Rules of impartiality
during evaluation of funding applications

LUNDBECK FOUNDATION

2024
Purpose, principles and scope

The Lundbeck Foundation’s rules and principles of impartiality guided by the rules of the Danish Public Administration Act are set out below. The purpose of the rules of impartiality is to safeguard the balance between transparency, non-bias and scientific expertise in the Lundbeck Foundation’s funding-award decisions.

The rules apply to members of the Lundbeck Foundation’s board of directors, members of the Foundation’s grant committees, external reviewers, executive management and others who have influence on the Foundation’s funding-award decisions (“evaluators”). Before any funding application is considered, each evaluator has an obligation to disclose any inherent or potential conflict of interest.

Any reasoned assumption that a conflict of interest exists will be investigated to the fullest extent to rule out any bias.

Decisions regarding disqualification of an evaluator are made by weighing up the specific circumstances against the present rules and the need to ensure that the selection committee has the best possible expert basis for evaluating applications.

The present rules apply solely during evaluation of funding applications and not to general discussions or briefings.

Disqualification

An evaluator will be disqualified from evaluating a specific application if they

1. have a personal or financial interest in the outcome of the application
2. have a familial relationship to the applicant such as domestic/non-domestic partner (current and former), blood relation or relation by marriage in direct line of ascent or descent, close collateral relation such as a niece or nephew or other close relation with a personal or financial interest in the outcome of the application
3. are or have been a supervisor for the applicant or, in any other way, collaborate with the applicant or have collaborated closely with the applicant within the past five years
4. have acted as a referee for the applicant on the application in question
5. have co-published with the applicant within the past five years
6. intend to enter into a close, scientific collaboration with the applicant during the course of the project proposed in the application
7. are employed at a public institution (such as a faculty or hospital) at which they manage or are managed by the applicant. In specific cases in which an application is of crucial
importance for a particular place of employment any staff or management at this institution will likewise be disqualified

8. the applicant is on a research team of which the evaluator is or has been a member within the past five years

9. any other circumstances that might cast doubt over their impartiality

If an evaluator is disqualified from evaluating a specific application, they will likewise be disqualified from evaluating other applications if eight or fewer applications are competing. Once a final decision has been made concerning the application subject to a conflict of interest, the evaluator will then be permitted to participate in evaluation of the remaining applications.

Guidelines in the event of disqualification

If there is any doubt about the impartiality of an evaluator in a given situation, the chair of the relevant committee or evaluation panel will decide, together with the management, whether the conflict of interest should result in disqualification.

Evaluators disqualified from evaluating a specific application may not make a decision, participate in a decision or participate in any part of the application processing.

Exceptions

In rare cases, the committee chair and management may decide that the above rules can be set aside if the result of excluding an evaluator would be that the committee loses its evaluation competence or that the scientific composition of the committee becomes subject to substantial misgivings. If the above exception is made, with the approval of the evaluator in question, the remaining evaluators will be advised that a potential conflict of interest exists, what it consists of, and the rationale for permitting the evaluator to participate in evaluation of funding applications.

Consequences of breach of the rules of impartiality

If an application is subsequently found to have been evaluated in breach of these rules, the following will be required:

- Re-evaluation of the application by the respective committee or panel without participation of any disqualified evaluator

- The breach will be reported to the Foundation’s board which will decide on the next steps.