

Cochrane Partnership Policy

Cochrane welcomes any organization to express an interest in becoming a partner that is interested in advancing our mission, vision and *Strategy to 2020*. This partnership should be mutually beneficial to both sides. Cochrane will base its decision of moving forward the partnership on its partnership framework.

Definition of ‘partnership’

‘A collaborative relationship between two or more parties that have agreed to work together, that is based on trust, equality and mutual understanding, and focuses on the pursuit of common goals that cannot be accomplished by the partners on their own’

Criteria for working with a partner organization

To form a partnership with Cochrane, the partner should:

1. Be willing and able to commit to helping Cochrane advance its mission, vision, and *Strategy to 2020*.
2. Be willing to declare its source of funding should Cochrane request this.
3. Be willing to make the partnership and the report on its activities publicly available.

Please note that any potential partner whose source of funding is included as an organization who Cochrane would not accept funding from in the Commercial Sponsorship policy will be subject to a higher level of scrutiny and before entering into a partnership or even move beyond informal discussions, it would require implicit approval from the CSG. Sources of funding must not either in reality or perception threaten or undermine Cochrane’s autonomy, editorial independence or reputation.

The partner organization and Cochrane will be required to commit to the following:

- To identify a representative from each organization to serve as the key contact points.
- To develop and implement a plan of joint activity.
- To facilitate opportunities for members of each organization to be involved in the partner’s activities.
- To contribute to promotion and advocacy of each organization by linking to each others’ websites.
- To provide financial support for the attendance of meetings related to the partnership.

Exploring a potential Cochrane-wide partnership

- Informal conversation with a designated member of the Central Executive Team, or Cochrane contributor, to assess the likelihood of the two organizations’ potential for synergy. During these conversations, with guidance from the partnership policy, joint needs, benefits and costs for the partners will be reviewed.
- Cochrane's SMT will review the assessment of joint needs, benefits and costs and approve or refuse the further development of the partnership, with an explanation.
- If SMT approves further development of the partnership, both organizations will agree to a workplan with clear roles and responsibilities; this may sometimes take the form of a

Memorandum of Understanding if the relationship is going to be a long-standing and strategic partnership.

- The decision will be communicated to the senior decision-maker of the partner organization.
- If approved, the partnership will be announced publicly on the websites of both organizations.

Role of Cochrane Groups in developing partnerships

Cochrane Groups should develop partnerships appropriate to advancing the aims of the group and in line with the criteria outlined above. They are at liberty to form their own relationships in line with this policy and in their sphere of influence but must not breach existing commitments that Cochrane has entered, e.g. with our publishers. Cochrane Groups will be asked, as part of the monitoring process, to inform Cochrane of all their strategic partnerships. If opportunities arise for wider collaboration, Cochrane Group members should discuss this with the leaders of the relevant groups and if it is an opportunity for Cochrane as a whole, they need to discuss this with the SMT.

Cochrane Groups also play an important role in implementing the organization wide strategic partnerships. For each partnership, the relevant Groups will be approached and will be asked to engage in the partnership development process, as well as the implementation of the joint activities. Depending on the complexity of the partnership and its possible strategic value for Cochrane, a working group, involving members from Cochrane Groups, may be established to give strategic guidance to a partnership.

Evaluation of the partnership

The Group leader responsible, or the SMT, will evaluate, in discussion with the partner, a partnership after the first year and then every three years to determine if the partnership remains valuable to both organizations. If the partnership is determined to be in jeopardy, the partner will be notified. The partner will have three months (or another period as may have been agreed in an MoU) to discuss and negotiate with Cochrane a plan of renewed meaningful activities to revitalize the partnership; otherwise, it will be terminated.

Termination of partnership

Cochrane reserves the right to terminate any partnership for any reason at any time. Some reasons for immediate termination include, but are not limited to:

- Serious violation of the criteria for being a partner
- Misuse or misrepresentation of the quality of the partnership with Cochrane
- Unwillingness to fulfil the responsibilities they agreed to upon acceptance of the partnership
- Serious misconduct by the partner that conflicts with Cochrane's vision, mission and principles and/or brings Cochrane into disrepute.

These will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will be decided by SMT and CSG.