

Are scientists who collaborate with industry tainted?

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When does conflict of interest become a problem, and what do we do about it?

Is anyone who takes money from business — or collaborate with company representatives — tainted and toxic? No. Collaboration with industry is part of the mission of many universities — it's literally in the job description of many public scientists. Universities rely on industry funding, and a lot of [important science throughout history came from private, rather than public, research](#). Plus, I'd rather have scientists wade into public policy than hide in ivory towers.

The notion that scientists are fatally tainted by engaging with industry stems, I think, from an unrealistic expectation. Scientists have never had special access to the truth, and every bit of science is a social construction made up of evidence, yes, but also influenced by biases and world views.

In the long run, science is self-correcting. Strong opinions, cultural prejudice, and filthy lucre can influence a scientist's statements. But none of that matters over time if results are reproduced and experimental methods stand up to scrutiny.

Read full, original post: [Are scientists who collaborate with industry tainted?](#)