

**INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR HEART AND LUNG TRANSPLANTATION (ISHLT)
CONFLICT OF INTEREST (COI) POLICIES FOR
THE JOURNAL OF HEART AND LUNG TRANSPLANTATION (JHLT)**

Approved August 2020

EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure and protect the integrity of the JHLT, the ISHLT has developed these policies on COI as it applies to the JHLT, its Editor-in-Chief, Deputy Editors, Section Editors, and Editorial Board members/Reviewers, as well as authors of manuscripts submitted to JHLT for consideration for publication. This policy is based upon the foundational work of The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), which updated its *Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals* in December 2019, see <http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>. Further guidance came from the Committee on Publication Ethics, COPE, see <https://publicationethics.org/competinginterests> and the World Association of Medical Editors, WAME, see <http://wame.org/conflict-of-interest-in-peer-reviewed-medical-journals>. The JHLT COI principles below are embodied within the ICMJE Recommendations and reflect accepted COI practice for major journals.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when a competing interest (financial, competitive, or otherwise) does or may influence (intentionally or not) the assessment of the validity or the interpretation of data and results. It is recognized that many authors and members of editorial boards have competing interests, and it is often not clear to journal readers, researchers, and editorial board members when a competing interest affects decision-making. Disclosure of all actual or potential conflicts allows all parties to make informed judgments.

The following competing interests or relationships must be disclosed by all Authors, Reviewers, and Editors (“covered individuals”), including when such interests/relationships are those of a spouse, child, or any other individual with whom the covered individual shares income or assets:

- **Employment**: Employment with an entity having an investment, licensing, or other commercial interest in the subject matter under consideration must be disclosed.
- **Leadership Position**: Service as an officer or director for an entity having an investment, licensing, or other commercial interest in the subject matter under consideration must be disclosed.
- **Consultant/Advisory Role/Expert Testimony**: Arrangements with an entity having an investment, licensing, or other commercial interest in the subject matter under consideration must be disclosed if payments are made within the past 24 months or anticipated to be paid in the current or upcoming 12 months, regardless of whether payment was made to the individual or his/her institution. Payments totaling less than \$500 per incident are excluded from disclosure requirements.
- **Stock Ownership/Patents**: Any ownership interest including stock, options, and warrants (except when invested in a publicly traded fund not controlled by the covered individual) in any publicly traded or privately held company, and/or any patents generating income in the past 24 months or anticipated to generate income in the current or upcoming 12 months must be disclosed if the company is an entity having an investment, licensing, or other commercial interest in the subject matter under consideration.

- Honoraria: Disclosure of honoraria for presentations or other services is required if payments are made by an entity having an investment, licensing, or other commercial interest in the subject matter under consideration and are paid within the past 24 months or anticipated to be paid in the current or upcoming 12 months, regardless of whether payment was made to the individual or his/her institution. Payments totaling less than \$500 per incident are excluded from disclosure requirements.
- Research Funding: All payments (including in-kind payments) associated with the conduct of research in which the disclosing individual is participating/has participated must be disclosed if the payment is provided by or on behalf of a company having an investment, licensing, or other commercial interest in the subject matter under consideration, and is paid within the past 24 months or anticipated to be paid in the current or upcoming 12 months, regardless of whether payment was made to the individual or his/her institution.
- Other Compensation: Trips, travel, gifts, or other in-kind payments, including those not directly related to specific research activities, must be disclosed if received from an entity having an investment, licensing, or other commercial interest in the subject matter under consideration and are paid within the past 24 months or are anticipated to be paid in the current or upcoming 12 months, regardless of whether payment was made to the individual or his/her institution, or a third party on the individual's behalf. Payments totaling less than \$500 per incident are excluded from disclosure requirements.

3. COI DISCLOSURE AND MANAGEMENT FOR EDITORS

All Editors

- All Editors must complete and submit the JHLT COI Disclosure Form at the time of appointment and annually thereafter and must attest at the time that they have read and intend to adhere to the JHLT COI Policy.
- All Editors must update their COI disclosure information throughout the year as needed.
- It is the duty of all Editors to recuse themselves if they have a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest with any manuscript submitted to JHLT. Such conflicts include those in Section 2 above as well as the following:
 - A spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, or child is an author on the manuscript
 - An author on the manuscript was recently (within 24 months) or is currently employed by or affiliated with the same institution or organization as themselves.

