

Declaration of Conflicting Interests Policy

A Declaration of Conflicting Interests policy refers to a formal policy a journal may have to require a conflict of interest statement or conflict of interest disclosure from a submitting or publishing author.

The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) states in its Guidelines on Good Publication Practice (2003) that:

“Conflicts of interest arise when authors, reviewers, or editors have interests that are not fully apparent and that may influence their judgments on what is published. They have been described as those which, when revealed later, would make a reasonable reader feel misled or deceived”.

Many scholars, researchers and professionals may have potential conflicts of interest, that could have an effect on – or could be seen to – have an effect on their research. As a result, OUSL Journal requires a formal declaration of conflicting interests enabling a statement to be carried within the paginated published article.

A potential conflicting interest might arise from relationships, allegiances or hostilities to particular groups, organizations or interests, which may influence excessively one’s judgments or actions. The issue is particularly sensitive when such interests are private and/or may result in personal gain.

Articles will be evaluated fairly and will not necessarily be rejected when any competing interests are declared.

Examples of conflicts of interest might include the following, although it is not an exhaustive list:

- Having received fees for consulting.
- Having received research funding.
- Having been employed by a related company.
- Holding stocks or shares in a company which might be affected by the publication of your paper.
- Having received funds reimbursing you for attending a related symposia, or talk.

If there are other interests which the reasonable reader might feel has affected your research you may also wish to declare them.

**Please note that it is not expected that details of financial arrangements be disclosed when a competing interest is declared.*

Author obligations regarding conflicting interests

In your Journal Publishing Contributor Agreement you will be asked to certify that:

1. All forms of financial support, including pharmaceutical company support, are acknowledged in your Contribution.
2. Any commercial or financial involvements that might present an appearance of a conflict of interest related to the Contribution are disclosed in a covering letter accompanying the Contribution and all such potential conflicts of interest will be discussed with the Editor as to whether disclosure of this information with the published Contribution is to be made in the journal.
3. That you have not signed an agreement with any sponsor of the research reported in the Contribution that prevents you from publishing both positive and negative results or that forbids you from publishing this research without the prior approval of the sponsor.
4. That you have checked the manuscript submission guidelines to see whether the journal requires a Declaration of Conflicting Interests and have complied with the requirements specified where such a policy exists.

How do I make a declaration?

Please include such a declaration at the end of your manuscript after any Acknowledgements and prior to the Funding Acknowledgement, Notes (if relevant) and References, under the heading 'Declaration of Conflicting Interest'. If no conflict exists, please state that 'The Author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest'.

**Please note, a Conflict of Interest Statement will not appear in journals that do not require a declaration of conflicting interests. Where a declaration is required the disclosure information must be specific and include any financial relationship that all authors of the article has with any sponsoring organization and the for-profit interests the organization represents, and with any for-profit product discussed or implied in the text of the article.*