



Publication, Endorsement & Representation Policies

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Publication Policy

Purpose

One of the responsibilities of an ASO trustee or committee member is to support the activities of ASO by using social media and/or other communication channels to promote relevant ASO materials.

This document sets out ASO's policy regarding its publications and, also, external associated organisations promoting ASO publications on their websites.

ASO Publications:

- Must adhere to brand guidelines.
- Must always include ASO logo and logos of current sponsors, updated to add when new sponsors are secured or remove when sponsors cease to support ASO.
- A list of contributors must be included in the publication.
- A copywrite notice must be included in the publication (please email asooffice@aso.org.uk for more information on the copyright notice).
- The publication must link to the ASO website.
- A Statement of Intellectual Property must be included in the publication.
- All advice in publications must include the following statement, "ASO does not provide individual advice to patients".
- There should be no promotion of specific products or services included in the publication.

For external associated organisations promoting ASO publications on their website:

- All material published in the name of ASO must carry the current approved logo.
- To protect the credibility and integrity of ASO, all publications must be approved by ASO before publication.
- It must be stated that all publications are the copyright of ASO and include an acknowledgement to ASO. It should be clear that the ASO materials are produced by and are the intellectual property of ASO and not produced by or the property of the third-party organisation.
- A link to the ASO website must be included in the publication.
- Any ASO resources should be separate from resources produced by the external associated organisation.
- It is the responsibility of the third party to ensure there are appropriate mechanisms in place to update the web page to ensure that the right version is available should ASO update any of its publications.

Process

For any organisation wishing to promote or provide links to ASO reports/article on their websites, agreement must be first sought by emailing the ASO operations team at asooffice@aso.org.uk. Once agreement has been sought, the member organisation must ensure that they adhere to this Publication Policy throughout the time that the publication is linked to their website.

Endorsement policy

Purpose

This policy is intended firstly to help guide decision-making about endorsements within ASO and to help ASO come to a logical, thought-out conclusion about whether to endorse a particular initiative based on a set of criteria.

Secondly it is intended to provide guidance to those seeking endorsement from ASO in terms of what ASO requires.

There may be exceptions not covered by this policy.

Scope

The policy deals with requests from both not-for-profit organisations and commercial companies.

ASO is often asked to endorse programmes, guidelines, statements, or other documents developed and produced by third parties and members.

Among the initiatives ASO might be asked to endorse are:

- Conferences and other meetings
- Guidelines
- Books or other printed resources and publications
- Web-based materials
- Other Educational programmes

ASO does **not** support or endorse individual drugs/pharmaceutical products or commercial devices or services. From time to time, if issues of practice related to the work of obesity specialists arise which are related to specific products, then a position statement may be produced but this will be a formal document produced and reviewed by the ASO, independent of input from the manufacturer. Any position statements produced, however, will not endorse or support the use of an individual drug or commercial product/service.

ASO does not, in general, consider requests to endorse other commercial products or legal services. If there is a particular situation where ASO has been a collaborator or it is particularly innovative and addresses a need that has already been identified, the specific situation will be referred to the ASO Chair.

Definition of endorsement

In this document, endorsement is understood to mean overall support for an initiative, project, or product, based on a thorough review, where ASO has been involved in its development. In the case of programmes or educational resources, ASO endorsement implies that the ASO agrees with the information being communicated.

