

## Collaborative Discussion 2 – Summary post

My initial post established that Abi faces fundamental tensions between statistical validity and commercial pressure, arguing that professional responsibility extends beyond client relationships to encompass public welfare and scientific integrity. I emphasised that comprehensive reporting of both positive and negative findings is mandatory under professional codes (ASA, 2018), supported by whistleblower protection legislation when public health risks are identified (Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998).

Contributions from my colleagues significantly enriched this analysis through diverse perspectives. Ketan and Dalbir emphasised the importance of governance frameworks and institutional oversight, with Dalbir's distinction between technical validity and ethical integrity proving particularly valuable (Mittelstadt, 2022). Their focus on systemic accountability through research ethics committees addresses structural solutions beyond individual professional obligations. Julius provided important cross-jurisdictional legal context through German advertising law, whilst Dalbir's emphasis on trust as "the currency of data-driven professions" highlighted broader professional implications (Floridi and Taddeo, 2022). Kieron's comprehensive analysis effectively connected the dilemma to established statistical ethics literature, particularly p-hacking and selective reporting (Simmons et al., 2011), whilst providing practical implementation strategies. Shashank's suggestion of proactive manufacturer engagement and Valentina's integration of bioethical principles, particularly beneficence (Beauchamp and Childress, 2019), demonstrated the multilayered nature of professional obligations.

Overall, these contributions reveal that my initial focus on individual professional responsibility, whilst necessary, required enhancement through consideration of institutional frameworks and bioethical principles. The colleagues' emphasis on governance structures and systematic safeguards complements my analysis of legal protections, creating a more comprehensive framework for addressing commercial research ethics.

The synthesis of the discussions on this topic demonstrates that statistical professionals operate within interconnected obligation systems: individual integrity, institutional governance, legal compliance, and societal welfare. Whilst all contributors converge on the principle that technical competence must serve public interest rather than commercial objectives, the practical mechanisms for ensuring this remain complex. The discussion reveals urgent needs for clearer mandatory reporting requirements, enhanced institutional oversight, and stronger integration of bioethical principles within statistical professional codes to address contemporary challenges in commercial research environments.

### References:

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