

Conflicts of interest

This appendix is designed to help you identify and declare possible conflicts of interest in your application. It provides examples only. You must declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that could reasonably influence:

- the application
- its review
- or the delivery of the research

If you are unsure whether something constitutes a conflict, declare it – NICHHS will assess and manage it.



If unsure, declare it – we will assess materiality.

What you must declare

You must declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that could reasonably influence:

- the application
- its review
- the delivery of the research

Types of conflicts you must declare

1. Conflicts with NICHHS

These conflicts are important as they may affect decision-making or perceived fairness. This includes relationships with:

- NICHHS staff
- Scientific Research Committee (SRC) members
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Governance Board or Finance Committee members

Our People: <https://nichs.org.uk/about-us/our-people>



Our Scientific Research Committee:

<https://nichs.org.uk/research-policy/research/our-research-grants-programme/our-scientific-research-committee>

2. Conflicts within the research team

This includes relationships between team members, such as:

- family or personal relationships
- supervisory or line management relationships
- financial or professional dependencies

These must be declared where they could influence:

- project management
- decision-making
- objectivity

3. Conflicts with third parties (including commercial)

This includes:

- industry partners
- collaborators outside the core team
- organisations with a financial or strategic interest in the research

Examples:

- funding from a commercial partner
- links to companies that may benefit from findings
- shared intellectual property interests

4. Conflicts with reviewers

You must declare any relationship between the research team and named reviewers. This includes:

- previous collaboration
- shared institutional affiliation
- supervisory relationships
- personal relationships
- financial interests

Reviewer relationships: what is acceptable

NICHHS recognises that the research community is small, and some connections are unavoidable. Conflicts are considered case by case.

Manageable (“soft”) conflicts

These may be acceptable if declared and not current or influential:

- past collaborations or co-authorship
- same institution, without current collaboration
- historic PhD supervision (no ongoing relationship)
- general professional familiarity

👉 These do not automatically exclude a reviewer

Unacceptable (“hard”) conflicts

These cannot be managed and should not be proposed:

- current collaboration on this or closely related research
- involvement in the application (e.g. partner, subcontractor)
- active supervisory or reporting relationship
- close personal relationship
- direct financial or professional benefit from the outcome

👉 These will exclude a reviewer

Important



- Declaring a conflict does not disadvantage your application
- Failing to declare a relevant relationship may raise concerns
- NICHHS will decide how conflicts are managed

Refer to the Conflict-of-Interest Policy