# EANM Guiding Principles with Regard to Transparency

## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Mission</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal and Fiscal Status</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Protection</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The European School of Nuclear Medicine (ESNM)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation with Other Relevant Societies</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Guidelines</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The EANM Website</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Congresses with Related Associations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The EANM Annual Congress</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relations with Industry</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The EANM Journal</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Affairs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association Management</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The EANM has come a long way since its foundation in 1985; much has been accomplished and the organisation has become highly professional.

The EANM leadership recognises that, along with professionalisation, an association needs strong guiding values regarding the way it operates on a daily basis. With this in mind, the current document relating to transparency and conflict of interest policy has been developed.

This document is not set in stone. It will be amended, revised and reshaped as the daily routine of the EANM changes. However, it will always depict the core values and high morals which unite the association.

History and Mission

The European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM) was founded on September 6, 1985 in London as the result of a merger between the Society of Nuclear Medicine-Europe and the European Nuclear Medicine Society.

The EANM is the umbrella organisation of Nuclear Medicine in Europe. It represents approximately 30,000 professionals working in the sector and is their sole representative body in dealings with the European institutions. As part of its role, the EANM aims to advance science and education in nuclear medicine for the benefit of public health as well as to promote and co-ordinate, throughout Europe and beyond, discussion and exchange of ideas and results relating to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases through the use of unsealed radioactive substances and the properties of stable nuclides in medicine. One goal of the EANM is thus to provide a suitable medium for the dissemination and discussion of the latest results in the field of nuclear medicine and related specialties.

Legal and Fiscal Status

The EANM is incorporated in Vienna, Austria as a professional non-profit medical association that facilitates communication worldwide between individuals pursuing clinical and research excellence in nuclear medicine.

The incorporation is guided by the Austrian Law of Associations (“Österreichisches Vereinsgesetz”) of July 1, 2002. The main details for the EANM can be seen in the online file of the “Zentrales Vereinsregister/Austrian Register of Associations” (http://zvr.bmi.gv.at/start). The code number for EANM is: ZVR 063483520.

The association’s accounts comply with Austrian fiscal provisions. These qualify the EANM as a “mid size association” and the EANM is thus obliged to file its annual balances to the Austrian fiscal authorities (Finanzamt für den 2. und 20. Bezirk). The accounts are both internally (by two members of the association called auditors) and externally audited (by the international tax advisor Deloitte) on an annual basis.

The President and the Treasurer are the representatives who have the authority to sign legal and financial documents.

The EANM Bylaws and Rules constitute the legal basis for the operation of the association. The merging of the two founding societies is still reflected within the EANM, as the association simultaneously acts as a forum for individual members (who convene annually at the Members’ Assembly) and as an umbrella organisation for the nuclear medicine societies of Europe (which convene at the Delegates’ Assembly). This twin-track approach guarantees that the EANM not only serves the needs of individual members but also has a strong awareness of the challenges faced by nuclear medicine in European countries.
Data Protection

The EANM adheres to the provisions of the Austrian Data Protection Act. The registration number of EANM is Datenverarbeitungsregister Nr. 1068431. The EANM database is not handed out.

Generally information regarding National Societies and membership is strictly confidential.

Research projects and investigations for which the EANM infrastructure network is required need to be approved by the Executive Committee. Results from these projects are the property of the EANM and may be released and published only by the EANM.

Governance

The EANM is governed by volunteer officers. Their commitment and dedication to nuclear medicine ensure that the association takes the right direction, thrives and is well prepared to meet current and future challenges. All volunteer officers are outstanding scientists, strong leaders and respected personalities in the nuclear medicine community.

The overall leadership rests with the Executive Committee, comprising President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Taskgroup & Committee Co-ordinator and Presidents of the next two annual congresses. The Executive Committee is responsible for the strategy and policy of the association.

