

EUROPEAN HEALTH MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION SPONSORSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS FRAMEWORK

1. Purpose and Overview

1.1 Introduction

The European Health Management Association – EHMA Partnerships and Sponsorships Framework provides transparency on how EHMA collaborates with partners and sponsors. This document outlines our strategic approach to partnerships, the values guiding our decisions, and ethical guidelines for cooperation, and it reflects EHMA's commitment to collaborative action to improve health management across Europe.

We believe in multi-stakeholder partnerships and sponsorships that include public and private sectors, civil society, and local governments. To maintain trust, EHMA is committed to ethical partnerships and sponsorships that align with its mission and exclude commercial activities that could conflict with public health values.

This framework outlines the strategic approach to building partnerships and securing sponsorships, with a particular focus on the European Health Management Conference, that serves as a platform to foster dialogue, knowledge sharing, and innovation among health management professionals. However, EHMA emphasises that the same principles and ethical guidelines apply to all EHMA partnerships and sponsorships.

1.2 Objectives:

1. Build long-term relationships with high-level institutions, health organisations, and NGOs.
2. Ensure financial sustainability through transparent, values-based sponsorships.
3. Engage with local authorities and public institutions to create regional impact.
4. Foster collaboration with private sector stakeholders committed to health equity and innovation.
5. Ensure transparency in all collaborations to build trust with stakeholders and participants.

2. Principles guiding EHMA partnerships and sponsorships

Health equity and sustainability	<p>EHMA prioritises initiatives that promote fair access to healthcare and reduce disparities in health outcomes, ensuring that no group is left behind. Partnerships and sponsorships are sought to support sustainable health system improvements, fostering resilience and innovation in healthcare delivery. The aim is to contribute to long-term public health benefits, focusing on preventive care, workforce development, and inclusive healthcare models that enhance the wellbeing of individuals and communities across Europe.</p>
Transparency and ethics	<p>EHMA is committed to fostering partnerships built on trust, transparency, and mutual accountability. All collaborations must clearly align with EHMA's mission and values, ensuring that sponsors' interests do not compromise the integrity of EHMA's objectives or activities. EHMA carefully evaluates potential partners and sponsors to avoid conflicts of interest and ensure compliance with ethical standards. A transparent governance structure is in place to monitor and report sponsorship agreements, safeguarding EHMA's credibility and maintaining public confidence.</p>
Multi-stakeholder collaboration	<p>Recognising the importance of diverse perspectives in addressing complex healthcare challenges, EHMA actively promotes collaboration across sectors. Partnerships are open to actors from public bodies, private enterprises, academia, non-governmental organisations, and civil society organisations. This multi-stakeholder approach ensures the exchange of knowledge, resources, and expertise, driving innovation and fostering impactful solutions that address shared healthcare priorities.</p>

Local and regional engagement	EHMA believes in the importance of strengthening healthcare systems from the ground up. To maximise impact, EHMA seeks to engage with local and regional stakeholders, including municipal governments, healthcare institutions, universities, local authorities and local companies. Collaborations at the local and regional level allow EHMA to invest in the region and the local area, be environmentally sustainable, and tailor initiatives to the specific needs of communities.
Shared goals and compatible values	Our partners' and sponsors' goals should align with ours and provide added value to achieving our mission to excellence in health management. Our partners' and sponsors' vision, values and ways of working should be compatible with ours. However, this does not mean that <u>all</u> organisational goals must be shared. EHMA seeks a level of compatibility but accepts that there may be some areas of difference in organisational goals or policies. As long as these do not represent a conflict of interest for EHMA or for the relationship, EHMA and its partners and sponsors can agree to differ.
Joint learning and mutual support	EHMA recognises that learning is a crucial element in any successful partnership and sponsorship and that we need to work together to create a mutually beneficial learning environment, share experiences, and act upon any learnings that emerge. Through learning together and changing our actions and behaviour as a result of lessons learnt, we can improve relationships with and between partners and sponsors and improve the positive impact in health management.
Integrity	EHMA and its partners and sponsors should conduct all business with honesty, truthfulness and sincerity, while remaining fair and ethical. Both EHMA and its partners/sponsors have an ethical obligation to accomplish their tasks with integrity and in a responsible and appropriate manner. EHMA will not accept support that could compromise who we are and what we do, or undermine our effectiveness in achieving our goals.

