



# **Publishing faculty's external relationships in VIVO, the Library-maintained researcher profile system**

Paul Albert  
Sarbajit Dutta  
Terrie Wheeler

**May 13, 2022**

times.com/2019/04/04/health/memorial-sl...

The New York Times

PLAY THE CROSSW

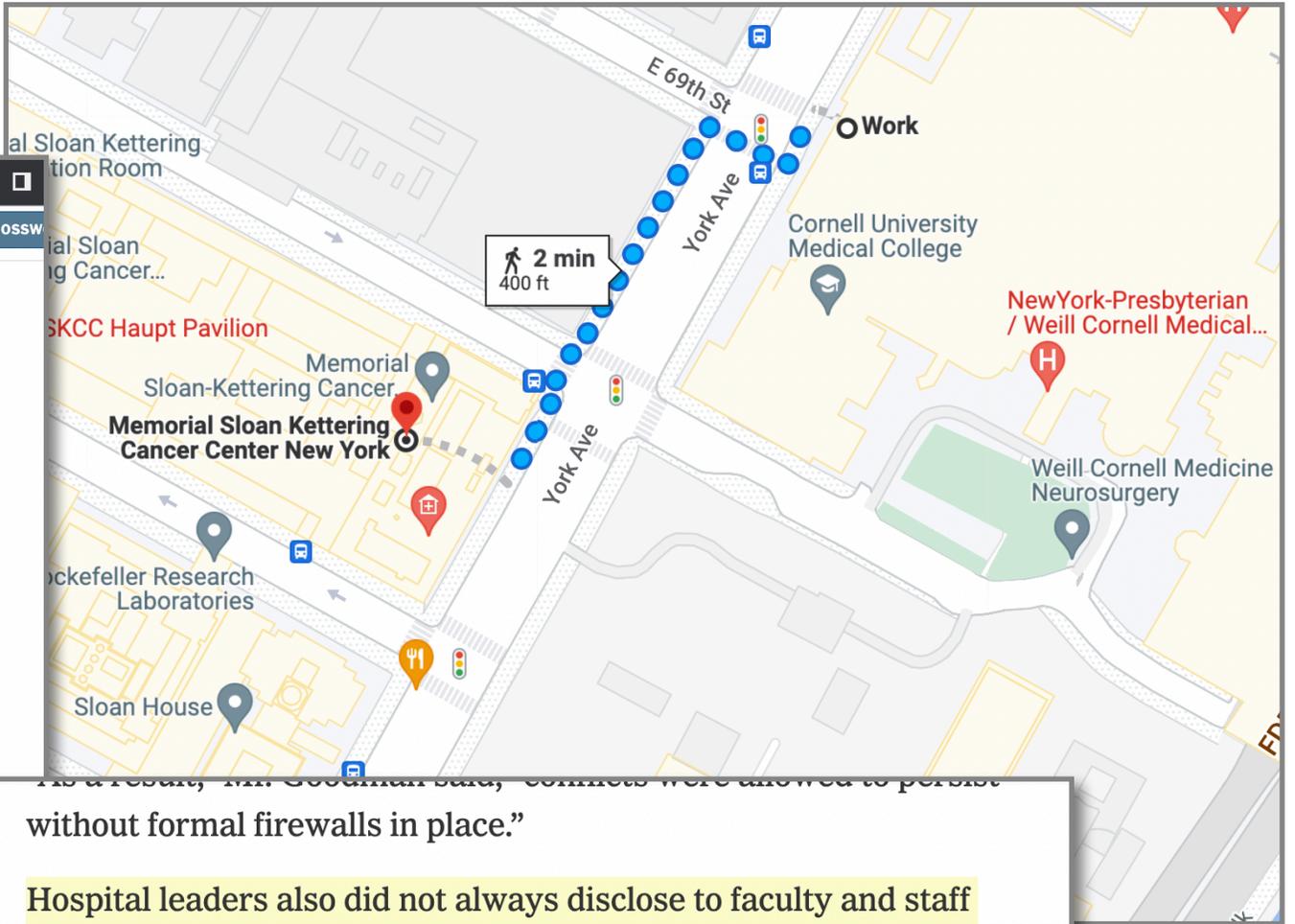
# Memorial Sloan Kettering Leaders Violated Conflict-of-Interest Rules, Report Finds

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Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in Manhattan. The center announced an overhaul of its policies on Thursday after an outside review found that top officials repeatedly violated conflict-of-interest rules. Jeenah Moon for The New York Times

By Charles Ornstein and Katie Thomas  
April 4, 2019



...without formal firewalls in place.”

