

AANS/NREF/NPA  
**Guidelines  
for Corporate  
Relations**



HARVEY CUSHING

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American  
Association of  
Neurological  
Surgeons

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# Guidelines for Corporate Relations

## Purpose

The American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) is dedicated to advancing the specialty of neurological surgery in order to provide the highest quality of neurosurgical care to the public. The Neurosurgery Research and Education (NREF) Foundation, AANS' philanthropic sector, focuses on development, resident education and research support. NeuroPoint Alliance (NPA), AANS' data collection division, drives research and quality improvement through the acquisition, analysis and reporting of clinical data via registries and related studies.

AANS cannot fulfill its mission through income from dues alone. The AANS, like most non-profit associations, depends on non-dues revenue, including support from external sources.

The purpose of this document is to outline the parameters for interactions between the AANS, NREF, NPA and its various Corporate Supporters.

## Objectives

AANS' multi-dimensional Corporate Relations outreach program operates according to guidelines that outline the protocols involved in our various relationships with commercial interests. These guidelines continue to support the AANS' position that professional, ethical relationships with Corporate Supporters are possible and can serve to benefit patients, surgeons and the specialty as a whole.

AANS strictly adheres to the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support™. These standards guide the AANS in all CME activities where commercial support is provided.

These guidelines were designed with the interactions between the Association and its Corporate Supporters in mind. They are not intended to govern how individual AANS members themselves make professional and/or business decisions with industry. Both AdvaMed's (Advanced Medical Technology Association) Code of Ethics and PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America) codes are voluntary, but clarify, for medical device and pharmaceutical companies alike, appropriate and inappropriate activity between health care professionals and medical device and/or pharmaceutical companies.

The Guidelines for Corporate Relations will be maintained to adhere to ACCME and other guidelines.

# Meeting and Educational Offerings

## Annual Meeting (CME)

Support opportunities in the form of educational grants may be provided directly to AANS to offset or reduce educational programming costs when the offering is primarily dedicated to promoting educational and/or hands-on training activities.

## Education, Clinical and Practice Management Workshops (CME)

Support opportunities in the form of educational grants may be provided directly to AANS to offset or reduce educational programming costs when the offering is primarily dedicated to promoting educational and/or hands-on training activities.

## Resident Courses (non-CME)

Numerous opportunities are available to Corporate Supporters to provide grants for AANS-sponsored resident training courses, meetings, and other individual non-CME educational courses. While these do not offer CME to the participants, these courses are run to the standards of CME courses so that the course content and viewpoints are fair and balanced.

***These offerings are bound by the following:***

## **General**

- AANS will solicit corporations for support of Annual Meeting marketing sponsorship opportunities, including but not limited to satellite symposia, electronic room keys, badge lanyards, Lunch-and-learn Seminars, banners, column wraps and quick planner.
- Corporate Supporters may give educational grants in support of part or all of a support opportunity.
- In order to provide safe and effective use of their medical technology through Practical Clinics and Breakfast Seminars, companies who donate equipment for use in practical clinics may have two representatives available onsite as a resource for faculty. Companies are prohibited from providing brochures or signage of any kind in the room or laboratory where the practical clinic or breakfast seminar is held.
- Standard recognition includes, but is not limited to, items such as signage and acknowledgement in association publications and registration materials, where appropriate. Additional types of recognition will be considered based on the type of funding or opportunity presented.
- Whenever feasible, AANS seeks funding for programs from a variety of sources. In doing so:
  - ▶ In keeping with established policy, the AANS maintains complete control of the development, implementation and assessment of all content and materials related to educational and non-educational offerings and determines and develops all aspects of the program, including budgets, agendas, course content, faculty, site selection, etc.
  - ▶ Corporations that may have interest in a particular program will be offered the opportunity to support the offering(s), in an equitable, established process.
  - ▶ The AANS does not, as a general practice, offer exclusive arrangements for corporate support of specific programs. However, there are instances where, due to a lack of interest or other factors, a program, event, publication or service is supported by a single Corporate Supporter.
  - ▶ In those instances when a program, event, publication or service is supported by a single Corporate Supporter, the AANS will exercise special cautions to avoid conflicts of interest and guard against any perception of bias.

## **Site Selection**

- AANS is solely responsible for the selection of geographic locations and venues for courses.
- Courses must be held in educational or conference settings, including hotels or other commercial meeting facilities conducive to learning.
- Clinical courses requiring hands-on learning must be conducted at medical institutions, academic institutions, laboratories or other specialized facilities deemed appropriate by the AANS.

## **AANS Faculty Support and Selection**

- Selection of faculty is based upon expertise and proper qualifications.
- AANS is solely responsible for the selection of faculty.

- When appropriate, faculty receive a reasonable honorarium paid directly by the AANS, including reasonable travel expense, meals that are modest in value and lodging per established AANS policy.
- Corporate Supporters, through educational grants, can provide appropriate support to AANS in order to sponsor reasonable honoraria, travel, lodging and meals for meeting faculty members. The corporations will have no involvement in the selection of faculty members or direct payment of honoraria to faculty members.

AANS has an established disclosure policy for all CME activities; speakers, authors, scientific planning committee members, paper presenters and, in some instances, staff, must disclose any relationships they, their co-author and/or their significant other have with commercial interests. When any conflicts are revealed, the AANS has an established policy to resolve them. A copy of the Updated Standards for Managing Conflicts of Interest in Educational Activities is available online at [http://www.aans.org/shared\\_pdfs/managing\\_conflict\\_of\\_interest.pdf](http://www.aans.org/shared_pdfs/managing_conflict_of_interest.pdf).

