

Conflict of Interest

ABGC defines conflict of interest (COI) as a situation in which a financial, professional, and/or personal affiliation has the potential to compromise an educator's judgment and may potentially bias a person's ability to objectively plan, implement, or review educational content. A conflict of interest may be actual, potential, or perceived. Potential and perceived conflicts of interest should be treated the same as actual conflicts of interest.

Allegations of conflict of interest are taken seriously by the National Society of Genetic Counselors. If you believe a conflict of interest violation has occurred at a Category 1 approved activity, you are encouraged to file a complaint to the National Society of Genetic Counselors Continuing Education COI Complaint Review Subcommittee. Your complaint will be reviewed by Continuing Education COI Complaint Review Subcommittee and you will be informed in writing of the outcome of its review and decision.

Please note: you may also indicate commercial bias on a conference or activity's evaluation forms when completing your post-activity survey, but this does not constitute a formal complaint. Please use this [NSGC Category 1 Activity Conflict of Interest Form](#) to file a complaint.

Complaints must be submitted within 60 days of completing an activity, in-person or online.

Some examples of situations which may warrant a COI complaint:

- A speaker is using branded slides or materials for their presentation.
 - "Branded" meaning their company logo is visible on all slides, not just in the context of a screenshot or content example, and/or they have promotional logos or branded materials prominently placed during their presentation.
- A speaker is giving a "sales pitch" for a new product or offering specific to their company or organization, without giving context or examples of similar products or offerings available elsewhere in the market.
- A speaker directly disparages a competitor's product, service or organization.
- A speaker fails to disclose any relevant COI either verbally or in writing before beginning their presentation.

Some examples of situations which do **not generally warrant a COI complaint:**

- A speaker is discussing new technologies or services available for use in practice, including some that may be offered by private companies or large corporations.
 - As long as the focus of the presentation is on the technology and practice, and the offerings are presented as examples of available technology while also discussing similar offerings from other organizations and without disparaging competitors, this is ok.
- A speaker discloses that they have financial interest in a company or organization discussed in their presentation.
 - As long as it's disclosed at the start of their presentation, having financial interest in a company or organization is not cause for COI complaint (unless they violate another COI rule such as branded materials, etc).
- A speaker utilizes a screenshot, logo, data visualization or reference to their own or another specific company or product during their presentation.
 - As long as this is in the context of the giving examples or discussing a study, etc and is not disparaging to another organization or competitor or being used to promote sales for their company, this is generally ok.

For questions regarding the conflict of interest policy, please contact ceu@nsgc.org.