



Cancer Charity
— EST. NORFOLK 1980 —

Code of Conduct

Advisory Panels to Big C Grants Committee

Version: 5.0

Summary:	The aim of this Code of Conduct is to set out Big C's expectations for the behaviour of all involved in the consideration of applications for Big C grant funding and to provide members of Big C Advisory Panels with clear "rules" within which to operate.	
Target audience:	Trustees, Advisory Panel members and other stakeholders	
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Version Control

Change Record

Date	Author	Version	Page	Reason for Change
2 March 2017	IJ/KM/NM	2	4	Note added to para 2.1 that Big C will retain copies of original applications and peer reviews etc.
2 March	IJ/KM/NM	2	4	Para 3.1 - amended to state that peer reviewers will be asked to declare whether they know an applicant rather than to declare a conflict of interest.
2 March	IJ/KM/NM	2	5	Para 3.3 - amended to give power to resolve major conflicts of interest to the Board via recommendation from the Grants Committee.
2 March	IJ/KM/NM	2	5	Para 4.1 – amended with a note to state content of feedback to be determined by IJ/KM/NM.
2 March	IJ/KM/NM	2	6	Para 5.2 – amended to state that Trustees or Panel members in breach “may” be asked to step down.
3 March	IJ	3	5	Para 3.2 – amended to state that Panel members who “work in close association” with the applicant should declare a possible conflict of interest.
27 March	KM/NM/AMS	4	5, 7 & 8	Addition of reference to “declaration of interests form” and creation of Appendix A containing the form
29 June 2020	Board	5	5	Changes to reflect AMRC membership requirements for Trustee voting on grant funding recommendations.

Reviewers/contributors

Name	Position	Version Reviewed & Date
Dr Ian Johnson	Chair of RAP	V1 - 2 March 2017 V2 - 3 March 2017
Nikki Morris	Director of Operations	V1 - 2 March 2017
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Code of Conduct

Advisory Panels to Big C Grants Committee

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Big C aims to ensure that applications for grant funding are assessed objectively and impartially and that funding decisions are fair, objective and transparent.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to set out Big C's expectations for the behaviour of all involved in the consideration of applications for Big C grant funding and to provide members of Big C Advisory Panels with clear "rules" within which to operate.
- 1.3 This Code of Conduct is supplementary to, and must be read in conjunction with, the Terms of Reference for each of the charity's Advisory Panels and the Terms of Reference of Big C's Grants Committee.

2. Confidentiality

2.1 Documentation:

Details of grant funding applications and related correspondence, Advisory Panel meetings and their papers; and the identity of external referees are strictly confidential and must be kept secure and not disseminated to or discussed with others outside the review process.

Big C will retain original copies of applications, peer reviews and correspondence with applicants, which will be stored securely. Any additional printouts of any of the above documents must be disposed of securely after applicants have been advised of decisions.

2.2 Discussions:

Discussions of a grant funding application between members of an Advisory Panel which occur outside a Panel meeting should be declared to the Panel Chair.

Advisory Panel members and peer reviewers can expect that their comments will be treated in confidence by all involved in the review process.

If an Advisory Panel member is approached by an applicant for technical advice on an application he or she may provide advice but must report this to the Panel Chair and Company Secretary. They may subsequently be asked by the Chair to absent themselves from a discussion of the application concerned.

3. Conflicts of interest

3.1 Peer reviewers:

Individuals who are applicants or co-applicants in the grant round are excluded from acting as peer reviewers for any of the applications.

When an individual is invited to peer review an application they are asked to declare whether they know the applicant(s) and if so in what capacity. Big C will determine whether the response is to be regarded as a conflict of interest, and where this is the case the individual concerned will usually be asked not to undertake the review, depending on the nature of the conflict. Such conflicts of interest might include previous collaboration with one of the applicants or co-applicants, or being related to an applicant or co-applicant.

3.2 Advisory Panel members:

Advisory Panel members are required to complete a declaration of interests form (attached as Appendix A) when they become a member of the Panel and annually thereafter. Members are expected to declare any potential conflicts of interest relating to any particular applications being made to a grants round, either before the meeting where they will be discussed, or during the meeting as soon as the existence of a conflict becomes apparent. In cases where an individual is uncertain as to whether a conflict of interest exists or not they should report this to the Chair and Company Secretary. The Chair shall decide on a course of action. If an individual panel member is concerned about a possible conflict of interest involving another Panel member, then he or she should raise the matter with the Chair.

Panel members who are applicants or co-applicants must declare an interest and withdraw from any consideration of that application. That Panel member will not receive documents pertaining to the application, learn the identity of any peer reviewers or receive its peer reviewers' reports. He or she must retire from the meeting when the application is assessed. Details of discussion of that application will be deleted from any papers the member receives.

Where the Chair is an applicant or co-applicant on a grant application he or she must declare an interest and should not be involved in that round of meetings. The Vice Chair will undertake the duties of the Chair should this situation arise.

Any panel member who could be seen as a direct competitor of an applicant (e.g. they are funded or applying for funding on a similar project to the proposal under discussion), or have collaborated or published with the proposed applicant within the past three years, or otherwise work in close association with the applicant, should declare a possible conflict of interest and may be asked to withdraw from the meeting for that application or may be allowed to stay but not vote on the application.

Any member of the Research Advisory Panel who is also a Big C Trustee will be able to vote on grant funding recommendations (subject to any conflict of interest) at Panel meetings however that person will not be able to vote on grant funding recommendations subsequently presented by the Panel to the Big C Grants Committee or by the Big C Grants Committee to the Big C Board of Trustees.

