

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 1

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

Your funder asks to see an early draft of a study he funded so that he can provide comments on it. The funder has expertise in the field and tells you that you can decide freely whether to integrate these comments or not.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 2

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

You hired an expert to work part-time on a long-term research project on different regulatory options and state subsidy schemes for a specific economic sector. In her spare time, the expert earns substantial additional income by doing consulting work for large companies working in this economic sector.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 3

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

A funder offers to fund a 4-page policy briefing note, explaining that no additional research is required. Instead, the funder just wants you to re-package conclusions and policy prescriptions from your previous studies (which were methodologically solid and, incidentally, align with the funder's vested interests) so that his government relations team can hand them out at a political party's conference.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 4

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

You are planning a conference. Your funder insists that you remove one of the speakers from the draft list, and suggests a different speaker to include in his place. Both potential speakers are equally respected academics, but one is a noted critic of the funder's industry, while the other is supportive of the industry.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 5

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

As part of your commitment to transparency, you have recently instituted conflict of interest forms for your research staff. The original plan, publicly announced in a blog, was to collate all these forms and post them online. However, the statements – to everyone's surprise – reveal that most of your senior research staff hold shares in companies working in the sectors they specialize in.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 6

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

Your institution has always disclosed who funded a particular study by including the funder's logo and the statement that "This study was funded by X" on the last page of the study. A long-standing funder now approaches you and asks you to not include his logo and the accompanying text on the next report. You already list that funder's contribution and its purpose on your funding page, as you do for all funders, so interested third parties can still discover who funded the report by going to your website.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 7

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

Your research team reached conclusions the funder does not like. The funder politely requests that you abandon the planned high profile launch event and media outreach and instead just quietly put the new study up on your website. You are free to re-allocate the funds earmarked for the launch as you wish.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 8

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

A unit of the Ministry of Interior asks whether you are interested in designing and conducting an opinion survey among a minority group living in your capital city. The only conditions are that you do not publicly disclose that you are conducting this research, and that the research results will not be shared with any third parties.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 9

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

A long-standing funder who you have a strong and consistently constructive relationship with has recently been publicly criticized for seeking too much political influence. The funder explains that she can no longer directly fund you, and suggests that instead, she will route funding for you through a foundation. You can then publicly list the foundation as your funder.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 10

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

Your funder likes four of the five policy options presented in your last study. He offers funding to deepen the analysis and policy recommendations for those four policy options in a separate paper, on condition that you do not explore or refer to the fifth option. The funder assures you that your researchers will have complete intellectual independence in exploring and presenting the four selected policy options, and based on your past experiences with this funder, you fully believe this promise.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 11

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

A government department currently under strong political fire approaches you to suggest that you conduct a study reviewing and summarizing all existing evidence attesting to the department's positive impact over the past five years, and launch it during a key point of the budgetary review process.

Reputational risks

SCENARIO 12

THE TRANSPARIFY THINK TANK
INTEGRITY CHECK

A funder asks whether you want to conduct a study on a topic of direct interest to the funder. The funder has already selected a lead author for the study who is a highly qualified academic; this choice is non-negotiable. However, the funder assures you verbally and in writing that your think tank will be free to conduct its usual internal peer review process and make any changes desired to the study before it is published.