



Ethical Framework for Macular Disease Foundation Australia

Purpose of the framework

Macular Disease Foundation Australia has put in place an Ethical Framework to guide decision-making and practice across all areas of our work. The Ethical Framework provides clarity on translating our purpose, values, and behaviour into practice, aligning ethical practice with relevant legislation, regulation, and internal policies and procedures. This framework assists in representing our community and preserving the reputation of our Foundation and is aligned with the principles of the Australian Consensus Framework for ethical collaboration in the Australian healthcare sector.

Guiding principles

Macular Disease Foundation operates with a strong emphasis on ethical principles, ensuring our activities and strategies align seamlessly with our overarching purpose. We are committed to using our resources responsibly, consistently evaluating our performance to ensure effectiveness and alignment with our purpose to reduce the impact of macular disease in Australia.

Transparency and accountability are central to our approach, as we actively engage with a range of stakeholders. Stakeholder interests are meaningfully considered, fostering a collaborative environment. Expectations for behaviour among all involved parties are explicitly outlined, reinforcing a culture grounded in integrity.

The Board plays a vital role in maintaining clarity and balance, with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and relationships.

How we work with different stakeholders

Government

Macular Disease Foundation works with the Australian, State and Territory Governments to advocate on issues of concern and influence public health policy that will improve outcomes for the macular disease community.

- Macular Disease Foundation receives funding from the Australian and some state governments to support our work. The Foundation also advocates to government on the important issues faced by people with macular disease.
- Macular Disease Foundation is non-partisan in our approach – we engage with both the current Government and the Opposition in a fair and balanced way.
- Our advice and submissions to Government are evidence-based.
- We communicate openly and transparently with Government while always representing our community.
- We work on a “no surprises” basis with the Government of the day.
- We proactively engage in the pre-budget submission process and work to identify any other Government grant opportunities that can further our purpose.

Corporate Partners

Macular Disease Foundation recognises the importance of working in partnership with corporate organisations and the wider eye health sector for collective community impact.

- Partnership and sponsorship initiatives must align with the Foundation’s strategic imperatives and have a demonstrable impact for people with macular disease and their families.
- Macular Disease Foundation does not partner with or invest in industries, companies or brands that derive more than 10% of their revenue from activities associated with the causes of macular conditions such as tobacco, alcohol, unhealthy foods, or sugary drinks or products.
- Macular Disease Foundation does not directly partner with any gambling entities, companies or brands.
- Written agreements on any commercial or non-commercial collaboration will be in place with details of the activities, clear expectations on ethical engagement and communication.
- Macular Disease Foundation will communicate and report on achievements against our contract obligations and provide written reports to demonstrate results.
- We provide and communicate the Foundation’s key priorities and funding opportunities to all long-term partners and encourage collaborative investment between corporate partners and other sponsors.

Pharmaceutical Companies

Macular Disease Foundation recognises the value of working in partnership with pharmaceutical companies, with a focus on treatments for macular disease. Macular Disease Foundation’s partnerships and sponsorships with pharmaceutical companies will in no way impinge on our ability to be an independent voice and representative of the macular disease community.

- Macular Disease Foundation does not recommend, endorse or advertise individual therapies and specific pharmaceutical companies. Treatment and choice of drug therapy must remain within the domain of and be based solely on the advice of the treating ophthalmologist.

- Partnership and sponsorship initiatives with pharmaceutical companies will always align with Foundation's strategic imperatives and have a demonstrable impact for people living with macular disease and their families.
- Access to individual data on patients and private details will never be provided to any pharmaceutical company, unless permission is provided for specific purposes.
- The recognition of funding from pharmaceutical companies will be transparent in the appropriate Macular Disease Foundation documents and platforms.
- For new treatments seeking registration in Australia, Macular Disease Foundation remains independent of the approval processes of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Our role is to advocate for new therapies after they are registered with the TGA so that patients are provided with increased access to cheaper, more convenient and/or more effective treatments. Once treatments are at the stage of being considered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee for reimbursement on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, Macular Disease Foundation may provide a submission highlighting the perspective of people living with macular disease.

The Macular Disease Foundation Australia Board updates this Ethical Framework policy regularly to ensure it remains relevant and effective. This Framework was last approved by the Board in May 2025.