

Section 2
General Procedures

NUMBER 2.1 GENERAL COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Revision Dates: Fall 2025; Fall 2024; Fall 1998

POLICY

Committees are established to undertake activities and projects to serve INFORMS, its members, and the profession of Operations Research and the Management Sciences.

The procedures in this section apply to all INFORMS-level committees, unless they are superseded by a specialized procedure elsewhere in this manual.

PROCEDURES

Members: Chairs of committees require Board approval, while committee members require Executive Committee approval, unless otherwise noted. Most committee terms begin on January 1. The prize committees have terms beginning throughout the year to facilitate their specialized activities.

If specific procedures are required for a particular committee, the relevant Policies and Procedures section shall detail the selection process. The length of the terms of members and chairs typically vary from one to five years of service. For some committees, the chair is normally chosen from among the senior members of the committee. Many committees stagger appointments of committee members for continuity.

A committee member or Chair must be a member of INFORMS at the time of appointment and throughout their service.

Relation to INFORMS Board: Committee chairs will be notified about upcoming Board Meetings by their Board Liaison or the INFORMS Executive Director's office. Each committee normally submits a written report to their Board Liaison, as requested. Typically, written reports are required for the Spring and Fall Board Meetings. The Board Liaison compiles the submissions, completes the report, and submits it to the Executive Director's office, e.g., at least two weeks preceding Board Meetings. These reports are distributed to all Board members.

Committee reports to the Board are of two types: (1) information such as progress on current projects and (2) motions to the Board that require a vote of the Board. Examples of committee activities that require a vote of the Board include:

- Proposals to spend money in excess of the approved budget

- Approval of out-of-the-ordinary requests
- Any out-of-the-ordinary use of the INFORMS name or logo
- New publications
- New prizes
- New major activities
- Joint activities with other societies

Committees may also propose a special type of motion, called a "sense of the board," to obtain approval and guidance from the Board for a concept.

Procedures to make a motion to the INFORMS Board: Motions to the Board from a Committee are handled via the Board Liaison. Motions with significant financial implications shall first go to the Finance Committee for review. Coordination between the Board Liaison and the Treasurer is required to ensure sufficient time for review. Relatedly, if a motion needs to be considered by any additional committee, this should be concluded in time to provide the information to the Board according to the following timeline.

At least four weeks preceding a Board Meeting, the Board Liaison shall inform the Secretary and the Executive Director's office that the committee has an item for the agenda. To better ensure there is time on the agenda for all motions, Board Liaisons are encouraged to request a motion as early as possible.

At least three weeks preceding a Board Meeting, the Board Liaison submits to the Secretary and the Executive Director's office a statement of the proposed motion and one or two paragraphs stating why the motion should be passed.

Voting on Motions within the Committee: Except where committee protocols specify otherwise, all committees may conduct voting on motions by any method, provided that there has been ample opportunity for discussion and debate among committee members on the merits of the item submitted for vote. Such opportunity for discussion and debate will normally be a meeting open to, announced, and scheduled to achieve the maximum participation by the full committee. Once voting has commenced, it may not be interrupted by any motion, including a motion to amend or lay on the table the item submitted for voting.

Relation to the INFORMS Executive Committee: If a committee needs guidance or has a recommendation that needs attention before the next Board Meeting, the Committee Chair or Board Liaison should contact the Secretary or any other appropriate member of the Executive Committee and request the attention of the Executive Committee.

Relation to the Board Liaison: A committee's Board Liaison serves as the committee's voice at Board Meetings. It is important that the chairs keep their Liaison well informed to ensure that the Liaison can accurately and fully represent them at Board Meetings.

Updating the Policies and Procedures Manual: At any time, a committee may submit to the Secretary, an addition or change to their section of this Manual, which will follow the process for review outlined in P&P 1.1 It is an important job for chairs to recommend updates to the Policies and Procedures Manual so that future chairs and INFORMS can benefit from their experience.

New Committees: New standing committees require Board approval. At the next Board Meeting following the planning of the formation of a new committee, the Chair submits a section, to the Secretary, for the *Policies and Procedures Manual,* which requires board approval. The section includes a description of the function or purpose of the committee; the procedure for committee membership; operating procedures; and suggested Board Liaison. For expediency, the initial committee membership, including recommended initial chair, may be proposed at the same time or approved according to general procedures.

Committee Records and Correspondence: The Chair is required to send a list of members and their terms of membership, start and end dates, to their staff liaison or the Executive Director's office.

Departing committee Chairs should send (or provide archival access to) committee files and previous committee correspondence to the new Chair. Contact information of the new chair can be obtained from the INFORMS office. If a new committee Chair has not obtained these files, they should call or write to the preceding chair of this committee or request assistance from the relevant Board Member or Liaison.

Copies of all major committee external correspondence should be sent to the Board Liaison, the Executive Director's office, and the appropriate INFORMS staff member. Major correspondences include those that create a commitment for INFORMS (time, resources, etc.) beyond a single year.

