



INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES

June 21, 2022

Urgent update: sponsorship of the ICN Tokyo 2022

To: IUNS Adhering and Affiliated Bodies; all potential ICN participants and others with interest in the corporate sponsorship of the 22nd International Congress of Nutrition, Tokyo, December 2022

From: Dr. Hisanori Kato (Chair of the Organizing Committee) and Dr. J. Alfredo Martinez (President IUNS)

Dear colleagues:

We are writing to you in response to the concerns that have been raised with regards to the sponsorship of the 22nd International Congress of Nutrition (ICN) to be held in Tokyo in December 2022. We thank you for bringing these concerns to our attention.

Before providing a few specific responses to your concerns, please rest assured that the IUNS and the local organizers of the 22nd ICN in Tokyo, are highly committed to ensuring the scientific integrity of the meeting. It is for this reason that IUNS recently updated its Private Sector Engagement Policy (available [here](#)). We recognize that for some constituents, the Policy does not go far enough; the next IUNS council has made a commitment to review this, and particularly to ensure that the voice of IUNS members is heard in defining any updates (see the companion letter from Dr. Lynnette Neufeld, President-Elect IUNS).

As local organizers of the 22nd ICN in Tokyo, we are legally bound to follow that policy. But as scientists ourselves, we are also fully and profoundly committed to protecting the scientific integrity of the ICN/IUNS meetings and nutrition research more broadly. We recognize that this information was lacking on the ICN website for you to make the assessment of how this integrity would be protected with regards to corporate sponsorships, and we apologize for that. Reference to the Policy, with specific details on its implementation were added to the 22nd ICN Website on 22 May 2022, but we recognize that may have been insufficient to alleviate some concerns and provide this letter with additional information and updates.

In this regard, we would like to draw your attention to the following considerations that have protected and will continue to protect the scientific integrity of the 22nd ICN:

1. ***There is no participation of anyone from the private sector in the Organizing Committee***, (composition of which can be found [here](#)) nor has there been at any time in the preparation for the 22nd ICN.
2. At the 22nd ICN congress all requirements of the IUNS Private Sector (PS) Engagement Policy are being followed explicitly:
 - “Any financial contributions of the PS to scientific meetings must be given to a common donor pool, controlled by Council or its designee.”
 - ***Fully implemented***

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- “The congress materials provided to participants cannot include gifts (pens, USB drives, sample products, etc.) or any other material containing the logo or name of a company or product. This includes the bag of the Congress if offered.”
 - ***Fully implemented***
 - “The PS cannot place advertisements, sample stands, or any other labelled activity in any of the conference rooms, hallways, stairways and connecting areas where the scientific congress takes place.”
 - ***Communicated with all sponsors and will be monitored and enforced throughout the 22nd ICN***
 - “All commercial exhibits must be located in an area completely independent of the congress venue, preferably on a different floor, and clearly labelled as such.”
 - ***Commercial exhibits will be separate from ICN activities, within the confines of the available conference centre space, and will be clearly labelled as such***
 - “No food and drink carrying the PS logo can be offered by the PS, at any time and in any location within the congress venue.”
 - ***Communicated with all sponsors and will be monitored and enforced throughout the 22nd ICN***
 - “The PS can submit symposium proposals just like any other attendee or organization. They will be evaluated for their scientific quality and relevance to the topics defined for the congress program. These symposia will be scheduled outside of the regular meeting agenda, usually before 8 am or after 5pm or later. The program will clearly label these symposia as industry-sponsored. No gifts, samples of food or drinks carrying PS logos or product names can be offered at these meetings.”
 - ***Fully implemented***
 - “All operational costs of IUNS projects must be covered from the specific budget approved for that project. Council members and IUNS officers cannot accept donations-in-kind from the PS related to the performance of activities on behalf of the organization. These donations may include, for example, the use of services such as communications, printing, etc., hospitality (lodging, food, drinks), transportation (air, car, train, etc.).”
 - ***Council members and IUNS officers confirm that no such donations have been offered by any private sector companies in relation to the 22nd ICN, and if offered will not be accepted, as per the IUNS Policy***
3. We acknowledge and apologize that error was made in accepting funds from Megmilk as a sponsor. In accepting these funds, the 22nd ICN did not adhere with the principle 2.2 laid out in the IUNS policy: “2.2 Nevertheless, the IUNS will consider financial contributions from the private sector from entities that comply with established principles of corporate governance, including protection of children, respect for civil liberties and equality in the workplace, and a corporate public profile consistent with health promotion and disease prevention.” Specifically in this regard, Megmilk does not fully comply with the requirements regarding the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, as evidenced [here](#). Therefore,
- ***The sponsorship from Megmilk has been returned, and all reference to the company is being removed from ICN materials and electronic media (expected date by which this process will be fully completed July 15, 2022)***



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With these clarifications and actions now taken with regards to the sponsorship by Megmilk, the 22nd ICN is fully compliant with the IUNS Private Sector Engagement policy.

We very much hope to see you all in Tokyo in December!

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Hisanori Kato

Chair, Organizing Committee of the 22nd IUNS-ICN

Dr J. Alfredo Martinez

President IUNS (2017 – 2022)