

Sponsorship Policy and Procedure

Purpose and Scope

This Policy determines the rules and procedures under which the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG or College) will accept sponsorship from third party organisations towards projects, strategic partnerships, workshops, Annual Scientific Meetings, and any other events, both online and face-to-face. This policy applies to all College members, trainees, staff, partners and sponsors. All incoming and outgoing sponsorship requests must be considered under this policy.

Product, company or service endorsement must be considered under the RANZCOG Endorsement Policy. Any requests for advertisement must be considered under the Advertising Policy and Procedure. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate must ensure that all requests which are in substance requests for Endorsement are provided to the RANZCOG Board, to be managed as appropriate under the Endorsement Policy.

Policy Definition

This policy outlines the principles and practices for RANZCOG in evaluating and making decisions on:

1. sponsorship requests from external organisations.
2. inviting external organisations partner with RANZCOG or sponsor RANZCOG initiatives.
3. external organisations request to review and endorse their documents with RANZCOG intellectual property.

Key Considerations

Sponsorship is an arrangement in which a sponsor or RANZCOG provides a financial contribution or in offers "value in kind" (VIK) to support specific activities in return for agreed and defined benefits. However, sponsorship should not be the main source of revenue for an activity. In some circumstances, RANZCOG may consider a partnership or sponsorship under a pro-bono basis. Such decisions to waive fees ordinarily applicable must be made by the CEO or their delegate. RANZCOG may choose to employ a third-party to act as an sponsorship agency on RANZCOG's behalf for specific events and initiatives.

This policy does not cover arrangements made for charitable, philanthropic or grant purposes.

The types of benefits that RANZCOG would customarily offer or require from a sponsorship generally fit with one of more of the below categories:

- Monetary support (direct and/or the provision of a service such as room hire/and or catering)
- Partnership support designation recognition (logo/brand)
- Brand exposure on promotional material including advertising, communications, websites and digital and social media channels and signage.
- Public Relations or external communications opportunities
- Speaking opportunity to promote specific message or outcomes.
- Access to digital and print communication channels or other opportunities which engage with the target audience

- Access to external party assets such as facilities and venues
- Other opportunities to generate a greater community awareness around specific items or issues.

There must be alignment and fit between the brand and activities of the sponsor and RANZCOG. There is to be no conflict between the objectives and or mission and or business practices between the sponsor and RANZCOG. Sponsorship objectives must also align with RANZCOG's Strategic Plan.

1. Mandatory Requirements

1.1. Standard Requirements

RANZCOG is a pre-eminent institution with unrivalled access to women's health practitioners in Australia and New Zealand, and accordingly its brand has significant value. Any Sponsorship accepted by RANZCOG must be at commercial rates, determined by the CEO or delegate. When considering proposals for sponsorship, or when inviting external organisations to be sponsors, RANZCOG will only pursue opportunities that can be assessed against the following principles:

- Must be aligned with the objects defined in the RANZCOG Constitution.
- Must be aligned with the business, brand and marketing objectives, brand purpose and values.
- Must be consistent, enhance and engage with RANZCOG's strategic plan and pillars.
- Must be consistent with RANZCOG's corporate image and identity.
- Must enhance the reputation of the RANZCOG brand in the community.
- Must have the ability to engage RANZCOG's members and consumers.

To ensure its credibility as the peak body in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and to uphold of the trust and confidence of its members and of the public, RANZCOG must be free of undue influence or conflicts, and in control of the decisions it makes. To this extent, when assessing sponsorship opportunities, due regard must be given to member perspectives, views, and concerns. As such, RANZCOG will not accept or support any advertisements, or engage with organisations that:

- Are likely to be perceived by a significant proportion of RANZCOG members as anti-social, anti-environmental, divisive, or controversial.
- Conflict with any health message or position statements issued or accepted by RANZCOG.
- Support political parties or religious organisations.
- Supports an individual.
- Presents a reputational risk.
- Support denominational religions.
- Promote directly or indirectly the business of gambling, alcohol, arms, smoking, drugs and abuse and exploitation of women.
- May be construed as discriminatory.
- Could be detrimental to public health and safety.
- Promote socially divisive issues or events e.g: beauty pageants or activities that may be linked to animal cruelty.
- Perceived to impose conditions that could limit, or appear to limit, the ability of RANZCOG to carry out its function fully and impartially.

RANZCOG will not enter into sponsorship arrangements with individuals or entities that are or may be subject to action or investigation by government or government bodies. RANZCOG will not be obliged under any sponsorship arrangement to provide explicit endorsement of the sponsor or the sponsor's products and product categories.

1.2. Medical Professionalism and Ethics

All sponsorships must be consistent with the Medical Practice professionalism and, in particular, must:

- a. Account for RANZCOG's standing in the healthcare industry and the community generally, noting RANZCOG's stature and reputation are inextricably linked to the Medical Practice profession's work, the professional stature of its members and the trust patients place in their Medical Practitioner.
- b. Comply with the Australian Medical Association Code of Ethics, which is available at <https://www.ama.com.au/articles/code-ethics-2004-editorially-revised-2006-revised-2016> , The Medical Council of New Zealand Standards, which is available at <https://www.mcnz.org.nz/our-standards/current-standards/> .