3. Types of partnerships

EHMA defines partnership as a mutually beneficial relationship between two or more organisations, which is undertaken for a specific programmatic purpose, and which works towards a shared goal of positive and sustainable impact. EHMA considers partnerships to be of fundamental importance in the way we work towards achieving our mission, and especially for the European Health Management Conference.

3.1 Partnerships with high-level organisations

EHMA actively collaborates with prominent international organisations and institutions to enhance the policy impact, credibility, and strategic positioning of its initiatives. These partnerships foster opportunities for joint initiatives, thought leadership, and increased visibility on global health policy issues. By aligning with leading organisations, EHMA reinforces its role as a key player in health management and strengthens its influence in shaping healthcare policies at both European and international levels.

3.2 Partnerships with health NGOs and networks

EHMA collaborates with leading European and international non-governmental organisations to align its initiatives with broader advocacy efforts and promote best practices in health management. These partnerships enable EHMA to contribute to policy discussions, develop innovative approaches to healthcare delivery, and ensure patient-centred care across Europe. Through joint efforts, EHMA and its partners work to influence health policy, share expertise, and build synergies between stakeholders across sectors.

3.3 Media partnerships

Media partnerships are essential to amplify the visibility and impact of events. They ensure that key messages, themes, and outcomes reach relevant stakeholders, including policymakers, healthcare professionals, researchers, industry

leaders, and the general public. Collaborating with media outlets also positions EHMA as a thought leader in health management, driving engagement before, during, and after any event.

3.4 Local and regional partnerships

Local engagement plays a crucial role in ensuring that EHMA's initiatives have a meaningful regional impact, fostering stronger connections with the hosting city/region. This approach not only enriches the event content with region-specific insights but also promotes sustainable collaborations that extend beyond the event. This engagement fosters collaboration between local actors and event participants, promoting mutual learning and long-term partnerships. EHMA seeks to create lasting value by establishing connections between local stakeholders and international participants. These collaborations often lead to joint projects, research initiatives, and policy dialogues that continue beyond the event, ensuring a lasting positive impact on the region. This approach bridges the gap between high-level policy discussions and practical implementation, fostering sustainable partnerships that benefit both local communities and the broader healthcare sector.

4. Types of sponsorships

'Sponsorship' for EHMA means collaborations foreseeing a payment by an organisation or individual in return for public association with an activity, project, event, or asset. This could be in cash or in kind. EHMA actively seeks sponsorships from both public and private sector organisations and companies committed to advancing sustainable and equitable healthcare. The sponsorship packages offer a range of visibility and engagement opportunities, designed to highlight the contributions of sponsors while ensuring strict adherence to EHMA's core values and ethical guidelines. By engaging diverse stakeholders, EHMA enhances the impact and relevance of events and initiatives, fostering collaborations that drive meaningful change in health management.

4.1 Sponsors' categories:

- **Healthcare, Medical Devices, and Tech Companies:** Organisations providing cutting-edge digital health solutions, telemedicine platforms, electronic health records (EHR), and health informatics tools aimed at enhancing patient care and operational efficiencies within healthcare systems.
- **Pharmaceutical and Biotechnology Companies:** Entities involved in the research, development, and distribution of innovative pharmaceutical products, with a focus on innovative treatments, preventive measures, and health equity initiatives. This category includes smaller biotech startups that prioritise improving health outcomes and addressing unmet medical needs.
- **Academic Institutions and Research Institutes:** Universities and research organisations engaged in health-related studies and initiatives that contribute to advancing medical knowledge and practices.
- **Clinical Research Organisations (CROs):** Firms that support pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical device companies by providing outsourced research services for clinical trials.
- **Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):** Organisations that work on various health initiatives, often focusing on underserved populations and advocating for health equity and access.
- **Public Health Funds:** Governmental and non-governmental organisations that provide funding for public health initiatives, research, and community health projects, contributing to the promotion of health equity and access to quality care.
- **Innovation Hubs:** Organisations that foster entrepreneurship and innovation in healthcare, including incubators and accelerators that support startups and initiatives developing transformative health solutions and practices.
- **Publishing and Media Organisations:** Companies that focus on health-related content, including journals, magazines, and media outlets, which can help in disseminating knowledge and promoting health initiatives.
- **Consulting Firms:** Organisations providing expert advice to healthcare companies on strategy, operations, and market trends, which can enhance the impact of health initiatives.
- **Insurance Companies:** Providers of health insurance who are interested in promoting programmes that lead to better health outcomes for their members.
- **Trade Associations and Professional Societies:** Organisations that represent specific sectors within healthcare, promoting best practices, education, and networking opportunities.
- **Companies Focused on Sustainability:** Organisations committed to sustainable practices that contribute to health and wellbeing, which can align with health initiatives focused on environmental health.

