

Northwestern University
Vendor Due Diligence - Conflict of Interest FAQs
October 13, 2010

COI Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is this new requirement?
The most prevalent conflicts of interest relate to relationships and interactions with Northwestern University suppliers. The new requirement allows a more routine evaluation of potential conflicts of interest. Additionally, conduct in business and academia has been the subject of public scrutiny and legislation in recent times, and it is good practice for us to demonstrate that our work is free from any question about our motivation and our dedication to the University mission.
2. Can someone else fill out the certification for the individual who selected or directed the vendor to be added to NUFinancials?
No, the individual who selected or directed the vendor to be added to NUFinancials is in the best position to evaluate and certify their relationship with the proposed vendor.
3. What happens if a conflict is identified?
If "Yes" is the answer to a question, the comment box should be completed to describe the potential conflict. The form is then required to be reviewed and approved by the requestor's Conflict of Interest (COI) Manager, the individual that approves the annual Conflict of Interest form. When Transaction Processing identifies a conflict disclosure, an e-mail will be sent to the COI Manager confirming receipt of their approval on the form. The information will be evaluated by representatives from the Controller's Office and Purchasing Resource Services. The COI manager and employee will be notified of the decision related to the conflict and the proposed vendor.
4. If a conflict exists, does this mean the proposed vendor will not be added to NUFinancials?
No, the conflict resolution will be evaluated to determine if it is appropriate to add the proposed vendor.
5. How long does it take for the disclosed conflicts to be resolved?
Upon receipt of the COI disclosure documentation, representatives from the Controller's Office and Purchasing Resource Services will have up to two business days to review the resolution documentation.