Each Executive Committee member is assigned a specific task. Currently the duties are as follows:

| President: Overall leadership, EU public affairs, spokesperson in dealings with 3rd parties |
| President-Elect: Long-term strategic development – including curricular and scientific development |
| Secretary: Monitoring of the Secretariat; relations with Individual Members, National Societies and Affiliated National Societies |
| Treasurer: Finances |
| TG/C Coordinator: Taskgroups and Committees |
| Congress Presidents: Scientific leadership for the respective annual congress |

The election process for the EANM Executive Committee is laid down in the EANM Bylaws and Rules. Before elections are held, candidates have to provide a manifesto stating why they are running for a position and what vision they have for the EANM. Furthermore, they are required to fill in a form on “potential duality of interest” and to make a commitment to take off their “national hat” and henceforth place the European cause at the forefront of their thoughts. The EANM President cannot be the president of a national society or a board member of an international society or organisation which has a potential conflict of interest with the EANM.

The volunteers serving on EANM Taskgroups & Committees (TG & C) are scientific pillars of the association. They offer invaluable service in the publication of procedural and clinical guidelines and other scientific papers, contribute to the educational programme of the European School of Nuclear Medicine (ESNM) and to other scientific projects (such as the initiation of multicentre trials or applications for FP7 grants) and network with other societies in their respective specialty.

The Taskgroups & Committees operate on the basis of TG/C instructions. At the end of each year they have to fill in a matrix showing their achieved goals/proposed activities for the next calendar year and file a budget request. This matrix is discussed and approved by the Executive Committee. Chairs of TG/C are nominated by the Executive Committee, based on their scientific excellence and leadership qualities. Members of the EANM can declare their interest in becoming a member.
of a TG/C online via the EANM website. They must provide a curriculum vitae, which is assessed by the respective TG/C, and candidates deemed suitable are proposed to the Executive Committee and need to be approved by the EANM leadership.

Chairs, members, co-opted members and senior advisors of TG/C are likewise required to fill in a form on “potential duality of interest” and to make a commitment to take off their “national hat” and henceforth place the European cause at the forefront of their thoughts.

The Advisory Council advises the Executive Committee in all scientific and vocational matters. It is composed of the Chairpersons of all EANM Committees, the Dean and Vice-Dean of the European School of Nuclear Medicine (ESNM), the President of the UEMS / Section Nuclear Medicine and two representatives of industry (AIPES – Association of Imaging Producers and Equipment Suppliers; IPCAA – International Pharmaceutical Congress Advisory Association). The members of the Advisory Council are requested to approve the strategy of the Executive Committee.

Regular contact and exchange between the EANM and its national nuclear medicine societies are facilitated by the National Delegates, who convene annually at the Delegates’ Assembly and at an interim meeting of the Delegates. The tasks of the National Delegates and the Deputy National Delegates are stated in a separate document entitled “Relationship EANM-National Delegate”. Their mandate is four years, so as to give them continuity. Their main role is to ensure the information flow between the national and the European level on scientific, legal and vocational matters relevant to nuclear medicine. In this role, the National Delegates are responsible for raising awareness of national problems at the European level and for relaying news from the EANM to the National Societies and their members. The members of the Delegates’ Assembly are requested to approve the strategy of the Executive Committee.

At the Members’ Assembly, held during the Annual Congress, the Executive Committee reports on the activities of the association, the internal auditors present their results and the Executive Committee is exonerated by the members. In addition, the members are requested to approve the strategy of the Executive Committee.

Since 2007 the EANM has also had member societies from countries outside the Council of Europe, which are called “Affiliate National Societies”. The purpose of this membership is to cooperate with National Societies outside the area depicted in the EANM bylaws, and to hear from them the developments in and concerns about nuclear medicine in their countries. The designated delegates of these societies can attend the annual Delegates’ Assembly as observers (without voting rights) and can raise their particular concerns during the special session for “Affiliate National Societies” that follows the aforementioned annual Delegates’ Assembly.

