

Journal of Indigenous HIV Research (JIHR): Policy on Conflict of Interest

1. Reasons for policy

CAAN makes every effort to ensure that its decisions and procedures are fair and objective. We believe that the best way to maintain readers' trust in the integrity of the research we publish is through a policy of transparency.

Upon submission to the JIHR, **authors** are invited to identify: 1) potential reviewers and 2) individuals they do not want to be asked to review their manuscripts.

External reviewers are asked to ensure that they avoid any actions that might lead to the appearance that a conflict of interest exists or could reasonably be viewed as affecting the objectivity of the reviewer or the quality of the research results. If conflicts of interest are disclosed, readers will be able to make an informed judgment about their significance or lack of significance. We believe this will be to the benefit of readers and authors alike.

2. Definition

For the purposes of this statement, a Conflict of Interest is a conflict between a person's duties and responsibilities regarding the review process, and that person's private, professional, business or public interests.

CAAN uses a blind peer-review process. Peer Review Board members are provided with an alphabetized list of the all authors and asked to inform CAAN of any related interests, including those described below that might be perceived as relevant. Reviewers are also encouraged to identify a conflict if they feel one exists despite the blind review process. However, just as conflict of interest does not automatically invalidate the conclusions of a paper, nor do they automatically disqualify a reviewer from evaluating it. CAAN will consider these statements when distributing submissions to reviewers.

Conflict of interest may occur if reviewers:

- Are from the same immediate institution or company as the primary author;
- Are currently co-authoring other materials or working with the author in a collaboration or publication;
- Are a professional associate* of the author;
- Are a close friend or relative of the author;
- Have had long-standing professional/personal differences with the author;
- Are a salaried employee or are negotiating employment with the institution of the author, except in multi-component organizations in which the components are sufficiently independent;
- Have received or could receive direct financial benefit of any amount, from the organization/institution referenced in the article or from the author.

* (professional associate is defined as any colleague, scientific mentor, supervisor or student with whom the reviewer is conducting research or other professional activities at the time of the review.)

3. Application to publishing policy

The JIHR is an independent publication. CAAN's strict policy is that editorial independence, decisions and content should not be compromised by commercial or financial interests, or by any specific arrangements with advertising clients or sponsors. Our policy is to disclose such arrangements where there is any risk of a perception of compromise on this issue. The JIHR is produced through funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) RFN# 152248.

Journal of Indigenous HIV Research (JIHR): Conflict of Interest Declaration Form

In the interest of transparency and to help readers to detect potential bias, we require reviewers of submissions to the JIHR to declare any conflict of interest in relation to papers submitted for publication.

For the purposes of this statement, a Conflict of Interest is a conflict between a person's duties and responsibilities regarding the review process, and that person's private, professional, business or public interests. There may be a real, perceived or potential conflict of interest between the primary author and the review committee member. See the Definition section (above) for examples.

Please review the list of authors contributing to Volume ___ of the JIHR and indicate whether you have a perceived conflict with any of the authors. Use the Conflict of Interest Declaration Form (below) to describe those conflicts.

Authors (alphabetical order)	Conflict (yes / no)

Declaration of competing interests

Please check one of the following:

- I declare that there are no competing interests such as those defined in the JIHR policies or others that might be perceived to influence the results and discussion reported in this paper.
- I have competing interests such as those defined in the JIHR policies or others that might be perceived to influence the results and discussion reported in this paper.
- I decline to respond to this request for information.

If you checked number 2 (above) please specify the competing interests here:

Any reviewer who is uncertain as to whether a conflict of interest exists must inform the Managing Editors of the potential conflict.

I agree to adhere to the JIHR Conflict of Interest policies as outlined above.

Signature

Date

Print Name