



FAQs about Sponsored Content

Curious about this new model we're running at *The Bastion*? Here's how we're trying to scale free, quality, independent journalism through sponsorships.

Q: Is all of *The Bastion*'s journalism sponsored?

No. We approach sponsors for series or articles on topics that are not directly linked to our core areas of coverage. [This is an example of one such series](#). The rest of our journalism (which is everything else) is financially supported by the [Independent and Public-Spirited Media Foundation](#). We retain full editorial independence regardless of the source.

Q. Why get sponsors involved at all?

It takes many individuals' money, time and other resources to create good stories for your consumption. Given the decline of free and fair media outlets, our sponsors recognize that monetarily supporting *The Bastion*'s brand of solution-oriented, well-researched journalism via an independent article/series strengthens India's media ecosystem at large. Their financial support also makes it possible to reach more readers' screens, free of cost. We dislike paywalls just as much as you do.

Q. What does the sponsor get out of supporting *The Bastion*'s journalism?

Every reader of *The Bastion* recognizes the importance and value of covering India's developmental journey in a responsible, ethical, and independent manner. By sponsoring editorial content and actively supporting this belief, a company or organisation can build its brand-value and trust amongst our readership and beyond. Given that there exists some relevance between their business services and our coverage, sponsors view this ability to support *The Bastion*'s platform as another form of advertising, albeit a responsible, ethical, and impactful one. This is the antithesis of loud, TRP-based advertising.

Q. How does *The Bastion* select sponsors?

Important question. We are open to monetary support from all sorts of organisations looking to expand the reach of their brands: be it companies, philanthropies, research centres, private entities, or non-profits. Having said that, every sponsor has to respect our editorial freedom and organizational values. From the get-go, we are clear and upfront about our intent: we need sponsors for our journalism to keep it free, but we will not entertain their influencing it.

As far as possible, we partner with entities that have minimal conflicts of interest with the verticals that our stories cover. We like to use this as the prototype example: a biscuit company would sponsor an in-depth series on how wheat farmers are using technology to improve their yield, or any aspect of their lives.



Yes, this leaves us with a very small set of organisations from which we can accept funds, but we've been extremely fortunate to have met sponsors who share these values.

Q: On what basis do sponsors support *The Bastion's* journalism?

Sponsors support us on a principal to principal basis, in line with a term-sheet we agree upon. This means that this is a one-time funding relationship for a specific article or series. So, this is not to be understood as a long-term venture or partnership between *The Bastion* and the sponsor.

So, if an organisation has sponsored our journalism for a specific series or article, they hold no editorial influence over any of the journalism published by *The Bastion* post and prior to the publication of the series.

Q: Who is responsible for the accuracy of reporting in a sponsored series?

We are. The article/series is wholly conceptualised and executed by *The Bastion*, and only financially supported by the sponsor post-production. The sponsor shall neither be legally accountable nor morally responsible for anything published by us.

Q: Can the sponsor influence how an issue is being reported or analysed in an article or series?

Short answer: No.

Long answer: Sponsors are bound by a term-sheet that states that they will not influence, interfere or dictate the particulars of *The Bastion's* journalism. They only provide financial support post-production of the journalism by *The Bastion*. We make this stance clear at the outset when we approach sponsors with our finished work.

Although we approach sponsors once we've produced our final product, cases may arise where sponsors interfere with the final product. If at any point *The Bastion* believes that its editorial and authorial agency is being compromised by the sponsor, *The Bastion* has full agency to withdraw from the term-sheet and halt the agreement. *The Bastion* holds full rights over its journalism supported by sponsorships, and may choose to publish it with another sponsor, or without sponsored monetary assistance.

Q. *The Bastion* generally publishes solution-oriented journalism. Will the sponsor's prospects benefit from the solutions being proposed in an article or series?

In all likelihood, no. We retain full editorial independence over our journalism and only approach sponsors with a finished product. So, there is no chance of their product or line of thought being incorporated into the series or article post-production of the said article/series.

We try our best to find sponsors in fields relatively unrelated to the topic of the article or series, such that their business receives fewer direct tangible impacts. However, at times, there may be

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intersecting interests between what we cover and our sponsor's line of work. Even in such cases, the editorial safeguards we have in place in our term-sheet do away with the risks and concerns of sponsors integrating their solutions into a piece.