



STS Criteria and Stipulations for Endorsing Industry Educational Programs

CRITERIA

1. The content of the program must be based upon the best and most updated evidence available in the content area(s) covered.
2. The program should be fair, balanced, and not promotional in nature and content.
3. The content cannot disparage other educational programs.
4. The content must be germane to the work of STS members.
5. The content must ultimately be directed toward the benefit of patients.
6. If CME credit is provided, the program must be approved for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* by the sponsoring organization.

STIPULATIONS

1. The Council on Education will vet activities for which STS endorsement is sought) and make recommendations to the Executive Committee with regard to the request.
2. STS must approve the learning objectives and final program.
3. The organization seeking endorsement must describe its disclosure process for speakers and planners, including the manner in which conflicts of interest are resolved and the way this resolution will be disclosed to learners.
4. STS members should be included as speakers for the program where possible.
5. If wet labs are to be used for demonstrating new procedures and techniques, STS members should be involved in the teaching.
6. If the third-party program includes a live surgery component, the program organizers must commit to following the STS policy titled [Guidelines for Using the Cardiothoracic Surgery Operation as a Teaching Instrument](#).
7. The program objectives should include an outcomes component that demonstrates the intended impact of the educational activity on the clinical practice of participants.
8. The program as offered to physicians must be in compliance with [The Society of Thoracic Surgeons' Ethical Standards for Cardiothoracic Surgeons Relating to Industry](#).
9. The program must be in compliance with ACCME Essentials, Elements, Policies, and Standards if *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* is awarded.
10. The program may not be scheduled to take place on the same dates as those of major meetings conducted by international, national and regional cardiothoracic surgery and related medical specialty societies.
11. A nonrefundable application fee is due to STS upon submission of the application.
12. If the application is approved, the duration of the Society's endorsement of the program will be for one year from the date of application approval.
13. If an identical program will be offered more than once during the one-year endorsement term, each subsequent program instance beyond the first offering will be subject to an additional fee.
14. STS members will be granted a discount on the program if a registration fee is involved.

IF APPROVED

1. Organizations sponsoring activities approved for STS endorsement will have the right to use the STS name and logo (trademark license) for that program (or series of programs) only.
2. STS will send via email to each STS member for whom STS has an actionable email address on file, a marketing communication promoting the endorsed activity, to be disseminated electronically on or around an agreed-upon date, provided that the email has been approved in advance by and in the sole discretion of STS.
3. STS will retain approval rights for any marketing material that bears the STS name or logo.

Amended: July 1, 2026 (STS Board of Directors)