Educational/Commercial Support Guidelines: Grants

What is educational support?
Educational support can be either commercial (e.g. pharma/device) or non-commercial (e.g. providers of clinical service directly to patients). Educational support can be financial or in-kind contributions given by a commercial or non-commercial interest which is used to pay all or part of the costs of a CE activity. This document provides guidelines on educational support from grants.

Full ACCME Standards for Commercial Support can be found online

Grant Support

The Office of Continuing Professional Development (OCPD), the accredited provider, must be made aware of all potential and confirmed grant support. The provider must make all decisions regarding the disposition and disbursement of commercial support. All commercial support associated with a CE activity must be given with the full knowledge and approval of the provider.

Letter of Agreement (LOA) Requirements-Per the ACCME and University of Minnesota
When there is educational support from a grant, a written Letter of Agreement (LOA) covering the terms, conditions, and purposes of the commercial support is required. A company may give an educational grant for a specified amount of money or can make an in-kind donation, both require a written agreement.

- All LOAs need to be signed by all parties prior to the start of the activity.
- It is acceptable to use either the LOA provided by the grantor or the University of Minnesota LOA. If using an agreement provided by the grantor then the written agreement must be in compliance with the following:
  - All non-University LOAs must be reviewed by the University of Minnesota’s legal team prior to signing. Please note and keep in mind when setting deadlines that this can take up to 2 weeks.
  - The accredited provider (OCPD) must have the ability to ask for changes to the terms of the agreement.
  - If the grantor’s agreement is used, OCPD will need to be listed using its legal name, “Regents of the University of Minnesota through its Office of Continuing Professional Development”
- The LOA must include the accredited provider (OCPD); even if the support is given directly to the partner or joint provider. Each party must obtain an authorized signature. One party may never sign on behalf of another. Educational partners and/or joint providers may not sign the LOA instead of the accredited provider.
- The LOA needs to provide a specific dollar amount or the value of the in-kind contribution along with adequate description and the basis (how the value was determined) for the value. In the scenario of donated equipment, the value of the in-kind contribution cannot be the listing price of the equipment; it must be the fair market value.
- All parties must be provided a copy of the fully executed LOA.

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Educational Support Guidelines
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Use of grant support
A company may not be given a complimentary exhibit table, booth, or any other space to display their products or promote their company as a result of providing an educational grant. Grant support for CE activities must be allocated to cover the expenses associated with the educational activity.

Acknowledgement of Support
To be compliant with the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support, all commercial support (grants and exhibitors) must be acknowledged on-site to learners. An appropriate acknowledgement of support should list the company name and may not include any logos or product-specific advertising. An acknowledgement of support template is available online; use of this template is not required. OCPD must review your acknowledgement of support prior to the activity.

Commercial interests can never be sponsors of a CE activity and use of the word “sponsor” to refer to a commercial interest who provided direct or in-kind donations to an activity is not in compliance with ACCME standards. An appropriate term for any commercial interest, non-commercial interest, individual, foundation, etc. who has given a direct or in-kind donation to an activity is “supporter.”