

# COMMERCIAL SUPPORT

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When we talk  
“Commercial Support” in CME  
we automatically think  
FINANCIAL support.



However, there are various types of  
FINANCIAL support.

# LET'S BREAK DOWN THOSE TYPES .....

- Revenue from Commercial Support
- Revenue from Non-Commercial Support
- In-Kind Support
- Revenue from Medical Education Companies (MECs)
- Revenue from Exhibits, Advertising and/or Promotional Opportunities

# How is Commercial Support Defined?

Commercial Support for an activity is financial, or in-kind contributions given by a commercial interest, which is used to pay all or part of the costs of an activity.

The roles and requirements when commercial support is received are outlined in the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support.

# Definition of a Commercial Interest

A Commercial Interest is any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients. The ACCME does not consider providers of clinical service directly to patients to be commercial interests.

Within the context of this definition and limitation, the ACCME considers the following types of organizations to be eligible for accreditation and/or free to be in control of content of CME.

- 501-C Non-Profit Organizations
- Government organizations
- Non-health care related companies
- Liability insurance providers
- Health insurance providers
- Group medical practices
- For-profit hospitals
- For-profit rehabilitation centers
- For-profit nursing homes
- Blood banks
- Diagnostic laboratories

# ACCME Standards for Commercial Support

SCS 3.1: The provider must make all decisions regarding the disposition and disbursement of commercial support.

SCS 3.2: A provider cannot be required by a commercial interest to accept advice or services concerning teachers, authors, or participants or other education matters, including content, from a commercial interest as conditions of contributing funds or services.

# ACCME Standards for Commercial Support

SCS 3.3: All commercial support associated with a CME activity must be given with the full knowledge and approval of the provider.

SCS 3.4: The terms, conditions and purposes of the commercial support must be documented in a written agreement between the commercial supporter that includes the provider and its educational partner(s). The agreement must include the provider, even if the support is given directly to the provider's educational partner or a joint provider.

# ACCME Standards for Commercial Support

SCS 3.5: The written agreement must specify the commercial interest that is the source of commercial support.

SCS 3.6: Both the commercial supporter and the provider must sign the written agreement between the commercial supporter and the provider.



# What Kind of Documentation of Commercial Support is Expected?

ACCME expects to be able to review income and expense statements for all CME activities. These statements must reflect:

Significant sources of income: Including income from commercial support, advertising and exhibit fees, tuition and registration fees, internal budget allocations and any other source that represents greater than 20% of total income.

Significant expenses: Including staff salaries, meeting costs, honoraria, faculty, travel expenses and any other item that represents greater than 20% of total expense.

SCS 3.13: The provider must be able to produce accurate documentation detailing the receipt and expenditure of the commercial support.

# SAMPLE ACTIVITY BUDGET FORM



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## Indiana State Medical Association (ISMA)

### CME JOINT PROVIDER ACTIVITY BUDGET AND DOCUMENTATION OF COMMERCIAL SUPPORT/GRANTS TEMPLATE

The Joint Provider will, at the conclusion of the activity, fill out and submit an Activity Budget, detailing all revenue and expenses associated with the activity, including all commercial support and grants. This information is kept on file by the ISMA. While a template is included below, you may choose to use your own.

Title of CME Activity		
Activity Date	Activity Location	

Income Category	Budget	Actual	Expense Category	Budget	Actual
Registration Fees			Marketing		
Meal Charge			Save-the-date cards		
			Brochure		
			Advertisements		
Subtotal			Mailing Labels		
Commercial Support (List Sources)			Postage		
			Other (Specify)		
			Other (Specify)		
			Subtotal—Marketing		
			Meeting Space and Logistics		
Subtotal—Commercial Support			Audiovisuals		
Exhibitors (List Sources)			Audience response system		
			Meeting room rental		
			Hotel Lodging (faculty/staff only)		
			Meals		
			Syllabus and other handouts		
			Supplies		
			Other (Specify)		
			Subtotal—Meeting Space/Logistics		
			Honoraria and Travel Expenses (list faculty)		
Subtotal—Exhibitors					
In-kind Contributions					
Subtotal—In-kind Contributions			Subtotal—Honoraria/Travel Expenses		
Other (Specify—e.g., government)			Other Expenses		
			Administrative fee (Joint Provider Fee)		
			Operational expenses		
			Other certification fee		
Subtotal—Other			Subtotal—Other Expense		
TOTAL INCOME			TOTAL EXPENSES		
NET GAIN OR (LOSS)					



# Can an Accredited Provider be added as a party to a written agreement for commercial support after the original agreement was executed?

**Yes.** An accredited provider can fulfill the expectations of SCS 3.4 – 3.6 by adopting a previously executed agreement between an accredited provider and a commercial supporter, and indicating in writing their acceptance of the terms and conditions specified and the amount of commercial support they will receive.

ACCME FAQ

# Can a provider include terms about both commercial support and promotional fees in the same written agreement?

**No.** In this scenario the commercial interest is giving commercial support and buying promotional and sales opportunities. The commercial interest should buy advertising and promotion opportunities with resources designated for that purpose.

If an agreement for advertising or promotion is struck between the two parties, it must be outside the written agreement for commercial support described in SCS3.