- **Local and Other Businesses:** Businesses, even those outside the healthcare sector, can serve as in-kind sponsors, providing resources or services that support health initiatives.

4.2 Public Sponsorships

Public sector sponsorships are essential for supporting EHMA's initiatives and enhancing the credibility and impact of the Annual Conference. These sponsors typically include governmental agencies, public health organisations, and international bodies dedicated to advancing healthcare policy and practice.

4.3 Relationship with the sponsor

The relationship with the funder/sponsor or donor is restricted to the direct purposes of the EHMA Annual Conference and does not extend to other areas of the activity or EHMA operations. All potential fundraising, sponsorship or donations will be assessed against their suitability, risks and appropriateness in relation to the event. Any arrangement for fundraising, sponsorship or donation (incoming and outgoing) should meet the following criteria:

- is consistent with, and enhances EHMA's profile, brand, strategic direction, values and purpose
- the agreement and level of support is adequate to meet the EHMA's objectives
- provides mutually beneficial outcomes
- creates opportunities for the EHMA Annual Conference
- contributes towards enhancing excellence in health management in Europe
- there is no conflict of interest.

All funds received through fundraising, sponsorship or donations must be invoiced by EHMA Director of Operations and the EHMA Finance Manager.

5. Ethical guidelines

EHMA is firmly committed to fostering partnerships and sponsorships that align with its mission, values, and commitment to sustainable and equitable healthcare. To ensure that all collaborations maintain the highest ethical standards, EHMA has established a comprehensive set of guidelines. These principles safeguard the independence and integrity of EHMA's activities while promoting accountability and transparency across all engagements.

EHMA recognises the significant role that sponsorships and partnerships can play in supporting its initiative. However, such sponsorships must adhere to rigorous ethical guidelines to ensure alignment with EHMA's mission and the integrity of the conference. Key considerations include:

- **Transparency and Ethical Standards:** Sponsors and partners are required to demonstrate a commitment to ethical business practices, including transparency in their operations, adherence to industry regulations, and proactive communication regarding their funding sources and intentions. This transparency is essential to maintaining EHMA's credibility and trust among stakeholders.
- **Relevance to Conference Themes:** Sponsors and partners must ensure that their products, services, or initiatives align closely with the key themes and objectives of the conference. This alignment allows sponsors and partners to actively contribute to relevant discussions, share innovative solutions, and provide insights that enhance the conference's overall content and experience for participants.
- **Patient-Centric Focus:** Sponsors and partners should prioritise initiatives that enhance patient outcomes and engagement. Their involvement should reflect a commitment to understanding and addressing the needs of diverse populations, particularly those experiencing health disparities. This focus not only reinforces EHMA's dedication to health equity but also positions sponsors as responsible contributors to the healthcare ecosystem.
- **Educational Contributions:** Sponsors and partners may be invited to participate in educational sessions or workshops, where they can share insights on best practices, new technologies, or emerging trends in healthcare. This educational component fosters a collaborative learning environment and enhances the overall value of the conference for attendees.

5.1 Alignment with Values

All partners and sponsors must demonstrate alignment with EHMA's core principles to ensure the integrity and impact of the conference and broader EHMA initiatives. These principles are:

- **Equity in Health:** Collaborations must actively support efforts to reduce health inequalities by promoting access to healthcare for all individuals, with a particular focus on marginalised or underserved populations.
- **Sustainability:** Partnerships should contribute to the development of resilient and sustainable healthcare systems while promoting environmentally responsible practices. This includes the responsible use of resources, carbon footprint reduction, and alignment with sustainability goals in healthcare.
- **Innovation and Collaboration:** EHMA seeks to work with partners that promote knowledge-sharing, foster multi-sector collaboration, and develop innovative solutions to healthcare challenges. These efforts should aim to improve patient outcomes and health system efficiency through novel approaches.