Hospital leaders also did not always disclose to faculty and staff when they had relationships to companies whose research was being conducted at Memorial Sloan Kettering, Mr. Goodman said.

The policy changes that Memorial Sloan Kettering announced on Thursday include the creation of a board committee to focus on

# Conflicts of Interest (COI) system

- All Cornell employees must complete a conflicts statement on an annual basis
- Must disclose all financial relationships outside WCM work
- The Conflict of Interest Office may contact users with a determination of a disclosed relationship(s) or request additional information.

 **Weill Cornell  
Medicine**

Updated By: Paul J. Albert @ 11-May-2022 12:22:07 PM

**CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS SURVEY**

**POLICY:** You are required to update your Conflicts Survey any time you develop a new outside commitment and/ or financial interest that is related to your institutional/WCM responsibilities or if there is a material change to an activity that you previously reported. WCM responsibilities are activities that are related to or arise from an area of Cornell expertise and activities.  
Referenced Policy: [4.14 Conflicts of Interests and Commitment](#)

**SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS**

- The survey consists of a few primary questions.
- Your answers will determine whether you are required to complete the [Entities](#) and related details sections in the survey.
- To save an in progress survey, click the Save button at the top right corner of the screen.
- To submit the survey, check the "I certify" box under the Certification section at the bottom of the page then click the Submit button.

**EXAMPLES OF REPORTABLE INTERESTS**

- Services for which you receive direct payment. Do not report WCM sponsored research support or payments received through WCM.
- Funded or reimbursed travel
- Honoraria or income from: seminars, lectures, serve on advisory committees or review panels. Honoraria from a US academic entity, "non-profit" entity, governmental agency, or professional society, only needs to be disclosed when the amount in aggregate exceeds \$5,000 per year.
- Service as a consultant or an independent contractor
- Intellectual property rights(patents, copyrights, and an executive or officer in a Non-WCM or non-Cornell University entity royalties from rights)
- Equity Interests (e.g., stocks, stock options, or other ownership interests) **EXCEPT** income from passive investment vehicles, such as mutual funds and retirement accounts
- Salary received as an employee of an external entity(salary from a non-WCM or non-Cornell University entity)

**PRIMARY QUESTIONS**

**Q1.** Are you involved in the design, conduct, or reporting of any research at WCM?

Yes  No

**Q2. Non-US Collaborators/Appointments/Funding and Other Support:** Within the past 12 months, have you had a relationship with any entities that you have directly received any form of consideration including funding, compensation, or in-kind support from non-US entities (including governments, non-governmental entities, academic institutions and private foundations)?

