

Policy on Working with Commercial Organisations

The purpose of this policy is to set out a clear framework for the Trust's relationship with commercial companies, particularly those which manufacture and market pharmaceutical products that are relevant to the work of the Trust. We acknowledge the financial support provided to the Trust from commercial companies, which is an important part of our funding as a charity. At the same time the Trust must protect its independence, and we need to safeguard that independence carefully in our relationship with funders.

This policy has therefore been produced to explain the Trust's stance in relation to funding from pharmaceutical and other companies with an interest in the field of ADHD. We want to maintain positive, cooperative and mutually beneficial relationships with pharmaceutical and other companies. In order to achieve this we believe both parties should be clear about what they can and cannot expect from the relationship and what the limits and boundaries are.

We recognise that many companies wish to contribute to charities through a sense of corporate responsibility, and in this field through a desire to give something back to those people affected by ADHD. This may lead to donations which the Trust may use as necessary to fund any aspect of our work. This type of 'unrestricted' funding is of most use to the charity.

Equally, we recognise the principle of mutual benefit. We appreciate that where funding is provided from a marketing or advertising budget there may be a need to be more specific in linking it to a particular activity. Our general approach is to negotiate on a project by project basis with each company so that the needs of both parties can be considered.

Principles

ADD Information Services (ADDISS) as a national charity operating in a small, specialised area must be very careful to maintain its independent stance, with regards to the field of ADHD (Aims of funding generally).

When working with commercial organisations, the Trust must take care that our unbiased, independent advice and information to people who are sufferers of ADHD, their families and professionals and our campaigning stance is not influenced in any way.

Thus, the acceptance of financial support from a company does not confer any form of editorial control or influence over the policies of the Trust. Those policies are determined by the trustees of the Trust and are based on the identified needs of people affected by ADHD.

As a general principle we will not endorse any particular product, either by stating that it is or is not a problem, and will not be associated with any advertising or promotional activity linked to a specific product. This means whilst happy to give credit as sponsors to companies, we normally avoid mention of product names.

In order to safeguard our independent standing, wherever possible, we prefer to have multi-sponsors of our work.

Increasingly we understand companies want to receive publicity for funding or other support provided to support charities. Different companies have different policies and approaches to this. The Trust will agree this on a project by project basis. The extent to which the Trust itself is willing for our name to be used in associated publicity will also vary. We must safeguard against associated publicity being seen as a form of endorsement. Any publicity or promotion should be agreed between the company and the Trust's trustees.

As a charity, maintaining positive relationships with all our funders is crucial to our survival. We must also abide by charity law and the requirements of the Charity Commission, and it is the Trust's aim as an organisation to follow best practice in the charity sector. This involves openness and transparency in our activities, one aspect of which is being open to our beneficiaries, other funders and the general public about the charity's sources of funding and fundraising approaches. Our funders will be listed in our annual report for this purpose.

Specific Rules

1. At no time can the charity's logo and name be used without the express written permission of the trustees.
2. A company's support will be acknowledged in an appropriate way determined in advance following discussions with the company.
3. In general, we will seek an exchange of letters of agreement where funding is to be provided from a company so that it is clear to both parties what funding will be used for.
4. We reserve the right to withdraw from any funding arrangement if it appears to threaten the good name or reputation of the charity.
5. The Trust may, if appropriate offer endorsement to certain research. However, each case will be judged by the trustees on its individual merits.
6. At no time should any commercial organisation or its representatives, such as PR companies, approach any member of staff or offer incentives to any member of staff in exchange for services of any kind. to avoid conflict of interest. Any requests for partnership working must be made through the CEO of ADDISS. Contracts must only be made with ADDISS, unless prior agreement has been approved by the trustees.
7. ADDISS will not endorse any projects initiated by a commercial organisation unless ADDISS has been involved from the start in its development to ensure against conflict of interest and to maintain transparency. The reputation of ADDISS is at all times paramount.