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FASEB CALLS ON THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY TO ENDORSE GUIDELINE FOR CONFLICTS OF INTEREST - UNVEILS COI TOOLKIT

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) has issued a call to the scientific community to adopt more consistent policies and practices for disclosing and managing financial relationships between academia and industry in biomedical research. On July 17, FASEB unveiled a framework for a national guideline and held a [meeting](#) of more than 75 [representatives](#) of scientific societies and other key stakeholders to discuss the process of implementation. Today, FASEB launches the [COI Toolkit](#), a website designed to help researchers, institutions, publications, and industry put into practice FASEB's recommendations.

Leo T. Furcht, M.D., immediate Past President of FASEB and chair of the committee that developed the program, described the challenge before the community: "FASEB is concerned that the lack of clarity and consistency in current conflict-of-interest policies may cause confusion by investigators and ultimately inhibit their ability to protect the integrity of research."

Representing 21 societies with more than 80,000 scientist members, FASEB's recommendations articulate the issue from the investigators' perspective because they, as a group, determine the effectiveness of policies and practices.

Delivering the keynote address, House Energy and Commerce Committee Vice-Chair Diana DeGette (D-CO), applauded FASEB's efforts and stated that, "By creating a more consistent standard to the extent possible we are more likely to avoid ambiguity and confusion. Without such standards, we run the risk of further confusing the public about the integrity of research and exacerbating their distrust."

The FASEB framework is based on three guiding principles: Investigators must conduct research activities objectively, operate with transparency, and be accountable to all stakeholders. In order to promote practices to achieve these principles, FASEB developed a [COI Toolkit](#) website that contains recommendations to improve the management of academic-industry relationships and promote investigator education. Many of the recommendations were derived from [guidelines](#) FASEB published in 2006. The Toolkit provides a platform for the community to share resources with the goal of moving toward a national guideline.

[Participants](#) in the meeting expressed enthusiasm for a set of common principles and guidelines that they could use to help better manage financial relationships between academia and industry.

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FASEB is composed of 21 societies with more than 80,000 members, making it the largest coalition of biomedical research associations in the United States. FASEB enhances the ability of biomedical and life scientists to improve—through their research—the health, well-being and productivity of all people. FASEB's mission is to advance biological science through collaborative advocacy for research policies that promote scientific progress and education and lead to improvements in human health.