

2020 ACC/AHA Valvular Heart Disease Guidelines

An Audit of Author Relationships and Industry Disclosures

DOCUMENT TYPE

Transparency
Synthesis Report

SOURCE MATERIAL

JACC / Circulation 2020

SCOPE

15 Committee Members,
7 Disclosure Categories

The Architecture of Disclosure

7 Required Categories of Review



Employment

Direct payroll ties



Consultant

Advisory roles



Speakers Bureau

Paid presentation roles



Ownership / Partnership / Principal

Equity & stakes



Personal Research

Direct grant funding



Institutional Benefit

Organizational funding / DSMB roles



Expert Witness

Legal testimony

Defining the Thresholds of Influence



Significant Interest



≥5% Voting Stock/Share

OR



≥\$5,000 Fair Market Value

OR



>5% of Gross Income



Non-Financial Ties

Relationships that exist with no financial benefit are included for transparency.



Trial Enroller

Clinical Trial Enroller with no direct/institutional relationship with the sponsor.

Note: Unmarked relationships are considered modest.

The Independence Overview



5 / 15

Zero Reported Ties

One-third of the committee reported absolute independence across all 7 categories.

10 / 15

Active Disclosures

Two-thirds of the committee reported at least one relationship, ranging from non-financial institutional roles to significant equity.

The Strictly Independent Roster

These five members reported "None" across all seven disclosure categories.

ZERO TIES

Catherine
M. Otto
(Co-Chair)

University of
Washington

ZERO TIES

Federico
Gentile

Centro
Cardiologico
Gentile, Naples

ZERO TIES

Hani
Jneid

Baylor College
of Medicine /
Michael
DeBakey VA

ZERO TIES

Eric V.
Krieger

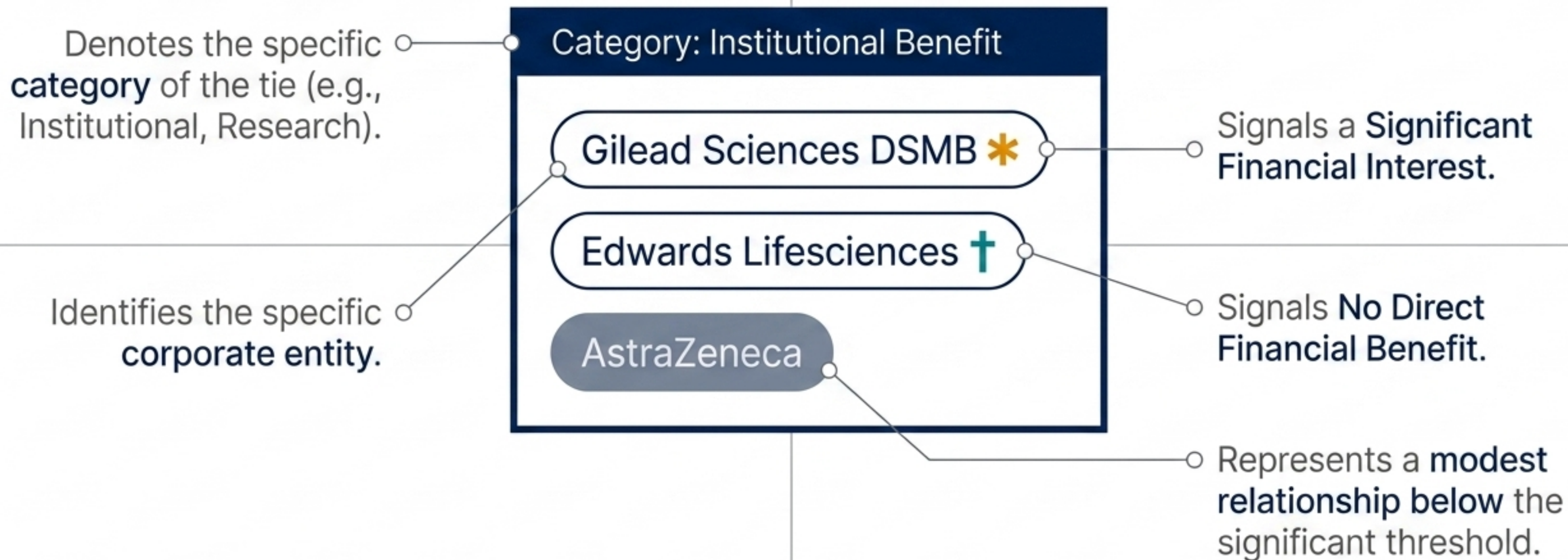
University of
Washington

ZERO TIES

Annemarie
Thompson

Duke University
Medical Center

Reading the Clinical Ledger



Only members with active disclosures are listed in the following ledgers.

Relationship Matrix: Institutional Foundations

Member	Institutional Benefit	Consultant	Research	Ownership	Speaker	Advisory
Rick A. Nishimura (Co-Chair)	Mayo Clinic †					
Robert O. Bonow		Gilead Sciences DSMB * JAMA * NHLBI †				
Blase A. Carabello	CRF	Cardiovascular Research Foundation Edwards Lifesciences DSMB †				
John P. Erwin		Baylor Scott and White Board * NorthShore University Health System †				

Relationship Matrix: High-Density Research Ties

Member Profile

Vera H. Rigolin (Northwestern University)

Personal Research

AstraZeneca

Merck/Schering-Plough *

Bristol-Myers Squibb *

Pfizer *

Celgene Corporation *

Portola Pharmaceuticals *

Institutional Benefit

ASE †

ICU Medical *

Rigolin holds the highest number of discrete industry ties on the committee (8), with 6 categorized as 'Significant Interests' (*).

Relationship Matrix: The Device Network

Member	Institutional Benefit	Consultant	Ownership/ Partnership	Personal Research	Expert Witness
Michael Mack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abbott Vascular † Edwards Lifesciences † Medtronic † 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gore † 			
Patrick T. O’Gara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JAMA Cardiology * NIH * Edwards Scientific † Medtrace † Medtronic † 				
Thoralf M. Sundt			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thrasos * Edwards Lifesciences ‡ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medpace Medtronic ‡ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defendant, Hemorrhage after pacemaker wire, 2019

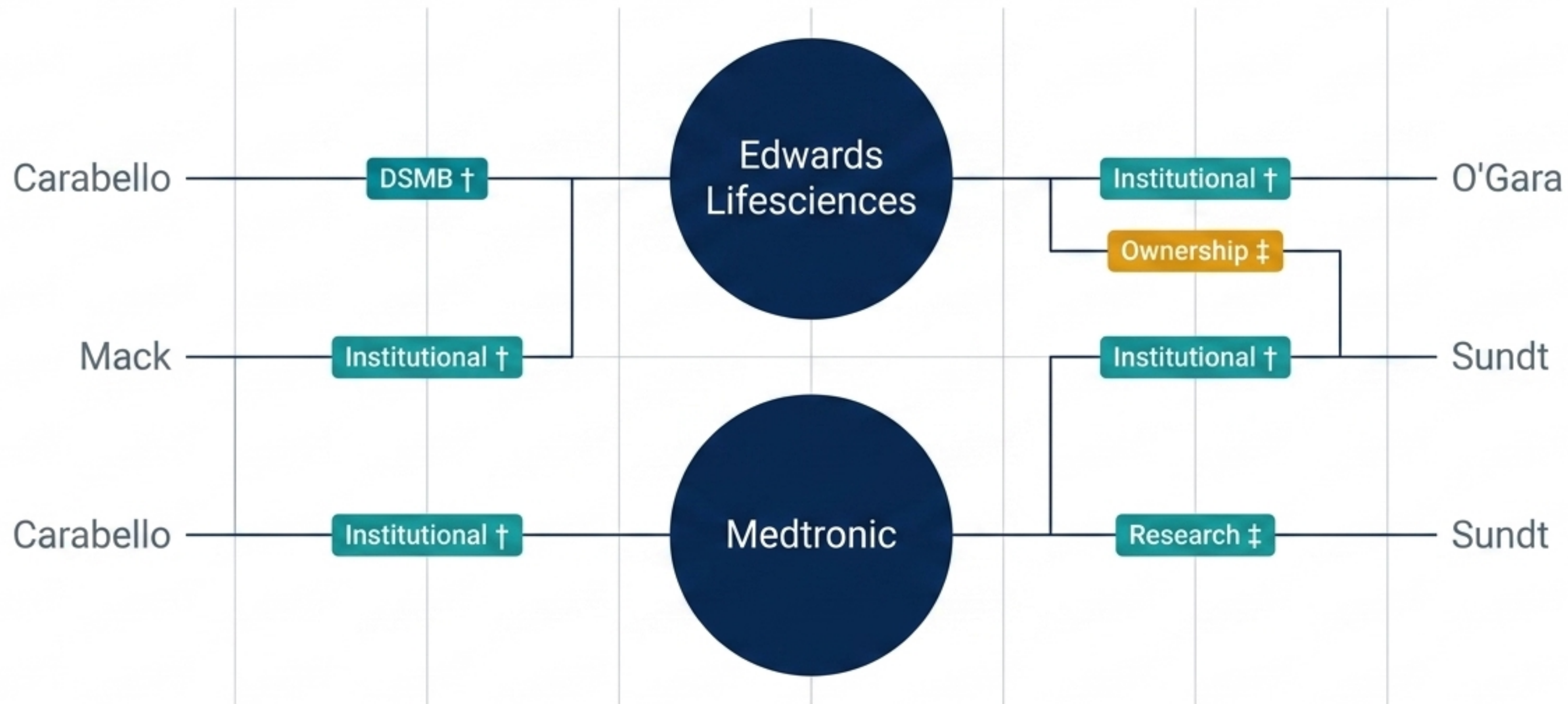
Relationship Matrix: Direct Equity and Employment

	Employment	Ownership/Partnership
Christopher McLeod		<p>Biosig Technologies</p> <p>Catheter Precision *</p>
Christopher Toly	<p>Simulab Corporation (CEO/CTO)</p>	<p>Simulab Corporation *</p>

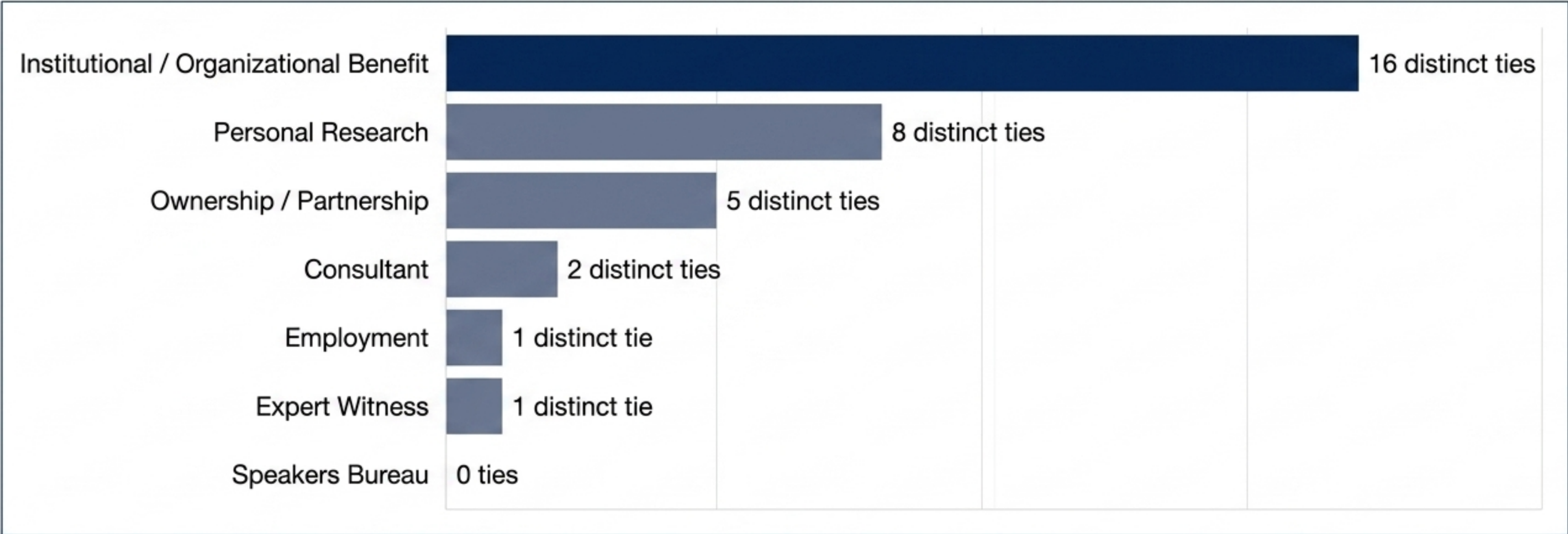
Toly is the only committee member holding a direct C-suite employment position with an active industry entity.

Industry Footprint: The Major Overlaps

Two global device manufacturers account for the primary cluster of overlapping committee relationships.



Categorical Breakdown of Disclosures



The committee has entirely eliminated 'Speakers Bureau' participation, a common historical source of conflict, routing the vast majority of industry interaction through Institutional and Research channels.

Synthesis: The Anatomy of Modern Compliance

Transparency is not the absence of influence, but the precise mapping of it.

CO-CHAIR INSULATION

Both Co-Chairs (Otto, Nishimura) maintain strict personal financial independence from industry.

STRUCTURAL ROUTING

Financial benefits are overwhelmingly routed through institutional or DSMB channels rather than direct personal payments.

DATA INTEGRITY

By quantifying 'Significant Interests' mathematically (the 5% / \$5,000 rule), the 2020 ACC/AHA VHD Guideline forces a rigorous, verifiable standard over subjective reporting.