

COI Policy for Cochrane Library Content (2020) - a Quick Guide for Authors

This quick guide is intended to give an overview of authorship requirements for the COI Policy for Cochrane Library Content (2020) and should be used in conjunction with the [full policy](#). Further elaboration and explanation are given in the full policy on all points.

Who CANNOT be an author?

- Anyone who is or has been recently employed by a commercial organization with a financial interest in the topic of the review
- Anyone who owns a commercial organization with an interest in the topic of the review
- Anyone who owns or has applied for a patent related to the topic of the review

Additional restrictions on authorship

- The first and last authors **must not**
 - have any relevant financial interests (see box 'Relevant financial interests')**OR**
 - have been involved in industry-controlled* studies eligible for inclusion in the review
- **Overall** 67% (two thirds) of the authors must be free of relevant conflicts
- Anyone who has been involved in the conduct, analysis, and publication of a study that could be included in the review **cannot**
 - determine the overall study inclusion and exclusion criteria
 - make study eligibility decisions about, extract data from, carry out the risk of bias assessment for, or perform GRADE assessments of that study

Non-financial interests

Authors must also declare all non-financial interests relevant to the topic of the review, but this will not prohibit authorship.

* industry-controlled studies are defined as studies with funding from a commercial organization which is involved in the design, analysis and reporting of the study.

Relevant financial interests

Financial interests are relevant if a payment is made by a commercial organization that is developing, or manufactures, markets or distributes (anywhere in the world) an intervention or potential comparator related to the topic of the review. This applies regardless of the reported direction of effect and even if the payment was for work or advice that did not relate to the topic of the review.

Such payments include (but are not limited to):

- speaker fees, honoraria, consultancies, and membership of advisory boards
- payment of travel, accommodation, subsistence and conference registration expenses

In all cases these must be declared. In some cases they may prohibit authorship. Authors must complete a Declaration of Interest form at the following time points:

- title registration/time of decision to update the review
- annually until publication
- just prior to publication (both protocol and review publication)

Timeframes

The relevant timeframe for interests is from 36 months before title registration (or from 36 months before work began for updates) through to the point of publication of the review (or update).

For authors joining during the process, the relevant timeframe is from 36 months before their involvement, through to publication.

N.B. Reviews that do not comply with the COI Policy may not be published in the Cochrane Library.