



Updated March 2025

Research Advisory Committee: Conflicts & Confidentiality Policy

Conflicts of Interest Code of Practice

All members of the RAC must actively adhere to and support this Conflicts of Interest Code of Practice.

The Prostate Cancer UK Research Team will endeavour to identify all potential conflicts of interest prior to allocation of applications to RAC members and will notify all RAC members of their conflicts in advance of the meeting. The aim of circulating conflicts in advance is to give RAC members an opportunity to discuss any conflicts of interest that they believe to be incorrect well before the RAC meeting. Any disputes about the conflicts of interest identified must be raised with the Research Team no later than 4 weeks after this list is circulated. Members must disclose any additional conflict of interests (not identified by the Research Team) in advance of the RAC meeting at which the application in question is to be considered, or as soon as the member's interest in the application becomes apparent. Any declaration of interest in a grant application by an RAC member shall be duly recorded in the minutes of the relevant Committee meeting.

Where a conflict of interest exists, the RAC member will not have access to any of the documentation for that application, nor will they be permitted to participate in the discussion, scoring or final outcome of the application. The RAC member will be required to leave the meeting while discussion and scoring takes place.

An RAC member may attend and participate at a meeting when a grant application they have submitted is to be considered. Any such member shall, however, be required to leave the meeting during the consideration of their grant application and shall not participate in the scoring or final outcome of their application. The same shall apply to RAC members for meetings at which a grant application is to be considered upon which they are considered to have any other type of conflict of interest (as outlined below in 'Definition of a Conflict of Interest').

The Chair of the RAC shall be independent, but in the event of any of the circumstances outlined below applying to the Chair, they will be subject to the same Code of Practice.

Definition of a Conflict of Interest:

Prostate Cancer UK considers a Conflict of Interest to arise under the following circumstances:

- If an RAC member is a named party on the grant application, either as PI, co-applicant, collaborator, mentor, referee or Head of Department.

- If an RAC member has a recent collaboration with any of the grant applicants (excluding collaborators): a recent collaboration is defined as an active funded grant, joint publication or other active working collaboration normally during the previous 5 years. Co-authorship on publications resulting from a large consortium (in excess of 20 authors) will not be considered a conflict of interest as collaboration between the two parties is considered to be minimal unless specified otherwise by the RAC member.
- If an RAC member has a personal relationship with any of the named parties on a grant application, such as spouse, family member or close friendship.
- If an RAC member is at the same Research Institute as the lead applicant(s) or co-applicants of the grant application.
- If an RAC member could personally gain (financially or otherwise) in relation to an application under consideration.
- If an RAC member is at the same Research Institute as a collaborator on the grant it is not considered to be a significant conflict of interest. However, we will take into consideration individual cases if raised by an RAC member.

Please note, Prostate Cancer UK may consider relaxing certain conflicts of interest if the fair assessment of an application is jeopardised by a significantly reduced number of members involved in the discussion.

Confidentiality

Committee members agree to not disclose any confidential information with any third parties. Confidential information may include (but is not limited to) information provided in research grant applications and progress reports, committee funding recommendations, information provided by peer reviewers, and any discussions about Prostate Cancer UK's strategy, active portfolio or funding decisions.

Any materials provided by Prostate Cancer UK (including electronic and paper copies) are done so in confidence and must be appropriately destroyed after the corresponding meeting or when the materials are no longer required.

RAC members must not input any content from Prostate Cancer UK funding applications, associated peer reviews or applicants' responses into generative AI tools to develop or refine their review comments.

Prostate Cancer UK should be notified of any possible breach of confidentiality as soon as possible.