

Policy for the Development and Approval of Official AAAAI Position Statements

Approved November 4, 2023

Overview

The Practice, Diagnosis and Therapeutics (PDT) Committee facilitates the development of projects by AAAAI members to be submitted for publication in JACI or JACI: *In Practice* carrying the imprimatur of the AAAAI. Referred to as the “PDT process”, this charge to the PDT Committee is intended to ensure these projects contribute to the literature of the specialty, are of consistent high quality, and reflect the standards of the AAAAI.

A Position Statement examines an aspect or aspects of clinical practice, research, or public policy pertaining to allergic/immunologic disease, and through literature review and a consensus of experts, sets forth a position designed to outline appropriate care, appropriate application of research, or public policy. AAAAI Position Statements are not to be considered to reflect current AAAAI standards or policy after five years from the date of publication. They are well referenced and contain an appropriate bibliography. Position Statements are infrequent, constitute official positions of the AAAAI and are only developed at the will of the AAAAI Board of Directors. Should the Board choose to solicit a Position Statement on a particular topic, a group of authors will be chosen, and asked to submit an intent form to begin the process.

Writing Groups

Writing Groups must include AAAAI members. Non-members may participate with the approval of the Executive Committee or Board of Directors but must follow all policies and procedures that apply to the AAAAI members involved, including participation in the conflict of interest review process. As Position Statements are official documents of the AAAAI, those participating in the Writing Group will not be recognized as individual authors on the final statement.

Any project proposal that involves outside organizations or agencies is not covered under the PDT process and must instead be approved by AAAAI leadership. For more information on external projects, see [AAAAI Policy Regarding the Development of Joint Activities with Other Organizations or Entities](#).

Document Proposal Process

Intent Forms

The Writing Group must submit to pdreviews@aaaai.org a [proposal intent form](#) including the lead author(s) name and e-mail address and proposed title. To ensure continuity, all AAAAI Position Statements must be named in the following format: “AAAAI Position Statement on (Topic Area)”.

The intent form must also include responses to each of the following:

1. A brief outline and topic summary of the proposed Position Statement.
2. A review of evidence/literature currently available on the topic, including a reference list of relevant previously published statements on the topic (practice parameters, other specialty society position statements, etc.).
3. A list of all Writing Group members and confirmation that a conflict of interest disclosure statement has been submitted for each author using the [Online Disclosure Management System](#).

As Position Statements are only created at the request of the Board of Directors, Board members may assist in the development of the intent form should the need arise.

Intent Form Review

Staff will review the intent form for completion and request any missing conflict of interest disclosures. The PDT Chair and Vice Chair, in consultation with the Chair of the Practice & Policy Division, reviews the request and disclosures of the Writing Group, and approves, or responds with suggested edits. In addition to reviewing for [conflicts of interests](#), considerations for whether to approve an intent form may include issues such as whether the proposal might conflict with or duplicate efforts already underway by another group within or in conjunction with the AAAAI, such as a Practice Parameter; and whether the proposed Writing Group has the requisite expertise for the proposed work. Considerations for appropriateness may include whether the proposal fits the description for a Position Statement; if it appears to endorse a commercial interest, or if something else about the intent form indicates that the document is outside the scope of PDT, like the word “guideline” in the title or an indication of external partners.

Document Development and Review

Once given approval to proceed, a Writing Group is expected to submit a draft document for review (with line numbers included) within 3-12 months by sending it to staff at PDReviews@aaaai.org. Position Statements should follow a specific template and Writing Group authors will be listed at the end of the document in the acknowledgement section and will be noted as collaborators and listed in PubMed. AAAAI will be listed as the only author of the Position Statement. A draft Position Statement should be no more than four (4) printed journal pages (11) double spaced manuscript pages) including references.

Upon receiving the draft document, all authors will be verified to ensure any new authors have submitted disclosures.

The PDT Committee Chair and Vice Chair identify potential reviewers with relevant expertise to the topic of a draft document. Reviewers may be drawn from Interest Section leadership or elsewhere in the AAAAI. Reviewers who are not members of the AAAAI may be asked to participate if necessary to find relevant content experts who were not in the Writing Group. A Writing Group may suggest reviewers, but PDT leadership is not required to invite those suggested. So long as some reviewers have specific expertise to judge the clinical and scientific merit of the document and public policy implications, other reviewers may be assigned with less specific expertise to review for readability and other factors.

Potential reviewers, as identified by PDT leadership, are provided with a timeline in which to return their comments and asked to keep the review process confidential. There is to be no communication between the reviewers and the Writing Group regarding the draft during the review process. Reviewers are asked to send their comments to staff in a separate document, and not via comments on a copy of the draft itself.

Staff will compile reviewer feedback into one comments table and send it to PDT leadership who will review the content of this comments table to determine whether the feedback is sufficient to constitute a comprehensive and robust review of the draft document. If PDT leadership determines that further review is needed, or if the original reviewers failed to deliver comments within the allotted timeframe, then additional reviewers may be identified and invited.

Staff will then send the comments table to the Writing Group, who will be asked to provide a response to each item in the comment table, indicating which suggestions were incorporated and which were not (referring as appropriate to the respective line numbers in the updated draft) and the rationale for the decision. When the Writing Group completes editing the draft, they send the marked-up copy, the comments table showing their response to each item, and a clean copy of the revised document back to staff, who will send all of these documents to PDT leadership.

PDT leadership will review the revisions documents to ensure the Writing Group has provided a thoughtful and complete response to the reviewers' comments. Staff will then send the comments table showing the Writing Group's responses and the marked up draft back to reviewers. The reviewers may indicate to PDT leadership that they are satisfied that the revisions reflect careful consideration of their own suggested edits or suggest further specific edits. This subsequent feedback by the reviewers is sent to PDT leadership, who then decide whether the review and revision process is complete. If they determine further editing is required, the review and revision process is repeated as necessary.

Once PDT leadership is satisfied that the document has undergone a sufficient and robust review, the AAAAI Board of Directors will be provided the document for review and approval before it is released for journal submission.

Approval Requirements

Position Statements must be voted on by the full AAAAI Board of Directors, with a two-thirds majority required for approval. Position Statements are subject to review by AAAAI legal counsel at the discretion of the AAAAI President in consultation with the Executive Director. Position Statements may be subject to a 30-day comment period before final approval at the discretion of AAAAI leadership. If a comment period is desired for a Position Statement, a broadcast email or regularly scheduled email communication will be used to announce the comment period for the proposed document, and comments submitted will become part of the deliberation of document approval by the Board.

Post-Approval Processes

Once approved, AAAAI leadership will determine whether a Position Statement should be printed in JACI, JACI: *In Practice*, or both. As this is an official document of the AAAAI, submission to the journal(s) will not be handled by the Writing Group, but instead by AAAAI staff according to the publication plan.

The following will also to be included on the first page all published AAAAI Position Statements.

AAAAI Position Statements are not to be considered to reflect current AAAAI standards or policy after five years from the date of publication. The statement is not to be construed as dictating an exclusive course of action nor is it intended to replace the medical judgment of healthcare professionals. The unique circumstances of individual patients and environments are to be taken into account in any diagnosis and treatment plan. The statement reflects clinical and scientific advances as of the date of publication and is subject to change.

All approved documents will be posted to www.aaaai.org as soon as possible and announced to the membership via broadcast email or in a regularly scheduled email communication.