

ECTRIMS Code of Practice for Annual Congresses

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1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

This document provides a Code of Practice for Annual Congresses of ECTRIMS, with particular reference to the participation of commercial and non-commercial organisations and of the press and media during the Congress.

The aims of this code of practice are:

- (a) To reflect the mutual commitment of commercial and non-commercial organisations and of ECTRIMS to support and organize ECTRIMS congresses of high scientific and clinical value.
- (b) To regulate and define the financial and intellectual participation, contribution, privileges and obligations of the involved organisations and their subcontractors.
- (c) To eliminate real or perceived conflicts of interest.
- (d) To set high ethical standards and to help organisations fulfil their obligations under applicable codes, laws and regulations related to Congresses.
- (e) To govern the relationship of ECTRIMS and its congress planning organisation (CPO) with the involved commercial and non-commercial organisations and their representatives in preparation for, during and after ECTRIMS Congresses.

2. POLICIES ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURE

To eliminate the possibility of real or perceived conflicts of interest, ECTRIMS adheres to the following policies regarding its operations, programmes and sponsorship of its congresses and other activities:

1. ECTRIMS is a not-for-profit professional organisation and all funds are used solely for ECTRIMS programmes and organisational support activities. Neither officers nor members of governing bodies are compensated for their purely voluntary services. Members of committees and governing bodies in ECTRIMS are themselves professionals in academic and/or clinical occupations and are not employees of any commercial pharmaceutical, biotechnological or medical equipment companies.
2. ECTRIMS finances are held independently of any sponsors and are independently audited
3. While annual ECTRIMS congresses benefit from sponsorship by commercial and non-commercial organisations that share our mission, the following requirements intended to eliminate the possibility or perception of conflicts of interest for the congress are in place:

- a. ECTRIMS congress planning and execution is the responsibility of a designated Local Organising Committee, a Scientific Committee, and the ECTRIMS Congress Planning Committee.
- b. The selection of all scientific and clinical presentations given during ECTRIMS congresses (main programme plenary sessions; research platform sessions; poster sessions) is made solely on the basis of scientific and/or clinical merit by the Scientific Committee for each congress and decisions are independent of the nature of any sponsorship of the underlying research.
- c. Each abstract submitted for consideration as a presentation at a congress must include a disclosure statement for each listed author; for platform presentations, the first “visual” must include disclosure statements for each listed author; for posted presentations, disclosures must be included prominently for each listed author.
- d. Satellite symposia held during the ECTRIMS congress are entirely sponsored by commercial or non-commercial organisations, must serve an ECTRIMS-relevant educational goal, and may not be promotional. The nature of each satellite symposium, its programme, chairs and speakers are approved in advance ECTRIMS, but the sponsoring organisation and the satellite symposium chair(s) are solely responsible for the content of the symposium.

3. SPONSORING OF SATELLITE SYMPOSIA

1. Satellite symposia are organised and entirely supported by pharmaceutical companies (the “sponsoring organisation”). The sponsorship contract has to be between ECTRIMS and the sponsoring organisation.
2. Each pharmaceutical company is entitled to organise two satellite symposia at a maximum. The second slot availability will be announced by ECTRIMS after having allocated one satellite symposium per sponsoring organisation.
3. The nature of the symposium, including the selection of topics, must be oriented to an ECTRIMS – relevant educational goal and not be exclusively promotional.
4. The “slides” presented during a symposium are the full responsibility of the speakers. No commercial names should appear in the title of presentations, the title of a symposium, “slides” for individual presentations or in print materials provided at the symposium (see n° 10 below). Presentations bearing the same design for all speakers are not welcome.
5. The sponsoring organisation must submit a full symposium proposal including titles, chairs and speakers to the ECTRIMS Executive Committee before the stated deadline. Please contact the ECTRIMS Congress Secretariat for more details.

Early contact with the ECTRIMS Secretariat is recommended to expedite approval and confirmation of the proposed symposium topic, co-chairs and presenters.

