS, all prospective panel members must disclose and allow ATS to consider all relevant COI prior to the onset of guideline development, and must also allow ATS to consider any potentially relevant new commercial relationships that arise during guideline development.
  - ii. Some COI are prohibited for all members of an ATS CPG panel, including the chair or co-chairs. These include direct financial relationships with relevant companies (exclusive of research funding and data and safety monitoring board activities), such as: investment in relevant companies by the panelist or panelist's life partner (exclusive of general mutual funds); participation on a relevant scientific advisory committee; consulting; non-CME speaking engagements and participation in speaker bureaus; providing expert testimony for a relevant company or law firm representing a relevant company; employment by a relevant company; a current professional relationship with or investment in a company involved in the manufacture or distribution of tobacco products.
  - iii. Some COI are acceptable for members of a CPG panel, including the chair or co-chairs, but will need to be managed during development (i.e., the conflicted individuals may participate in discussions about the evidence, but must be excluded from formulating, voting on, writing and grading recommendations related to their COI). Manageable conflicts include: relevant research funding paid to the participant's institution; participation on a data safety monitoring board relevant to the subject matter; relationships that are unrelated to the guideline's subject matter but involve a relevant company, such as participation on an unrelated research advisory committee, unrelated consulting, unrelated non-promotional speaking, and unrelated expert testimony.
  - iv. The chair (if only one) or the majority (i.e. > 50%) of co-chairs and the majority of CPG panel members must be free from relevant conflicts of interest.
  - v. Throughout the period of CPG development and for one year after publication, all CPG panel members should refrain from speaking activities related to the subject matter that involve payments by industry directly to the speaker.
  - vi. CPG project applicants that have questions about these requirements can contact John Harmon at [ethicsoffice@thoracic.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@thoracic.org) or 212-315-8611 for assistance.
4. New/Renewal applications must comply with the volume restrictions & completion of each field. New/Renewal applications received that are incomplete will not be accepted. Project Budgets will be determined by ATS Project Staff once project is approved.

5. Supplementary materials can be added to your application. Supplementary materials may include correspondence with other organizations, survey results or other like information. **Supplementary materials may not exceed 10 pages.**
6. New/Renewal applicants will receive an email confirmation from the ATS electronic submission site at the time of application submission. If you do not receive a confirmation email within 24 hours stating that your application has been submitted, please contact Miriam Rodriguez
7. NEW / RENEWAL Project submission does not guarantee acceptance or funding of any kind.

#### **PHASE 2: SCIENTIFIC REVIEW AND APPROVAL-OF-ALL-PROJECTS -IN-CONCEPT**

1. New/Renewal Applications will be reviewed in by the Planning Committee(s) of the submitting Assembly and in some cases by the appropriate ATS Committees. Assembly Planning Committees will review all NEW/RENEWAL projects from that Assembly. **Favorable review from the respective Assembly or Committee does not guarantee ATS funding.** Please note that project applications containing an educational or Web component will also be reviewed Internally by appropriate staff leaders.
2. Applicants will have the opportunity to amend their proposals.
3. By **mid-November**, acceptable New/Renewal Applications will be approved in concept by the ATS Program Review Sub-Committee. Primary applicants will be notified by ATS staff via e-mail if their project has been approved in concept. Applicants will not receive written scientific reviews at this time, but they will be notified that they may proceed to **phase 3** of the submission processes as described below. Please note: approval in concept does not guarantee full or partial funding by the ATS, or authorization of the primary applicant or others to conduct the project for the ATS. As explained below, final authorization and funding levels are dependent on completion of the conflict of interest disclosure and management process, and on the final funding decisions of the ATS Board of Directors.

#### **PHASE 3: PROJECT COMMITTEE COI DISCLOSURE AND REVIEW**

- In the event that your New/Renewal application is accepted-in-concept, at that time ATS will provide you with instructions on how to (a) contact and ensure that each of your project committee's members has an up to date and complete Personal Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest on file with ATS, and (b) review your committee members' disclosure summaries and report to ATS on resolution of identified conflicts of interest. (Renewal projects, please note: you having completed such COI review when your project was last approved by ATS does not satisfy renewal project requirements. Annual COI review is required.) Projects will not be submitted to the ATS Board for approval of renewal unless these COI requirements have been completed in full by that date.

#### **PHASE 4: ATS APPROVAL**

- As noted above, recommendations from the ATS Project Review Committee (PRC) will be reviewed by the ATS Finance Committee.

- Application decisions will be made, and applicants notified. Applicants whose New / Renewal projects have been approved-in-concept will receive instructions to complete project committee COI disclosure and disclosure review requirements **by mid-December**.
- If all COI management steps have been completed successfully, applications approved for funding by the ATS PRS and Finance Committee will be recommended for final approval by the ATS Board of Directors at its **December** meeting. Please note that the final approved funding level will be determined by ATS Project Staff.
- Applicants will receive a written summary of the ATS Program Review Sub-Committee comments on the application, official letter of approval and detailed approved budget in late **December**.
- All products or works, whether in writing or in another form, that are created partly or completely with the assistance of funding provided by the American Thoracic Society will be the intellectual property of the ATS exclusively, unless otherwise stipulated in writing by the ATS. The disposition of these products or works will be at the sole discretion of the ATS. Recipients agree, as a condition of receipt of ATS funding, that ATS owns the copyright and all other rights to these products or works.