



IHI Principles for Engaging with Commercial Organizations

March 2015

Introduction

Who We Are

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), an independent not-for-profit organization based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, is a leading innovator, convener, partner, and driver of results in health and health care improvement worldwide. For more than 25 years, we have partnered with visionaries, leaders, and front-line practitioners around the globe to spark bold, inventive ways to improve the health of individuals and populations. Together, we build the will for change, seek out innovative models of care, and spread proven best practices.

To advance our mission, IHI's work is focused in five key areas: Improvement Capability; Person- and Family-Centered Care; Patient Safety; Quality, Cost, and Value; and Triple Aim for Populations. IHI also works with a wide range of entities — whether health care facilities, entire health care systems, or governments — to help them achieve significant results in quality, safety, and innovation.

How Commercial Support and Engagement Can Help IHI

To help achieve these goals, IHI seeks and accepts external support in the form of grants, contracts, sponsorships, donations or gifts in support of our mission. IHI also partners with a wide range of organizations in delivering our mission. External support from commercial entities¹ falls into the following broad categories:

- Supporting the development or delivery of innovation/R&D, content, or programming.
- Sponsoring events or other educational programs.
- Helping us undertake initiatives that accelerate the rate of improvement in health care and health where more typical nonprofit funding sources may be limited, including improvement activities in the developing world.
- Providing unrestricted contributions to general IHI operations.
- Funding by donors that is targeted toward specific IHI program areas.
- Supporting the delivery of IHI conferences or courses, including direct support to programs and presenters, providing scholarships, and furnishing conference materials.
- Supporting IHI's website (ihi.org) and IHI's knowledge management system, which helps to build a worldwide community of improvers and continually harvests and disseminates new ideas, tools, resources, and other content.
- Providing support for IHI's work with schools of medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and administrative health care to teach new health professionals the methods to improve care.
- Assisting IHI to reach broader audiences.
- Providing access to skills and resources that IHI does not have available internally.

¹ Commercial entities are organizations that offer products or services to a market with the intent of making a profit. In a commercial entity, shareholders, partners, investors, or employees may own (or have rights to own) the profits, residual income, or surpluses of the organization. This contrasts with not-for-profit entities (like IHI) where any surpluses or fund balances are held for public benefit and no individuals or entities have any ownership claim. A nonprofit foundation established by a for-profit entity would normally be considered a nonprofit by IHI in evaluating potential sponsorship or funding arrangements.

Guidelines for Commercial Support and Engagement

IHI's ability to advance health and health system improvement depends crucially on maintaining an independent position with respect to commercial products and services. "Independence" is a matter of both actual and perceived relationship with potential sponsors and partners. The fact or appearance of endorsement toward a specific commercial product or service has the potential to damage IHI's reputation.

With both the benefits and risks of commercial support in mind, IHI has established the following principles and guidelines, which apply primarily to the acceptance of "Commercial Support," that is, external funds from for-profit corporations, partnerships or other entities selling goods or services related to health and health care, or who otherwise stand to gain financially from association with IHI.

Principles and Guidelines

IHI may accept support from or engagement with commercial entities when an opportunity:

1. Is consistent with IHI strategy, values, and improvement methods:
 - IHI engages with commercial organizations only (a) for unrestricted support for IHI content or programming or (b) for specific projects that are consistent with our mission and business strategy.
 - IHI does not engage with commercial organizations that require an exclusive working relationship.
 - IHI does not accept external funds from companies that make tobacco products, including other companies owned by tobacco companies, or their parent companies.
2. Reflects IHI's commitment to the free, non-commercial flow of improvement knowledge and resources:
 - IHI believes that the free flow of ideas provides the best opportunities for improvement and we provide extensive free and public access to content through our website, publications, and other mechanisms.. IHI reserves rights to the intellectual properties resulting from the project, unless otherwise agreed upon in advance.
 - IHI does not engage with funders that would set limits on the broad and unfettered dissemination of work product or learning.
 - IHI retains the right to publish results or content.
 - Any permissions or licensing agreements with commercial entities must adhere to appropriate standards that prevent misuse, unintended use, and modification of licensed materials, prohibit modification that changes meaning, and prohibit use of IHI trademarks or logos to endorse company products/services.
 - IHI does not permit commercial partners to generate commercial activity around IHI improvement knowledge and resources.
3. Avoids real or perceived conflicts that impair or give the appearance of impairing the ability of IHI program participants to make informed or objective decisions:

