

The Eve Appeal

Research Advisory Committee Code of Conduct

The Eve Appeal's Research Advisory Committee (RAC) members operate according to a Code of Conduct that lays out how they should behave, including declaring vested interests.

The Board of Trustees relies on the willingness of the gynaecological cancer community to give their time to participate in the range of activity required as a member of the RAC and appreciates their willingness to do so.

Membership

Name	Occupation and Organisation	Date of appointment
Professor Emma Crosbie (Chair)	Professor of Gynaecological Oncology Manchester University	January 2024
Rhea Crighton	Lead Gynaecology Clinical Nurse Specialist Royal Devon University Healthcare Trust Lay/Community Representative	January 2021
Dr Helen Howie	Lay/Community Representative	January 2021
Professor Sudha Sundar	Professor of Gynaecological Cancer, University of Birmingham	June 2019
Professor Anne Lanceley	Emeritus Professor of Women's Cancer Care, Institute for Women's Health, University College London	June 2024
Dr Garth Funston	Senior Lecturer, Primary Care Cancer Research, Wolfson Institute of Population Health, Queen Mary University of London	June 2024
Professor Raji Ganesan	Honorary Professor, Institute of Cancer and Genomic Sciences, Birmingham University; Consultant Gynaecological Pathologist	June 2024
Professor James Brenton	Professor of Ovarian Cancer Medicine in the Department of Oncology, University of Cambridge	May 2025

1) General

This code of conduct relates to the RAC and any other funding panels of the Eve Appeal.

The purpose of this code is to minimise the potential for conflicts of interest arising and to protect the Eve Appeal and those who work for it from any perception, real or otherwise, that the external interests and affiliations of its RAC members might interfere with their ability to work towards the furtherance of the Eve Appeal's objectives.

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2) Grant review

The Eve Appeal makes every effort to ensure that research proposals and reports are assessed objectively and impartially. Review by an appropriately constituted group is seen as essential to this decision-making process. To assist with the review process, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- a) As a condition of participation, RAC members and reviewers agree that documents and correspondence relating to applications for funds and progress reports are strictly confidential and should not be discussed with anyone outside the RAC during the review, either before or after the Research Advisory Committee meeting.
- b) Documents should not be discussed between RAC members except during the business of the meeting. Discussions of a proposal between members of the RAC which occur outside a meeting should be declared to the Chair.
- c) If an RAC member (or serving Trustees) is approached by an applicant for technical advice on an application, they may provide advice, but must report this to the RAC Chair and secretariat. They may subsequently be asked by the RAC Chair to absent themselves from a discussion of the application concerned.
- d) Anonymised feedback to candidates (successful or unsuccessful) will be provided by the Eve Appeal secretariat. RAC members should not, under any circumstances, provide feedback directly to applicants.
- e) Any printed and digital papers should be kept secure. Printed papers should be disposed of securely after the decision has been reached.
- f) Should a reviewer have a vested interest (organisational, collaborative, pecuniary, personal or other) in the outcome of a grant application or review they should declare it.
- g) While membership of the RAC will be publicly available, the identity of reviewers in relation to specific grants will be kept confidential.
- h) Members should be aware that the role of reviewers is advisory.

3) Managing conflicts of interests

The following guidelines should be followed to manage conflicts of interest:

- a) Where an RAC member is an applicant or co-applicant on a grant application, he or she must declare an interest and withdraw from any consideration of that application. That member will not receive documents pertaining to the application, learn the identity of its referees or receive its referees' reports. He or she must retire from the meeting when the application is assessed. Details of discussion of that application will be deleted from any papers the member receives. This should also apply to trustees who serve as panel members and are applicants in the grant round.
- b) RAC members who have collaborated or published with the proposal applicant within the past three years, or work in the same institution, should declare an interest and may be asked to withdraw from the meeting for that application, or may be allowed to stay, but not vote on the application. Where the RAC Chair is in this position they will be asked to withdraw from the meeting for the discussion of that proposal and the vice-chair will chair the meeting for that application.

- c) RAC members who are a direct competitor of the applicant (e.g., they are funded or applying for funding on a similar project to the proposal under discussion) within the past three years, should declare an interest and may be asked to withdraw from the meeting for that application. Where the RAC Chair is in this position they will be asked to withdraw from the meeting for the discussion of that proposal and the Deputy Chair will chair the meeting for that application.

4) Resolution of conflicts of interest

The Eve Appeal recognises that the gynaecological cancer research community is not large, and that conflicts will arise. Most conflicts or potential conflicts will relate to a particular issue and as such will not present any long-term restrictions on an individual's ability to work for the Eve Appeal or to sit on its committees.

To ensure resolution of conflicts of interest that arise, please note the following:

- a) Major conflicts of interest may arise which compromise an individual's ability to continue in their position within the RAC. Where such a situation relates to a member of a funding committee/panel, the matter will be discussed by the Chair of the Committee together with the committee secretariat. In cases where agreement cannot be reached through this means, the case will be referred to the committee, whose decision should be taken as final.
- b) Members of the RAC are expected to declare any potential conflicts of interest relating to individual funding decisions to the RAC secretariat before the meeting wherein they will be discussed (as detailed above); if this has not been noted in advance, it should be declared during the meeting as soon as the existence of a conflict becomes apparent.
- c) In cases where an individual is uncertain as to whether a conflict of interest exists or not, they should report this to the RAC secretariat. The secretariat shall discuss the matter with the individual as necessary and report to the Chair, who will decide on a course of action.
- d) If an individual is concerned about a possible conflict of interest involving another member of the committee, then he or she should raise the matter with the Chair of the RAC.
- e) If the Eve Appeal has reason to believe that a member of the RAC or other funding panel external Review Process has breached this Code of Conduct, then he or she may be asked to step down as a RAC member.

5) Updating the policy

The Eve Appeal will endeavour to review this policy every two years, in consultation with the Board of Trustees.

As a member of The Eve Appeal's Research Advisory Committee, I agree to adhere to the guidelines outlined above.

Name:

Signature:

Date: