

EVIDENCE EXCHANGE BRIEF – JANUARY 2020

SYSTEMS OF FUNDING FOR GAMBLING RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

Funding systems for research are a source of debate in the gambling research community, specifically if the funds come from sources that rely on or benefit from gambling revenue.¹ The main concern cited by critics is that the funder has a conflict of interest in favour of expanding gambling revenues and may influence the research process in a number of ways according to that interest.²⁻⁴ Some researchers have ethical objections to taking money derived from gambling revenues since a large proportion of it comes from people with gambling problems.⁵

Although there are conflicts of interest for researchers working directly with gambling industry partners, there are also potential benefits. In particular, the arrangement gives researchers access to industry data and the ability to do on-site research that they otherwise may not receive in jurisdictions where there is no regulatory requirement for operators to provide access.³

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE ABOUT INFLUENCE OF FUNDING SOURCES

In the fields of alcohol and tobacco research it has been demonstrated that the industry bodies used tactics to influence research and harm reduction programmes in ways that favour industry interests rather than the health of the public.⁶ There are concerns of similar effects occurring in the gambling research field, although the literature lags behind in investigating this.⁶ There have been only a few published studies on the influences of funding sources on gambling research outcomes, and they are described briefly below.

The landmark 2013 report “Fair Game: Producing gambling research” performed in-depth interviews with 109 participants who either produce or use gambling research, including 67 UK participants.⁷ On the topic of funding sources, some important findings of the study were:

- No funding sources are neutral, so funding programs are all influenced by some degree by the source’s priorities and paradigms.
- Industry maintains a level of influence over voluntary contributions, even if administered by an intermediary.
- General research councils expect gambling research to be funded by specialized gambling charities, thus gambling research is not generally funded from other sources.

- Gambling researchers prefer not to take money from industry, but are pressured to do so when it is their only option.⁷

More recently, one research team produced a brief report and a review article that found no biases related to source of funding.^{8, 9} However, these conclusions should be interpreted with caution as there are many potential sources of bias in research and these studies only investigated specific sources of methodological bias. Furthermore, the review article's authors declare that the study was directly funded by gambling industry, and quantitative reviews from other fields have found that industry sponsorship can drive research agendas away from public health interests.¹⁰

In summary, the empirical evidence base is still being developed, but proponents for changing funding practices argue for the following principles:

1. Research should not be funded by the proceeds of gambling;
2. Research priorities should not be influenced by the beneficiaries of gambling;
3. Conferences and other research fora should not be influenced by industry;
4. Funding sources must be disclosed in journals and at conferences; and,
5. Meaningful access [for researchers] to products and environments must be part of licensing.¹¹

The International Think Tank on Gambling Research, Policy and Practice has also drafted a gambling research code of ethics ("the Auckland Code"), although it has not yet been finalized.¹²

VOLUNTARY VS INVOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

As found in the Fair Game report, voluntary industry contributions for research are conceptualised as a gift, and thus the industry has a sense of ownership over the fund and influences the research agenda. Even if the funds go to an intermediate third party, industry can influence the research agenda tacitly or explicitly if, for instance, industry representatives sit on an advisory committee for the research fund.

For example, the most controversial gambling research funder that is not a gambling operator might be the National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG) in the United States.¹³⁻¹⁵ It is a not-for-profit organization but receives its funding as donations from the American Gaming Association and other industry groups.^{16, 17} Thus, although there are concerns about all forms of funding derived from industry contributions, it is important to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary industry contributions, as voluntary contributions have been shown to be subject to more industry influence.

HYPOTHECATED FUNDING PROGRAMMES

Government-administered research programs are often funded through hypothecation. Hypothecated funds, also referred to as a levy or levied funds, refers to a research programme or other programme to address gambling harm that is funded from a predetermined portion of gambling revenues. Examples include arrangements where a certain percentage of all slot machine revenues go into the fund, or a percentage of each casino's annual license fee. The concern with this model is that it creates a conflict of interest whereby gambling research programmes benefit financially from the expansion of gambling, which may encourage more industry input into research agendas.¹¹ Critics argue that to fund gambling research, governments can direct gambling taxes to a consolidated fund, and then fund research programmes out of the consolidated fund in order to reduce industry influence into the research programme.¹¹

In the context of these current issues, this brief report details the gambling research funding programmes of 11 jurisdictions across 7 countries, followed by a table summarizing the programmes and their main advantages and disadvantages.

JURISDICTIONAL SCAN

AUSTRALIA

In Australia, there are two national funding sources for gambling research. The Australian Gambling Research Centre (AGRC), which is funded by the Australian Commonwealth Government, and Gambling Research Australia (GRA), which is a partnership between the Commonwealth Government's Department of Social Services and all eight State and Territory gambling regulatory bodies. Some Australian states also have their own research programmes, while others make all their research funding contributions to GRA. In this report, we give a detailed account of the state research funding structures in New South Wales and Victoria, but note that the Australian Capital Territory's Gambling and Racing Commission and Tasmania's Department of Social Services also have active gambling research programmes.

The main advantage of the state partnership model is that it can create a robust programme involving smaller jurisdictions that could not fund large research projects on their own. GRA has been very productive in terms of research outputs.¹⁸ One risk of this model is that the different member organizations will have varying research/policy objectives, which a consensus research programme may not adequately address. In Australia, the 2010 Productivity Report on Gambling found Gambling Research Australia to be innovative and productive, but criticized the research programme for not producing research that can inform policy decisions to reduce harm from gambling.⁵ This may have contributed to the decision to

create the Australia Gambling Research Centre (AGRC) in 2013, whose research programme reflects the policies of the Commonwealth Gambling Measures Act 2012.¹⁹

The AGRC is situated in the Australian Institute for Family Studies and is funded from the Australian Government's general fund. Thus, it is one of the few gambling research programmes in this scan whose funding model has no direct connection to gambling profits, eliminating that potential conflict of interest.

NEW SOUTH WALES

The New South Wales Office of Responsible Gambling manages the government's gambling research fund. The Office is situated in the Better Regulation Division of the Department of Customer Service, and therefore is under a regulatory mandate. The research programme is funded by the Responsible Gambling Fund, which is funded through a legislated levy on each licensed in the state. Currently, the levy amount is set at 2% of all gaming revenue. In 2018/19 the Responsible Gambling Fund gave \$30 million to responsible gambling programmes, including research.²⁰

The Office's 2018-2021 strategic plan identifies six research priorities, including "what works in prevention and harm minimisation" and "support for policy development and regulatory effectiveness".²¹ However, it is worth noting that half of the 2019-20 research projects are focused on the priority area "emerging technology and new trends",²² so other topics like harm minimization and policy development may not be top priorities.

The levy amount is determined according to the *Casino Control Act 1992 Section 115*, which states that the levy is to be:

*"(a) as agreed from time to time by the Treasurer and the casino operator concerned, or
(b) in the absence of agreement, as determined by the Treasurer from time to time."*^{23, Sec. 115}

Thus, although the levy is legislated, the actual amount levied is agreed on by the casino operator. Thus, the contributions are "voluntary" to that extent and as a result is somewhat subjected to the conflict of interest issues involved in voluntary contributions.

VICTORIA

The Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation (VRGF) is an independent statutory authority that is accountable to the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation.²⁴ Therefore, it is a third-party group that administers all levied Responsible Gambling funding, but it falls under the jurisdiction of the gambling regulator.

The VRGF is funded through funds a health benefit levy hypothecated from a percentage of EGM revenues into a Consolidated Fund.²⁵ VRGF's current annual budget is approximately \$38.25M/year²⁶, of which approximately \$1M/year is spent on research activities.²⁷

The VRGF levy model in Victoria is complex and spread across multiple pieces of legislation.²⁵ Thus for the purpose of this report an estimate is provided. According to the most recent Australian Gambling Statistics (2017-18), total Victorian gambling losses for the year was \$5.81 billion.²⁸ In the same year, the VRGF's [annual budget](#) was approximately \$40 million.²⁹ Therefore, the total budget for VRGF for the 2017-18 year, which presumably all came from hypothecated gambling revenues, was approximately 0.688%.

CANADA

In Canada, Federal legislation on gambling is limited to the Criminal Code of Canada, and all gambling regulation and harm minimization is the responsibility of the individual provinces. As such, there is no national body supporting gambling research, however provincial stakeholders may be members of the Canadian Consortium for Gambling Research (CCGR), which currently has six member organizations from six provinces. The organizations include gambling regulators, gambling operators, and independent gambling research/KTE organizations. Members pay an annual membership fee to CCGR which funds the triennial inclusion of a gambling module in the Canadian Community Health Survey.³⁰ They also occasionally fund other research initiatives of national interest, including the development of measurement tools including the popular Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI).³¹ Multi-jurisdiction research partnerships may consider funding standardized prevalence studies or measurement tool development that are more universally useful across multiple jurisdictions, rather than policy research that may only be useful in certain policy contexts.

ONTARIO

Until recently, 2% of slot machine revenue from most casinos in Ontario, Canada was levied to the province's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) to fund the research, prevention, and treatment of problem gambling.^{32, 33} Indigenous casinos and resort casinos were not subject to the levy.

Research funds were administered through an independent third party, the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre (OPGRC) from 2000 to 2013. In this time, OPGRC was the largest single funder of problem gambling research and made high-quality contributions to our understanding of problem gambling. However, their research programme was criticized for being too narrowly focused on the psychology of individual problem gamblers and not investigating the broader social and economic determinants.³⁴ Consequently, when setting research agendas it is important to carefully consider whether the research priorities sufficiently span all facets of the issue.

From 2013 to 2019 the funding was restructured so that research funds were administered directly through the Ministry's Health Systems Research Fund, and OPGRC shifted its mandate knowledge translation and exchange (KTE), under the new name GREO. As part of GREO's service to MOHLTC, GREO provided Managed Research services for the province's monopoly gambling operator, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG). Under this model, OLG would provide research grants to investigate specific responsible gambling topics, but GREO would administer all aspects of the grant, including deciding what researcher is awarded the grant, and managing all communications with the researcher. Although research funded through voluntary industry contributions is at higher risk for industry influence, managing the research through an intermediary with a health mandate reduces the level of influence the gambling operator has on the research process, while maintaining the benefits of industry cooperation such as access to player data and permission to perform *in situ* research in casinos.³⁵

In 2019, The Health Systems Research Fund, including GREO, was eliminated from the provincial government's budget.³⁶ Future funding structures could consider specifically requiring a gambling research programme rather than creating one large umbrella fund for all of treatment, prevention and research, which has the potential for research funds to be reduced or eliminated.

FRANCE

The French online gambling regulator, the *Autorite de regulation des jeux en ligne* (ARJEL), was created in 2010 when online gambling was legalized in France. At that time, it was legislated that online gambling operators were required to disclose all data to ARJEL, including customer behaviour and transaction data.³⁷ In turn, ARJEL provides health researchers access to this data to investigate topics such as early detection of problem gambling risk.³⁸ Through these legislative requirements, France is able to make rich online gambling data available to health researchers without requiring them to build relationships with gambling operators.

ARJEL is funded through contributions from a number of France's economic and financial ministries,³⁸ however further investigation of the funding structure of ARJEL and its research programmes is beyond the scope of this document.

NEW ZEALAND

In New Zealand, the Gambling Act 2003 enacts a levy on gambling operators to fund an "integrated problem gambling strategy", including public health services, intervention services, research, and evaluations.³⁹ This integrated strategy fund is administered by the Ministry of Health, and it is a legislative requirement that it take a public health approach to gambling

harm. The current three year strategy has an approximate \$60.339M NZD budget, of which \$4.5M is allocated to research and \$1.5M to evaluation.⁴⁰

If the goal of a gambling research programme is to improve the health of the population, then it is logical that an organization with a health mandate would be better suited to administer that programme than one with a regulation mandate. In the recent *Nature* editorial “Science has a gambling problem”, it is suggested that government health research agencies are best positioned to take the lead on government research programmes.⁴¹

Given the strategy’s administration by a government health agency and high proportion of the budget allocated to research, this is one of the more robust funding models in this scan. It is not without criticisms, however, particularly for allowing high levels of gambling industry input, and granting hypothecated gambling profits to many government and community organizations.⁴²

Unlike most other levy systems where a predetermined percentage is hypothecated from total revenue, in New Zealand the Ministry of Health first proposes a budget for the integrated problem gambling strategy, and once the budget is approved, the levy formula is applied to determine how much each gambling sector will contribute. In the current funding cycle, the following portions of player expenditure were levied from the four sectors subject to the levy:

- Non-casino gaming machines: 0.78%
- Casinos: 0.56%
- New Zealand Racing Board: 0.52%
- New Zealand Lotteries Commission: 0.43%⁴⁰

The levy formula is legislated in the Gambling Act.^{39, Sec. 320} The variables in the formula include all forms of player expenditure in the sector, as well as the number of people presenting for problem gambling services, although the weighting between these two variables can be changed. In effect, gambling operators are required to make larger contributions when more people present for problem gambling services.

This is a unique hypothecation model in that it creates a direct financial incentive for operators to prevent instances of problem gambling. Still, there are some potential issues with using access of problem gambling services as a measure. It has been estimated that only 7-12% of people with problem gambling seek help from problem gambling services,⁴³ and it also does not account for people experience low or moderate gambling harms. This model could also create a financial incentive for gambling operators to discourage people from accessing problem gambling services. The Ministry of Health has acknowledged some of these issues and in response, the current funding cycle reduced the relative weighting of problem gambling presentations.⁴⁰

In summary, New Zealand uses an innovative and promising model to derive gambling research funds based on the amount of gambling harm being experienced in the jurisdiction, but careful consideration is required in determining how “harm” is measured.

NORWAY

Although details about Norwegian gambling research funding structures are not available in English, a rapid Web of Science search for gambling research articles with a Norwegian funding source declared (N=25) found that approximately 50% were funded by the Norwegian Research Council, 25% by the government monopoly gambling operator Norsk Tipping, and 25% from other sources. We also know that some gambling research is done through the Norwegian Institute for Alcohol and Drug Research.

Gambling research funded by broader research councils is highly preferable according to critics of current research funding systems, as it removes connections to operator and government vested interests and it ensures that the level of quality and innovation in the research approach is on par with other non-gambling research in the jurisdiction. It is unclear, however, if there are any structures in place at these institutes to ensure gambling gets funded. Further investigation is required to determine the extent to which general research councils fund gambling research in other jurisdictions

For the studies funded by Norsk Tipping, it appears that the funding is granted directly to individual researchers (for example, see Auer and Griffiths⁴⁴). Research funding received directly from gambling operators is considered high risk in terms of conflict of interest, however the risk for “industry friendly” research is potentially lower if the operator is government-operated rather than privately owned. That being said, the distinct benefit of this arrangement is that it provides researchers with access to gambling data and environments that are not otherwise available. In the case of Norway, this is especially valuable as it is a highly regulated gambling environment with controls such as mandatory pre-commitment and global loss limits, meaning that the researchers may have access to operator data on these interesting topics.

SWEDEN

In Sweden there are two main funding streams for gambling research. The government monopoly gambling operator Svenska Spel has a research programme funded from gambling profits, and the Public Health Agency of Sweden funds its own research programme on gambling. Most of the Public Health Agency’s research investment falls under the Swedish Longitudinal Gambling Study project (Swelogs), a large longitudinal study on the relationship between gambling and health.⁴⁵

From Svenska Spel's 2018 annual report⁴⁶, since 2011, they have contributed over 50M SEK (~4M GBP) to gambling addiction research. For the next four years, they have committed 7.5M SEK (~0.61M GBP) to fund a research professorship in gambling addiction at Lund University, and a further 31.5M SEK (~2.54M GBP) to their Research Council. The Research Council awards grants for gambling research and is independent from Svenska Spel, as it is comprised of representatives from Karolinska Institute, Uppsala University, and the Public Health Agency of Sweden.

For the research voluntarily funded by Svenska Spel, the concerns for conflict of interest apply; however, the degree of industry influence is mitigated somewhat in both cases: there are no industry representatives sitting on the Research Council, and a research professorship at a university will have more research autonomy than researchers given individual grants for specific projects, assuming there are no academic constraints imposed on the professor. The professorship model is valuable as it creates more credibility for the research, however it is a larger financial investment requiring a longer time commitment.

It is evident that the two research programmes are distinctly aligned with the interests of the funding agency. The Research Council and professorship funded by Svenska Spel are both specifically focused on *gambling addiction*, and this research focus is normally limited to people currently experiencing gambling problems. On the other hand, the Public Health Agency's gambling mandate is to *prevent gambling problems* and the research programme takes a population level approach to studying the relationship between health and gambling in general.

UNITED STATES

In the United States there is no national government agency responsible for funding gambling research. The only nationwide body funding gambling research is the National Centre for Responsible Gaming (NCRG), a not-for-profit discussed in more detail in this report's introduction. The editorial board of *Nature* has called for a national government agency, preferably a health agency, to assume this responsibility.⁴¹

The United States gambling environment is complex and a discussion of all research funding programmes is beyond the scope of this report. However, we will discuss the recent regulatory changes in Massachusetts as an illustrative case study.

MASSACHUSETTS

In the state of Massachusetts, the 2011 Expanded Gambling Act requires an annual research agenda to "*understand the social and economic effects of expanding gaming in the commonwealth and to obtain scientific information relative to the neuroscience, psychology, sociology, epidemiology and etiology of gambling.*"^{47, sec. 71} The research programme is funded

through the Public Health Trust Fund. This fund receives a minimum of \$5,000,000 each year from gambling operators, divided proportionally by the number of total gaming positions at each establishment.^{47, sec. 56}

Although the research funds are derived from gambling operators, they are not hypothecated in the strictest sense. The fund receives a flat rate spread across all gambling operators and not a percentage. Although some critics argue that no gambling research should be directly funded from the proceeds of gambling, this model removes the vested research in gambling expansion, since the research fund would receive the same amount even if gambling expanded further. Regarding the administration of the Public Health Trust Fund, research funding decisions are made by the state's secretary of health and human services, under the advice of the Gaming Policy Advisory Committee.^{47, sec. 58} The advantage of this arrangement is that the top decision-maker has a health mandate and is thus more likely to make research decisions in the interest of the health of the public. However it is worth noting that the Gaming Policy Advisory Committee includes appointees who are representatives of gaming licensees.^{47, sec. 68}

Another benefit of this research programme is that the research agenda is diverse, and emphasizes studying the broad socioeconomic effects of gambling, which are historically understudied in gambling research.⁴⁸ Furthermore, it is a legislated requirement that there be an annual research programme, and that the programme has a dedicated fund, rather than one larger "Responsible Gambling Fund", that must be divided between research, prevention, and treatment as is common in other jurisdictions.

Currently, the fund supports a large research programme called the Social and Economic Impacts of Gambling in Massachusetts (SEIGMA). SEIGMA is a rigorous and well-regarded programme covering a wide array of topics in gambling, including a longitudinal study.⁴⁹ In general, establishing this programme in concert with the legislated expansion of gambling has allowed them to do valuable before-and-after research as gambling expanded in the state.