Editor-in-Chief

- Prior to final acceptance or rejection of a manuscript, the EIC must attest that he/she had no conflicts of interest that would prevent a fair and unbiased assessment of the manuscript and that the JHLT COI Policy was followed in the decision-making process regarding the manuscript.
- The EIC will coordinate with the Managing Editor to assign an alternate Deputy Editor to manage the review and decision-making process for any manuscript in which the originally assigned Deputy Editor has elected to recuse themselves after disclosing a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest in order to maintain the fair and unbiased assessment of the manuscript.

Deputy Editors

- The Deputy Editor will coordinate with the Managing Editor to assign an alternate Section Editor to invite reviewers for a manuscript in which the originally assigned Section Editor has elected to recuse themselves after disclosing a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest in order to maintain the fair and unbiased assessment of the manuscript.

- In the event that the Editor-in-Chief is unable to render a final decision on a manuscript due to any real, potential, and/or perceived conflict of interest, the Deputy Editor may be called upon to proxy the EIC role in order to carry out the fair and unbiased assessment.

Section Editors

- The Section Editor will invite alternate reviewer(s) for select manuscripts in which the originally invited reviewer(s) has elected to recuse themselves after disclosing a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest in order to maintain the fair and unbiased assessment of the manuscript.

4. COI DISCLOSURE AND MANAGEMENT FOR REVIEWERS

All Reviewers

- It is the duty of all Reviewers to recuse themselves if they have a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest with any manuscript submitted to them for review. Such conflicts include those in Section 2 above as well as the following:
 - A spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, or child is an author on the manuscript
 - An author on the manuscript was recently (within 12 months) or is currently employed by or affiliated with the same institution or organization as the Reviewer.
- Upon acceptance of an invitation to review, the Reviewer must read the JHLT COI Policy and determine whether or not he/she has a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest with the manuscript. If not, the Reviewer may accept the invitation to review and attest that he/she does not have any conflicts of interest with the manuscript. If the Reviewer does have a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest with the manuscript, he or she must attest to that circumstance and decline the invitation to review.
- If the Reviewer is uncertain as to whether a conflict of interest exists, the Reviewer should contact the Section Editor to discuss the circumstances.
- The Editors have the discretion to disregard a review if, in their assessment, the Reviewer has a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.

Editorial Board Members

- The appointed members of the Editorial Board, who serve as the body of committed reviewers, must complete and submit the JHLT COI Disclosure Form at the time of appointment and annually thereafter and must attest at the time that they have read and intend to adhere to the JHLT COI Policy.
- Editorial Board members must update their COI disclosure information throughout the year as needed.
- The Section Editor will invite an alternate Reviewer should the originally assigned Reviewer disclose a real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.

5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE FOR AUTHORS

The ISHLT and the JHLT currently abide by the ICMJE Recommendations (“the Uniform Requirements”) as they relate to authors. Accordingly:

- All listed authors must complete and submit to JHLT at the time of manuscript submission the ICMJE's standardized disclosure form, which can be found at http://www.icmje.org/coi_disclosure.pdf. If uncertain as to what might be considered a potential conflict of interest, authors should err on the side of full disclosure of all relationships described above.
- Such disclosure must include actual or potential conflicts of interest related to all aspects of the manuscript. This includes any actual or potential competing interest related to the design and conduct of the study and interpretation of the study data.

- In addition, each manuscript, regardless of its type, must include a financial conflict of interest disclosure statement. This statement should be included AFTER the Discussion Section and BEFORE the References in a separate section. This statement must include all funding sources or acknowledgements of contributions of any material nature pertinent to the manuscript and must describe ALL authors' relationships with companies or relevant entities that make products pertinent to the manuscript. The statement must specify the type of relationships (e.g., consulting, paid speaking, grant support, equity, patents) EACH author has with EACH company. The role(s) of any funding organization(s), if any, in the collection of data, its analysis and interpretation, and/or in the right to approve or disapprove publication of the finished manuscript must be described in this statement as well. This information is of serious concern to the Editorial Office and no manuscripts will move forward for processing if this statement is not provided as described herein.
- Authors must completely spell out all grant funding agency abbreviations.
- If an author has no conflicts to declare, he or she must indicate **None**.
- Failure to include the disclosure statement at the time of manuscript submission will result in the Editorial Office returning the manuscript, which may be resubmitted provided the disclosure is included with the next submission. Allegations of inappropriate disclosure will be investigated.