6. Approved speakers and co-chairs are to be invited by the sponsoring organisation, which will also cover their ECTRIMS registration fees, hotel accommodations and travel expenses in addition to symposium fees.
7. A maximum of one speaker at each symposium who is an employee of the sponsoring organisation is allowed.
8. The number of satellite symposia in which any one participant may be involved as a presenter, discussant or chair is limited to two for each ECTRIMS Congress. If a participant is a chair and a speaker at the same symposium it will be considered as only one activity. The ECTRIMS Congress Secretariat will evaluate this once all symposia proposals are received and communicate with the involved speaker/chairperson and notify the sponsoring organisations in case this limit is exceeded.
9. Slots for satellite symposia are available on all of the 4 congress days. The organising sponsor can express preference for a particular time slot and lecture room for the satellite symposium to the ECTRIMS Congress Secretariat. The final assignment will be given by the Congress Secretariat according to a principle of rotation between companies that have attended successive ECTRIMS congresses.
10. Approved satellite symposia will be mentioned as such in the ECTRIMS final programme, on the website and in the app.
11. The organising sponsor may produce printed and electronic materials (symposium programme and abstracts) for distribution at the symposium. This material must be submitted for approval to the ECTRIMS Congress Secretariat and must mention: "Satellite Symposium of the ECTRIMS 2016 Congress." The organising sponsor is responsible for involving its symposium co-chairs and speakers in development of such printed/electronic matters and must have their approval prior to printing and distribution. Post-congress publications (in print or electronic form) are subject to the same rules.
12. A small onsite reception (snack) which is compliant with the applicable industry codes before or at the end of the symposium may be offered by the sponsoring organisation (please contact the ECTRIMS Congress Secretariat for details). No other activities around the symposium are allowed.
13. Private buses to transport delegates from and to hotels are only allowed outside the official congress hours.

4. USE OF ECTRIMS LOGOS

Commercial and non-commercial sponsoring organisations may – with prior approval from ECTRIMS – use the ECTRIMS logo for ECTRIMS congress-related communications. Any communication or document (printed or electronic) that contains the ECTRIMS logo must to be sent to the ECTRIMS Secretariat for prior approval.

5. INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITIONS

Every year, along with the ECTRIMS annual meeting, industry exhibition space is provided where products, services and information may be promoted during the congress.

All activities and displays must reflect the character of the congress and are subject to review by ECTRIMS. Activities that feature non-scientific “gimmicks” are not accepted by ECTRIMS. Approval requests have to be sent in writing to the congress organisers. Promotional activities within the exhibition space are allowed as long as they do not interfere with the running of the conference or disturb fellow exhibitors. It is within ECTRIMS and the congress organiser’s capacity to have any activities stopped. Outside the provided exhibition space, promotional activities are not allowed.

For further information concerning arrangements for ECTRIMS industry exhibition space, please contact the ECTRIMS Secretariat:

ECTRIMS Secretariat
c/o Congrex Switzerland Ltd.
Reinacherstrasse 131
4053 Basel / Switzerland

Email: secretariat@ectrims.eu

Website: www.ectrims.eu

6. PRESS AND MEDIA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ECTRIMS welcomes media participation at its annual congress. The official language of the ECTRIMS is English. Simultaneous translation will not be provided. ECTRIMS offers the following services and benefits to editors, journalists, and health and medical writers from around the world during the congress:

- Complimentary annual congress registration
- ECTRIMS press room access
- Complimentary internet access / printer
- Admission to the ECTRIMS press conference
- Admission to all ECTRIMS sessions
- One-to-one interview opportunities
- Copies of abstracts / research presented

Press policy and guidelines:

- (a) Press registration requirements
- (b) Press badge access
- (c) Press room
- (d) Photography, audio and video recording
- (e) ECTRIMS press conference
- (f) Congress embargo policy
- (g) Non-ECTRIMS press events

(a) Press registration requirements

The congress media registration is only open to media personnel who are members of the working press.