3.3 Resolution of conflicts of interest:

Big C recognises that most conflicts or potential conflicts will relate to a particular issue, and as such will not present any long-term restrictions on an individual's ability to join or remain a member of an Advisory Panel.

In a small number of cases, major conflicts of interest may arise which compromise an individual's ability to continue in their position as a member of an Advisory Panel. Where such a situation arises, the matter will be discussed by the Chair of the Panel together with the Director of Charitable Operations and the Company Secretary. In cases where agreement cannot be reached through this means, the case will be referred to the Big C Grants Committee which will advise the Big C Board of Trustees on the final decision to be made.

4. **Feedback**

4.1 Applicants

To avoid any confusion, feedback to applicants (successful and unsuccessful) will be provided only by Big C. Trustees, Advisory Panel members and peer reviewers should not, under any circumstances provide feedback directly to the applicant.

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their applications, including anonymous versions of peer reviewers' comments, and this feedback may also include the conclusion reached by the Trustees in response to recommendations made by Advisory Panels. The content of the feedback

to applicants will be determined jointly by the Chair of the Panel, the Company Secretary and the Director of Charitable Operations. Information that might identify the comments of individual Panel members or peer reviewers will not be provided to applicants.

4.2 Peer reviewers

Peer reviewers will be advised of the outcome of the applications that they have reviewed after decisions have been communicated to applicants.

5. Breach of the Code of Conduct

5.1 Staff:

Breach of this Code of Conduct will be treated as misconduct under Big C's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

5.2 Trustees and Advisory Panel members

Any Trustee or Advisory Panel member who acts in breach of this Code of Conduct may be asked to step down from the Board or Panel.

6. Review

6.1 Review will be undertaken every two years or earlier if required.

7. Associated documents

7.1 Big C Standing Orders:

- Appendix 5: Terms of Reference of Big C Grants Committee
- Appendix 6a: Terms of Reference of Big C Research Advisory Panel

7.2 Association of Medical Research Charities: Guidance on developing a Conflicts of Interest Policy

Big C Advisory Panel - Declaration of Interests form

1. This form is intended to capture **long term predictable interests** that could be perceived to lead to conflicts of interest. These and any other interests will be judged on a case by case basis and should be raised with the Advisory Panel Chair and Company Secretary when you are sent a list of grant applications to review or at the Advisory Panel meetings.
2. This form should be used to report any interests that could potentially cause embarrassment or damage the credibility of yourself or Big C if they subsequently come to light in relation to the recommendations made by the Advisory Panel.

Name:	
Primary employer:	

Registerable interest (over the past 3 years)	Yes / No	Nature and description of interest
1. Personal financial (1) <i>e.g. other employment, honoraria, contracts, academic collaborations where income has been personally received or attributed, consultancies, directorships, shares...</i>		
2. Personal non-financial (2) <i>e.g., honorary contracts, unpaid academic collaborations, memberships, charities, Trustees, pressure groups...</i>		
3. Non-personal financial (3) <i>e.g. funding to a department and not to an individual...</i>		
4. Other interests (4)		

I declare that the information provided is accurate (5)

Please check the box to confirm this statement

I understand that this information will be stored electronically (6)

Please check the box to confirm this statement

Signature: Date:

Notes

- (1) **Personal financial:** This includes other employment, honoraria, contracts, academic collaborations where income has been personally received or attributed, consultancies, directorships, shares.
 - 1.1 Provide the names of the body or company from which you receive personal remuneration, equal to or above £5k per annum:
 - (i) Any appointment at a university or research institute or similar body;
 - (ii) Any directorships, employment, consultancies or other connection with companies in any field where the company might benefit from support by Big C either as a collaborator or in some other way;
 - (iii) Any position of authority in charities and other bodies providing research funding, or support for policy or communication in relevant fields;
 - (iv) Any other body involved in research, medical, bio-medical, pharmaceutical, healthcare provision or science or health policy/communication.
 - 1.2 Declare any major academic collaborations outside your own organisation. Please provide the name of the university (and department), institute, company or similar body, and the nature of the connection e.g. research collaboration.
 - 1.4 Declare the name of any company in which you have direct shareholdings (with a market value equal to or greater than £10,000) or other financial interests which are involved or may in the future be involved in the research, medical, biomedical, pharmaceutical, healthcare provision and similar fields.
 - 1.5 The amount(s) of remuneration received or value of any shares **does not** need to be declared.
- (2) **Personal non-financial:** This includes honorary contracts, unpaid academic collaborations, memberships, charities, Trustees, pressure groups.
 - 2.1 Declare any unremunerated involvement with, or membership of, any other body in connection with research, medical, bio-medical, pharmaceutical, healthcare provision and similar activity, including relevant:
 - (i) appointments at a university or research institute or similar body;
 - (ii) directorships or employment or other connection with companies in any field where the company might benefit from support by Big C either as a collaborator or in some other way;
 - (iii) positions of authority in charities and other bodies providing research funding or science or health policy/communication.
 - 2.2 Members are expected not to occupy paid party political posts, or to hold particularly sensitive or high-profile unpaid roles in a political party, pressure group or similar organisation. Any political/pressure group associations should be declared.
- (3) **Non-personal financial:** This includes funding to a department and not to an individual.
- (4) **Other interests:** This could include other interests not mentioned above, but which you consider could be perceived to lead to a conflict of interest.
- (5) If in doubt you should err on the side of disclosure and/or discuss uncertainties with Chair or Company Secretary.
- (6) The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.
- (7) The form will be sent to you for checking and updating once a year, however any material changes to the information supplied should be notified to the Chair and Company Secretary. Please note that as this information is subject to change this does **not** replace the need to report all interests when you are sent list of grant applications to review or at the Advisory Panel meeting.