6. CONSEQUENCES OF NOT DISCLOSING COI

There are serious consequences for any author failing to disclose potential or actual conflicts of interest. These will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may include:

- Ban from publishing in JHLT for from 1 year to indefinitely
- Expression of concern published in JHLT
- Retraction of article
- Instigation of institutional inquiry into scientific misconduct
- Report to *Retraction Watch* of misconduct

7. PUBLICATION OF COI INFORMATION

Authors

All conflict of interest disclosures submitted by authors at the time of manuscript submission (using the ICMJE's standardized disclosure form, found here: http://www.icmje.org/coi_disclosure.pdf) will be published as part of the final typeset article in a separate section titled "Disclosure Statement".

Editors and Editorial Board Members

All conflict of interest disclosures submitted annually by Editors and members of the Editorial Board will be published via a link on the JHLT page of the ISHLT website, a link on the JHLT website, and a link provided in the front matter of each issue of the JHLT.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES

Author COI

All listed authors must complete and submit to JHLT at the time of manuscript submission the ICMJE's standardized disclosure form. Author disclosure statements should also be included in the submitted manuscript and will be published as part of the final typeset article in a separate section titled "Disclosure statement."

Editor and Editorial Board member COI

- The JHLT COI Disclosure Policy and Disclosure Form shall be provided by the ISHLT Director of Communications to each Editor and Editorial Board member at the time of their invitation to serve and every June 1 thereafter, for submission by July 1 of each year.
- The COI disclosure information submitted by the Editors and Editorial Board members will be collated by the ISHLT Director of Communications into a document suitable for public consumption.
- The ISHLT Director of Communications will update this document every July 1 and as needed throughout the year and will provide a link to this document and each updated version to the JHLT Managing Editor, the Elsevier Journal Manager, and the Publisher for their records. The Elsevier Journal Manager and the Publisher will both coordinate with appropriate Elsevier's teams to include this disclosure document in the print and digital journal, and on the JHLT website.
- The ISHLT Director of Communications will ensure that the JHLT page of the ISHLT website contains a link to the JHLT COI Policy, a list of the Editors and Editorial Board members, and a link to their current COI disclosure information.
- The Elsevier Journal Manager will ensure that each print and digital issue of the JHLT contains a link under the Editorial Board listing to the JHLT COI Policy and the most current COI disclosure information for the Editors and Editorial Board members.
- The Managing Editor will ensure that all required processes for implementation of the JHLT COI Policy for Editors and Editorial Board members are made available and completed as required.

Attestation Process

- All Editors must complete and submit the JHLT COI Disclosure Form at the time of appointment and annually thereafter and must attest at the time that they have read and intend to adhere to the JHLT COI Policy and will update accordingly throughout the year as/if needed.
- It is the duty of all Editors (EIC, Deputy, and Section) to recuse themselves if they have a real, potential, and/or perceived conflict of interest with any manuscript submitted to JHLT and undergoing peer review.
- Authors will disclose all real, potential, and/or perceived conflicts of interest upon manuscript submission and will have that information published with all accepted manuscripts and final publication.
- Reviewers are also expected to declare all real, potential, and/or perceived conflict of interest with any manuscript that are invited to review and will be asked to confirm that they have no conflicts upon acceptance of invitation.

In-System Mandatory Questions:

- Editor in Chief - Prior to final acceptance of a manuscript for publication, Editor-in-Chief must agree to the following statement with "Yes" / "No" response: "I attest that I have no conflicts of interest that prevented my making fair and unbiased decisions regarding this manuscript and that that I adhered to the JHLT COI Policy in the decision-making process regarding the manuscript."
- Reviewers – At the time of acceptance of the invitation to review, upon reviewing the JHLT COI Policy provided with their invitation, reviewers will be asked to attest that they have no conflicts of interest: "I attest that I have no conflicts of interest to disclose that will prevent a fair and unbiased peer review regarding this manuscript and that I have read and will adhere to the JHLT COI Policy in the decision-making process regarding the manuscript".

These check-point questions will both be mandatory for the EIC and for Reviewers for each manuscript that they directly handle within Elsevier's Editorial Manager platform.