



CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

As Editor-in-Chief, *International Surgery*, I dedicate this editorial letter to the immense importance of conflict of interest policy. A conflict of interest policy statement exists for *International Surgery* and is fully observed. Conflict of interest procedures relate to the trust that authors place on the publishing practices of *International Surgery*, and no ambiguity should exist in reference to this trust.

The definition of conflict of interest is that a conflict of interest exists when there is a divergence between an individual's private interests and their responsibilities to scientific and publishing activities. This is the definition of conflict of interest for *International Surgery*.

The scope of conflicts of interest in relation to *International Surgery* includes the areas of financial relationships, academic commitments, personal relationships, political and religious beliefs, and institutional affiliations.

In reference to declaring and managing conflicts of interest, the goal of *International Surgery* is not to eliminate all possible conflicts of interest, but to manage constructively by stipulating that authors of submitted manuscripts openly declare in writing any potentially perceived conflicts of interest at the time of submitting a manuscript for the consideration of the Editor-in-Chief and editorial staff of *International Surgery*. Authors are also to understand that additional questions may be asked by the

Editor-in-Chief and editorial staff pertaining to possible conflicts of interest.

The consequences of author(s) failing to declare a conflict of interest include no (further) consideration of the manuscript, exclusion of those persons with a conflict of interest from the review process, abstaining from decisions where a conflict of interest might evolve, and/or investigation by impartial observers.

The responsibilities of participants in the publishing process are direct and significant. Authors are asked to report any financial conflicts of interest related to research and written presentations of their work, as well as any other competing interests. Reviewers are asked if they have any conflicts of interests in reference to the manuscript under review. Editors will not make any editorial decisions, if they have any financial or other types of interest in a particular manuscript.

Conflicts of interest in scientific medical publishing affect everyone with a stake in research integrity. The Editor-in-Chief and editorial staff of *International Surgery* have the goal of publishing with the highest possible integrity.

Sincerely,

Professor Christopher Chen
Editor-in-Chief
International Surgery