Committee Budget and Expenses: The INFORMS budget is established on a calendar year basis. See the budget P&P for details. When committee-related budget requests are made it should be through the committee's Board Liaison.

Commonly, a new committee Chair inherits a budget. Planned expenses that exceed the committee's budget should be brought to the attention of the committee's Board Liaison and the Executive Director. The ED will determine whether there is clear alignment with the Board's strategic direction and whether it can be absorbed within the current year's budget. The ED may also confer with the President, Treasurer, Executive Committee, and Finance Committee if needed.

If the expense is a significant deviation over the existing budget, cannot be absorbed by other areas, or is not clearly within the direction established by the Board, then the ED and Board Liaison will bring the revisions to the Board for approval.

The typical committee budget is intended to cover routine administrative expenses such as supplies, postage, telephone, and copying. A few committees have other planned routine expenses, such as publication of a newsletter, or planned irregular expenses, such as conducting a membership survey. Membership fees in INFORMS, including subdivision memberships, may not be reimbursed for any volunteer work.

Allowable expenses can be reimbursed by sending a request for reimbursement with supporting documentation to the appropriate staff liaison.

Committee Travel: Committee or committee Chair travel is reimbursed by INFORMS only under special circumstances. Normally such circumstances will be inherent in the committee's charge and the anticipated travel expenses will be included in the committee budget. An example is a site visit to evaluate a vendor in a competitive selection process. To qualify for reimbursement, travel must be approved in advance by the Treasurer. With a few exceptions, INFORMS does not fund travel to its own meetings.

Committee voting: A quorum is defined as at least half of the voting members of the Committee.

Working Groups and Ad Hoc Committees

Working Groups and Ad Hoc Committees are designed to address focused issues that require timely attention and cannot be efficiently managed by standing committees.

Creation of Working Groups:

INFORMS recognizes that temporary committees may be needed to advance its goals.

A *working group* is a body formed to address a short-term need that is not classified as a standing or ad hoc committee. It is formed by an individual Board member to carry out such specific parts of that member's charge. The group's duration must not extend beyond the Board member's remaining term. Working groups do not require formal approval by the Board. Their formation and activities must be included in the Board member's regular reports, submitted in coordination with the staff liaison.

Creation of INFORMS-level Ad Hoc Committees:

An INFORMS-level *ad hoc committee* may be established to addresses a short-term need that is not covered by an existing department or standing committee charge and that spans multiple departments, thus necessitating enterprise-wide focus and Board oversight. Ad hoc committees created by subdivisions are not addressed in this section.

All procedures outlined above for standing committees apply to INFORMS-level ad hoc committees with the following notable exceptions.

1. Any member or members of the Board may propose the formation of an ad hoc committee.
2. Ad hoc committees are advisory and do not have decision-making authority, nor do they bind INFORMS.
3. An ad hoc committee must have a charter that includes, at a minimum, the motivation for creating the committee, the committee charge, the committee membership, any anticipated resources, the committee timeline, and expiration date.
    a. One of the Board members requesting the ad hoc committee is the board liaison with all relevant duties.
    b. The ad hoc committee charter must be approved by the Executive Committee to ensure alignment with the strategic plan and availability of resources.
    c. If additional staff resources are requested, the Executive Director must be consulted prior to the charter being submitted to the Executive Committee and shall make determination of these resources. Any unbudgeted expense must follow procedures stated in Policy and Procedure Number 5.10.
    d. The final approved charter shall be documented in the Executive Committee meeting minutes. Since these minutes are included in the Board agenda, this ensures the Board has full visibility of the charter.
    e. For expediency, the chair of the ad hoc committee is approved by the INFORMS Executive Committee, and the members are approved by the board liaison overseeing the committee. The names of the ad hoc committee members shall be shared with the Board in periodic updates.
    f. The committee expiration date shall be fixed dependent on the scope of work and should not extend past the current term of the board liaison.
    g. Charters may be extended, with either a continuing or a new board member serving as board liaison, if warranted.
4. Periodic updates shall be provided to the Board.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 1.1 Policies and Procedures
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 3.4, Availability and Confidentiality of INFORMS Documents and Minutes
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 4.7, Board Liaison
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 5.10, Expenditure Approval

NUMBER 2.2 ETHICAL GUIDELINES

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Fall 2016

POLICY

Ethical conduct is an important consideration for experts in all fields. The following Guidelines were developed to further INFORMS purpose of promoting high professional standards and integrity (Constitution, Article 1.2.v). The Guidelines are available to all members to encourage pursuit of the highest level of ethical practice.

Members of the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS) advance the science and practice of quantitative decision-making via operations research and analytics. We recognize a responsibility to uphold high ethical standards on behalf of society, our organizations, and the profession. The following ethical guidelines are intended to be aspirational: something INFORMS members should attempt to follow throughout their career.