OTHER FUNDING MODELS

RESEARCH CHAIRS AT UNIVERSITIES

Like Sweden, some funding programmes in other jurisdictions elect to establish research chairs at universities in addition to awarding funding on a project-by-project basis. Some examples of gambling research chairs and their funders include:

- Alberta Gambling Research Institute (AGRI) Research Chair and Research Coordinator positions at three universities in Alberta, Canada. AGRI is funded by the province's Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance.⁵⁰

- The French online gambling regulator ARJEL supported the creation of a chair on gambling regulation at the University of Bordeaux's Department of Law.³⁸
- Australian Capital Territory's Gambling and Racing Commission (gambling regulator) funds the Centre for Gambling Research at the Australian National University.⁵¹
- In British Columbia, Canada, the Centre for Gambling Research at the University of British Columbia was established with funding from the provincial government and the British Columbia Lottery Corporation (provincial government monopoly gambling operator).⁵²

The obvious disadvantage of this model is that establishing a university research chair is more costly and requires longer-term commitment than funding individual research projects. However, the distinct advantage is that it provides a larger degree of academic freedom to the researchers, and leveraging their expertise in this way adds more credibility to the programme. Research chairs are variously established by funds from gambling regulators, gambling operators, and general government funds, and although the research may still be influenced by the funding source's interests, the degree of influence would be reduced. The concerns about voluntary contributions from gambling operators still apply in this case.

PRIVATE GAMBLING OPERATORS

It must be noted that private commercial gambling operators also directly fund research that is published in academic journals. For example, the industry trade group ClubsNSW has funded two recent studies through a deed of gift directly to the researchers.^{53, 54} The authors declare that the research was conducted with no input from ClubsNSW in the design and methodology of the study; however, as described in the introduction, these are only two of many potential sources of bias, and research funded in this way is considered to be at highest risk of conflict of interest.

SUMMARY TABLE

This table summarizes the research funding models in this report, including advantages and disadvantages, to inform decision-making

Jurisdiction	Research Programme	Source of funds	Primary administrator of funds	Advantages	Disadvantages
Australia	Gambling Research Australia (GRA)	Eight state and territory gambling regulatory bodies (regulatory agency)	Partnership between Australia Department of Social Services (health agency), and state and territory gambling regulatory bodies (regulatory agencies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces more research output and can pursue larger projects than jurisdictions can do individually. • Involves smaller jurisdictions that cannot run a full research programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different jurisdictions will have different policy objectives, and the research agenda may not be able to adequately address all of them
	Australian Gambling Research Centre (AGRC)	Australian Government general fund	Australian Institute of Family Studies (health research agency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding not connected to gambling profits • Health agency focus on gambling harm reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding must compete with other government health priorities.
New South Wales, Australia	Responsible Gambling Fund	A percentage of gaming revenues from each licensed casino, as agreed on by the state treasurer and the casino operator	Office of Responsible Gambling (regulatory agency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated funds for responsible gambling research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on “responsible gambling” (RG) research • Funds come from same pool as other RG initiatives • Conflict of interest: funds are somewhat voluntary as they are agreed on by the operator

Jurisdiction	Research Programme	Source of funds	Primary administrator of funds	• Advantages	• Disadvantages
Victoria, Australia	Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation (VRGF)	Levy based on number of active EGMs, a percentage of EGM revenues, and other factors.	VRGF, which is accountable to the state regulatory agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levy is a “health benefit fund”, so research fund has a public health approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small proportion of the health benefit fund is allocated to research • Conflict of interest: the fund benefits from increased EGM revenues
Canada	Canadian Consortium for Gambling Research (CCGR)	Membership fee from various gambling organizations	Partnership of members, including regulatory, operator, research and KTE organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership has clear charter to do projects of national interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of national support means most funding goes to including gambling questions in the national health survey.
Ontario, Canada	Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre (OPGRC, 2000-2013)	Levy from percentage of EGM revenues, with some exceptions	OPGRC, an agency of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPGRC’s mandate was exclusively funding problem gambling research, thus produced high-quality research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research mandate was limited to problem gambling • Conflict of interest: the fund benefits from increased EGM revenues
	Ontario Lottery and Gaming (OLG) Managed Research Program	OLG (government monopoly gambling operator)	GREO, an agency of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (until 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry provided access to gambling venues • Research managed by health agency reduces industry influence on research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict of interest: gambling operators voluntarily contributed funds, and set research topic

