# **SOCIETY OF GYNAECOLOGY AND OBSTETRICS OF NIGERIA (SOGON)**



**Conflict of Interest Policy**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to protect the interests of SOGON by (a) preventing the personal interest of the Board, Employees, and Independent Contractors from interfering with their duties to the organization and (b) avoiding any unethical financial, professional, or political gain on the part of such individuals.

This policy will outline the rules regarding conflict of interest and the responsibilities of SOGON and its employees in resolving any such discrepancies.

This policy intends to supplement, not replace, any applicable federal, state, or local laws regarding conflicts of interest.

**Persons Concerned**

This statement applies to the Board of Trustees Members, Executive Council Officers, and all Employees who can influence the governance and actions of SOGON. This includes anyone who makes financial decisions, might be referred to as “management personnel,” or has proprietary information regarding SOGON.

**Policy Elements**

The relationship of SOGON with its staff should be based on mutual trust. As SOGON is committed to preserving the interests of people under its employment, it expects them to act only towards its fundamental interests. Conflict of interest may occur whenever a staff’s interest in a particular subject may lead them to actions, activities or relationships that undermine SOGON and may place it at a disadvantage.

**What is a Staff Conflict of Interest?**

This situation may take many different forms that include, but are not limited to, conflict of interest examples:

* Staff’s ability to use their position with SOGON to their personal advantage
* Staff using connections obtained through SOGON for their own private purposes
* Staff acting in ways that may compromise SOGON’s legality (e.g. taking bribes or bribing representatives of legal authorities)

The possibility that a conflict of interest may occur can be addressed and resolved before any actual damage is done. Therefore, when a member of staff understands or suspects that a conflict of interest exists, they should bring this matter to the attention of the Executive Council so corrective actions may be taken. Supervisors must also keep an eye on potential conflicts of interest of their subordinates. The responsibility of resolving a conflict of interest starts with the immediate supervisor and may reach the Executive Council.

All conflicts of interest will be resolved as fairly as possible. The Executive Council has the responsibility of the final decision when a solution cannot be found. In general, members and staff are advised to refrain from letting personal and/or financial interests and external activities come into opposition with SOGON’s fundamental interests.

**Procedures**

1. **Duty to Disclose** – Each Member, Trustee, Executive Council Officer, Employee, and any other Interested Person is under an obligation to disclose the existence or potential existence of a Conflict of Interest as it arises.
2. **Investigating Conflicts** – When a potential Conflict of Interest is disclosed, the Executive Council will then provide the individual with an opportunity to disclose all material facts. The Executive Council will collect all pertinent information and question the involved parties. If it turns out that a conflict does not exist, the inquiry will be documented but no further action will be taken.
3. **Addressing a Conflict of Interest** – If the Executive Council determines that a conflict of interest exists, they will take the appropriate actions to address the conflict. This may include (but not be limited to): (a) prohibiting any Interested Parties from voting on any matter related to said Conflict of Interest or (b) terminating employment with SOGON.

Affected parties both within and outside of SOGON, including the Board of Trustees, employees, and independent contractors, will be notified. If the Conflict of Interest in question involves an Executive Council member, that individual will be excused from deliberations.

1. **Disciplinary Action** – All conflicts of interest will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The Executive Council has full discretion to decide what disciplinary action is appropriate and necessary for disclosed conflicts of interest. If the Executive Council reasonably believes a member or staff member failed to disclose an existing or possible Conflict of Interest, it shall inform the individual of the rationale for such belief and grant the individual an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose the Conflict of Interest. After hearing the individual’s response and investigating further as warranted by the circumstances, the Executive Council may take appropriate disciplinary action, including removal from the position at the organization.
2. **Notice of Annual Statements** – Member, Trustee, Executive Council Officer, Employee, and any other Interested Person must sign a Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Statement upon said individual’s term of office, employment, or other relationship with SOGON and must do so annually. Failure to sign does not nullify the policy.

### **Review and Approval**

* SOGON can modify, amend, replace, revise and/or add any of the provisions of this Policy in such a manner and to such an extent as may be deemed fit subject to the approval of the Executive Council and Board of Trustees.
* The Policy is approved by the Board of Trustees of SOGON on Wednesday 19th July 2023

Signature:



**Dr Kehinde Okunade**

**Secretary, SOGON Lagos Sector**

**Annual Declaration**

By signing, the individual named below understands what constitutes a Conflict of Interest and understands the procedure for addressing them with SOGON, including their duty to disclose any known or potential conflicts of interest.

The signee agrees to abide by the procedures set forth by this policy for the next year and the duration of their relationship with SOGON.

**Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_/\_\_/20\_\_**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**