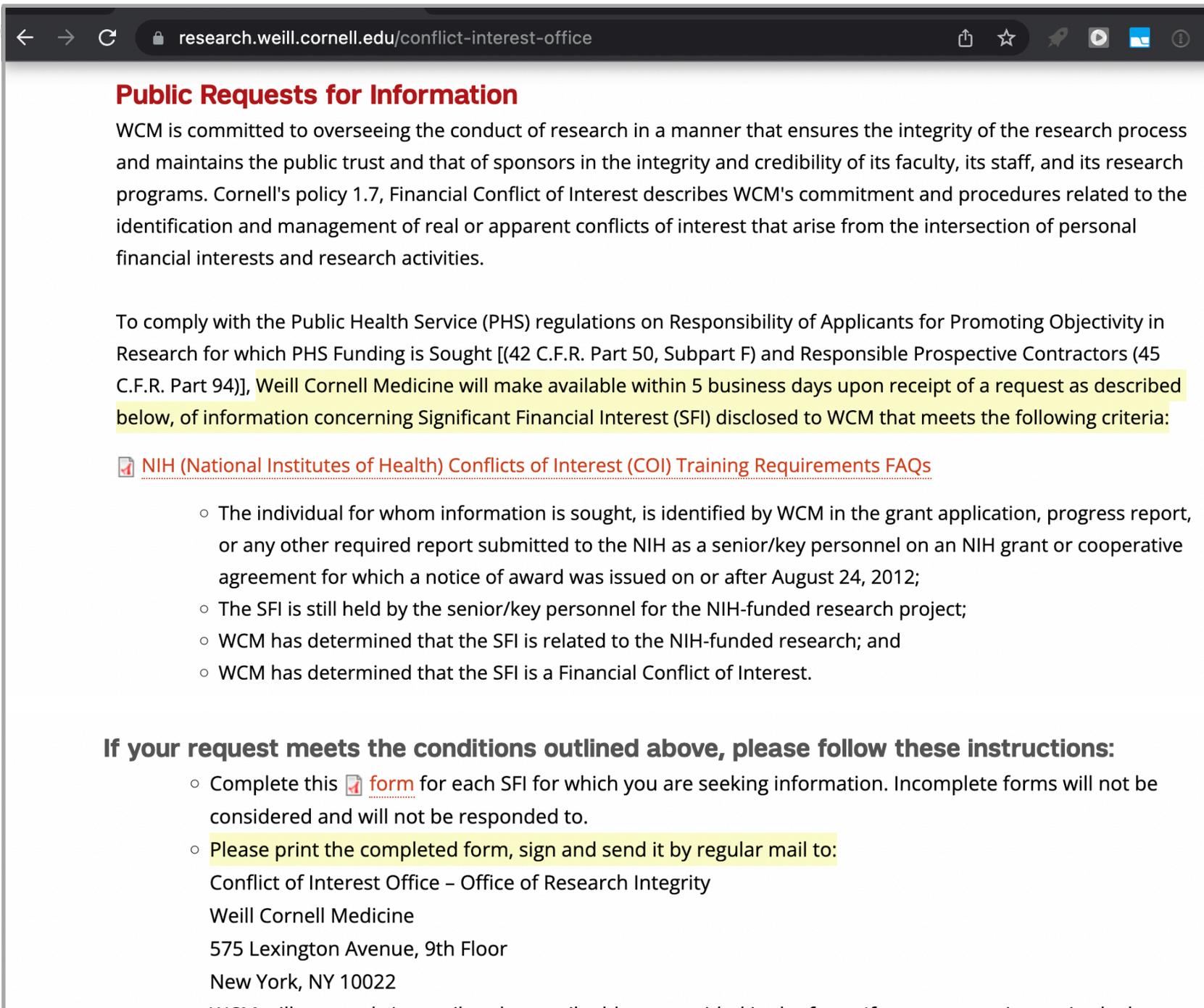
Yes  No

# Types of conflicts at WCM

Group	Description	Examples
<b>Advisory/Scientific Board Member</b>	Advisory/Scientific Board Member refers to a group of individuals who have been selected to advise a business regarding any number of issues	Scientific advisory board member, medical advisory board member
<b>Consultant</b>	Consultant refers to an individual who provides expert advice to a business or entity	Consulting on medical devices or pharmaceuticals
<b>Leadership Roles</b>	Leadership Roles refer to an individual with decision-making responsibility to an outside company	Board of directors, officer, trustee
<b>Other Interest</b>	Other Interests refers to miscellaneous financial interests not covered in other categories	Stipends, anything of monetary value
<b>Ownership</b>	Ownership refers to any financial stake an individual owns in any company	Stock options, equity interest
<b>Professional Services</b>	Professional Services refers to a service requiring specialized knowledge and skill usually requiring a license, certification, or registration	Expert witness, commissioned writing
<b>Proprietary Interest</b>	Proprietary Interest refers to ownership of intellectual property rights	Trademarks, patents, royalty income
<b>Speaker/Lecturer</b>	Speaker/Lecturer refers to an individual who conducts professional lectures, speeches, or presentations	Educational speaking engagement, company sponsored speaker

# Legacy method for requesting conflicts info

- Not ideal as it requires a wait and the purchase of a “stamp”



research.weill.cornell.edu/conflict-interest-office

## Public Requests for Information

WCM is committed to overseeing the conduct of research in a manner that ensures the integrity of the research process and maintains the public trust and that of sponsors in the integrity and credibility of its faculty, its staff, and its research programs. Cornell's policy 1.7, Financial Conflict of Interest describes WCM's commitment and procedures related to the identification and management of real or apparent conflicts of interest that arise from the intersection of personal financial interests and research activities.

To comply with the Public Health Service (PHS) regulations on Responsibility of Applicants for Promoting Objectivity in Research for which PHS Funding is Sought [(42 C.F.R. Part 50, Subpart F) and Responsible Prospective Contractors (45 C.F.R. Part 94)], Weill Cornell Medicine will make available within 5 business days upon receipt of a request as described below, of information concerning Significant Financial Interest (SFI) disclosed to WCM that meets the following criteria:

[NIH \(National Institutes of Health\) Conflicts of Interest \(COI\) Training Requirements FAQs](#)

- The individual for whom information is sought, is identified by WCM in the grant application, progress report, or any other required report submitted to the NIH as a senior/key personnel on an NIH grant or cooperative agreement for which a notice of award was issued on or after August 24, 2012;
- The SFI is still held by the senior/key personnel for the NIH-funded research project;
- WCM has determined that the SFI is related to the NIH-funded research; and
- WCM has determined that the SFI is a Financial Conflict of Interest.

