# Independence and Research Standards

**Version:** 0.3.0.

*This document states the standards Foreshock's research operates under, and the limits a commercial relationship never crosses. It applies to every published assessment, sponsored or not.*

Foreshock is an independent platform focused on helping DeFi users understand changes in protocol risk and connect those changes to portfolio exposure. The platform, the assessment framework, and the monitoring system are developed under a single product vision centered on consistency, evidence quality, explainability, and explicit treatment of uncertainty.

## 1. Operating principles

**1.1 Independent conclusions.** Commercial relationships do not determine ratings.

**1.2 Evidence before confidence.** Incomplete evidence lowers confidence. It never raises a rating by default and never lets a category be assumed safe.

**1.3 Explainable output.** The principal drivers of every rating are stated. A reader can see which categories moved a score and why.

**1.4 Clear limitations.** Ratings are never guarantees of safety.

**1.5 Disclosed coverage.** Every published assessment states what share of its weighted rubric rests on verified evidence. A thinly evidenced assessment is marked provisional and banded Low-signal; it is never dressed up as a full reading, and it is never withheld to make the library look better evidenced than it is. Presence in the library is a statement that evidence was gathered and disclosed, not a certificate of quality.

## 2. Ratings are not for sale

2.1 Payment may affect prioritization, timing, or scope.

2.2 Payment never affects the rating, the conclusions, the confidence, or the publication of adverse findings.

## 3. Sponsored assessments are disclosed

3.1 A sponsor may provide documents, identify factual errors, and answer questions.

3.2 A sponsor may not negotiate the rating, suppress findings, or block publication, subject to agreed engagement terms.

3.3 A sponsored assessment carries the same evidence standards as any other assessment, and is labeled as sponsored where it is published. No sponsored assessment has been published to date, and none will be published before the label exists in the product: the labelling mechanism is a precondition of the first one, not a promise to add afterwards. This clause was written as a commitment before that mechanism was built, which made it read as a description of something already in place; stating the sequence plainly is the correction.

## 4. Corrections are reviewed, not negotiated

4.1 A correction request is held to the same evidence standards as the original assessment.

4.2 Outcomes range from no change to a documented update. The route a request takes is decided by the evidence attached to it, not by who submits it.

## 5. Conflicts of interest

5.1 Conflicts are disclosed and managed, through disclosure, scope limits, additional review, or declining the engagement.

## 6. Evidence policy

6.1 Material claims require identifiable support.

6.2 Secondary-only evidence is reflected in confidence.

6.3 Anonymous claims and marketing materials are not treated as reviewable evidence.

## 7. Proprietary methods

7.1 The interpretation of an assessment is public, and is documented in the Methodology summary.

7.2 The implementation behind it is protected.

## 8. Status of this document

8.1 Ratings and research published by Foreshock do not constitute financial or investment advice and do not guarantee protocol safety.

8.2 This document is versioned. The version above identifies the standards in force for assessments published while it is current.