To register for the congress as a member of the working press, please use the online registration at on the congress website. Press registrations must be submitted 2-3 weeks prior to the congress in order to receive a written confirmation of the registration prior to the congress opening. Alternatively, registration onsite is possible. Please contact the onsite registration team at the congress venue upon arrival.

A press badge will be issued to journalists (including freelance journalists) from the following media sources:

- Journals, magazines and news publications
- News agencies
- Newsletter media
- Broadcast media

Companies or organizations producing publications, videos, and/or other electronic media intended for marketing, advertising, financial analysis, or public relations purposes may not register as press, nor may financial analysts, public relations personnel or exhibitors.

Identification will be required when you arrive for registration at the congress by:

- a letter of assignment on the letterhead of the news organization being represented,
- press identification (such as an accredited press card), or
- a business card issued by a recognized news organisation and clearly showing registrant's name and position (editor, writer, producer, reporter).

Freelance journalists must always provide an original letter of assignment.

Please note that information regarding press registrants is proprietary and ECTRIMS congress does not give, rent, or sell current, past, or on-site press registration lists.

(b) Press badge and event access

Registered press is required to wear the ECTRIMS press badge at all times while on site at the congress. The press badge will entitle bearers access to:

- The scientific sessions listed in the programme
- The official ECTRIMS press conference
- Press conferences organised by the industry
- The congress exhibitions
- The press room

(c) **Press Room**

The press room will be located in the congress venue. The press room will be equipped with on-line access and electrical outlets for laptop computers. ECTRIMS press releases, abstracts and other relevant information will be available.

Opening hours:

The press room will be open throughout the congress opening hours. Exact dates and times will be published in the ECTRIMS final programme book.

(d) Photography, audio and video recording

ECTRIMS has strict guidelines regarding the use of photography, video and audio recording equipment.

Photographs, audio and video recordings, are not permitted at the ECTRIMS official meeting sessions. This regulation does not apply to industry sponsored satellite symposia or stands in the exhibition area (exhibitors may only take pictures of their own stands for documentation purposes).

Registered media must send a written request for their video or photography shooting to the ECTRIMS Secretariat (secretariat@ectrims.edu) to assure accommodation.

(e) ECTRIMS Press Conference

An official ECTRIMS press conference may be organised during the congress programme at the congress venue. Pre-registered journalists will receive an invitation to the press conference including the agenda shortly before the congress.

(f) Congress media embargo policies

Media Embargo for Journalists:

Journalists are required to observe media embargoes. Media coverage of regular abstracts being presented at the ECTRIMS congress is strictly prohibited until abstracts have been posted on-line at the ECTRIMS website, 2 weeks prior to the congress. For “late breaking news” abstracts, media coverage is strictly prohibited until the first day of the congress.

Press Releases from Investigators or Study Sponsors:

Investigators and/or study sponsors who may wish to issue press releases relating to abstracts to be presented at an ECTRIMS congress are also required to adhere to the following ECTRIMS press release embargo policies:

- Press releases related to “regular” abstracts that contain data related to the presentation are strictly embargoed until the abstract is available on-line at the ECTRIMS website, 2 weeks prior to the congress.
- Press releases related to “late breaking news” abstracts that contain data related to the presentation are strictly embargoed until the first day of the congress.
- Investigators or sponsors who wish to issue press releases that contain no actual data related to the presentation but provide “top line” information for release in advance of the normal embargo date need the specific approval of the ECTRIMS Executive Committee, who may require changes in the text before permitting release. Please contact the ECTRIMS Secretariat at secretariat@ectrims.eu.

Media Embargo Violations:

Individuals and/or sponsors who violate these ECTRIMS media embargo policies may face sanctions relating to current and future abstract submissions, presentations and visibility at ECTRIMS congresses.

For more information about media embargo policies, including the correct embargo dates/times for ECTRIMS abstracts, please contact secretariat@ectrims.eu.

(g) Use of the ECTRIMS logo

The use of the ECTRIMS logo on any materials without explicit written permission from the ECTRIMS Secretariat is prohibited.