ACCME FAQ

# Further Explained .....

Any event or product that contains advertising or promotional opportunities must not be part of the educational CME activity and must not be paid for by commercial support. Normally these are assigned to the “Exhibit Hall,” advertising pages or screens, or promotional receptions or meals, all of which are clearly identified as such to the learner.

ACCME FAQ

# ACCME Standards for Commercial Support

SCS 4.2: Product-promotion material or product-specific advertisement of any type is prohibited in or during CME activities. The juxtaposition of editorial and advertising material on the same products or subjects must be avoided. Live (staffed exhibits, presentations) or enduring (printed or electronic advertisements) promotional activities must be kept separate from CME.

# Non-Commercial Support

Letters of Agreement are not required for non-profit organizations, government agencies, etc. providing financial support toward a CME activity.

However, this could be considered a best-practice so that the terms, conditions and purpose(s) of the support are still outlined and there is no question by either entity.

# In-Kind Support

In-kind Support is any non-monetary commercial support received for an activity.

- Durable equipment
- Facilities/space
- Disposable supplies
- Animal parts or tissue
- Human parts or tissue
- Other

You *should not* estimate the dollar value of in-kind support. The aforementioned are the options listed in PARS from which to choose/describe the nature of in-kind support.



# Revenue from MEC (Medical Education Companies)

If you decide to work with a Medical Education Company who is offering you a stipend to cover local meeting costs for providing the venue, but who is delivering their own speaker and CME credit (granted through a joint providership with another accredited organization, and supported by an educational grant), you would not report this stipend as revenue.

This program would be considered the MEC's event and they would thus report data on it within PARS.

You would not even consider this event part of your program and would not report it within your Self Study or performance-in-practice files.

# Revenue from Exhibits, Advertising and/or Promotional Opportunities

Providers are asked to report this revenue in PARS, as part of their annual year-end reporting requirements.

Revenue from Registration Fees should also to be tracked/reported.

## 2018 Program Summary ?

The [Program Summary](#) summarizes income for the 2018 Reporting Year. Required fields may be filled with a zero ("0") if they do not apply to your organization.

### 1. Total amount of monetary commercial support received in 2018

Total amount of monetary commercial support received (aggregated from information provided about your individual activities)..... USD 1,570.00

### 2. Total advertising & exhibit income received in 2018

Advertising and exhibit income received in support of your program (Required. If none received, type "0.00") USD

### 3. Total registration fees received in 2018

Registration fees received from activity participants. (Required. If none received, type "0.00") USD

### 4. Total government monetary grants received in 2018

Monetary grants received from federal, state or local governmental agencies in support of your Program. (Required. If none received, type "0.00") USD

### 5. Total private monetary donations received in 2018

Monetary donations received from private sector, including foundations, in support of your Program. Commercial Support is not considered to be a Private Monetary Donation. (Required. If none received, type "0.00") USD

# Acknowledging Commercial or Financial Support

SCS 6.3: The source of all support from commercial interests must be disclosed to learners. When commercial support is “in-kind,” the nature of the support must be disclosed to learners.

SCS 6.4: Disclosure must never include the use of a corporate logo, trade name or a product-group message of an ACCME-defined commercial interest.

SCS 6.5: A provider must disclose the above information to learners prior to the beginning of the educational activity.

# Guidelines Around Acknowledging Commercial Exhibitors and Management of Associated Commercial Promotion

Promotion and advertising should be completely separate from a CME activity and it should be clear to the learners.

When determining the boundaries for promotion, you want to remember the spirit behind the Standards - promotion and advertising should never occur in [educational materials](#), CME content (used in the transfer of education), and/or in the CME space.

# Standard 4.2

For print:

Advertisements and promotional materials will not be interleaved within the pages of the CME content. Advertisements and promotional materials may face the first or last pages of printed CME content as long as these materials are not related to the CME content they face and are not paid for by the commercial supporters of the CME activity.

# Standard 4.2

For computer based:

Advertisements and promotional materials will not be visible on the screen at the same time as the CME content and not interleaved between computer “windows” or screens of the CME content.

# Standard 4.2

For live, face-to-face CME:

Advertisements and promotional materials cannot be displayed or distributed in the educational space immediately before, during, or after a CME activity. Providers cannot allow representatives of Commercial interest to engage in sales or promotional activities while in the space or place of the CME activity.



# Breaks, Lunches and Handout Items

If a provider controls (e.g. breaks, lunches, meals) and/or hands out items (e.g. tote bags, lanyards, pens), for example, at the registration desk to give to learners, then these meals/items would be considered part of the activity and the funds received for them would be considered commercial support and Standard 3 would apply.

# Breaks, Lunches and Handout Items

These items may not include corporate logos acknowledging them as commercial support anywhere commercial support is being acknowledged. It is acceptable to acknowledge the commercial support with the supporting companies' names, and for the supporter to be associated with supporting a specific aspect of the activity.

There are no limits within ACCME requirements as to where you acknowledge support using the company name.

# Breaks, Lunches and Handout Items

In regards to placing flyers in a registration bag, there are no ACCME requirements that prohibit what can go into an attendee's bag. The restrictions are with educational materials and educational space, per Standard 4.

The ACCME requirements do not address what learners bring into the CME space. However, your organization is not prohibited from having requirements that go beyond those of the ACCME.

Questions?????

THAT'S A  
WRAP