

# The Bias Lab

## Work Sample Brief

Building the future of media literacy.

### Congratulations — You're in the Top 4%

From 2,700+ applicants, you made it to the final ~100. That's not luck. Your background caught our attention, but now we need to see you build.

This isn't an interview. It's a work sample. We're giving you 72 hours to show us how you think, execute, and ship. The best submissions won't just complete the task — they'll surprise us with insights we hadn't considered.

**One rule:** Ship something real. We'd rather see an imperfect but functional prototype than a perfect plan.

## 1 The Mission

The Bias Lab is solving a problem that everyone complains about but nobody fixes: media bias. Not with another left-right slider or “fact-check” badge, but with actual intelligence.

We score every article across **five dimensions**: ideological stance, factual grounding, framing choices, emotional tone, and source transparency. Our AI reads between the lines, surfaces buried ledes, and maps how narratives evolve across the entire media ecosystem.

Think of it as a Bloomberg Terminal for media bias — except it's for everyone, and it actually works.

## 2 Core Values (aka How We Work)

**Ship beats perfect.** We launch fast, learn faster, and iterate constantly. Your 72-hour sample should reflect this — we want to see working code/designs, not theoretical frameworks.

**Everyone owns the product.** Engineers write copy. Designers debug code. Marketers analyze data. If you see a gap, you fill it. Your title is just a starting point.

**Default to transparency.** Show your work. Use AI? Tell us how. Stuck on something? Document your thinking. We value clear communication over polished presentations.

**Impact over activity.** We don't care how many hours you work. We care about what you ship. Focus on the 20% that delivers 80% of value. Same applies to this demo for your work!

## 3 What We're Building in 90 Days

Before you dive into your track, understand the bigger picture. We're shipping an MVP that:

- Ingest all major news articles from leading sources in real time
- Score each article against our five-dimension bias framework
- Cluster narratives to reveal how stories evolve across outlets
- Highlight exact phrases that signal bias or framing choices

- Link every claim directly to primary sources
- Deliver these insights through a fast, intuitive, and accessible UI

Your work sample should contribute directly to this MVP. We're literally going to plug the best submissions together next week.

## 4 Submission Requirements

- **Deadline:** Sunday, 12:00 PM ET (late submissions auto-rejected)
- **Format:** Working prototype + short process doc (text submission)
- **Submission:** Via Airtable form
- **Include:**
  - Your actual deliverable (code, design, strategy doc)
  - Brief explanation of decisions and tradeoffs
  - List of AI tools used (encouraged!)
  - Time spent (honesty appreciated)

## 5 Track 1: AI/ML Engineer

**What you'll actually do in the sprint:** Build the brain of our bias detection engine. You'll work with transformer models, design scoring algorithms, and create explainable AI that can tell users exactly why an article scored the way it did. You'll also help train models on human feedback and optimize for sub-200ms response times.

**Why this role matters:** Without accurate scoring, we're just another opinion site. Your models determine whether we succeed or fail.

### Your 72-Hour Deliverable

#### Build a bias-scoring pipeline that actually works:

1. **Data ingestion:** Pull 10-20 recent articles about the same news event from different sources (NewsAPI, RSS, or web scraping). Pick something controversial happening right now.
2. **Scoring engine:** Implement scoring for our 5 dimensions (0-100 scale each):
  - Ideological stance (left-center-right spectrum)
  - Factual grounding (claim verification, source quality)
  - Framing choices (what's emphasized vs. buried)
  - Emotional tone (neutral to inflammatory)
  - Source transparency (clear attribution vs. "people say")
3. **Tech requirements:** Use any small LLM (Llama, GPT-3.5, Claude Haiku). Focus on prompt engineering over fine-tuning. Make it fast — under 500ms per article.
4. **Output:** JSON API endpoint that returns scores + highlighted phrases that influenced each score. Include confidence intervals.
5. **Bonus points:** Implement narrative clustering — group similar framings together automatically.

**What good looks like:** Your pipeline correctly identifies that Fox and CNN frame the same story completely differently. It highlights specific phrases that reveal bias. It runs fast enough for real-time scoring.

## 6 Track 2: Full-Stack Engineer

**What you'll actually do in the sprint:** Ship the actual product. You'll build APIs that serve bias scores, create interfaces that make complex data digestible, and deploy systems that don't fall over when we hit the front page of Hacker News. You'll also implement user features like bias tracking and personalized insights.

