

NIMBioS Conflict of Interest Policy

(As modified based on input from NIMBioS Advisory Board on 20 November 2008)

Members of the Board of Advisors should recuse themselves from review or discussions of a request for NIMBioS support if they are participants in the proposed activity, have a substantial personal or professional relationship with the organizers of the activity, or under any other circumstances that would prevent them from providing a fair and objective review. Specifically, Board members should not be involved in the review of a request for support submitted by a current or former student or mentor, a colleague from the same institution, a family member, or a post-doctoral associate or collaborator within the past 4 years.

Based on the close nature of the doctoral student/advisor-mentor relationship, a conflict of interest is always present. Advisory board members are always considered to have a conflict of interest with their current or former doctoral students and must declare the conflict of interest and recuse themselves from review of requests for support organized by said students/former students.

Generally, a conflict of interest exists if there has been intellectual collaboration between board members and organizers requesting support within 48 months of the evaluation date. Colleagues from the same financial unit within an institution are considered to have a conflict of interest whether or not they are in direct collaboration. When a colleague changes institutions, the conflict of interest remains for 12 months.

An advisory board member who is an organizer on a request for support under consideration will not be assigned to review requests for support in that same category during that review period (e.g., if the advisory board member's request is for a Working Group, then (s)he will not be assigned Working Group proposals during that review period).

The NIMBioS Directors (Director, Associate Directors and Deputy Director) will recuse themselves under all similar circumstances. If all Directors are in conflict with a request for support (as would be the case for requests authored by NIMBioS researchers), they will refrain from any discussion of the request and the final decision on whether support is authorized will be made by the Advisory Board. In general, prioritization for support of Working Groups, Investigative Workshops and Postdoctoral Fellows will be made by the advisors, with final approval of support made by the Directors following consultation with the applicant.

Organizers of Working Groups, Investigative Workshops, and other activities as well as those requesting support as Sabbatical Visitors, Short-term Visitors, and Post-doctoral Fellows must declare possible conflicts of interest with advisory board members or NIMBioS directors (see lists at www.nimbios.org) in their requests for support. Possible conflicts of interest include all those discussed above.