## Social Events/Networking Functions (Non-Educational Activities)

- Corporate Supporters are encouraged to support social activities and networking functions held in conjunction with the AANS Annual Scientific Meeting or other education programs offered by the AANS.
- Meals, receptions and hospitality should be modest in value and not interfere with the educational content of a CME activity. There shall be no extracurricular social activities covered by any corporation for faculty or attendees, including but not limited to theater tickets, plays, sporting events, concerts and amusement parks.
- Recognition will be appropriate to the giving level and will be afforded, based on amount, in accordance with the predetermined meeting/support benefits.

## Exhibits

- AANS will assess a fee in exchange for lease of booth space for appropriate company displays at AANS meetings and educational courses/workshops.
- Recognition will be appropriate to the giving level and will be afforded, based on amount, in accordance with meeting/support benefits predetermined and disseminated by AANS. Exhibit booth dollars are exempt from support levels and are recognized separately.
- Corporate representatives must conduct themselves before, during and after the exhibit in a professional manner, as outlined in the AANS Exhibitor Prospectus. The AANS Exhibitor Prospectus is available through the AANS Meeting Services Department.
- Exhibiting companies may also elect to separately support AANS through an educational grant.

## Marketing & Advertising

- It is appropriate for supporters and/or exhibitors to support AANS publications. Exhibitors shall pay usual and customary rates. Further details regarding the purchase of support in AANS publications are set forth in the Other Opportunities: Marketing/Advertising section of this document.

## **Auxiliary Activities (tours, offsite training sessions, meetings)**

- In order to provide equal access to all supporters, AANS does not permit plant and/or facility tours, educational sessions onsite at corporation facilities, non-sanctioned workshops or training sessions to occur at any time during the entire AANS scheduled educational offering.

## **Enduring Materials (self-education materials, including but not limited to online courses and textbooks)**

- AANS staff and/or leadership can solicit and accept corporate support in the form of educational grants for enduring CME course materials.
- Recognition will be appropriate to the giving level and will be afforded, based on amount, in accordance with predetermined meeting/support benefits.

# **Neurosurgery Research and Education Foundation (NREF)**

## **General NREF Corporate Support**

- In the interest of supporting neurosurgical research and education opportunities, the NREF will solicit corporations for their financial support through the Pinnacle Partners in Neurosurgery Program.
- This research and educational support will be used to enhance the NREF Research Grants and Fellowship programs.
- In addition, Corporate Supporters may also provide support to the NREF through annual fundraising campaigns, advertising on the Rhoton calendar, at fundraising events and contributions in honor or memory of family members, colleagues and friends.
- The NREF will be responsible for and control the use of these funds.
- Recognition will be appropriate to the giving level and will be afforded, based on amount, in accordance with the predetermined Pinnacle Partners in Neurosurgery Program benefits for that year.

## **Research Young Clinician Investigator Awards/Medical Student Summer Research Fellowships**

- The NREF may annually collaborate with Corporate Supporters in the co-funding of annual Research Grants, Young Clinician Investigator Awards and the Medical Student Summer Research Fellowships.
- Companies supporting in part or in full research grants must execute the NREF Fellowship Support Agreement or other appropriate contract before proceeding with the process.

- The NREF will announce grant programs to department chairs, program directors, medical students, residents and young faculty, soliciting grants in specific disorder categories and dealing with specific scientific methodologies. This can be done to target research in areas of interest to Corporate Supporters, without bias or the insistence that applicants use their product/instrumentation or procedure(s).
- The NREF's Education Advisory Committee (EAC) is responsible for administering the existing grant review, and the scoring and decision-making process. The EAC will forward its final decision(s) to Corporate Supporters who support grants for their information.
- The NREF does not require awardees of co-sponsored grants to visit company headquarters or to deliver progress and/or final report in person.

## Post-residency Clinical Fellowship Grant Program

- As part of its mission, the NREF developed a medical education grant program through which it will accept donations from third party donors and award fellowship grants to applicants in the field of neurosurgery, using funds raised by the NREF.
- A separate Review Committee, free from bias and conflicts of interest, is responsible for the application review and funding decisions, which are made in a transparent and independent manner.
- Corporate Supporters may donate funds to the NREF in support of the post-residency clinical fellowship program, but do so without any involvement or influence in how the monies are allocated, with the exception of specifying the neurosurgical subspecialty funding should be directed to (i.e.: spine, CV, pediatrics, general neurosurgery).
- The NREF is solely responsible for all aspects of the program.

# Other Opportunities

## Marketing/Advertising

- Exhibiting companies who participate at AANS meetings may purchase promotional opportunities, which include but are not limited to *AANS Neurosurgeon* and meeting-related opportunities/programs. AANS will review all promotional opportunities prior to placement and reserves the right to accept or refuse placement.
- The AANS reserves the right to add the word "advertisement" to any ad, which, in the opinion of the AANS, might be confused with editorial copy.
- Advertisements, insertion orders or space reservations may be canceled or rejected by the AANS at any time.

## Journal of Neurosurgery Publishing Group (JNSPG)

Corporate Supporters are solicited by a third party, on behalf of JNSPG, to purchase both classified and commercial advertisements in the *Journal of Neurosurgery*, *Journal of Neurosurgery: Spine* and *Journal of Neurosurgery: Pediatrics*. Details regarding the specifics of their advertising policies are available through the JNSPG office.

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[www.nref.org](http://www.nref.org) | [www.aans.org](http://www.aans.org) | [www.neuropoint.org](http://www.neuropoint.org)

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