**Why this role matters:** The best AI in the world is useless if users can't access it. You make the magic visible.

### Your 72-Hour Deliverable

**Build a working prototype users can actually touch:**

1. **Backend API** (Python FastAPI or Node Express):
  - GET /articles — list recent articles with bias scores
  - GET /articles/{id} — detailed breakdown with highlighted phrases
  - GET /narratives — clustered story framings
  - Mock data is fine, but structure it like real bias scores
2. **Frontend** (React, Vue, or vanilla JS):
  - Homepage: Show 3-5 trending narratives as visual clusters
  - Article view: Radar chart of 5 bias dimensions
  - Highlight biased phrases on hover (different colors per dimension)
  - One-click access to primary sources
3. **Deploy it:** Use Vercel, Netlify, Railway — we need a live URL
4. **Performance:** Page load under 2 seconds, smooth interactions
5. **Bonus points:** Add a “bias over time” graph showing how coverage evolved

**What good looks like:** A journalist could use your prototype tomorrow to understand how different outlets are covering a breaking story. It feels fast, looks clean, and actually works.

## 7 Track 3: Product Designer

**What you'll actually do in the sprint:** Design interfaces that make media bias not just visible but visceral. You'll create information hierarchies that guide users from curiosity to insight in seconds. You'll also design features that keep users coming back daily and sharing what they discover.

**Why this role matters:** We're competing with TikTok for attention. If the UX isn't extraordinary, we're dead.

### Your 72-Hour Deliverable

**Design an interface that makes bias impossible to ignore:**

**1. Three key screens in Figma:**

- **Discovery:** Homepage showing narrative clusters for 5-6 trending stories. Visual metaphor: stories drift apart as coverage diverges. Make it feel alive.
- **Analysis:** Article detail with bias radar chart, highlighted phrases, and source comparison. Show how the same quote gets framed differently.
- **Personal insights:** "Your Media Diet" dashboard — bias balance, blind spots, reading patterns. Gamify media literacy without being preachy.

**2. Interaction details:**

- Hover states that reveal bias explanations
- Smooth transitions between narrative clusters
- Mobile-first but desktop-optimized
- Dark mode that doesn't suck

**3. Design system basics:**

- Color coding for bias dimensions (but colorblind-friendly)
- Typography that handles quotes, headlines, and analysis
- Component library: buttons, cards, charts, badges

**4. Bonus points:** Design a sharing mechanic that makes bias discoveries viral

**What good looks like:** A user opens your design and immediately understands how media bias works. They can navigate without instructions. They want to share what they discover.

## 8 Track 4: Brand/Marketing Designer

**What you'll actually do in the sprint:** Create a visual identity that positions The Bias Lab as the antidote to media chaos. You'll design assets that work everywhere from academic papers to TikTok. You'll also help craft the visual language that makes our data storytelling compelling.

**Why this role matters:** Trust is our product. If we look amateur, nobody believes our analysis.

### Your 72-Hour Deliverable

#### Create a brand that screams credibility and accessibility:

##### 1. Core identity:

- Logo that works at 16px and on a billboard
- Wordmark with personality (think Stripe meets FiveThirtyEight)
- App icon that stands out in a crowded home screen

##### 2. Visual system:

- 5-color palette: primary, secondary, 3 bias indicators
- Font pair: headlines (bold, trustworthy) + body (readable, modern)
- Grid system for consistent layouts
- Icon style for bias dimensions

##### 3. Launch assets:

- TikTok/Reel template for "bias breakdown" videos
- Twitter/X card for sharing bias scores
- Reddit banner for AMA announcement
- Email signature for team

##### 4. Mini brand guide: 3-4 pages showing usage, restrictions, and rationale

##### 5. Bonus points: Create animated logo for video content

**What good looks like:** The New York Times would use our bias score badges. Gen Z would share our graphics. Your mom would trust our analysis.

## 9 Track 5: Growth Marketing Manager

**What you'll actually do in the sprint:** Orchestrate our launch to hit 10,000 users in week one. You'll create viral moments, build creator partnerships, and turn early users into evangelists. You'll also design growth loops that make sharing our bias analysis natural.

**Why this role matters:** We could build the perfect product and still die in obscurity. You ensure we don't.

### Your 72-Hour Deliverable

**Design a launch that breaks through the noise:**

**1. Channel strategy (pick 3-5 with specific tactics):**

- Which subreddits, when to post, what angle?
- Which creators/journalists to partner with?
- What hashtags, challenges, or trends to hijack?
- How to leverage Product Hunt, Hacker News?

**2. Content samples (write actual copy):**

- 60-second TikTok script: "Rating media bias until I get sued"
- Twitter thread: "We analyzed 1,000 articles about [current event]..."
- Reddit AMA intro for r/media\_criticism
- Cold DM to a creator with 500K+ followers

**3. Viral mechanic:**

- Design a "Bias Spotter Challenge" — users submit biased headlines
- Micro-bounty system: \$5 for clips that get 10K+ views
- Referral loop that actually makes sense

**4. Week 1 tactical plan:**

- Hour-by-hour launch day schedule
- Contingency plans for different traction scenarios
- Success metrics and tracking setup

**5. Bonus points:** Identify a controversial story to launch into

**What good looks like:** Your plan is so specific we could hand it to an intern and they could execute it. Every channel has a clear hook. The viral mechanic feels organic, not forced.

