



# Australian Living Evidence Collaboration

## Conflicts of Interest Procedure

v01:4th October 2023

### Scope

This procedure applies to members of ALEC Committees and Groups, hereby referred to as 'ALEC members', including, but not limited to, the Strategic Advisory Committee, Methods Advisory Group, Technology Advisory Group, Consumer Advisory Group and Research Advisory Group.

Individual guideline programs associated with ALEC will have their own conflicts of interest procedures. ALEC members who contribute to guideline development may also need to complete a Declaration of Interest Form for the specific guidelines they are involved in.

### Procedure Statement

The [Australian Living Evidence Collaboration](#) seeks to operate with strong ethical practices and a commitment to integrity and transparency in all its dealings. We ask that ALEC members declare their interests that have a bearing on, or may be perceived to have a bearing on, carrying out their role properly and impartially. This procedure outlines the process for declaring interests to ensure that all conflicts are identified and managed appropriately, whether they be potential, perceived or actual conflicts.

### Understanding types of interests

While there is no definitive list of interests which can be declared, the below provides some examples of the types and relationships that may give rise to a conflict.

- **Commercial and financial interests:**  
Any employment, business activity or share in something that has a monetary, or equivalent value. Examples of financial interest include distributions from trusts, directorships of trusts, significant shareholding in a public or private company, shares, share options, dividends, and the right to receive remuneration or other benefits such as salaries, fees from company directorship or board membership, consulting fees, allowances and discounts.
- **Gifts, benefits and hospitality:**  
A gift is something voluntarily transferred from one person to another without an expectation of payment or other compensation from the person who receives the gift. For the purpose of this procedure, a gift includes free or discounted items, hospitality and/or entertainment (such as travel and accommodation), and any item given or accepted that would generally be seen by the public as conferring a benefit to the individual receiving it.
- **Non-financial interests:**  
While financial interests are of most concern, non-financial interests may be relevant, such as board membership (unpaid) and affiliations with organisations that stand to benefit from the decisions and activities of ALEC.
- **Relationships:**  
Interests held by a partner, dependent, or other close personal relationship should be declared where these could influence, or could reasonably be seen to influence, the decisions taken or the advice given by ALEC members.

### **Declaring interests**

ALEC members are to be proactive, accountable and cooperative in managing any potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

An ALEC Declaration Form will be provided to each ALEC member when they commence, and annually thereafter. ALEC members are to notify the ALEC Project Team within 30 days of any change in circumstances where an interest arises.

The requirement to complete the form applies even where the interest is transient or temporary, and includes when an ALEC member is acting in, or seconded to, a different position on an interim or short-term basis.

ALEC members are required to be aware of the possibility of a conflict of interest and work with the ALEC Executive Team to refine a management plan if needed once they have submitted the form.

A conflict of interest may be described as follows:

- Potential – where private interests are not, but could come into, conflict with the ALEC member's role;
- Perceived – where it appears, or could be perceived, that an ALEC member's private interests are improperly influencing the performance of their duties, whether or not that is actually the case; or
- Actual – where a direct conflict exists between an ALEC member's current role and their existing private interests.

ALEC members may seek advice from the ALEC Project Team about the relevance of their interests and individual circumstances, and whether a specific interest declaration is required.

All information contained in a form is managed in accordance with the applicable Monash data protection and privacy obligations.

### **Declaration in connection with committees/meetings**

At the commencement of ALEC meetings, depending on the topics of discussion, the Chair or nominee may call for members to declare any interests that may impact, or may be perceived to impact, their ability to perform their role. If the Chair of the committee has any interests to declare, this should be disclosed to the ALEC Executive Team.

Where an interest is declared, the Chair/nominee may determine the declaration of the interest is sufficient and no action is required or further management is appropriate. Any declaration of interest and management action should be recorded in applicable meeting minutes.

### **Conflict of interest management plans**

The ALEC Executive Team is responsible for the assessment of interests and will determine if a management plan is required. ALEC members may be contacted by the ALEC Executive Team for additional information in relation to their declaration.

When a potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest has been identified, the ALEC member will be advised that a management plan is required to resolve or manage the conflict.

The ALEC Executive Team will be responsible for the endorsement of any management plan and may seek support of Monash University or other relevant subject matter experts.

### **Review and monitoring**

The ALEC member and any other nominated persons identified in a management plan are responsible for the implementation and adherence to strategies to manage conflicts associated with the declared interest.

### **Breach of procedure**

A failure to comply with this procedure, including knowingly misleading the ALEC Project Team, or a failure to manage a potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest, or inappropriate actions taken by a person with a conflict of interest, will result in that member being excluded from all activities within the Australian Living Evidence Collaboration.

Australian Living Evidence Collaboration

School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine  
Monash University  
Level 4, 553 St Kilda Road  
Melbourne, VIC 3004  
[admin.alec@monash.edu](mailto:admin.alec@monash.edu)

