

American Medical Association International Conference Recognition (ICR)

Criteria for Conference Approval, Fees, Sponsor Requirements, and Monitor Travel Reimbursement

Introduction: To allow US physicians the opportunity to receive credit for participation in international conferences, the American Medical Association (AMA) House of Delegates has established policy that allows for select international conferences to be approved for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* directly through the AMA Division of Continuing Physician Professional Development. For a conference to receive such credits, it must meet established criteria and the sponsoring organization(s) must agree to certain terms and requirements as outlined below.

Sponsor Requirements

For a conference to be approved through ICR Program the sponsoring organization(s) must agree to do the following before, during and after the conference:

Before the conference

- Submit ICR application and all required attachments to the AMA at least 120 days prior to the start date of the conference.
- Provide the evaluation summary and participant demographics for the most recent past conference.
- Arrange for payment of the required application fee upon submission of the ICR application. Organizations not based in the U.S. must pay by wire transfer.
- Use only language prescribed by AMA for advertisements and in program materials. Do not advertise “***Credit has been applied for***” or similar. Advertising in this manner in advance of program approval violates AMA-PRA policies and shall be cause for non-approval of the conference.
- Register the AMA staff monitor assigned to the conference so that the monitor may participate in all sessions.
- Arrange for hotel accommodations for the AMA monitor at the headquarters’ hotel.
- Provide name and contact info for an onsite contact at conference.
- Provide final schedule of educational sessions to AMA at least 60 days prior to the conference start date. Distinguish between educational sessions that may qualify for credit and sessions that do not qualify for credit.

The following types of sessions are not eligible for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*:

- Award presentations
- Business meetings
- Sessions for which physicians are not part of the target audience
- Satellite sessions (or other activities) developed by commercial interests/ineligible companies (see definition at the end of this document)..
- Sessions that advocate for unscientific approaches to diagnosis or therapy, or promote recommendations, treatment, or manners of practicing healthcare that are determined to have risks or dangers that outweigh the benefits or are known to be ineffective in the treatment of patients.*

- Sessions where faculty actively promote or sell products or services that serve their professional or financial interests.*
- Notify, by email or other method, all US physician registrants of the opportunity to receive *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* and all US non-physicians of the availability of a certificate of participation within two weeks of the start date of the conference.
- Obtain permission from individual learners before sharing their names or contact information with any commercial interest/ineligible company or its agents.*
- The sponsor will document terms, conditions and purposes of commercial support in an agreement with each commercial interest/ineligible company prior to the start of the activity.* This information will be available to the AMA on request.
- Marketing or exhibiting in association with the activity must not (1) influence any decisions related to the planning, delivery, and evaluation of the education, (2) interfere with the presentation of sessions certified for AMA credit, or (3) be a condition of the provision of financial or in-kind support from commercial interests/ineligible companies.*

At the conference

- Provide a desk and signage (preferably in the conference registration area) for the AMA staff monitor.
- Duplicate and distribute credit claim forms provided by AMA to conference attendees (in registration packet, have available at the AMA and/or registration desk, or by other means.) If you post a credit claim form on the internet, it must only be accessible by conference attendees.
- Have a registration process or other mechanism to verify participants' attendance at the conference.

After the Conference

- Verify participation for individuals who request credit claim forms after the close of the conference. This can be accomplished by confirming email queries from the AMA, forwarding to the AMA vetted requests provided by your organization, or providing a list of all attendees to the AMA within 21 days of the close of the conference so that the AMA may verify participation for individuals who submit credit claim forms after the conference. Attendance records must be available for six years.
- Reimburse the AMA for travel expenses for an AMA monitor to attend the conference (reimbursed in accordance with AMA travel policies) within 30 days of receipt of invoice. The AMA will submit the invoice and receipt copies via email, and will not submit receipts for items under \$25.00 in keeping with AMA policy.
- Provide a summary of conference evaluations and final attendance figures (# total attendees, # physicians, # US physicians) to the AMA within 60 days after the close of the conference.

*ACCME Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education

Criteria for Conference Approval

Applications will be judged based on the following criteria:

Conference

- The sponsoring organization(s) is not an ACCME accredited provider.
- The conference is:
 - Sponsored by
 - a not-for-profit membership organization with individual or organizational members in different countries
 - or*
 - a joint effort of multiple not-for-profit organizations such as academic, research, government and/or membership-based institutions
 - Primarily for the purpose of convening an international audience to present education related to a medical specialty, disease or international health issue. The primary purpose of the conference is education and is not commercial or travel-related.
- The conference has a track record; this is not the first time it has been held.
- A multinational audience of physicians, including US physicians, is a primary target audience for the Conference.
- All decisions related to planning, faculty selection, delivery, and evaluation are made without influence or involvement from owners/employees of a commercial interest/ineligible company.*
- The sponsor can describe how the need for the Conference was determined.
- The sponsor has developed specific learning objectives related to the needs identified and will communicate these to the target audience.
- The sponsor plans/develops the conference in the context of physician competencies.
- Teaching formats are appropriate for the educational sessions.
- The sponsor will provide a suitable learning environment for educational sessions.
- The sponsor will ensure that industry/commercially sponsored activities or satellite sessions, or sessions developed by or with influence from planners or faculty with unmitigated financial relationships, are clearly designated as not being eligible for AMA PRA credit. ‡
- The sponsor will include information regarding which sessions are/are not certified for AMA credit in the format(s) most commonly used by participants.
- The sponsor has a mechanism to evaluate physician satisfaction and learning from educational sessions.
- Live activities: No promotional materials or sales activities (including sessions developed by a commercial interest/ineligible company or faculty/planners with unmitigated financial relationships) will be allowed in the same room(s) as educational sessions certified for AMA credit within 30 minutes before or after said sessions. ‡
- For online and/or on-demand content, learners must not be presented with marketing while engaged in certified sessions, nor must they be required to click through, watch, listen to, or be presented with product promotion or advertisement.*
- Information about the activity that does not include educational content, such as schedules and logistical information, may include marketing by or for a commercial interest/ineligible company.*

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‡ Amended using ACCME Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education

Conference Content

- Conference presentations and conference materials are in English.
- The content conforms to the following AMA definition of Continuing Medical Education:
“CME consists of educational activities which serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that a physician uses to provide services for patients, the public or the profession. The content of CME is the body of knowledge and skills generally recognized and accepted by the profession as within the basic medical sciences, the discipline of clinical medicine, and the provision of the health care to the public [AMA House of Delegates policy #300.98].”
- The sponsor will take reasonable steps to ensure that
 - Educational sessions provide unbiased, evidence-based content and are free of commercial influence or bias
 - Educational sessions are free of marketing or sales of products or services. Faculty must not actively promote or sell products or services that serve their professional or financial interests.*
 - Faculty use scientific research that conforms to generally accepted standards of experimental design, data collection, analysis and interpretation when including patient care recommendations.*
 - Faculty base clinical recommendations on current science, evidence and clinical reasoning, while providing a fair and balanced view of diagnostic and therapeutic options.*
 - Faculty use generic names when possible
 - Educational materials (slides, abstracts, handouts, evaluations, disclosure information) for certified sessions will not contain advertising, logos, trade names, or product messages. ‡
- Sessions may describe or explain complementary and alternative health care practices if they include a discussion of the existing level of scientific evidence that supports the practices as well as alternatives. However, they may not advocate specific alternative therapies or teach how to perform associated procedures without scientific evidence or general acceptance among the profession that supports their safety and efficacy.
- Sessions that involve new and evolving topics must be clearly identified as such within the program and individual presentations. The sponsor is responsible for facilitating engagement with these topics without advocating for, or promoting, practices that are not, or not yet, adequately based on current science, evidence, and clinical reasoning.*

Planning Committee and Faculty

- Faculty and Planning Committee members are selected based on their expertise in the content area.
- Owners, employees, contractors or agents of a commercial interest/ineligible company may not serve as Planning Committee members, nor may they serve as faculty in a session certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™.‡
- Individuals who refuse to disclose relevant financial relationships will not be able to participate in the planning or participate as faculty.
- Planning Committee members and faculty must disclose to the sponsoring organization, and any relevant financial relationships mitigated, before the individual begins their part in the activity.*
- The sponsor will document the steps taken to mitigate financial relationships.*

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Disclosure

- **All** financial relationships with a commercial interest/ineligible company within the 24 months prior must be disclosed to the sponsoring organization by anyone with control of content (including faculty and planners), and it is the responsibility of the sponsor to determine relevance. ‡
- The sponsor must have a method to track and document the disclosure process for all with control of content (including planners and faculty) and share this information with the AMA on request:
 - Prior to the individual beginning their role in the activity (including planners and faculty)
 - Obtain disclosure
 - Determine relevance
 - Mitigate as necessary
 - Prior to the start of the activity:
 - Disclose planner and faculty information to participants
- Faculty and Planning Committee members' credentials and relevant financial relationships with commercial interests will be communicated to participants (including a statement that all relevant financial relationships were mitigated and a list of names for those with no financial relationships to disclose) prior to their engagement in the activity and disclosure must be verifiable after the conference. ‡. To ensure it can be verified, disclosure for all individuals with control of content must be provided to participants in writing (either on the website, in an app, or a paper list provided at registration). Speaker disclosure at the start of their presentation is encouraged but is not sufficient for this process. Disclosures (including faculty slides) may not include company or product logos.
- Disclosure of commercial support information (names of commercial interests/ineligible companies and nature of support if in-kind) will be made to learners prior to their engagement in the activity. * The disclosure may not include company or product logos.

