

8.6 Guidelines for Business Support Relationships

8.6.1 Introduction

NAMI enters into relationships with corporations, other businesses and professional associations to provide meaningful mission-related benefits to its members, mental health professionals and the general public. Benefits include health education, information, disease awareness, advocacy and resources.

NAMI seeks and secures such direct and in-kind financial support in order to fund programs and services. Some of these funders are pharmaceutical, managed behavioral healthcare, other health related businesses or associations that make products or offer services used by people with mental illness or the professionals who serve them. NAMI believes it is not only ethically sound but also equitable to engage such support of NAMI's programs designed to benefit people with mental illness, so long as such relationships do not compromise or otherwise inappropriately influence the policies and operations of NAMI.

NAMI is committed to avoiding conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest in all of its relationships, including those with any corporate, other business or professional association funders. Therefore, NAMI's Board of Directors has determined that accepting such support, as well as NAMI's relationship to these donors, shall be guided by the principles provided under Sections 8.6.2 through 8.6.5 of these Policies and Procedures.

8.6.2 Definition of Acceptable Business Support Relationships

The following terms help to define the nature of corporate, other business, or professional association relationships and acceptable forms of such relationships:

8.6.2.1 Sponsorships

A "sponsorship" is a corporate, other business or professional association funder that provides unrestricted educational grants of financial or in-kind support for a specific NAMI activity or program that could include peer support, education, research, awareness, and fundraising. Typically, a sponsorship provides for recognition of the entity providing the support.

8.6.2.2 Strategic Alliance

A "strategic alliance" is an agreed-upon relationship between NAMI and a corporate, other business or professional association sponsor to carry out NAMI's defined goals. Under no circumstance may the funder implicitly or explicitly use such an alliance as an endorsement of their products or services. (An example would be where NAMI provides a health education message or service that is delivered or supported by a company or

association where the purpose is to improve health information, awareness and outcomes related to mental illness.)

8.6.2.3 Cause Marketing

“Cause marketing” is where a corporate, other business or professional association sponsor supports NAMI or a particular cause formally supported by NAMI by providing unrestricted financial donations, in-kind assistance or other resources. The sponsor may gain public recognition for such public support of NAMI, but may not tie this support to any commercial return or other financial benefit to the sponsor.

8.6.3 Excluded Activity

NAMI **shall not** engage in the following types of relationships with corporate, other business or professional association funders:

8.6.3.1 Endorsement

NAMI will not endorse, license, certify, or in any way imply support for any sponsor’s product, service or program, including recognizing or certifying the quality or standards of any particular product, service, or program.

8.6.3.2 Product Association

NAMI’s name and logo may not be associated with specific branded products. references to NAMI’s website, phone number or address for the purposes of referral to NAMI may be permitted with NAMI’s written approval.

8.6.4. Guiding Principles for Corporate Relationships

1. NAMI shall at all times maintain an independent position on issues affecting the welfare of people with mental illness. The potential effect of such positions on the commercial interests of any sponsor shall not be a relevant factor in the NAMI’s decision-making process.
2. NAMI will solicit and accept support only for projects and activities that are consistent with its mission.
3. NAMI will accept funds for projects relating to the communication of information only when it has final editorial approval over content and distribution.
4. NAMI will neither endorse nor accept conditions that allow the perception that NAMI endorses any products, devices, treatments or services NAMI may require a disclaimer explicitly stating this policy be included in any publication;
5. NAMI will accept support for projects or programs only with assurances that the privacy of people with mental illness and their families will be protected, including requiring specific, prior written permission in order to waive such privacy.

6. NAMI will accept support for professional meetings and symposia only when the program content and selection of speakers are approved by NAMI or an independent body designated for that purpose by NAMI.
7. NAMI shall, at all times, maintain complete control and sole discretion over all funds received.
8. NAMI will ensure that programs for which it accepts funding do not adversely affect NAMI's nonprofit, tax-exempt status.
9. The use of NAMI's name and logo in any print, electronic or other form not produced by NAMI is not permitted without specific, prior written permission from NAMI.
10. Corporate, other business and professional association sponsors, as well as their agents, vendors and trade associations, are expected to work collaboratively with NAMI's national office on issues directly affecting NAMI state organizations and local affiliates.
11. NAMI retains sole discretion with regard to how the support it receives in the form of educational grants or in-kind gifts from corporate, other business or professional association sponsors will be applied, invested or expended.

8.6.5. Affirmative Disclosure

NAMI will, unless otherwise prohibited by law, disclose the sources of financial support it receives from corporations, other businesses and professional associations as listed in the annual filing of IRS Form 990, which will be posted on the NAMI Web site.