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These guidelines are available to view at [masterclasses.bmj.com](http://masterclasses.bmj.com)

## 1 Statement of principles

BMJ Masterclasses are a series of face to face educational events run by BMJ Group to help doctors make better decisions. In order to produce quality events we work with appropriate sponsors, including pharmaceutical companies, who share our principles and want to help provide doctors with high quality education. We work with sponsors under the principles of transparency, probity and editorial independence.

## 2 Guidelines for sponsored symposia

- 2.1** BMJ Masterclasses may offer the opportunity to sponsor a symposium at a Masterclass. (the “sponsored symposium”)
- 2.2** The content of the sponsored symposium will be relevant to the specified Masterclass, pitched to the appropriate target audience, evidence based and of educational value to delegates. Drugs must not be referred to by their brand name within the presentation slides.
- 2.3** On occasion where a topic is suggested by a sponsor, the BMJ Masterclasses editorial team will decide whether this is an area of educational value for potential delegates and then work with the sponsor to ensure that any material presented in the ‘sponsored symposium’ is complementary to the main programme

### 2.4 The speaker at sponsored symposia

- 2.4.1 The sponsor should nominate a speaker who has:
  - The ability to deliver good, relevant content
  - Transparency in any commercial dealings
  - Authority in their field
- 2.4.2 The BMJ Masterclass editorial team reserves the right to refuse a speaker does not meet the criteria listed above.
- 2.4.3 The BMJ Masterclass editorial team reserve the right to refuse a topic suggestion if not felt to be of educational relevance to our intended audience.
- 2.4.4 The speaker may be paid an honorarium by the sponsors, which should be commensurate with their experience and the work involved in preparing and presenting the talk.
- 2.4.5 The speaker must not be an employee of the sponsor.
- 2.4.6 The speaker must not be the chair of the BMJ Masterclass event.
- 2.4.7 The speaker must introduce their talk with a verbal and visual ‘Declaration of interests’, as outlined in the speaker guidelines. As part of this, they should state that

they have been invited to present the symposium on behalf of the sponsor and should acknowledge any support they have received in preparing their presentation material.

## 2.5 Schedule

The BMJ Masterclass editorial team work closely with sponsors to ensure they produce quality sessions under the principles of transparency, probity and editorial independence.

- 2.5.1. Sponsors are encouraged to provide the following details to the BMJ Masterclasses sales team at least 22 weeks before the event:
  - a) Proposed title of the sponsored symposium
  - b) Name of the proposed speaker and place of work
  - c) Company logo.
- 2.5.2 The BMJ Masterclasses marketing team will incorporate the above information under point 2.5.1 in all cases, as part of the BMJ Masterclass online programme ([masterclasses.bmj.com](http://masterclasses.bmj.com)) and also in the printed marketing brochure where publishing deadlines permit. The information will also be published in the delegate programme on the day of the meeting.
- 2.5.3 At least 6 weeks before the event, the BMJ Masterclass sales team will introduce the sponsors to the editorial team for that event by email. The sponsors will then liaise directly with the BMJ Masterclass editor concerned, to ensure the content of the sponsored symposium meets the high standard of quality and evidence as outlined in the speaker guidelines and is appropriate for the target audience attending that event.
- 2.5.4 The sponsor will provide the BMJ Masterclass editorial team with full contact details of the speaker, including their mobile phone number. This is to facilitate any discussion that may take place thereafter regarding the presentation.
- 2.5.5 At least 4 weeks before the event, the final slides should have been received by the BMJ Masterclass editorial team in order to check the content.
- 2.5.6 Any final amendments required by either the BMJ Masterclass editorial team, the sponsor, or the speaker must be completed one week before the event, after which time no further changes will be made.
- 2.5.7 The BMJ Masterclass editorial team reserves the right to request alterations or refuse content.

### On the day of the event

- 2.5.8 The speaker should arrive one hour before the scheduled symposium start time, to allow time for audio visual set up.
- 2.5.9 The sponsored symposium will be introduced by the chairperson, or a senior member of the BMJ Masterclass team.
- 2.5.10 The sponsored symposium shall last 45 minutes and the speaker should allow time for questions during this time.
- 2.5.11 After the sponsored symposium, the BMJ Masterclass sponsorship team will share relevant feedback from the delegates evaluation form with the sponsors and the speaker.

## 3 Other types of sponsorship arrangements

Under the principles outlined in section 1, BMJ Masterclasses may work with sponsors in different ways.

**3.1** Internationally, we may choose to run any of the UK BMJ Masterclass programmes which may be adapted to address local issues, and adhere to relevant local accreditation requirements. We will take the views of sponsors into account when deciding this. The model for working in this way may include the sponsor recruiting delegates.

**3.2** In a BMJ Masterclass non-clinical programme, an organisation may be permitted to run their own session during the day

3.2.1 In this instance it will be clearly stated on the programme materials that the content provided is independent of the BMJ core content within the Masterclass.

3.2.2 Under such an agreement, the BMJ Masterclass editorial team may permit the company to use their own employees to present the relevant educational content of the session, and therefore section 2.4.5 in the standard guidelines for sponsored symposia will not apply.

3.2.3 The organisation involved in running the session will still be required to submit their content and speakers for approval by the BMJ Masterclass editors, under the criteria laid out in section 2 of this document.