1. Society

Whereas operations research and analytics can have a deep impact on society, with applications ranging from medical decisions to national defense, business strategy, public policy, and many other contexts, we aspire to be:

- Accountable for our professional actions and the impact of our work.
- Forthcoming about our assumptions, interests, sponsors, motivations, limitations, and potential conflicts of interest.
- Honest in reporting our results, even when they fail to yield the desired outcome.
- Objective in our assessments of facts, irrespective of our opinions or beliefs.
- Respectful of the viewpoints and the values of others.
- Responsible for undertaking research and projects that provide positive benefits by advancing our scientific understanding, contributing to organizational improvements, and supporting social good.

2. Our Organizations

Whereas our work influences the success and standing of our organizations (universities, businesses, government, and nonprofit agencies) as well as our constituencies (students, clients, customers, and suppliers), we aspire to be:

- Accurate in our assertions, reports, and presentations.
- Alert to possible unintended or negative consequences that our results and recommendations may have on others.
- Informed of advances and developments in the fields relevant to our work.
- Questioning of whether there are more effective and efficient ways to reach a goal.
- Realistic in our claims of achievable results, and in acknowledging when the best course of action may be to terminate a project.

- Rigorous by adhering to proper professional practices in the development and reporting of our work.

3. The Profession

Whereas we are part of the profession of operations research and analytics and have an obligation to help advance the profession and to uphold high standards on behalf of our colleagues and future generations, we aspire to be:

- Cooperative by sharing best practices, information, and ideas with colleagues, young professionals, and students.
- Impartial in our praise or criticism of others and their accomplishments, setting aside personal interests.
- Inclusive of all colleagues and rejecting discrimination and harassment in any form.
- Tolerant of well-conducted research and well-reasoned results, which may differ from our own findings or opinions.
- Truthful in providing attribution when our work draws from the ideas of others.
- Vigilant by speaking out against actions that are damaging to the profession.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.7, Annual Acknowledgment of Select Policies

NUMBER 2.3 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Summer 2020

POLICY

A "conflict of interest" or COI is defined as any situation in which a person who influences decision making for INFORMS has an incentive to recommend or make decisions that are not in the best interest of INFORMS or the community served by INFORMS. The existence of an incentive is sufficient to establish a conflict of interest, even if no undue influence has been exerted.

Conflicts of interest should be avoided, if possible, for example, by the person with a conflict of interest being replaced by another person without a conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest cannot be avoided, it must at least be disclosed by the person having the conflict of interest to persons with the authority (PWA) to either eliminate the conflict or to ensure that it is made known widely to the affected community. For example, staff members including the executive director and board members including the president should disclose conflicts of interest to the Executive Committee. Members of other committees, such as award committees, award revocation panel/committee, or nomination committees should disclose conflicts of interest to their fellow committee members, as well as persons who appointed the committee or who oversee the committee, if any. The management plan for identified conflicts will be the responsibility of the PWAs, who may also consult with the PWAs for their position or appropriate INFORMS staff as needed. Any actions taken should be reported to the Board Liaison or relevant INFORMS staff.

Each year, each INFORMS staff member, board member, Editor-in-chief, committee chair, award committee member, or award revocation panel/committee member must sign a Conflict of Interest agreement or acknowledgment before commencement of their duties.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.7, Annual Acknowledgment of Select Policies

NUMBER 2.4 CODE OF CONDUCT

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Fall 2021

POLICY

This Code of Conduct Policy of The Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS) requires that all participants conduct themselves during INFORMS activities in a professional manner that is welcoming to all participants and free from any form of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation. Participants agree to treat each other with respect and consideration to create and ensure a collegial, inclusive, and professional environment.

All participants in INFORMS activities agree to comply with this Code of Conduct Policy. "All participants" includes, but is not limited to, members, officers, directors, attendees, guests, presenters, speakers, contractors, exhibitors, sponsors, authors, reviewers, editors, volunteers, entrants, and certification holders.[1]

This Code of Conduct Policy applies to all INFORMS activities[2], which include but are not limited to:

- Any meeting or call, whether in-person or online, whose purpose is to conduct or discuss matters related to INFORMS business, events, publications, awards, or initiatives.
- Any element of an INFORMS conference or workshop, such as plenary sessions, technical sessions, tutorials, tours, receptions, business meetings, networking sessions.
- Any component of the publication review process associated with an INFORMS journal, such as the editorial and review tasks for handling a submission and the responses from the authors.
- Any communications that are hosted by INFORMS or by an INFORMS subdivision.
- Any INFORMS-sponsored professional development activity or certification activity.
- Any INFORMS-sponsored social activity.
- Any non-INFORMS activity, where the person is acting as a representative of INFORMS.

Participants are expected to avoid any inappropriate actions or statements based on individual characteristics such as age, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, physical appearance, body size, marital status, nationality, political affiliation, ability status, educational background, or any other characteristic protected by law. Harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment, or disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, any behavior or language that is inappropriate, aggressive, or intimidating; unwelcome jokes or comments; unwanted touching or attention; stalking; harassing photography or recording; offensive or sexually oriented images; and aggressive physical behavior. Promoting or encouraging any of the above behavior is likewise prohibited.