(h) Non-ECTRIMS Press Events

Press briefings, news conferences, and press receptions other than those sponsored by ECTRIMS must be approved in advance by the ECTRIMS Secretariat. Organisers of Non-ECTRIMS press events must make sure that there is no overlap in timing of any such events

with the congress scientific programme, satellite symposia and ECTRIMS-organised press events.

7. ANCILLARY MEETINGS HELD DURING ECTRIMS CONGRESSES

Ancillary events are non-ECTRIMS sponsored events such as business meetings, social gatherings, receptions, workshops or committee meetings that are held during the official dates of the Congress.

The following rules apply for organizing an ancillary meeting:

- (a) Any organisations (commercial or non-commercial) wishing to hold a meeting either during or immediately prior to / after the annual ECTRIMS congress must request approval from the ECTRIMS Congress Secretariat in advance.

This applies to meetings held in the congress venue as well as any other venue within the host city.

- (b) The ECTRIMS Congress Secretariat will review the request and in case of doubt, consult the ECTRIMS Executive Committee.
- (c) Company-sponsored meetings or symposia open to all congress participants are not allowed, with the exception of official ECTRIMS "Satellite Symposia" which are part of the official congress programme.
- (d) Only small, closed meetings (e.g. "internal" or "by invitation only" meetings) are allowed during, immediately prior to, or after the annual ECTRIMS congress.
- (e) Meetings approved by the ECTRIMS Congress Secretariat must not be identified as being part of the official congress programme
- (f) Should any communications or publications arise from ancillary meetings held during the congress, they must not include use the word ECTRIMS.

8. HANDLING OF DISPUTES, CLAIMS ETC.

No agreement can foresee all eventualities or problems which may occur. Consequently it is accepted that continued dialogue will take place between involved organisations, press or other representatives and ECTRIMS.

Any dispute, controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this code of practice shall be settled by ECTRIMS. ECTRIMS will decide on appropriate actions if necessary.

In the first instance, any problems arising in connection with the arrangement of the ECTRIMS congress, or participation at any ECTRIMS meeting, may be discussed and resolved by the appointed representatives of the involved body or person for the particular ECTRIMS meeting with the ECTRIMS Executive Committee.

At all times, each and every organisation's representatives, as well as their subcontractors, will respect the guidelines and policies of ECTRIMS with the intention of creating qualitatively excellent annual meetings, which take account of the requirements, contributions and expectations of all participants. ECTRIMS will, ensure financial transparency of congress budgets and accounts.

9. GOOD BUSINESS CONDUCT

- (a) All involved in ECTRIMS congresses are expected to conduct themselves in a way compatible with high standards of business conduct with respect to all aspects of their participation in the congress.
 - For example: Employees or others acting on their behalf should not raise questions or otherwise intervene in satellite symposia sponsored by other companies with the intention of enhancing their own company products or making comments about competitor products.
- (b) All organisations (commercial and non-commercial) are expected to comply with all the applicable codes, laws and regulations that apply to their activities at the Congress and to behave in a proper and ethical manner. They should also ensure that all relevant personnel receive appropriate training concerning compliance with applicable rules.
- (c) All organisations will be responsible for the behaviour of the employees, affiliates and agents working on their behalf.

10. COMPLIANCE WITH CODES, LAWS AND REGULATIONS

- (a) All participating commercial and non-commercial organisations are responsible for compliance with all applicable codes, laws and regulations. They are likely to be held responsible under those rules for the actions of their employees, affiliates and agents working on their behalf. Codes and regulations include various responsibilities for approval, certification and reporting for which companies are responsible.
- (b) All participating organisations should take appropriate steps to ensure compliance with all applicable codes, laws and regulations and – in the case of commercial

organisations - that their actions are representative of ethical and professional interactions between involved industry and healthcare professionals. All organisations are advised to put appropriate training in place so that their activities are compliant with the applicable codes, laws and regulations.

11. CONTACT

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4053 Basel / Switzerland

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