- IHI does not engage with commercial organizations on research and education programs that relate to specific pharmaceuticals, medical devices, diagnostics, information technology, or any other product purported to have direct health benefits to patients or to health system performance.
 - IHI does not engage in partnership with commercial organizations that directly advance that organization's commercial interests.
 - IHI programs must comply with the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) guidelines for commercial support. IHI designs all meetings and events to maximize the impact on improvement. IHI retains control over educational content, selection of speakers, and the review of educational materials.
4. Preserves IHI's strategic, methodological, and operational independence and control:
- IHI retains control of the selection of all project personnel.
 - IHI ensures that the design of project activities is consistent with our improvement methods and content expertise.
5. Transparently discloses all relationships:
- IHI discloses all sponsored activities that are partially or completely financed by external funds, including funds from commercial entities.
 - Speakers at IHI events are required to disclose whether any part of their presentation resulted from external funding and whether they have any personal financial interest in the subject matter of the presentation.
6. Acknowledges commercial support or engagement and uses the IHI brand appropriately:
- Acknowledgment of commercial support or involvement may be included in IHI's publications, meeting materials, web pages, reports of project results, and all other similar materials, as appropriate. Guidance is documented in the IHI Brand Standards guide (current guide last updated in September 2014).
 - IHI permits acknowledgement of commercial support in communications, with advance review and approval of such communications by IHI.
 - Review and approval is required by the IHI Marketing Department for narrative statements about IHI made by funders and for use of the IHI name and/or logo.
7. Is subject to appropriate governance and oversight, including:
- IHI Priorities Group² reviews and approves exceptions to this policy.
 - IHI Priorities Group reports to the IHI Board of Directors on any commercial relationships that are new or unusual in scope or approach.
 - IHI provides a yearly summary of commercial funding received to the Board of Directors for review.
 - IHI Board, faculty, and staff are required to disclose potential conflicts of interest annually and documentation is maintained through an electronic system.
 - IHI maintains joint continuing education accreditation through ACCME, ANCC, and ACPE.³ Current accreditation runs through 2018.

² IHI Priorities Group comprises the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Vice President, and Senior Vice Presidents. This group meets weekly.

³ Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) <http://www.accme.org/>; American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) <http://www.nursecredentialing.org/>; Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) <https://www.acpe-accredit.org/>.

- Commercial entities providing support to IHI conferences or other programs are not permitted to influence or provide input to the content, design, objectives, methods, or selection of faculty for IHI programs. Post-event participant surveys ask attendees to identify potential biases so that IHI can rectify any situations where commercial influence might occur.
 - The IHI Ethics Policy and Guidelines for Citizenship is reviewed and updated annually. New staff are oriented upon hire and current staff are oriented to the policy annually.
8. Meets IHI's standards for administration and accounting:
- Written agreements are required when entering into relationships with commercial entities.
 - Funds received from commercial entities will be fully accounted for in line with IHI's normal high standards of financial management.

Operational Guidance

All IHI program, regional, functional, and administrative staff and leaders are responsible for acting in accordance with this policy. The following guidance is provided:

- When IHI leaders or staff identify opportunities for IHI to receive commercial support they will promptly bring the opportunity forward through the New Business process.
- Each opportunity for commercial support will be vetted using the principles listed above in addition to IHI's normal strategic criteria.
- In case of ambiguity, opportunities will be escalated to the IHI Priorities Group for review and input.
- The Priorities Group will determine whether consultation with the Board of Directors is warranted, particularly in cases that are new or unusual in scope or approach.
- For any commercially-sourced support in excess of \$500,000 the team proposing support will seek review and input from the Priorities Group.
- Any exceptions to this policy will be reviewed and approved by the Priorities Group before accepting support.
- This policy will be reviewed at least every two years by the Priorities Group and Board of Directors.