INFORMS reserves the right to take any necessary and appropriate action against a participant who

1 Staff is not covered by this Code of Conduct but must abide by substantially similar policies.

[2] This policy is for INFORMS-related activities. Violations that may have occurred during a non-INFORMS-related setting should follow the rules of that setting. For example, misconduct between a professor and a student occurring at the university should follow the university's code of conduct even if both individuals are INFORMS members.

engages in any form of harassment or inappropriate behavior in violation of this Policy, including removal of the participant. If there is a question of immediate danger, action may be taken to ensure the immediate safety of all participants regardless of any procedure that may follow.

How to Report: If a participant experiences or observes inappropriate comments or actions that may be in violation of the Code of Conduct Policy, the participant should report their experience or observation to the INFORMS Hotline — by phone: 855-650-0005; online: https://www.lighthouse-services.com/informs; by e-mail: reports@lighthouse-services.com; or by fax: 215-689-3885 (must include "INFORMS" with the report). Reporting may be made anonymously. However, if an individual chooses to submit an anonymous report, this may inhibit INFORMS' ability to investigate the charge without further information. (Lighthouse Services is an independent provider hired by INFORMS to provide this service.)

Retaliation for good faith reports of inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated and are violations of the Code of Conduct Policy. In addition, a participant who is shown to have made a knowingly false or frivolous accusation in a report filed under this Policy will be considered to have violated this Code of Conduct Policy and may be subject to the disciplinary actions outlined within it.

Post-complaint Process: All reports will be investigated and will be handled confidentially to the extent possible. The current President and the Executive Director[3], in consultation with legal counsel (when warranted), will investigate the charge to determine whether there has been a violation of the Code of Conduct Policy. Depending upon the circumstances, they may engage a third-party to further investigate the facts and circumstances reported and/or appoint an ad hoc committee to conduct the investigation and recommend disciplinary action, if warranted.

When a report is filed, the individual accused of the violation will be notified of the complaint[4] and informed of the investigation process, within thirty (30) days of the initial complaint being filed. This individual will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint and provide input to the investigation, within thirty (30) days of receiving the complaint.

Post-investigation Process: If an investigation substantiates that a violation of this Policy has occurred, the current President and the Executive Director will determine disciplinary action[5]. These actions may include, but are not limited to, a written or verbal warning, ejection from a meeting without refund, ban from publishing articles and/or online posting, ban on volunteer activities or holding officer or leadership role, ban on all activities, revocation of certification or awards, and/or recommendation to the Board of Directors of revocation of membership, or any other action deemed appropriate by INFORMS. The action may be time specific, or lifetime based on the severity of the violation.

---

[3] If the report involves the current President, or if the President has a conflict of interest, the Executive Committee, absent the President, will replace the President in this process. If the report involves the Executive Director, or if the Executive Director has a conflict of interest, the Executive Committee will replace the Executive Director in this process.

[4] The name of the complainant may be shared.

[5] If a secondary policy exists for a certain area (for example, Fellows Revocation Policy, INFORMS Guidelines for Copyright & Plagiarism), a recommendation will be made to that entity.

If the recommended consequence is revocation of membership, the Board of Directors will be required to approve the revocation per INFORMS Bylaw 1.6.

Those who have been accused will be informed of the outcome. Persons deemed to be in violation of the Code of Conduct Policy will receive written documentation of any actions taken. Those who report an incident and/or were involved will be informed of the outcome unless they request otherwise, or their contact information is not available.

Should either party wish to appeal a decision within thirty (30) days after it is made, they may make an appeal to the President[6] of INFORMS who is required to bring the matter to the full Board of Directors for review within an additional sixty (60) days. Grounds for appeal include a claim of procedural error, substantive or significant new evidence, or evidence of bias in the fact-finding and decision process. The Board may uphold, reject, or adjust the findings or ask for further investigation. The determination of the Board of Directors is final and cannot be appealed.

The Executive Director's Office is responsible for record keeping of complaints and actions.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.7, Annual Acknowledgment of Select Policies

[6] The Immediate Past President or President-Elect may be asked to shepherd this appeal process if the President led the initial investigation. Timing of presidential terms will need to be considered. The aim is to ask a President who did not lead the investigation to lead the appeal.

NUMBER 2.5 INFORMS ELIGIBILITY

Revision Dates: Summer 2025; Fall 2024 adopted by Board

PURPOSE

INFORMS is an organization incorporated in the United States and is required to comply with the letter and spirit of applicable governmental policies in the United States. Additionally, INFORMS has a responsibility to its members, volunteers, employees, and other stakeholders to protect its reputation and standing within the global community. As part of this responsibility, this policy establishes eligibility criteria for individuals, companies, and organizations to participate in INFORMS and INFORMS-related activities, including—but not limited to—volunteering, awards, speaking engagements, donations, and other activities.

