Friedman School Principles for Engagement and Funding

The mission of the Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy is to generate trusted science, educate future leaders, and produce real world impact in nutrition science and policy. To achieve this mission, multi-sector collaboration is one core strategy. We engage expertise, perspectives, and resources from diverse sectors in order to create and apply dynamic, interdisciplinary solutions to leading challenges in nutrition science and policy.

Our commitment to this mission guides our engagement with others, including extramural support and multi-sectoral collaboration for programs, research, and advocacy. It is our intention to have our work supported by a diverse portfolio of funding and collaborations from foundations, government, the private sector, and philanthropists. The Friedman School understands that all such choices—whether to engage or not to engage with various partners—involves some risk. These include, but are not limited to, risks related to reputation, conflict of interest, and missed opportunities. Our principles for engagement with those outside Tufts University have been developed to minimize risk and maximize impact.

Five key principles guide our considerations for seeking engagement and achieving funding:

1. An evidence-based approach is a core pillar of the Friedman School’s efforts. Through established processes, we take care to safeguard the scientific integrity and objectivity of our research and initiatives. Support and partnerships do not compromise our scientific integrity and obligation to share information for the benefit of the communities we serve.

2. The Friedman School only accepts funds for activities that are consistent with its mission and priorities. Interactions should enhance the goal of the Friedman School to promote health, sustainability, and food justice. Funding will not be accepted that has the potential to be exploited in a way that is inconsistent with our goal.

3. The expectations of prospective partners and sponsors regarding project implementation, outcomes, and recognition will follow established guidelines at the Friedman School and Tufts University. Sponsorship and support that we accept are transparently declared.

4. Control of research activities remains with the Friedman School. Support and partnerships do not unduly influence topic selection, research design, study conduct, data analysis, interpretation or publishing.

5. We value and respect the perspectives of our stakeholders—including Tufts University, our donors, community partners, colleagues, alumni, students, and others. Therefore, we consider these perspectives and seek additional input, as appropriate, from stakeholders when judging the relevance and potential conflicts of interest before engaging with philanthropists, foundations, governments and companies.

For more information, visit the Friedman School research web page containing this document, and information on the Tufts University Financial Conflict of Interest.