The European School of Nuclear Medicine (ESNM)

The European School of Nuclear Medicine (ESNM) was founded in 1997 to face the challenges posed by the increasing importance of education as mandatory credit hours became the rule for European professionals. The Dean and the Vice-Dean of the ESNM are appointed by the EANM Executive Committee. All volunteers active in the ESNM have to fill in a “potential duality of interest form” each year.

The ESNM began as a small group of people charged with organising seminars in Central & Eastern Europe for colleagues who could not afford to attend the annual congress of the association. At that stage, the ESNM was the “educational outreach programme” of the EANM. Starting in 2001, the school was charged with organising a full programme of Continuing Medical Education (CME), of interest not only to nuclear physicians but also to physicists, radiopharmacists and radiochemists. This programme was warmly received by the membership and has continued successfully ever since. Since its inception, the ESNM has grown in terms of both the number of contributing volunteers and the range of its activities. The group enlarged when it was decided to
incorporate the chairpersons of all Committees in order to ensure delivery of state of the art education in every subspecialty. The ESNM is now the umbrella organisation for all educational activities of the EANM.

Many “Affiliate National Societies” and other groups call on the ESNM to assist with nuclear medicine education at various congresses and seminars. The extent to which assistance is given is decided by the Executive Committee.

Cooperation with Other Relevant Societies

Nuclear medicine is a cross-sectional medical specialty dealing with the prevention, diagnosis and therapy of major health problems like oncological, cardiovascular and neuro-psychiatric disorders. Accordingly, the EANM has intensive contacts and maintains close co-operation with other relevant European associations, such as:
- European Cancer Organisation (ECCO)
- European Society of Medical Oncology (ESMO)
- European Society of Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ESTRO)
- European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC)
- European Society of Cardiology (ESC)
- European Society of Radiology (ESR) and many others.

The Executive Committee selects associations with which cooperation should be sought and decides upon the extent of the desired cooperation. The Executive Committee also takes the first steps in approaching an allied association. Once the leadership of the EANM and the relevant association have decided on the extent and framework of the cooperation (sometimes leading to the signature of a “Memorandum of Understanding”), the Executive Committee can assign to relevant Committees the role of continuing the cooperation on a daily basis.

The respective Committee needs to designate areas of cooperation in the TG/C Matrixes and at regular intervals needs to report to the Executive Committee about advances in the cooperation.

Scientific Guidelines

EANM Guidelines are state of the art standards written by the most knowledgeable experts in the topic in question. They are published as fully citable scientific papers in the EANM journal, European Journal of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (EJNMMI), and are downloadable for everyone from the EANM website. EANM guidelines have high recognition and esteem in the nuclear medicine community and are well utilised as a daily reference.

Ideas for guidelines can be suggested by National Societies, by groups of individuals, by Taskgroups or Committees, or by cooperating associations. The Executive Committee examines the suggested topics and assigns each guideline to a specific Taskgroup or Committee. The Taskgroup or Committee assembles a group of authors qualified in the subject and asks the Executive Committee to approve the team set up for guideline writing.

The development of guidelines for medical purposes calls for competence of the authors, but it is also necessary to strictly avoid any commercial dependence which could influence the quality of the guidelines or could render conclusions from the Guidelines contestable. Therefore, before writing EANM Guidelines the potential authors need to disclose any affiliations that could influence the outcome, by filling in the form “EANM GUIDELINES - Disclosure of financial or other connections, i.e. conflicts of interest” (attachment 1). The Executive Committee analyses the forms and approves the guideline authors. The authors and their disclosure forms are publicly available on the EANM website under the header Publications/Guidelines.
In the case of **procedural guidelines**, these can be written internally by EANM TG/Cs, without cooperation with other relevant societies. Should the authors of the procedural guidelines feel that an expert from industry is necessary in order to cover a technical aspect of the guideline, then the Executive Committee needs to be asked for approval of this person.