POLICY

INFORMS is committed to complying with all applicable laws regarding the participation of individuals and entities on sanctioned lists designated by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), the Department of State, the Department of Commerce, and other US federal and state government agencies. In addition, INFORMS reserves the right to evaluate and, if necessary, prohibit participation in INFORMS-related activities based on legal, ethical, and reputational considerations. These criteria ensure that INFORMS complies with all applicable laws, and upholds its commitment to integrity, compliance, and professionalism in all its programs and engagements.

Applicability

This policy applies to all INFORMS activities -including, but not limited to, participation related to the following contexts:

- INFORMS Awards and Recognitions
- Membership
- Certifications
- Conference and Event Speaking Engagements
- Volunteer Participation
- Publications
- Sponsorships and exhibits
- Donations
- Any other activities where an association with INFORMS may be publicly visible

Eligibility Criteria

In general, INFORMS accepts participation, submissions, applications, and nominations from individuals, companies, and organizations unless they meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Non-Compliance with U.S. and International Regulations:
   INFORMS will not accept participation from individuals or entities that are:
   - Listed on the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) List.
   - Listed on the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) Entity List or Denied Persons List.
   - Included in any U.S. Department of Commerce or Department of State lists restricting participation in U.S.-based programs.
   - Subject to any other applicable sanctions, trade restrictions, or regulatory prohibitions.
   - Identified by a U.S. government agency as posing a significant risk, or subject to warnings or advisories related to compliance or reputational considerations.
2. Ethical Violations and Professional Misconduct:
   Participation may be denied to individuals or organizations that are found to have engaged in unethical behavior, including but not limited to:
   - Violations of academic or professional standards.
   - Harassment, discrimination, or misconduct in a professional context.
   - Misrepresentation of qualifications or credentials.
3. Criminal History or Investigations:
   INFORMS may exclude individuals or entities if they have a history of serious criminal activity or are under investigation for crimes that could harm INFORMS' reputation or impact the safety of INFORMS' members. This includes, but is not limited to, violent crimes, fraud, and other offenses deemed incompatible with INFORMS' values and mission.
4. Reputational and Ethical Considerations:
   INFORMS may, at its sole discretion, exclude individuals or entities from participating if their inclusion is deemed to present a reputational risk or is otherwise inconsistent with INFORMS' values and mission.

Decision Authority

Final decisions rest with the INFORMS Executive Committee, along with the Executive Director and the appropriate Vice President responsible for the activity or program, who will weigh, among other factors, the severity and timing of the conduct at issue. Such conduct must be more than an unsupported allegation. The Executive Committee may obtain assistance from outside counsel and the Board of Directors. The Board will be notified of any exclusion decisions, no later than the next scheduled Board of Directors meeting.

The decision to revoke INFORMS membership is stipulated in INFORMS Bylaw 1.6 and described in the INFORMS Code of Conduct Policy. Decisions related to certifications are handled in accordance with rules governing the CAP program as set forth in the CAP program standard operating process documents.

Right to Appeal

If an individual or organization believes they have been excluded in error, they may submit a formal appeal. Appeals will be reviewed by the Board of Directors, who will make the final determination. The INFORMS President will decide whether the Board convenes to address the appeal before the next scheduled meeting or if the discussion is delayed until the next meeting. During the appeal process, the exclusion decision remains in effect.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Constitution & Bylaws
INFORMS Code of Conduct Policy
CAP program standard operating process documents

NUMBER 2.6 CONFIDENTIALITY

Revision Dates: Fall 2024

This Confidentiality Policy is established to bring awareness to the need to safeguard and protect the confidentiality of information and INFORMS. Volunteers, during their service on INFORMS committees or other activities, may have access to confidential information, including but not limited to meeting discussions, documents, financial data, member lists, and other proprietary information. Confidential information may only be used for fulfilling committee duties or duties of elected officers.

If items are marked as "confidential," they are confidential. If items are not marked but a reasonable person might consider them confidential, sensitive, or proprietary, INFORMS volunteers shall treat them as confidential. Among other things, this includes personal financial information, deliberations during awards or other selection processes, author names of anonymized journal papers under review, lists of members including emails and addresses, information pertaining to a non-disclosure agreement active with INFORMS, etc. If a volunteer is unsure, they should ask a staff member who may have more information. Volunteers or staff may direct questions to the Executive Director or the President for clarification.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.7, Annual Acknowledgment of Select Policies

NUMBER 2.7 ANNUAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SELECT POLICIES

Revision Dates: Fall 2024

POLICY

As stewards of INFORMS, volunteers play a critical role in upholding INFORMS standards and fostering an inclusive, respectful environment. To reinforce these principles, all members of the Board of Directors and of committees that report directly to the Board are required to acknowledge their understanding of key INFORMS policies on an annual basis.

Each year, these members must sign a comprehensive acknowledgment document. "Signing" will be broadly defined as a digital signature, a digital acknowledgment, pen and paper, or other methods that denote that the reader has read the document and acknowledges its content.