Commercial Support

- Commercial interests/ineligible companies will not pay directly for any of the expenses related to the education or the learners. ‡
- The sponsor may use commercial support to fund honoraria or travel expenses of planners, faculty, and others in control of content for those roles only.. ‡
- The sponsor may not use commercial support funds to pay for travel, lodging, honoraria or personal expenses for individual learners or groups of learners. ‡
- A record of commercial support received (including amounts or kinds and how it was used) will be made available to the AMA on request.*

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Fees and Payment

The following is the schedule of ICR fees and expenses:

- Application fee (subject to change without notice):
 - \$10,000.00
- Travel reimbursement
 - Reimburse the AMA for travel expenses for an AMA monitor to attend the conference (reimbursed in accordance with AMA travel policies) within 30 days of receipt of invoice.
- Certificate fees:
 - Participants that request an AMA certificate of credit (physicians) or a certificate of participation (non-physicians) will be charged a \$35 USD processing fee. This fee will be waived for physicians who are AMA Members. All certificates will be sent by email. (Credit claim forms must be submitted within six weeks of the end date of the conference.)
- Payments
 - The application fee must be submitted by wire transfer or check ***in advance*** of conference approval. Organizations not based in the U.S. must pay by wire transfer.
- Refunds
 - Should the conference not be approved, the application fees minus a \$500.00 USD processing fee will be refunded to the sponsoring organization.
 - Should the conference be cancelled the application fee will be refunded minus \$1,000.00 USD and the cost of any non-refundable travel reservations.

Monitor Travel Arrangements and Reimbursement

- Monitors traveling on behalf of the AMA are subject to AMA travel reimbursement policies (Attachment A).
- The sponsoring organization must confirm hotel accommodations for the AMA monitor at the conference headquarters hotel; charges for hotel expenses may be direct billed to the sponsoring organization.
- The AMA monitor will book airline reservations (upgradeable coach) through AMA's travel agency, *not through the sponsoring organization's travel agent*. Every attempt will be made to book economical fares.
- The AMA will provide a detailed report of the monitor's expenses including copies of receipts for any expenditure over \$25 USD to the sponsoring organization. (The AMA will submit the invoice and receipt copies via email. If you require the invoice and receipts to be mailed, we will add the additional cost to Federal Express the documentation to your invoice. Receipts for items under \$25.00 will not be submitted, consistent with AMA policy.)
- Reimbursement to the AMA for the monitor's travel expenses must be paid in accordance with AMA policies within 30 days of receipt of the AMA invoice.

For Further Information or to Request an Application:

- Please contact Mary Kelly at: mary.kelly@ama-assn.org, Phone: 312.464.4668
 - If requesting an application, please indicate the following:
 - Title, dates and location of conference
 - Estimated number of physician attendees
 - Primary contact for application (name, organization, address, phone, fax and email)
 - That you have read the requirements and terms (including fees) for conference approval as listed above.

Definitions for some of the terms used in this document:

Commercial interest/ineligible company

Commercial interests/ineligible companies are those whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing health care products used by or on patients. Providers of clinical service directly to patients are not considered commercial interests.

Examples of commercial interests/ineligible companies include*:

- Advertising, marketing, or communications firms whose clients are commercial interests/ineligible companies
- Bio-medical startups that have begun a governmental regulatory approval process
- Compounding pharmacies that manufacture proprietary compounds
- Device manufacturers or distributors
- Diagnostic labs that sell proprietary products
- Growers, distributors, manufacturers or sellers of medical foods and dietary supplements
- Manufacturers of health-related wearable products
- Pharmaceutical companies or distributors
- Pharmacy benefit managers
- Reagent manufacturers or sellers

Commercial support

Financial or in-kind contributions given by a commercial interest/ineligible company (as defined above) that is used to pay for all or part of the costs of a CME activity.

Faculty

The individuals responsible for teaching, authoring, or otherwise communicating the activity content to learners.

In-kind commercial support

In this context, non-monetary resources provided by a commercial interest/ineligible company used for a CME activity. Examples of in-kind support include equipment and supplies.

Owners and Employees of Commercial Interests/Ineligible Companies

Financial relationships of commercial interests'/ineligible companies' owners and employees are regarded as unresolvable. Such persons cannot control or influence any aspect of the planning, delivery, or evaluation of any sessions certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*[™].*

Owners are defined as individuals who have an ownership interest in a company, except for stockholders of publicly traded companies, or holders of shares through a pension or mutual fund.

Relevant financial relationships

Financial relationships of any amount with commercial interests/ineligible companies if the educational content is related to the business lines or products of the commercial interest/ineligible company. Conference organizers are required to collect information from all those individuals in control of educational content about all of their financial relationships with ineligible companies within the prior 24 months. The conference organizer (in consultation with the AMA as necessary) is then responsible for determining which relationships are relevant.

Financial relationships are those relationships in which the individual benefits by receiving a salary, royalty, intellectual property rights, consulting fee, honoraria for promotional speakers' bureau, ownership interest (e.g., stocks, stock options or other ownership interest, excluding diversified mutual funds), or other financial benefit. Financial benefits are usually associated with roles such as employment, management position, independent contractor (including contracted research), consulting, speaking and teaching, membership on advisory committees or review panels, board membership, and other activities from which remuneration is received, or expected.