In the case of **clinical guidelines**, these must be interdisciplinary, i.e. written in cooperation with relevant clinical associations/groups. Before commencing to write with other specialists, the relevant association must be asked what standards for “conflicts of interest” they have. If they have their own standards, these should be compared with those of EANM to ascertain whether they are compatible. If the cooperating group does not have standards, then their authors should be urged to use the form “EANM GUIDELINES - Disclosure of financial or other connections, i.e. conflicts of interest”. In the case of clinical guidelines no experts from industry or with any other commercial background may be involved.

If the clinical guideline contains an important procedural (technical) part, and should the authors feel that an expert from industry is necessary in order to cover a technical aspect of the guideline, then the Executive Committee needs to be asked for approval of this person.

Clinical guidelines written by two or more cooperating associations should be simultaneously published in each association’s journal. Before writing of guidelines is commenced, the question of how simultaneous publication will work should be carefully researched and agreed upon; this agreement should be put in writing.

**The EANM may ask industrial companies to give an unrestricted grant to facilitate work** on the guidelines. In such a case, there must be a written agreement between the EANM and the industrial company showing that the money will have no influence on the result (no attribution to a specific person), but will be used to cover administrative costs like meetings, secretarial work and language editing.

The EANM gives copyright for guidelines only to National Societies who want to translate them and use them to formulate their own guidelines.

**The EANM Website**

The EANM website has become the information central for the association, where all relevant information is posted.

Powerpoint presentations (e.g. of Continuing Medical Education) published on the web are always encrypted, so that information cannot be taken out. The authors of these presentations are personally liable for any copyright issues arising from the publication of photo material, graphs and the like.

There is a large public area, but also a restricted area for EANM members only. The EANM website is free of company advertising.

**Joint Congresses with Related Associations**

The EANM already cooperates in holding joint meetings with two associations:
- The congress MIRO with ESTRO
- The ICNC congress series with ESC and ASNC

In the case of joint congresses, the EANM Executive Committee must approve these and a formal agreement must be signed, specifying scientific content, equality in composition of the scientific committee, management of the congress, budget etc.
Research

In 2007 EANM founded EANM Research Ltd. (EARL) with the goal of fostering multicentre research. A first study, “European Database of $^{[123]}$I$\text{FP-CIT}$ (DaTSCAN) SPECT scans of healthy controls (ENC-DAT)”, will be completed by the end of 2009. Ideas for research projects can be brought to the EANM Executive Committee by nuclear medicine specialists, or industrial companies can ask to use the network of centres of excellence for their research.

In the case of contract research, a written agreement between the industrial company and the EANM has to be signed. The research protocol, the methodology and the results must be evaluated by the EANM Committee specialising in the relevant research field and approved by the EANM Executive Committee.

The EANM Annual Congress

The EANM Annual Congress is the institutional congress of the association and needs to yield an adequate profit to the association in order to support the other activities of the association (education, public affairs, guidelines etc.)

The venue for the congress is selected on the basis of formal proposals. The venue requirements are described on the website, in the section Annual Congresses/Venue Requirements.

The EANM is aware of the negative carbon footprint caused by congresses. In acknowledging its environmental responsibility, the EANM tries to act as closely as possible in accordance with the "green meeting" principles as set out by the Joint Meetings Industry Council (www.themeetingsindustry.org) and the Green Meetings Industry Council (www.greenmeetings.info).

The “EANM Congress Guidelines” describe the role distribution between the Executive Committee, the Congress President and the paid congress management. The budget and scientific content of the annual congress are controlled by the Executive Committee.