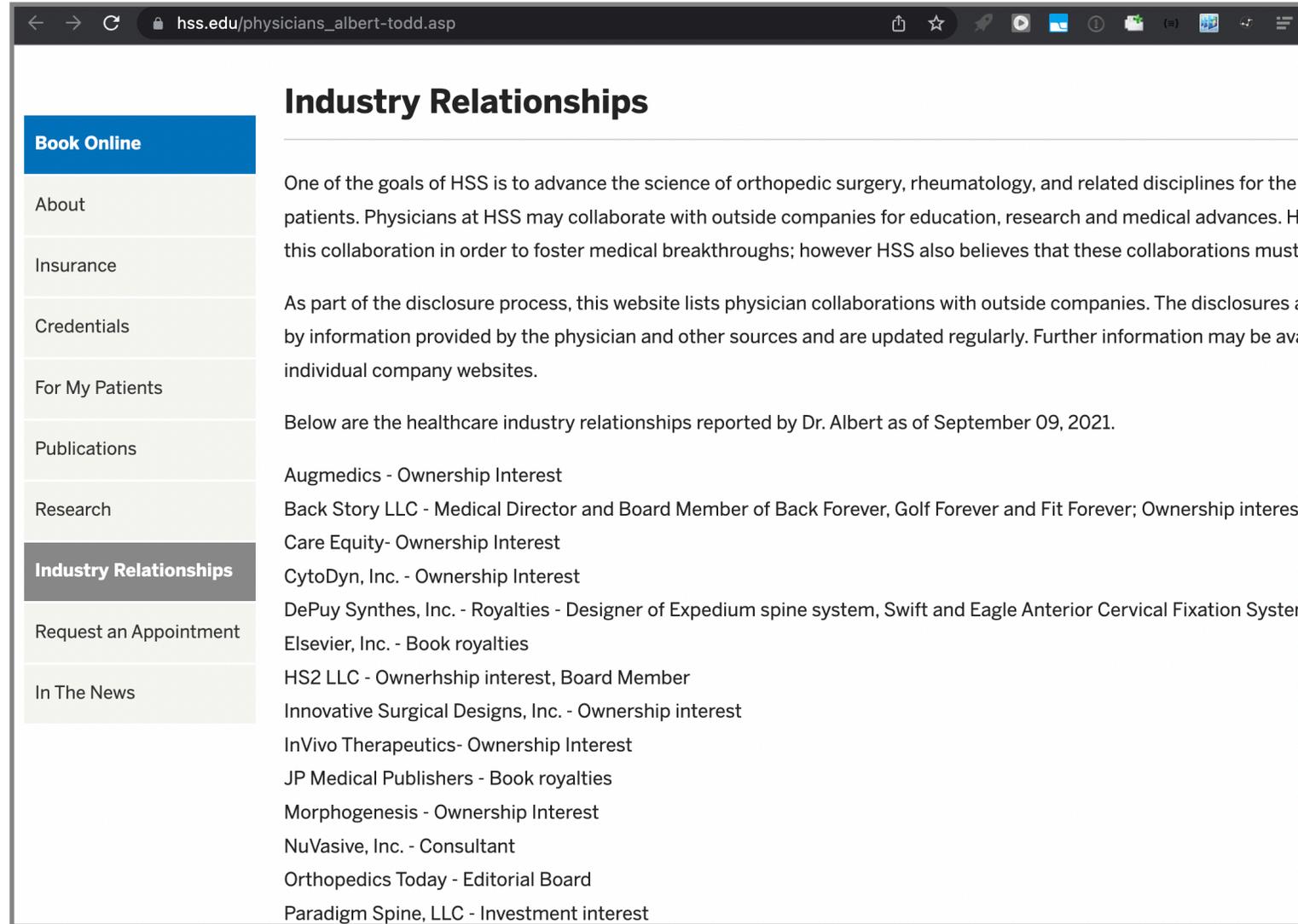
**If your request meets the conditions outlined above, please follow these instructions:**