Criteria for ASO endorsement

The criteria ASO uses to process requests for endorsement or support are as follows:

- The initiative must be relevant to ASO's aims and objectives.
- ASO should be able to verify the credibility of the organisation seeking endorsement and the organisation should provide relevant information as requested.
 - The document produced should be up-to-date, relevant, and evidence based.
 - ASO must be willing to express a positive view about the document.
- ASO will only consider requests for endorsement where one or more ASO representatives have been involved with the initiative from the outset and contributed to its development. Any exceptions to this must be agreed by ASO.
- There must be demonstrable benefit to the endorsing of an initiative. This may be a demonstrable benefit towards helping to achieve the ASO charitable objectives and/or to the ASO as an organisation (e.g. profile, reputation, income potential).
- ASO, in general, will only consider requests to endorse specific initiatives, not entire organisations.
- If appropriate, the organisation should be able to provide information about marketing and sponsorship of both the initiative and their organisation.
- The request for endorsement should define what is expected from ASO and what ASO can expect from the organisation in return. This may include, for example, publicity for the ASO.
- In the case of long-term endorsements (more than one year), ASO will require periodic review of the materials/project, at an interval agreeable to both organisations.
- If the endorsement is for a publication, ASO should see and approve the final artwork, and this should be repeated if there is any agreement to any further print-runs or subsequent editions.
- If the endorsement is for a conference or event, ASO should have prior sight of the programme and speaker information before the event in order to endorse.
- ASO will not endorse or promote individual products or services.
- ASO will not accept any funds or enter into any agreement from/with the health and dietary industry or a subsidiary linked to products that are associated with weight gain.

Collaborations

ASO often works in collaboration with other groups, societies, or organisations. In these cases, ASO should reach agreement on conditions and endorsement at the start of each project.

Endorsement approval

Endorsement approval for third parties will allow the use of the ASO logo and the words "Endorsed by". Endorsement approval through collaboration (involvement) in the

development of relevant documents will allow the use of the ASO logo and the words “In collaboration with” if preferred. ASO will provide a high-resolution version of the logo for inclusion for these purposes.

ASO must maintain impartiality in its interactions with industry members and therefore it should be assumed that all applications will be discussed with other Council members.

Process

Parties interested in securing ASO endorsement should contact the ASO operations team via asooffice@aso.org.uk with information on the proposed initiative. The operations team will acknowledge the enquiry and forward it to ASO Chair.

Applications will be reviewed by the Chair and the Board of Trustees. Unanimous or majority decisions will be made (excluding anyone conflicted). The operations team or the ASO Chair will email a decision within 14 days of application receipt.

In the case of a positive decision, the operations team or ASO chair will discuss how ASO can support the initiative more broadly and make any necessary arrangements involving use of the ASO name and logo. The ASO chair will then instruct the operations team to ensure a written agreement is put in place setting out the terms of ASO’s involvement including ownership of copyright/intellectual property, approval process/timescales and fees payable. This applies most specifically to requests from commercial companies.

Representation Policy

Background

ASO is regularly invited to put forward individuals to represent it on committees, working parties, projects and other groups. ASO can also be asked to nominate individuals to sit on Committees, working parties, projects and other groups in an individual capacity. In addition, individual ASO members, in particular trustees, are often approached directly to sit on such groups.

Each of these situations can provide opportunities to ASO in terms of increasing its profile and extending its influence. Similarly, they can offer opportunities to individuals in terms of their profile, reputation and career development. However, there are also risks involved in individuals representing ASO with other organisations.

This document clarifies the policy and expectations of ASO in each of these situations.

Approaches Made to ASO

Prioritisation

The Chair of ASO Board of Directors will discuss the invitation for ASO representation and decide its level of priority in accordance with ASO objectives. Where the priority is high, every effort will be made to identify a representative. For lower priority, ASO will only accept the invitation if it can readily find a representative.

Selection

Individuals invited by the ASO to represent on any group or body are acting formally on behalf of ASO. They are selected by the ASO and can be replaced / substituted by the ASO at any time.

