

Policy Addressing Conflict of Interest for Members of the IBC

1.0 Purpose

To detail the process for members of the IBC to report a conflict of interest with an application being discussed, and how the discussion will proceed when a conflict of interest is reported.

2.0 Policy

In accordance with Section IV-B-2-a(4) of the *NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant and Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules*, no member of the Virginia Tech IBC may be involved, except to provide information requested by the IBC, in the review or approval of a project in which he/she/they has been, or expects to be, engaged or has a direct financial interest.

When a member has a conflict of interest, the member should notify the IBC Chair and may not participate in the IBC review or approval of that application, except to provide information if requested by the committee.

Some examples of conflict of interest cases include, but are not limited to:

- A member is involved in a potentially competing research program.
- Access to funding or intellectual information may provide an unfair competitive advantage.
- A member's personal biases may interfere with his or her impartial judgment.

3.0 IBC Application Reviews with a Reported COI

In the event that a member reports a conflict of interest with an application being reviewed, when the discussion of the application is ready to begin the member with the conflict will leave the meeting room (whether attending in person or virtually). The member will not be involved in the discussion or in the vote. The member will not be counted toward a quorum for that review.

4.0 IBC Application Reviews with a Possible COI

In the event that a member is not sure if their specific situation meets the definition of a conflict of interest, that member can abstain from discussing the application and can abstain from the vote. In such cases, the member is counted towards a quorum.