5.2 No Conflicts of Interest

EHMA takes rigorous measures to ensure that no partnership or sponsorship compromises the independence, objectivity, or values of its activities. Key practices include:

- **Independence of EHMA Activities:** No sponsor or partner may influence EHMA's strategic priorities, conference content, or policy advocacy. All programming, speaker selection, and discussions remain solely under EHMA's control.
- **Restrictions on Commercial Exhibitions:** EHMA does not permit commercial exhibitions at its events to avoid any undue promotion of products or services that could compromise the neutrality of discussions or detract from the conference's educational mission.

5.3 Exclusion of Certain Sectors

To maintain its commitment to public health and ethical standards, EHMA excludes support from industries or organisations whose practices conflict with public health goals or undermine social responsibility. These sectors include:

- **Tobacco, Alcohol and Arms Industries:** Due to their adverse impact on public health, EHMA does not accept financial or in-kind support from companies involved in the production, distribution, or promotion of tobacco, alcohol or arms products.
- **Gambling Industries:** EHMA excludes gambling-related sponsorships to avoid promoting activities that contribute to social and economic harm.
- **Organisations engaged in unethical practices or human rights violations:** EHMA does not collaborate with any entities involved in unethical business practices, corruption, exploitation, or violations of human rights.

5.4 Transparency and Accountability

EHMA is committed to ensuring that all sponsorships and partnerships are conducted with full transparency and accountability to stakeholders. This includes:

- **Public Disclosure of Partnerships and Sponsorships:** EHMA will publish the details of all partners and sponsors on its website, conference materials, and annual reports to ensure full transparency.
- **Accountability in Fund Allocation:** EHMA will regularly report on the use of sponsorship funds to demonstrate how contributions have been used to advance the organisation's mission and objectives.
- **Open Communication:** EHMA encourages open communication with partners, sponsors, and stakeholders regarding expectations, responsibilities, and outcomes. Any concerns about ethical compliance will be addressed promptly and transparently.

5.5 Declaration of Compliance

All partners and sponsors are required to sign a **Declaration of Ethical Compliance**, formally committing to uphold the values, principles, and ethical standards outlined in this framework. This declaration ensures:

- **Commitment to EHMA's Values:** Partners and sponsors affirm their alignment with EHMA's principles of equity, sustainability, and collaboration.
- **Compliance with Exclusion Policies:** The declaration confirms that sponsors are not engaged in activities that conflict with EHMA's ethical guidelines or public health goals.
- **Ongoing Adherence to Ethical Standards:** EHMA reserves the right to reassess partnerships if concerns about non-compliance arise, and it may terminate collaborations that fail to meet the required ethical standards.

By adhering to these guidelines, EHMA ensures that all partnerships and sponsorships reinforce its mission of advancing sustainable, equitable healthcare. These principles foster trust among stakeholders, promote responsible collaboration, and safeguard the integrity of EHMA's activities at the Annual Conference and beyond.

5.7 Commitment to address ethical issues

We actively seek opportunities to work together with external organisations to achieve shared objectives. However, it is vital that we maintain our independence and do not allow external partnerships to bring the name of the European Health Management Association (EHMA) and/or the EHMA Annual Conference into disrepute. EHMA therefore seeks, so far as is practical and within the constraints of Belgian law; initiatives that do not compromise the independent status of EHMA, to ensure that the activities of organisations we work with are consistent with our organisational values.

6. EHMA Process for Partnerships and Sponsorships

6.1 Process summary

A summary of the key activities that EHMA considers essential for each phase is as follows.

- a) **Partner and Sponsors selection:** Potential partners and sponsors are identified and selected, ensuring that they meet the basic minimum standards outlined in EHMA's Due Diligence tool. The purpose and goals of the partnership/sponsorship are established.
- b) **Authority for approval:** For guidance all fundraising/sponsorship/donation can be negotiated, agreed and approved by the Executive Director. All the partnerships can be negotiated, agreed and approved by the Executive Director and the Events Manager.
- c) **A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** is drawn up and signed before the partnership starts. The MoU agrees an overall goal and vision for the partnership/sponsorship and how it might develop over a defined period of time. It outlines a strategy for working together and examples of the type of collaboration that might be embarked upon.