Selection is based on knowledge and expertise needed for the role balanced with the need to develop a wider group of people experienced in representing ASO. Selection maybe through the following routes:

- Individual with known interest/expertise (e.g a trustee)
- Request for volunteers/nominations via ASO mailing to the membership

Expectations of ASO representatives

Individuals selected to represent ASO are expected to:

- Act as an ambassador for ASO.
- Represent the views of the organisation, seeking input where relevant and practical in advance from other colleagues and bringing issues back to the ASO Board of Trustees for input and advice.
- Liaise with the ASO Board of Trustees such that ASO has a record of activities it is involved with and so that broader organisational opportunities can be capitalised on where relevant on the advice of the ASO Committee.
- Provide a short report to each ASO trustee meeting (twice per annum). Representatives will be sent a reminder to complete their report at least 2 weeks in advance of each ASO committee meeting
- Ensure formal approval is sought from the ASO Board of Trustees for any materials, press releases or other programme where it is proposed to use the ASO name/logo according to the ASO endorsement policy. In some cases, ASO may wish to make a charge for endorsement or the use of a logo so a formal application to the Board of Trustees will be required with appropriate time to review the proposed resource/material. If in any doubt members should contact the Chair of the ASO for clarification.

The appointment of individuals selected to represent ASO will be confirmed/reviewed at ASO trustee meetings. Representatives are asked to always conduct themselves professional, represent the views and opinions of the ASO and ensure that they adhere to the ASO code of conduct.

Monitoring and reporting

Details of national groups and bodies where the ASO is formally represented will be included on the ASO website and in the annual report of the trustees.

Payment of expenses and indemnity

ASO wherever possible will arrange for travel expenses to be claimed directly from the host organisation. Where the host organisation is not willing to pay fees and expenses, ASO will consider paying them at the discretion of ASO chair in accordance with the relative priority of the project. Any individual formally representing the ASO (i.e. instructed to do by the Charity) is covered by the charity's professional indemnity insurance.

Nomination of Individuals

ASO will seek permission from any individual before putting their name forward to another body or group

ASO is not able to pay locum fees (or an agreed honorarium towards loss of earnings).

Travel expenses cannot be reimbursed in situations where an individual is acting in an individual capacity and not as a representative of ASO. ASO would however welcome feedback and updates, within the bounds of confidentiality, from the initiative, such that any relevant opportunities for the ASO can be capitalised on.

Approaches Made to Individuals

Approaches made to individuals to sit on groups / bodies are the business of that individual not the ASO. It is, however, immensely valuable for the ASO in terms of intelligence and potential opportunities, (where individuals feel it is appropriate) for the ASO to be informed of groups / bodies that they are involved with and / or that relevant opportunities are passed onto the ASO via the committee. It can also be immensely valuable to the ASO if such individuals can support and promote the agreed views and interests of the ASO in such situations.

Individuals, particularly where he / she is an ASO Trustee should be aware that whilst they may see themselves as acting in a personal capacity, their role can be interpreted by the group / organisation as acting on behalf of the ASO. Individuals should therefore take responsibility for clarifying that they are not representing any organisation and encourage groups / organisations to talk directly to the ASO where relevant. Organisations should be advised that if they want a ASO representative, they should write directly to ASO to request that the organisation puts someone forward to represent them.

From time-to-time committee members may be approached by organisations for support of a particular product or initiative. Trustees should be aware that their role as a supporter could be interpreted by organisations as acting on behalf of the ASO. Any such enquiries for endorsement should be directed to the secretariat for formal review by the ASO committee according to the endorsement policy.

To protect ASO representatives from being harassed by commercial organisations the ASO will no longer publish its list of the names of representatives from the committee but instead publish on the website a list of organisations with whom the ASO collaborates with.

Any member of ASO who is approached by a pharmaceutical company for support or feedback on committee reviews/appraisals is required to submit the following response:-

Unfortunately, I am unable to share any information about the Appraisal/Review and the views of ASO on this issue as we are bound by a confidentiality agreement in terms of our representation on this group. There are explicit instructions by ASO that all discussions relating to remain confidential unless we are putting out a position statement on behalf of ASO which would then be in the public domain.

We do this in order to maintain the integrity of our representation as a professional body to [organisation].

Any trustees wishing to provide a personal opinion must make this clear in writing to the organisation concerned that they are not representing the opinions of ASO.