

## Conflicts of Interest Code of Practice

All members of the Wellbeing of Women Research Advisory Committee (RAC) and any other committees or panels brought together to assess research funding applications submitted to the charity, including chairs and all external reviewers must actively adhere to and support this Conflicts of Interest Code of Practice.

External peer reviewers will only be approached if the secretariat at Wellbeing of Women does not identify any conflicts of interest based on the criteria identified below. All external reviewers must disclose any potential conflict of interest, and if a significant conflict comes to light then that reviewer shall not be used.

The Wellbeing of Women secretariat will endeavour to identify all potential conflicts of interest prior to allocation of applications to the 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 the 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 secretariat and RAC members must disclose any additional conflict of interests (not identified) as soon as the interest in the application becomes apparent. Any declaration of interest in a grant application by a RAC member shall be duly recorded in the minutes of the relevant committee meeting.

Where a conflict of interest exists, a 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.

A 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).

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

### Definition of a Conflict of Interest

Wellbeing of Women considers a Conflict of Interest to arise if the potential reviewer or committee member:

- Is a named party on the grant application, either as PI, co-applicant, collaborator, mentor, referee or Head of Department.
- 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 3 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 reviewer.

- Has a personal relationship with any of the named parties on a grant application, such as spouse, family member or close friendship.
- Is at the same research institution as the lead applicant(s) or co-applicants of the grant application. If the individual is at the same institution 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 the reviewer.
- For any Centre of Excellence, collaboration between research institutions will not be considered a significant conflict of interest. Only when direct personal collaborations have been identified would there be a conflict of interest.

Please note, Wellbeing of Women may consider relaxing certain conflicts of interest if the fair assessment of an application is jeopardised by a significantly reduced number of assessors involved in the discussion.

**Download full conflicts and confidentiality policies:**

[Research Advisory Committee: Conflicts & Confidentiality Policy](#)

[Peer Reviewer: Conflicts & Confidentiality Policy](#)