Jurisdiction	Research Programme	Source of funds	Primary administrator of funds	• Advantages	• Disadvantages
France	<i>Autorite de regulation des jeux en ligne</i> (ARJEL) data initiative	Multiple economic and financial ministries	ARJEL (regulatory agency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gambling researchers can access online gambling data without building relationships with gambling operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a research funding programme; only a programme providing data access for research
New Zealand	Integrated Problem Gambling Strategy	Levied from operators based on player expenditure and level of gambling harm (measured as use of problem gambling services)	Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme is administered by a health agency and legislated to take a public health approach • High proportion of strategy budget allocated to research and evaluation • Strategy budget is set first, then levy percentages are based on the approved budget • Levy formula incentivizes operators to prevent gambling harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy has high levels of industry input. • Levy measures gambling harm through access of problem gambling services, which is a very limited measure of harm.
Norway	Norsk Tipping research programme	Gambling revenues, voluntarily contributed	Norsk Tipping (government monopoly gambling operator)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers have access to industry data from a highly regulated jurisdiction, allowing for unique research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary funding directly from gambling operator to researchers is a high-risk conflict of interest

Jurisdiction	Research Programme	Source of funds	Primary administrator of funds	• Advantages	• Disadvantages
Norway cont'd	Norwegian Research Council	General government funds	Norwegian Research Council (general research granting agency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No connection between research funds and gambling-related vested interests • Gambling research will be high-quality, on par with other research funded by the Norwegian Research Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No structures in place to ensure that gambling research is funded
Sweden	Swedish Longitudinal Gambling Study (Swelogs)	Ministry of Health and Social Affairs	Public Health Agency of Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding not connected to gambling profits • Public health agency well-positioned to take a public health approach to gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding must compete with other public health priorities
	Svenska Spel Research Council	Gambling revenues, voluntarily contributed	Various non-industry council members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No industry representatives on granting council reduces industry influence on research process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary contributions from industry are a high risk of conflict of interest in the research agenda
	Svenska Spel research professorship on gambling addiction, Lund University	Gambling revenues, voluntarily contributed	Person holding the research professor position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor has more research autonomy than grantees, reducing industry influence • Research is perceived as more credible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict of interest: true level of professor's research autonomy is unknown. • Larger financial commitment than research grants

United States	National Centre for Responsible Gaming (NCRG)	Voluntary industry donations	NCRG Scientific Advisory Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme is well-funded, and has high standards for scientific methods and peer-review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of industry involvement cause programme to be controversial • Focus on gambling disorder misses many determinants of gambling harm
Massachusetts	Social and Economic Impacts of Gambling in Massachusetts (SEIGMA)	Flat rate amount derived from gambling licensees	Secretary of Health and Human services, under advice of Gaming Policy Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual research agenda studying the broad societal effects of gambling • Top administrator of the fund has a health mandate • Hypothecation model reduces vested interest in gambling expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds are derived from gambling revenues • Research advisory committee includes representatives from the gaming licensees
Various	University research chairs	Various, but usually gambling revenues either voluntarily or involuntarily contributed	Person holding the research professor position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor has more research autonomy than grantees, reducing funder influence • Research is perceived as more credible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict of interest: true level of professor's research autonomy is unknown. • Larger financial commitment than research grants
Various	Private gambling operator research programmes	Gambling revenues	Gambling operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers have access to gambling venues and data otherwise unavailable for investigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This model has the greatest potential for industry influence and thereby constitutes the highest risk of conflict of interest.

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