1.3. Therapeutic Goods

Compliance with Law

All Sponsors or their referring agents must certify (which may be incorporated into the written agreement) that all Sponsorship involving Therapeutic Goods complies with:

- The Medicines Australia Code of Conduct (available <https://www.medicinesaustralia.com.au/code-of-conduct/code-of-conduct-current-edition/>)
- The Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code (available at <https://www.tga.gov.au/publication/therapeutic-goods-advertising-code>)
- The Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code (available at <https://www.asa.co.nz/codes/codes/therapeutic-and-health-advertising-code/>).

Pharmaceutical advertising

Advertising from the pharmaceutical industry can only be appropriate so far as they do not breach or distort the doctor – patient relationship. Specifically, sponsorship involving Therapeutic Goods is subject to the following:

- Sponsorship must be accessible only by healthcare professionals in a manner and medium that prevents access by the general public;
- Sponsorship agreements with pharmaceutical companies do not entail direct product or product category endorsement by RANZCOG.
- Sponsorships involving development or delivery of educational grants, resources or materials must explicitly state the nature of partnership. Such grants, resources or materials cannot be used as vehicles for direct marketing or advertising to RANZCOG's membership.
- Advertising on RANZCOG promotional items (that is, items bearing RANZCOG branding) such as pens, notepads and branded items like clothing and accessories is not acceptable under any circumstances;
- Sponsorship cannot appear in RANZCOG Social Media channels.
- Sponsorship can appear in RANZCOG Events, Products and activities targeting the general public providing all references, information or references to a Therapeutic Good are omitted.

2. Procedures

2.1. General Procedures

Any requests for incoming or outgoing sponsorships must be reviewed and approved by the CEO or delegate. Relevant Executive Leadership Team members will also need to be consulted and required to provide input when a sponsorship impacts their directorate or business unit. Once the initial proposal is approved, ongoing sponsorships will be managed by the relevant Executive Leadership Team member responsible for the area. Any queries around clinical or medical propriety of a proposal will be forwarded to the Board, to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Under certain circumstances, authority to approve sponsorships may be delegated by the CEO to appropriate RANZCOG Personnel.

2.2. Outgoing Sponsorship Proposals

All outgoing sponsorship proposals must be reviewed by the CEO or delegate. Where possible, sponsorships must be packaged together across multiple events and initiatives so as to maximise value for both RANZCOG and the sponsor. Where an external organisation approaches RANZCOG to offer sponsorship, they must provide a detailed proposal outlining expectations, contributions, and timeframes.

2.3. Incoming Sponsorship Proposals

All incoming proposals must be formally made in writing, outlining the project or event details, contribution required and the benefits RANZCOG would receive. Such proposals will be reviewed by the CEO or delegate and evaluated based on alignment to RANZCOG's strategic plan and values. Alignment with RANZCOG criteria does not guarantee sponsorship. Final approval will be based on funds and resources available at the time.

2.4. Right of refusal

Independent of anything else outlined in this policy, RANZCOG reserves the final right to decline any proposed sponsorships for professional, ethical, moral, legal or logistical reasons. Once such a decision has been made, RANZCOG will notify the concerned party in writing. RANZCOG is not obliged to enter into any further communication with the concerned party.

2.5. Sponsorship Agreement and Management

RANZCOG is required to enter into a written agreement with sponsors that details the obligations of each of the parties. This is required for both financial and in-kind sponsorships. RANZCOG must also maintain a sponsorship register with deliverables and timelines to ensure compliance with any sponsorship agreements.

3. Transition Provisions

RANZCOG recognises it has entered into commercial and contractual relationships with Sponsors prior to the endorsement of this Policy. To this end:

- This policy is subject to the terms of these agreements
- RANZCOG should not seek to terminate any agreement merely because of the update of this policy
- RANZCOG must not in any circumstance exercise any right or option to extend or renew any of these contracts if any component conflicts with this Policy
- any renegotiation of any agreement must include appropriate changes to ensure it conforms to this policy.

4. Non-compliance

A failure to comply with this Policy may result in RANZCOG incurring unwanted or misaligned contractual obligations or responsibilities which can lead to significant legal, financial or reputational risks.

5. Legislation

All advertising arrangements are obligated to adhere to the following legislations;

- Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 (Cth)
- Medicines Australia, Code of Conduct (19th Ed)
- The Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code 2018 (Cth)
- The Fair Trading Act 1986, New Zealand
- Advertising Standards Authority Inc., New Zealand, Standards Codes

6. Related RANZCOG documents

- Constitution
- Strategic Plan
- Code of Conduct
- Endorsement Policy and Procedure
- Advertising Policy and Procedure
- RANZCOG Media Kit

Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1.1	July / 2021	New Policy established
v2.1	September / 2021	Minor amendments and corrections

Policy Version:	Version 2.1
Policy Owner:	Executive Director, Innovation, Learning and Quality Assurance
Policy Approved by:	RANZCOG Board
Review of Policy:	July / 2023