

Sponsorship of External Parties Policy

1. Purpose

The Vector Institute may consider providing support to outside organizations for educational events, professional development activities, or networking and collaboration activities within the terms outlined in this policy.

The purpose of this policy is to guide Vector's strategic considerations and day-to-day decision-making in evaluating third party sponsorship requests and to maximize resource allocation for Vector's role in advancing Canada's knowledge, creation, and use of artificial intelligence (AI) while also ensuring Vector's ability to realize its own vision and priorities.

2. Scope

This policy covers all areas where Vector could either provide funds or in-kind contributions to external organizations for collaboration, networking, professional development, and educational activities including conferences, symposia, events, meetings, and lectures.

3. Principles

- To increase the profile and awareness of AI, of deep learning and machine learning more broadly, and of Vector, with relevant audiences
- Fairness and transparency in the way Vector sponsors networking, collaboration, professional development, and educational events and activities
- Fiscal prudence and accountability for use of funds
- Alignment between the activity and/or the sponsored organization/group and achievement of Vector's strategic directions

4. Definitions

- **Sponsorship:** An arrangement where financial or in-kind support is provided by Vector to advance the knowledge, creation, and use of AI, and deep learning and machine learning more broadly, and to increase awareness of the Vector brand.
- **Exhibit booth:** Exhibit space at a conference or event that is purchased by Vector for the purpose of raising awareness of and promoting Vector and the Canadian AI ecosystem.

5. Content

Criteria for Sponsorship Acceptance

The following questions should be considered:

- Does the external organization or event align with Vector's vision, mission, and values?
- Does this sponsorship and relationship support the achievement of Vector's strategic directions?
- What are the costs and measurable benefits to Vector (e.g., increased awareness of Vector, significant exposure to a target group or sector, increased level of inquiries or web traffic from relevant audiences)?

Each exhibit or sponsorship opportunity will be evaluated in light of:

- Its purpose and potential to help advance awareness, knowledge or usage of AI, and deep learning or machine learning more broadly
- Its ability to maximize the visibility, profile, and promotion of Vector’s organization, people, and work
- The active involvement and/or presence of Vector staff or faculty in the activity or event (e.g., presenters, moderators, organizers, booth staffing, attendance)
- The reach and scope of the target audience for the activity, including but not limited to potential talent, academic or research institutions and researchers, key leaders or influencers in priority sectors, or sponsors
- The opportunity to leverage joint promotion with Vector sponsors, meet expectations of government partners, build goodwill and relationships with research and academic institutions, and generally connect other AI ecosystem stakeholders (e.g., accelerators and incubators)
- The ability to leverage and promote work already underway (e.g., Vector researcher involvement in external training workshops or seminars)
- Specific high-profile requests from government funders (e.g., MEDJCT, ISED/CIFAR) for participation will be given priority
- A focus on supporting Ontario-based organizations and activities, with a recognition that national/international groups hosting events in Ontario may also merit consideration
- Other current or potential relationships and partnerships with the external organization – i.e., the scope of sponsorship may be for one event or a related series of events
- Overall cost, including additional expenses that may be incurred by Vector, e.g., travel costs to participate in the event, and probable public perceptions of those costs

Acceptance Conditions

1. Only reputable individuals or legal entities whose image, product, or services do not conflict with Vector’s vision, mission, values, and strategic priorities may be considered.
2. Vector will not exhibit or enter into sponsorship arrangements with any organization that has a primary focus on:
 - a. Party politics at the federal, provincial, or municipal level or any form of political lobbying
 - b. Acceptance of the exhibit or sponsorship must not result in a conflict of interest for either party
 - c. Any other activity, event, or profile that could present a moral hazard to Vector’s reputation, in the opinion of either Vector’s Board or senior staff.

Process

For instructions and guidelines surrounding documentation and form completion related to this policy, please contact communications@vectorinstitute.ai.

Recognition

Sponsors wishing to promote Vector’s support may use Vector’s name and brandmark and link to Vector’s website in content, wording, and links from Vector, as well as alignment with Vector branding guidelines.

Documentation & Record-Keeping

All sponsorships will be documented. All sponsorship requests, evaluations, agreements, and related documentation, together with a list of all sponsorships will be maintained by the Communications and Engagement

Team to track funding and participation, ensure there is no duplication of Vector contributions, and manage records and documentation.