This document will include the following key policies, each with the appropriate acknowledgment statement:

Conflict of Interest (P&P 2.3):

- I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and will adhere to the above Conflict of Interest policy.

Code of Conduct (P&P 2.4):

- I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and will adhere to the above Code of Conduct policy.

Confidentiality (P&P 2.6):

- I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and will adhere to the above Confidentiality Agreement.

Other committees within INFORMS may also use this form.

PROCEDURE

- The comprehensive acknowledgment document will be distributed to all relevant committee members annually. Committee members will be required to review and sign the document.
- The Executive Director’s office will be responsible for the collection of signed documents for Board members and committee members serving on committees that report to the Board.
- Failure to sign the acknowledgment form may result in a review of the member's eligibility to serve in their role.

This process, including escalation of issues, will be overseen by the Executive Committee.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.3, Conflict of Interest
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.4, Code of Conduct
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.6, Confidentiality

NUMBER 2.8 JOINT ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER SOCIETIES

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Winter 1997

POLICY

In general, the Board encourages joint activities where there is some clear benefit to INFORMS and low risk to INFORMS. Such activities may include, but are not limited to, joint meetings, joint publications, joint competitions, joint awards, and reduced subscription rates for the other societies' publications.

Any activity of INFORMS conducted jointly with another society is subject to prior approval by the Executive Committee. If financial resources are involved, documentation should be established between or among the societies, such as a Memorandum of Understanding. If the financial resources are significant (as defined by contract-related policies), approval should follow the procedures outlined in the financial section. These policies also apply when there is activity conducted jointly between a subdivision and an external society.

The Board shall be notified of all new collaborations no later than the next Board meeting following the agreement. The Board may vote to require changes or termination of the collaboration at any time.

NUMBER 2.9 SPEAKING FOR INFORMS ON PROPER PRACTICE

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Winter 1995

POLICY

No individual, including staff, members, subdivision officers/leaders, individual Board members or officers, is authorized to publicly represent or declare what constitutes proper practice within INFORMS' fields of interest. This authority is vested solely with the Board, which is the only body empowered to make public statements or decisions on these matters.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.10, Positions on Governmental Public and Political Issues
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.11, Advocacy Operations

NUMBER 2.10 POSITIONS ON GOVERNMENTAL PUBLIC AND POLITICAL ISSUES

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Summer 2006

POLICY

INFORMS is committed to advancing its fields of interest by engaging in governmental and public discourse on relevant issues. In some cases, INFORMS may want to establish public-facing positions on such issues. Such positions must be consistent with INFORMS legal status as a tax-exempt organization, as defined by Federal and state laws and regulations, including a prohibition from "directly or indirectly participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office."

Public positions

Definition and Scope: A "public position" is defined as any official stance or statement made on behalf of INFORMS regarding governmental, public, or political issues. This includes, but is not limited to, statements made in petitions, letters, social media posts, or public presentations that purport to represent an official public position held by INFORMS.

Opinions: Individuals affiliated with INFORMS, including officers, members, and staff, are free to express their personal opinions in a private capacity. However, they must ensure that their personal views are not presented as representing INFORMS' official stance. When in doubt, individuals should consult the Executive Committee or Executive Director for guidance.

Approval Process

Executive Committee Authority: To address the time-sensitive nature of many governmental and public issues, the Board delegates the authority to approve public positions to the Executive Committee. The Board will be informed of all authorized positions, ensuring transparency and oversight.

Board Approval for Sensitive Issues: The Executive Committee must seek explicit Board approval before taking a public position on any issue deemed controversial or sensitive. In cases of uncertainty, the Executive Committee should err on the side of caution and refer the matter to the Board. Sensitive issues are those likely to generate significant public controversy, impact INFORMS' reputation, or involve complex legal, ethical, or stakeholder considerations. INFORMS staff shall maintain a rubric or methodology for best practices for the Executive Committee to use for its deliberation and decisions regarding such matters. These matters require heightened scrutiny and must be referred to the Board for approval before any public stance is taken. The Executive Committee will identify such issues based on their potential to affect the organization's core values, mission, or standing within the community.

Subdivisions

Subdivisions of INFORMS are not permitted to independently take public positions on governmental, political, or other external issues. However, if a subdivision wishes to propose INFORMS adopt a public position, it must first submit a detailed motion to the Subdivisions Council. This motion should include the rationale for the position, its relevance to INFORMS' mission, and its potential impact or implications. The Subdivisions Council will then review the motion and, if deemed appropriate, forward it to the Board for final approval. This process ensures that all public positions taken by INFORMS are consistent with the organization's overall strategy, objectives, and legal obligations.