When entering an abstract for the congress, authors have to confirm the following (in the abstract handling system):

- I affirm that all research summarised by my abstract in which human subjects were used conformed to the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki of the World Medical Association (Clinical Research 1966; 14:103) and met all the requirements governing informed consent of the country in which the research was performed.
- I affirm that all research summarised by my abstract in which animal subjects were used conformed with the 1991 revision of “Guiding principles in the Care and Use of Animals” (American Physiological Association, Bethesda, MD 20814, 3991).
- I affirm that the abstract submitted has not been previously published as an article on or before (date before the annual congress)

And finally, when an abstract has been reviewed and accepted for the congress, the “notification of acceptance” states:

"UEMS/EACCME Declaration of Disclosure: please note that you also have to disclose any potential conflict of interest or support that might cause a bias in your presentation. If your presentation creates a "conflict of interest", please contact the EANM secretariat. Otherwise your confirmation of acceptance is also taken as the required UEMS/EACCME Declaration on Disclosure and no further action from your side is necessary".

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Furthermore, at each oral presentation the second slide (following title, affiliation of presenter) needs to be a disclosure slide, saying “I herewith disclose that I have no....” The same disclosure statement needs to be written on each poster.

Relations with Industry

As already stated above, industry representatives are welcomed onto the Advisory Council, and the EANM is very keen to foster a good, transparent relationship with industry.

The EANM congress could not be held without industrial participation. Therefore, it is the intention of the EANM Executive Committee to create an open partnership and a win-win situation for the association and industry alike.

Concerning industry regulations for congresses, the EANM association and congress management is cognisant of the EFPIA (European Federation Pharmaceutical Industry Associations), EUCOMED (Technical Industry) and IPCAA (International Pharmaceutical Congress Advisory Association) codes. Close contact with industry is sought in order to structure the scientific and social programme in accordance with these codes. It goes without saying that an industry meeting is scheduled at every annual congress, where the industry partners can freely express their concerns to the EANM management.

The EANM Journal

The European Journal of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (EJNMMI) is the official journal of the EANM. The association has a long-term agreement with Springer Publishing for the production of the journal and has built a trusting relationship with the publishing house. It is Springer who decides upon the lines of commerce, i.e. which ads can be placed and at what cost.

It is at the discretion of Springer to choose a top-level scientist and well-organised person in the field of nuclear medicine to become Editor-in-Chief of the journal. The EANM Executive Committee is informed of this nomination.

The editorial concept of the EJNMMI is developed by the Editor-in-Chief in cooperation with the Editorial Board. The EANM may place content into the column “Society News” – publishing educational activities of the EANM or National Societies. The “Society News” does not feature any information on new products etc. from industry.

Public Affairs

As a representative European umbrella association, EANM is aware of the ever-growing importance of European Union decision-making in Brussels and the other locations of EU institutions. EANM therefore recognises the need for direct representation to the relevant EU bodies.

Since EANM is bound to use its resources in the most cost-efficient way, it decided to assign Brussels-based public affairs support to a specialised public affairs consultancy, the European Affairs Consulting Group (EACON, www.eacongroup.com). EACON was chosen based on its professional credentials and is entrusted with a broad range of public affairs duties, such as monitoring and analysis of EU legislation, support in direct representation of EANM interests, project support etc.

In carrying out its tasks, EANM and EACON fully respect established public affairs standards regarding openness, transparency and ethical behaviour. EACON is bound by the codes of conduct of the relevant sector bodies [Society of European Affairs Professionals (SEAP) and European Public Affairs Consultancies’ Association (EPACA)] of which it is a longstanding member.
Association Management

The EANM has chosen the option of “Association Management Company” for the day-to-day administration of the association. A tender for association management was publicised in 1999 in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and Herald Tribune, and the Executive Committee selected vereint Ltd. in Vienna.

vereint Ltd. were chosen due to their CEOs’ knowledge in Association Management (Andrea Bauer) and Congress Management (Andreas Felser). Details on their legal status etc. can be seen on the website www.vereint.com

vereint Ltd. stands out among Association Management companies and PCOs by virtue of their published dedication to the flat-fee principle (no mark-ups, no commissions), which guarantees transparency to the association. All third-party suppliers used by vereint (graphics, registration/housing/social programme, printing, legal advisor, tax advisor etc.) also abide to the principle of transparency.