- Complete this [form](#) for each SFI for which you are seeking information. Incomplete forms will not be considered and will not be responded to.
- Please print the completed form, sign and send it by regular mail to:  
Conflict of Interest Office – Office of Research Integrity  
Weill Cornell Medicine  
575 Lexington Avenue, 9th Floor  
New York, NY 10022

# Goal from the Dean

- Become more transparent about existing external relationships / conflicts
- Publish relationships in WCM's two profile systems
  - VIVO (researcher profile system)
  - POPS (clinical profile system)

*Hospital for Special Surgery's  
"Industry Relationships" section of  
its profile system*



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `hss.edu/physicians_albert-todd.asp`. The page has a navigation menu on the left with the following items: **Book Online** (highlighted in blue), About, Insurance, Credentials, For My Patients, Publications, Research, **Industry Relationships** (highlighted in grey), Request an Appointment, and In The News. The main content area is titled **Industry Relationships** and contains the following text:

One of the goals of HSS is to advance the science of orthopedic surgery, rheumatology, and related disciplines for the patients. Physicians at HSS may collaborate with outside companies for education, research and medical advances. HSS encourages this collaboration in order to foster medical breakthroughs; however HSS also believes that these collaborations must be managed in a transparent manner.

As part of the disclosure process, this website lists physician collaborations with outside companies. The disclosures are based on information provided by the physician and other sources and are updated regularly. Further information may be available on individual company websites.

Below are the healthcare industry relationships reported by Dr. Albert as of September 09, 2021.

- Augmedics - Ownership Interest
- Back Story LLC - Medical Director and Board Member of Back Forever, Golf Forever and Fit Forever; Ownership interest
- Care Equity- Ownership Interest
- CytoDyn, Inc. - Ownership Interest
- DePuy Synthes, Inc. - Royalties - Designer of Expedium spine system, Swift and Eagle Anterior Cervical Fixation System
- Elsevier, Inc. - Book royalties
- HS2 LLC - Ownership interest, Board Member
- Innovative Surgical Designs, Inc. - Ownership interest
- InVivo Therapeutics- Ownership Interest
- JP Medical Publishers - Book royalties
- Morphogenesis - Ownership Interest
- NuVasive, Inc. - Consultant
- Orthopedics Today - Editorial Board
- Paradigm Spine, LLC - Investment interest

# Key roles involved

- Information Technologies
  - Director, Research Admin Computing
  - Project manager for Research Administration
  - Developers for VIVO (researcher profiles), POPS (clinical profiles)
  - Database administrators, research administration system and academic staff management system
  - Analysts, Research Administration and Faculty Data
- The Business
  - Director, Human Research Compliance
  - Exec Dir, Research Business Operations
  - Director, Environmental Health & Safety
  - Executive Dir, Clinical Trials

# Timeline

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Updated plan</b>
<b>Leadership approval</b>	Nov. 2020	same
<b>Conflicts Advisory Panel (CAP) approval</b>	Nov. 2020	same
<b>Development work</b>	May - Jul. 2020	same
<b>QA &amp; testing</b>	Aug. - Oct. 2020	same
<b>Initial communication to faculty</b>	Dec. 2020	same
<b>Beta period</b>	Dec. 2020 - Mar. 2021	Jul. - Aug 2021
<b>More communications</b>		Aug. - Dec. 2021
<b>Move to production</b>	Apr. 2021	Jan. 2022

## Demonstration

## Possible outcomes

- Best case scenario
  - Improve patients' confidence in their physicians
  - Provide a disincentive for faculty to make poor decisions
  - Help third parties to surface and effectively criticize bias in research
  - Sets a tone that this institution cares about conflicts and their effects on decision-making
- Some caveats
  - Transparency is a necessary but not sufficient condition for ethical action by physicians and researchers
  - Needs to be pushback for unethical behavior both from inside and outside the institution
  - We don't want to create a CYA system which affords plausible deniability without accountability

## Abstract

- At Weill Cornell Medicine (WCM), all faculty members and staff are required to complete a Conflicts of Interest Survey at least once annually. These disclosures include the following types of external relationships: Advisory/Scientific Board Member, Consultant, Leadership Roles, Ownership, Professional Services, Proprietary Interest, and Speaker/Lecturer. Until recently, these disclosures of external relationships were not easily accessible by the general public. WCM began in January 2022 to publish all external relationships on its clinical (POPS) and researcher (VIVO) profile systems. VIVO is managed by the Samuel J. Wood Library. This change was made by WCM as part of a larger strategy of improving the transparency of its researchers' conduct. This is especially relevant at a time when the integrity of research is under greater scrutiny in society at large.