Compliance

All public positions taken by INFORMS must be consistent with the organization's legal obligations, particularly its tax-exempt status. INFORMS is prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office. Additionally, lobbying activities must be conducted in a manner that does not jeopardize the organization's tax-exempt status.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.11, Advocacy Operations

NUMBER 2.11 ADVOCACY OPERATIONS

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Summer 2019

POLICY

INFORMS recognizes that government policies and actions can significantly advance the organization's fields of interest and their contributions to society. Therefore, INFORMS is committed to supporting the advancement of these fields by engaging with legislative and regulatory bodies at the federal, state, and local levels to:

1. Increase awareness and understanding of INFORMS' fields of interest across all levels of government.
2. Advocate for the use and support of these fields in government operations and policy creation.
3. Expand government funding opportunities related to INFORMS' fields of interest.

Advocacy vs. Lobbying

It is important to distinguish between advocacy and lobbying, as they involve different activities and legal requirements:

Advocacy (also referred to as Public Affairs) consists of activities aimed at raising awareness, educating, and engaging stakeholders on issues related to INFORMS' fields of interest. Advocacy efforts may include, but are not limited to, public education campaigns, media relations activities, discussions with policymakers, and other activities that promote the organization's mission without directly seeking to influence specific legislation.

Lobbying involves direct efforts to influence legislation or government decisions. This includes any attempt to persuade legislators or government officials to support or oppose specific bills, regulations, or policies. Lobbying activities are subject to strict legal limits and reporting requirements under the Internal Revenue Code. Further, federal lobbying activities are additionally defined and regulated under the Lobbying Disclosure Act. Lobbying activities in states or localities may be defined and regulated by state or local statutes and must be addressed accordingly.

PROCEDURE

Given the rapid pace of government-related opportunities, the Board recognizes that flexibility must be provided to the Executive Committee, the Executive Director and/or their designated advocacy lead, to pursue or respond to policy developments that support INFORMS' fields of interest. Additionally, some public policy issues may be important to INFORMS' operations or stakeholders but may not be related to the organization's fields of interest. In such cases the Executive Committee, including the Executive Director and/or their designated advocacy lead, is authorized to determine appropriate responses and provide direction on requests and activities that align with these objectives. The Board will be informed of all significant advocacy and lobbying activities at

regular intervals, no less than annually.

COMPLIANCE

All lobbying activities must be conducted in strict compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to the Internal Revenue Code and the Lobbying Disclosure Act. INFORMS staff will track and report on lobbying activities to ensure that the organization remains within the legal limits necessary to maintain its tax-exempt status. The Board will be updated on these and other advocacy activities no less than annually to ensure transparency and compliance.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.10, Positions on Governmental Public and Political Issues

NUMBER 2.12 USE OF INFORMS LOGO AND ACRONYM

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Summer 2017

POLICY

INFORMS wishes to avoid confusion and achieve a unified image; this requires a set of consistent procedures for the use of its logo and acronym. The INFORMS logo is to be used across all products and sub-brands. Specific requirements can be found in the INFORMS Branding Guide.

PROCEDURES

1. LOGO: The official copyrighted INFORMS logo, available through the Executive Office, should be used as is. No modifications may be made.

2. COLOR: The official colors for the logo can be found in the INFORMS Branding Guide. Reproducing the logo in black and white is acceptable, and there is an official grayscale version. In cases of one-color printing jobs, the one-color version may be printed in the specified color.

3. ACRONYM: Where the INFORMS name is spelled out in text, it should appear in all capital letters, in order to avoid confusion that might be caused by alternate capitalization conventions (e.g., InForms, InfORMS) that can be misunderstood as typos.

INFORMS may develop a template for slide presentations, letterhead for official use, and/or virtual backgrounds. Some documents (e.g., webpages or virtual backgrounds) may also reflect collaborations. These documents will be consistent with the INFORMS guidelines on color and logo. Use will be allowed for official INFORMS activities and by INFORMS employees or Board of Directors on official business.

The official INFORMS logo, and the branding information should be available to members so that they can maintain consistency with INFORMS.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 3.1, Trademarks

NUMBER 2.13 EMAIL

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Summer 2010

POLICY

INFORMS wishes to correctly balance the wishes of the Society to better communicate with its members, the wishes of many members to receive useful information, and the wishes of many members not to receive unwanted email, and therefore establishes the following consistent procedures.

PROCEDURES

1. INFORMS will maintain an email list of members that excludes members who have asked INFORMS not to contact them via email.

2. INFORMS will follow all US legal requirements, including those related to communications. When operating an event in another country, INFORMS will follow the required policies to the extent required by a US-based organization. INFORMS may also choose to follow additional international standards developed by other countries even if not required.

3. The number of mass email messages sent to the overall membership should be limited to no more than two per month, not counting the emails and newsletters members have opted into. At times, the limit of no more than two mass emails per month may need to be temporarily lifted to accommodate INFORMS business (e.g., elections, constitutional amendments). When possible, segments of members should be targeted so mass email to all members is limited.

4. Subdivisions can be given mailing lists of their members, provided that no email addresses are given of those who do not want to receive email, and that the subdivision has in place a mechanism to allow those who want no subdivision mail to easily choose not to receive it. Subdivisions are free to make their own rules on frequency and authorization of email. INFORMS should be extremely cautious in mailing to members of a subdivision without doing it through the subdivision: any such targeted mailings would fall within the guidelines.

