


Review Date: New policy
Date Developed: May 2021
Principal Responsibility: AOA Board
Endorsed: 05/05/2021 Board Meeting

Approved by:	Title: CEO	Name: Adrian Cosenza	Signature/date  7 July 2021
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OUTCOME:

In line with the AOA Ethical Framework, AOA is committed to maintaining independence and transparency in dealing with industry and sector sponsorship. The intent of this policy is to assist in the translation of AOA's ethical values into the professional conduct and behaviour of all AOA sponsorship relationships, in the interests of all orthopaedic surgeons and those in good standing with AOA.

BACKGROUND:

AOA remains committed to an innovative and transformative agenda. In early 2020 AOA embarked on a journey to develop a Digital Transformation Strategy to expand AOA membership offerings and cultivate a unique value proposition for members and stakeholders. AOA's online and digital content spans a range of AOA properties which have been determined appropriate for ethical sponsorship collaboration.

AOA values industry and sector sponsors and their commitment to the educational aspirations of the AOA membership & orthopaedic community.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Industry/sector** – medical device companies, manufacturers; medical or health insurers, public or private hospitals or companies, practice management software companies, medical defence organisations, education providers and other organisations that focus on the AOA's orthopaedic membership and/or community.
- **Sponsorship** – financial or in-kind support from an industry/sector sponsor as defined above.
- **Content** includes all AOA sourced, developed and delivered educational material and information including subject matter expertise content provided by third parties at the direction and instruction of AOA.
- **Sponsored Content** – includes third party provided product or company specific educational material and information
- **Properties/channels** – AOA arranged programs, events, publications, communications and digital assets

POLICY

- All proposals for sponsorship will be required to meet with specific sponsorship principles
- All sponsorship material must comply with AOA approvals and requirements
- All proposals for sponsorship will be reviewed by AOA management and/or relevant nominated representatives prior to consideration by CEO and/or Board.

STRATEGIES:

1. Principles for Sponsorship
2. Sponsorship Material
3. Process for Reviewing Sponsorship Proposals
4. Examples of Sponsorship
5. Anticorruption requirements

1. Principles for Sponsorship

AOA will accept sponsorship support from industry/sector organisations if it is in accordance with the following principles:

- AOA will be open about and communicate its policies and guidelines regarding relationships with industry and sector sponsors. AOA materials directed to both members and/or the public will contain accurate terms or statements such that reasonable individuals will understand the nature and extent of the industry/sector sponsorship relationship
- AOA will never compromise its independence or engage in a sponsorship relationship that will affect the organisation or its members' credibility or integrity. In all dealings it is imperative that AOA maintains the trust of its members, the public and government and that AOA should never be perceived to promote any product or commercial third party
- AOA will determine appropriate areas for the sponsorship, the types of sponsorship, the length or duration of sponsorship and the relevant sponsorship benefits
- All sponsorship relationships must have an AOA-related benefit and be in accord with AOA's vision and its values
- AOA will strive for a sponsorship that is beneficial both to the sponsor and AOA
- AOA will treat all industry/sector sponsors fairly and honestly
- AOA will exercise independent judgment in all its decision making. Thus, AOA will retain sole discretion in relation to the content, quality, scientific and educational integrity of all sponsored programs, events, publications, communication and digital assets
- AOA where appropriate will utilise and attain clinician input and feedback to assess the relevance of sponsorship proposals and exercise the appropriate testing to ensure relevance and value to membership.
- AOA will have a written agreement with all industry/sector sponsors prior to the implementation of the formal relationship.

2. Sponsorship Material

- AOA will exercise independent judgment in all its decision making. Thus, AOA will retain sole discretion in relation to the content, quality, scientific and educational integrity of all sponsored programs, events, publications, communication and digital assets
- AOA retains the sole discretion to determine the use of its name, logo and identifying marks. Any use of the AOA name, logo, and identifying marks in any organisation's promotional or educational materials must be approved by AOA in writing in advance of the use.
- AOA cannot be held legally responsible for any information used by sponsors in promotional material regarding the clinical performance of any medical device or prosthesis advertised by sponsors. AOA reserves the right to reject any sponsor material that it believes will not reflect its ethical values and principles.

- All sponsored content will be clearly identifiable as such to a reasonable observer in all AOA channels / properties and attendance either virtually or in person is optional for members and trainees.

3. Process for Reviewing Sponsorship Proposals

- Sponsorship proposals will be reviewed for compliance against the Principles for Sponsorship
- Sponsorship proposals will be reviewed initially by either
 - the relevant manager and/or
 - the AOA Management Team prior to review by the AOA Advocacy & Governance Manager for compliance with the Principles for Sponsorship.
- Sponsorship proposals that are non-compliant and require modification will be returned to the Sponsor as soon as possible for amendment
- Sponsorship proposals that are not in line with the *AOA Principles for Sponsorship* and unable to be made compliant will be returned to the sponsor with an explanation as to why the proposal is non-compliant.
- A sponsorship proposal may be referred to clinicians for specific advice which AOA will forward to the Sponsor.

4. Examples of Sponsorship

Examples of sponsorship proposals which are considered to be compliant with the *AOA Principles for Sponsorship* and deemed compliant include (but are not limited to):

- Member communications eg: Bulletin, eNewsletter, AOA Industry Update Page
- AOA Member Conferences eg: AOA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM), AOA Continuing Orthopaedic Education (COE) Meeting,
- AOA Livestreaming Event Sponsorship, AOA Event eProceedings Sponsor, AOA Event App Sponsor

Examples of sponsorship proposals which are considered to be outside the *AOA Principles for Sponsorship* and deemed non-compliant include (but are not limited to):

- Infrastructure or IT systems by the Sponsor that capture and store data about patients/surgeons where the stored data may be subject to FOI/subpoena
- Proposals to that include Bone School are not guaranteed to be approved – these may only be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Proposals to provide direct non-contracted sponsorship to Journal Clubs.

5. Anticorruption Requirements

As outlined in the Staff Anticorruption Policy.

AOA employees are not permitted to offer payments or gifts nor receive payments or gifts

For the sake of clarity, AOA does not offer, and forbids employees from offering or receiving, any payment or gift intended to induce any person to transact business with AOA.

As outlined in the [AOA Code of Conduct](#) AOA Members

A member will not accept any form of personal promotion or advertising from industry.

A member will not seek gifts from industry.

Any gifts, money or other benefits (excluding textbooks or analytical models) from industry exceeding a total value of AUD\$100 represent a declarable financial interest.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR/S

Number of Industry/Sector sponsorships that are compliant vs the number that are non-compliant.

Satisfaction of membership on the value of industry/sector relationships as demonstrated by
- number of complaints.