## 10 Track 6: Operations & Strategy

**What you'll actually do in the sprint:** Be the connective tissue between brilliant people who barely talk to each other. You'll design systems that keep us shipping, spot problems before they explode, and make sure we hit our milestones. You'll also handle fundraising ops, user research, and whatever else needs doing.

**Why this role matters:** Startups die from lack of execution, not lack of ideas. You're the execution engine.

### Your 72-Hour Deliverable

**Design the operating system for our 90-day sprint:**

**1. Your 90-day role blueprint:**

- Week-by-week objectives for yourself
- Which processes you'll own vs. support
- How you'll measure your own impact
- Where you'll flex into other roles

**2. Process improvements (pick 3 from our 70-day plan):**

- Identify specific bottlenecks or gaps
- Propose solutions with tools/workflows
- Estimate time/resource savings
- Include templates or automation ideas

**3. Team coordination system:**

- Daily standup structure (5 min max)
- Weekly sprint planning template
- Async communication protocols
- "Blocker" escalation process

**4. Launch readiness checklist:**

- 50-item checklist for launch day
- Who owns what, by when
- Contingency plans for common failures

**5. Bonus points:** Create a simple dashboard mockup for tracking sprint health

**What good looks like:** Your system feels lightweight but comprehensive. It removes friction without adding bureaucracy. Anyone could pick up your docs and run the sprint.



## 11 Track 7: Research Scientist

**What you'll actually do in the sprint:** Lead groundbreaking research that makes The Bias Lab a global authority on an aspect of AI bias, media manipulation, and narrative warfare. You'll publish papers, create datasets the entire industry uses, and uncover patterns that change how people understand information. You'll also collaborate with universities and think tanks to establish our credibility.

**Why this role matters:** We're not just building a product — we're building the definitive research lab for understanding how bias shapes AI, media, and society. Your work becomes the citation everyone uses.

## Your 72-Hour Deliverable

### Propose research that puts us on the map:

#### 1. Design an original research project (pick one):

- **LLM Bias Inheritance:** How do different LLMs (GPT, Claude, Llama) interpret the same article differently? Design an experiment to measure model-specific bias.
- **Narrative Velocity:** How fast do framings spread across media ecosystems? Propose a method to track “bias contagion” in real-time.
- **The Manufactured Center:** Does “balanced” coverage actually reflect truth, or does it create false equivalence? Design a study to measure this.
- **Algorithmic Amplification:** How do social media algorithms preferentially spread certain bias types? Propose a measurement framework.
- **Your idea:** Something we haven’t thought of that uses our 5-dimension framework

#### 2. Research proposal (2-3 pages):

- Core hypothesis and why it matters
- Methodology (data collection, analysis, validation)
- What datasets you’d need/create
- How this positions The Bias Lab as the authority
- Potential collaborators (academics, journalists, labs)

#### 3. Proof of concept:

- Run a mini version of your study (5-10 data points)
- Show preliminary findings that validate the approach
- Create one compelling visualization of your discovery

#### 4. Impact strategy:

- Where would you publish? (arxiv, conference, blog)
- Which influencers/researchers would amplify this?
- How does this drive users to our platform?
- What press headline would this generate?

#### 5. Bonus points: Identify a controversial finding that would spark productive debate

**What good looks like:** Your research proposal would get accepted at an academic conference AND go viral on Twitter. It’s rigorous enough for peer review but accessible enough for Vox to cover. Most importantly, it positions The Bias Lab as the place serious people go to understand bias.

## 12 How We'll Evaluate

**We're looking for five things:**

1. **Does it work?** Can we use this next week?
2. **Clear thinking:** Are your decisions defensible?
3. **Execution speed:** Did you focus on what matters?
4. **Surprise factor:** Did you teach us something?
5. **Culture fit:** Would we want to build with you for 90 days?

**What we don't care about:**

- Perfect code (ship it messy)
- Formal presentations (just show the work)
- Traditional credentials (we already saw your resume)

## 13 Final Notes

**Use AI aggressively.** We do. Claude, GPT-4, Cursor, v0, whatever. Just tell us how you used it. We care about judgment and output, not typing speed.

**Prior work is fine** if it fits the brief. Built something similar? Adapt it. Just explain what's new vs. recycled.

**Ask smart questions** via email if genuinely stuck. But try to figure it out first. Resourcefulness matters in work like this.

**Remember the mission:** We're not building another news aggregator. We're building the tool that saves media from itself. Your work should reflect that ambition.

**Deadline: Sunday, 12:00 PM ET**

*Late submissions will not be reviewed.*

Good luck. Ship something great.

— The Bias Lab Team