5. INFORMS allows rental of members' e-mail addresses to advertisers under tightly controlled conditions and managed by the Executive Director for the purpose of informing members of offers deemed to be of interest to them. INFORMS and renters will comply with all provisions of current legal regulations to ensure privacy and security of members' e- mail addresses including allowing members to opt out of third-party e-mail transmissions as specified in regulations. Messages from sister societies may be sent free of charge by INFORMS if the Executive Director feels it is warranted, but the mailing itself must be done by INFORMS, and clearly state that it is an INFORMS mailing (and falls within the other guidelines).

NUMBER 2.14 VOLUNTEER AND STAFF RELATIONS AND GENERAL RESPONSIBLITIES

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Fall 2002

POLICY

INFORMS has two key components that make it function: volunteers and office staff. Volunteers (elected or otherwise) give their time to INFORMS to provide guidance, expertise, and often supplement the functions of staff. Staff members are paid employees whose jobs are to make INFORMS an ongoing and successful enterprise. As such, it is our policy to have INFORMS be a member-driven and staff-executed organization to the extent possible.

Volunteers report up through the Board of Directors, with the President serving as an intermediary, when needed. Office staff report up through the Executive Director. The President and Executive Director coordinate closely. It is INFORMS policy that volunteers and staff work closely together to achieve the goals of the organization, create products and services, and carry out activities on behalf of INFORMS and the membership. In many activities, the desired relationship is one where volunteer ideas are discussed, refined as needed, and, if decided to implement, staff work in a manner consistent with their professional experience, the organization's capabilities and resources, and our non-profit tax status.

Volunteers are given the prerogative of setting policy, and the primary policy setting body for INFORMS is the Board of Directors. Many board members have additional responsibility for specific areas of governance within INFORMS, as described in other sections of the P&P. The Executive Director assigns a staff member to work with and assist each board member. Each committee or editorial board reports to or through an assigned Board Liaison. Each committee or editorial board may also be assigned a specific staff person with whom they work and rely on for assistance.

In general, it is INFORMS policy to assign only senior staff members as board and committee liaisons. Every year a listing of the board members, their respective committees and their staff liaisons is prepared and distributed to all those involved.

The role of staff members is to assist their board partners and committee chairs in conducting the business of INFORMS, Professional staff fill key positions involving the day-to-day operation of INFORMS, and they provide professional competence in functional areas. It is recommended that Vice Presidents and their staff members communicate on a regular basis, to help ensure alignment on policy and operational directions.

Operational activities or functions of INFORMS for which interruption or delay could result in financial loss, exposure to liability, or serious public relations difficulty, will generally be the responsibility of professional staff under the management of the Executive Director. Such activities include, but are not limited to, financial accounting, handling of receipts and payments, maintenance of records, operational management of meetings, production management of publications, and vendor relationships.

Should there be differences of opinion about policy and/or the related operational directions between a staff liaison and a board member or committee, the staff liaison should consult the Executive Director. (Volunteers and elected officers are always free to share feedback with the INFORMS President.) The Executive Director can address concerns with the staff liaison and take the matter up to the President and/or Executive Committee for further discussion, if deemed necessary. Likewise, should there be disagreement between a volunteer and staff member about how to execute a project, consultation with the Executive Director is required, as all staff report through the Executive Director. If the matter cannot be resolved or if the disagreement is with the Executive Director, the member is encouraged to consult with the President, or if warranted, the Executive Committee.

The goal of INFORMS is to achieve a well-balanced volunteer–staff relationship, one that is synergistic and takes advantage of what both groups offer. Volunteers and staff members are encouraged to work together as trusted and respected partners.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.15, Volunteer Input on Staff Performance

NUMBER 2.15 VOLUNTEER INPUT ON STAFF PERFORMANCE

Revision Dates: Fall 2024; Fall 2002

POLICY

It is INFORMS policy that the Executive Director will consult board members for input on the performance of staff members with whom they work. The Executive Director may ask Board Members for their assistance in obtaining feedback from committee chairs and editors-in-chief on the staff (e.g., through specific forms if provided). Completed feedback (e.g., through forms or other specified channels) should be shared directly with the Executive Director. The Executive Director, as part of their annual employee review process with individual employees, will consider this input by the volunteer leaders as a component of staff performance.

PROCEDURES

a. In November, the Executive Director will contact board members to solicit input on the performance of their respective staff liaisons.
b. Once received, board members are encouraged to forward the request to their committee chairs and/or editors in chief, so the Executive Director obtains feedback from the wider community of volunteers who work closely with staff.
c. Volunteers may provide their feedback through email, a document, or a conversation.
d. The Executive Director will consider the volunteers' inputs as part of the staff members' annual performance review process.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:
INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Number 2.14, Volunteer and Staff Relations and General Responsibilities