CONSUMER REIMBURSEMENT AND REMUNERATION POLICY

BACKGROUND

Consumer representation across decision-making and program-related processes has been vital to ACTA's progress against its mission, and ACTA is committed to supporting active consumer involvement.

This Policy was developed with reference to similar policies across Australia. It is accepted best practice to provide financial acknowledgement for consumer representation and contribution. In addition to covering all out-of-pocket expenses, consumer payments should reflect the level of expertise, commitment and responsibility that the activity demands.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Consumer Reimbursement and Remuneration Policy (Policy) builds on ACTA's commitment to involving consumers as part of its core business. ACTA recognises that travel and other expenses may be a barrier to consumer involvement and this Policy aims to address this barrier through:

- reimbursement for pre-approved and reasonable expenses incurred as a result of active participation in ACTA's activities; and
- participation payments that acknowledge the lived experience, time commitment, and significant contributions to ACTA's activities.

This Policy applies to any person who has been formally appointed as an ACTA consumer representative. The nature of consumer involvement may vary but could include:

- attendance in a focus group, workshop or consultation activity;
- consumer representation on a recruitment, selection or award judging panel;
- active involvement in the development of resources and publications;
- sharing of their lived experience of clinical trials and clinical quality registries to raise awareness, access and involvement;
- membership on the ACTA Board or an ACTA committee, including reference, steering and working groups.

This Policy does not cover:

- open invitation community forums or consultation events;
- participation in surveys;
- current ACTA employees;
- people funded to represent another external agency, organisation or group;
- any engagement activities or expenses that have not had prior approval from the ACTA CEO or their authorised delegate.

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OBJECTIVES

- To affirm ACTA's commitment to working with consumers.
- To reduce the barriers to consumer involvement in ACTA activities.
- To enable ACTA staff to budget appropriately for consumer involvement and engagement.

DEFINITIONS

ACTA:	Australian Clinical Trials Alliance Ltd
ATO:	Australian Tax Office
Board:	ACTA Board of Directors
Consumer:	Any actual or potential user of the health service
Delegated project or administrative staff:	This is the ACTA staff member supporting the relevant activity and should be determined at the time of budget approval.

PROVISIONS

1. Reimbursements

1.1. Consumer declaration and involvement forms are to be offered to a consumer by the delegated administrative staff supporting the engagement activity.

1.2. Out-of-pocket expenses include public transport, private transport and parking, training, accommodation, and other incidental costs.

1.3. Evidence of attendance or expenses must be provided (e.g. attendance record, meeting minutes, relevant receipts etc.), in order to initiate completion of the payment.

1.4. Claims for the use of private cars are calculated following the Australian Taxation Office Claiming motor vehicle expenses as a sole trader – cents per kilometre policy.

1.5. Approval for consumer out-of-pocket expenses is to be confirmed by the CEO prior to reimbursement.

2. Length of time to claim reimbursement

2.1. Any claim for reimbursement is to be initiated by the consumer with support from delegated administrative staff within three months of the approved activity.

2.2. Some consumers may prefer not to be reimbursed or paid for their time for altruistic purposes, and this is their choice. The offer can be made and recorded as declined.

3. Sitting fees and hourly rate remuneration

3.1. With the exception of remuneration related to Board appointments, which is the responsibility of the Board, ensuring prior budget approval and completion of consumer involvement payments is the responsibility of the delegated project or administrative staff supporting the engagement activity.

3.2. Approval for consumer involvement payments is to be confirmed by the CEO prior to any consumer engagement in ACTA's governance, project or operational activities.

3.3. Any discussion about remuneration should be undertaken with the consumer prior to the engagement.

3.4. Consumer declaration and involvement forms are to be offered to a consumer by the delegated project or administrative staff supporting the engagement activity.

3.5. Schedule 1 outlines ACTA's cost model and contains a defined payment schedule correlating with specific levels of engagement to maintain consistency across activities, projects and programs. The model can be used for budgeting purposes and provides an overview of consumer activity across five levels of consumer participation.

SCHEDULE 1: 2025 ACTA COST MODEL FOR CONSUMER SITTING FEES AND HOURLY REMUNERATION RATE

(This table has been adapted from the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre cost model. It should be reviewed and updated annually)

Level of engagement	Remuneration type	Mechanisms of engagement	Committee Chair*	Committee Member	Participation
Consumer-led	Sitting fee±	• Consumer engagement in ACTA governance, strategy, policy and evaluation. • Advocacy, leadership, evaluation and continuous improvement of consumer engagement practice. • Provision of strategic advice on consumer engagement and consumer-led education and research priorities/initiatives to ACTA leadership team. • Drive a program of consumer-led consultation processes to build relationships and the knowledge base of ACTA.	$294 (≥ 4h)[1] $147 (< 4h)	$252 (≥4 h)[1] $126 (< 4h)	
Partnership	Sitting fee±	• Represent the consumer perspective on consultations, steering committees, reference groups and interview panels.	$252 (≥ 4h)[2] $126 (< 4h)	$216 (≥ 4h)[2] $108 (< 4h)	
Involving	Hourly rate	• Program and project involvement – liaison, working group, advisor, team member, project governance. • Speaking engagements/panel member at ACTA events. • Reviewer roles in research, education, training and communications.			$55/h
Consulting	Hourly rate	• Participate in consultation activities such as focus groups, consultative workshops and interviews+. • Storytelling to support communications, program development or delivery: interviews, writing, video-based.			$45/h
Informing	N/A	• Consumers who receive ACTA communications and may participate as an audience member in ACTA symposia and other events.			$0

[1] Amounts determined by Safer Care Victoria *A guide to consumer remuneration* citing Department of Premier and Cabinet Appointments and Remuneration Guidelines (2023). Schedule C: Classification criteria and remuneration schedule - Group C organisations (Section 3a) relates to advisory bodies to departments. The upper limit has been used for sitting fees to acknowledge the additional time required in pre- and post-meeting reading, preparation, and follow-up actions. The committee member rate is 86% of the Chair rate.

[2] Amounts apportioned for comparative complexity of consumer contribution to align with ACTA tiered model of consumer engagement. The Chair rate is the same as the member rate for *Consumer-led* activities, and the member rate is 86% of the Chair rate.

*There is no separate sitting fee for a Deputy Chair. If a Deputy Chair is appointed, payment will be at the member's rate. If the Deputy Chair assumes the role of the Chair the Chair's fee will be payable for the period the Deputy Chair acts as Chair.

±Sitting fees have been segmented into 4-hour blocks, with maximum payment capped at the full day rate.

+No hourly rate remuneration for participation in surveys.