

DAA Corporate Partnerships: The Facts

DAA is a member-based organisation, and our top priority is supporting our members – more than 6,000 of Australia’s nutrition and dietetic professionals. Our Accredited Practising Dietitians* (APD) members are committed to helping people improve their health through food and nutrition. They take very seriously their responsibility of providing personalised nutrition advice and support, based on robust and objective evidence.

DAA partners with a range of organisations

DAA is very open and transparent about the fact that we partner with a range of organisations.

We are passionate about working across the board to support Australians in improving health through nutrition. We’re here to work together with everybody from government, to the food industry, to public health advocates, to the media, because we care deeply about inspiring and supporting Australians to eat better, be healthier and live life to the full.

We understand that some people may question our Corporate Partnerships. We are a not-for-profit member-based organisation with a big job. There’s minimal Government support for associations such as DAA to carry out our work. Working with Corporate Partners allows us to extend evidence-based nutrition messages further and improve the health of Australians more than we could do on our own.

Importantly, we ensure that activities undertaken with each Corporate Partner are in line with our Vision and Mission and relate to our profession.

DAA maintains independence in working with Corporate Partners

We have a number of protections in place to ensure that our Corporate Partnerships do not influence our decision making or the partnerships themselves. These include:

- Binding legal contracts (which protect the independence of both organisations),
- Robust and transparent [policies and procedures](#) (including ‘Guiding Principles for engaging with DAA Partners and Sponsors’) and
- A risk assessment process before undertaking any partnership.

The DAA Board sign off on all overarching policies and procedures relating to our partnerships but are not involved operationally in dealings with our Corporate Partners (this is managed by DAA staff), so partners have no avenue to influence the DAA Board, its strategies, or its policies or procedures. In essence, we have created a ‘Chinese wall’ between DAA and our Corporate Partners, which highlights our commitment to maintaining our independence and our integrity.

On the (rare) occasion where a partner has sought to influence our policy making or our members, DAA has ceased the partnership.

Income from Corporate Partners makes up a small part of DAA's overall income

Financial independence is paramount to DAA. As a member-based association, DAA receives most of its income through membership fees. Other sources of income are accreditation, advertising and partnerships. Occasionally, DAA receives government funding for specific projects.

Of DAA's total income (in both 2016 and 2017), just under 8% has come from our Corporate Partnerships. And of that income from Corporate Partnerships, no one partner has provided more than 1% of the total revenue.

So, income from Corporate Partnerships makes up a small portion of DAA's overall income. And by limiting the amount of financial support we receive from our Corporate Partners, we ensure that none has enough financial leverage to compromise our independence.

Nutrition information communicated by DAA to the public

DAA provides nutrition information of a general nature to the 'healthy' Australian community, such as through 'Smart Eating for a Healthier You' on our website and through our social media channels aimed at the public. We also regularly and consistently recommend people seek personalised advice and support from an APD.

At a population level, evidence supports a balanced and varied diet, based around eating vegetables and fruit, good-quality carbohydrates (such as wholegrains), lean meats and dairy foods, and limiting highly-processed foods that provide little nutrition. This has been consistent over the years, and this is what we communicate, including through our website and social media channels. Where our content through such channels relates to our partners (such as when we share a partner recipe through Facebook), it is communicated as such.

Information about DAA's current Corporate Partners

- Through our newest category of partnership, **Member Partners**, we work with our APD members who have businesses with products or services that are of value to other APDs. Current member partners include Education in Nutrition, NERO and Xyris.
- **Program Partners** have the highest level of engagement with DAA. Our current Program Partner, Australian Healthy Food Guide (published by nextmedia), delivers evidence-based nutrition messages from APDs nationwide through their magazine for consumers.
- Many of our **Major and Associate Partners** represent core foods. Our work with Jalna Dairy Foods, Meat and Livestock Australia, Australian Breakfast Cereal Manufacturers Forum and Egg

Nutrition Council involves communicating evidence-based health benefits about these foods and appropriate amounts to include in a healthy, balanced diet.

- Our partnerships with ‘big food’ are often mentioned. In fact, just two of our current partners fall into this category, Nestle and Campbell Arnott’s. Nestle employs around 30 APDs who help to facilitate the renovation and innovation of more nutritious products. A focus on portion control and resealable packaging are practical innovations to assist with weight management. Nestle is a leading producer of clinical nutrition products, like tube feeds, formula feeds and supplements. These products provide partial or full nutrition requirements to patients and APDs working in clinical settings use these daily. We also partner with Campbell Arnott’s, and our activities are focussed on wholegrains and vegetables, both key to a healthy diet.
- We also work with **insurers** - Guild Insurance, who provides professional indemnity insurance for APDs and AIA Vitality who promote APDs to their life insurance holders.

How does DAA use money generated from Corporate Partnerships?

By working with Corporate Partners, DAA is able to better support our members. For example, funding from Corporate Partnerships helps offset the cost of continuing professional development for members. Corporate Partners also provide valuable support for DAA programs and campaigns. For example, our partnership with Australian Healthy Food Guide (published by nextmedia) supports advertisements promoting Accredited Practising Dietitians. Corporate Partners have also previously supported the DAA National Conference Research Presentation Awards, Postgraduate Research Scholarships and DAA media monitoring.

Where to from here?

Every year we review what we’re doing, what value we’re getting, what risks there are and whether we’re exerting the influence we need to make the relationships with each of our Corporate Partners work.

As a membership organisation, we’re also engaging with our members for their views in this area. Most recently, we’ve commissioned a group of members to develop a background paper and a comprehensive survey on our Corporate Partnership Program, to gather feedback from all members. This survey will be used to inform the Board on the views of our members regarding Corporate Partnerships. This work is progressing in the first half of 2018.

***Accredited Practising Dietitians:** Accredited Practising Dietitians tailor nutrition advice and support to find the best approach for each person. This is the cornerstone of Medical Nutrition Therapy – it’s what APDs do, and what sets them apart. Like all health professionals, Accredited Practising Dietitians are accountable for the advice they provide. They must abide by DAA’s Code of Professional Conduct and Statement of Ethical Practice – and this includes giving dietary advice that is evidence-based. This means Australians can be confident that advice from an APD is safe, solid and trustworthy.