Each sponsorship and partnership will be formalised through written **MoU** detailing the scope, obligations, and benefits, including:

To ensure smooth cooperation and transparency, EHMA follows structured processes:

1. **Sponsorship MoU:** Formalises financial contributions, visibility rights, and responsibilities.
 2. **Partnership MoU:** Outlines shared goals, non-financial contributions, and collaborative actions.
- d) **Declaration of Ethical Compliance:** All sponsors and partners must sign a **declaration** confirming adherence to EHMA's ethical guidelines and commitment to sustainable and equitable healthcare.
 - d) **Planning:** Event planning documentation is drawn up by jointly by EHMA and the partner/sponsor, to include a proposal, log frame if necessary. Event outputs and other performance indicators are agreed. An implementation plan is produced to detail the timeframes and responsibilities for all activities. Monitoring and reporting expectations are agreed.
 - e) **Review:** Informal reviews of the partnership/sponsorship will have been taking place throughout the relationship, but a more formal review should take place as the EHMA Annual Conference comes to the end of its life cycle. EHMA and the partner/sponsor should ensure that both the Conference and the partnership/sponsorship are evaluated to document their respective successes, challenges and learnings.

6.2 Privacy policy

All information concerning partnerships and sponsorships (including their names, addresses, and telephone numbers; amount of the donation for sponsors etc) shall be kept strictly confidential by EHMA, its staff, and volunteers, unless written permission is obtained to release such information.

EHMA is committed to respecting the privacy of sponsors and partners.

The types of information that EHMA collects and maintains are as follows:

- contact information (name, address, telephone number, and email address)
- information on events attended, publications received, and special requests for the Annual Conference
- information provided by the partner/sponsor in the form of comments and suggestions and all the correspondence between EHMA and the partner/sponsor.

EHMA uses this information to understand their interests in its mission and to update them on the EHMA Conference's plans and activities. It is shared with staff, board members, volunteers, and consultants only on a 'need-to-know' basis. EHMA also assures donors that their names and addresses will not be shared with any third party unless permission has been granted.

6.3 Minimum standards

In order to enter a partnership or a sponsorship, EHMA should be satisfied that **NONE** of the following criteria apply to the organisation under consideration. These criteria are reviewed in the first stage of EHMA's due diligence assessment, which takes place with all potential partners and sponsors during the EHMA Conference conceptualisation process. If any of these criteria apply, EHMA will normally not enter into partnership/sponsorship. In exceptional circumstances however, the Operations Team can apply for the decision to be reconsidered, provided that they can explain and justify the situation to Senior Management Team (SMT) and demonstrate that the issue is not serious enough to pose an unworkable risk to EHMA and to the EHMA Conference.

NONE of the following statements should apply for the entity under consideration for the partnership/sponsorship:

- The entity's mission and values are in conflict with EHMA's own.
- The entity intentionally discriminates against people.
- The entity is found involved in exposing their staff, beneficiaries or clients to any form of abuse and exploitation.
- The entity is suspected of furthering its aims through violence or terrorist activities and/or has some connections with terrorist groups.
- The entity is not appropriately registered as a legal entity under various acts of the local laws.
- The entity has not complied with the laws under which it was formed.
- The entity and/or its executives have been found involved in fraudulent or illegal activities as per credible sources.
- The entity is bankrupt, being wound up, under administration by the courts, entering arrangement with creditors, has suspended business activities or is the subject of legal proceedings.
- The entity has been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct in the last two years.
- The entity has been blacklisted by government, regulatory, monitoring, or another oversight body.
- The entity has some relations with industries that are not aligned with EHMA's mission (i.e. alcohol, tobacco, arms industries).

7. Transparency and Reporting

EHMA will publish all active partnerships and sponsorships on its website before the Conference. Sponsorship funds will be managed transparently and audited to ensure alignment with EHMA's mission. EHMA will also release a **report**, highlighting key partnerships, key sponsorships and their contributions to the conference's success.

8. Conclusion

The **Partnerships and Sponsorships framework** ensures that EHMA's collaborations and sponsorships align with its values and mission, contributing to the success of the 2025 conference. Through transparent, ethical cooperation with **diverse stakeholders**, the conference aims to foster dialogue, drive innovation, and build sustainable solutions to improve health for all.

Change control

- Development and review of this framework is the responsibility of the Events Manager, in collaboration with the Director of Operations and the Executive Director.
- Approval and sign-off of this framework is the responsibility of the Executive Director.
- Any substantial changes to this document require approval and sign off.

- The Partnership and Sponsorship Framework is under regular review, and any changes made must be in line with the overall EHMA Policies and procedures.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval authority: EHMA Executive Director, Federica Margheri

Administration: EHMA Events Team

For more information, please contact: conference@ehma.org