

# Informing, Connecting and Inspiring America

PUBLIC MEDIA'S COMMITMENT TO REPORTING FACTS AND DISPELLING DISINFORMATION

## Journalism that strengthens our democracy

The reach and power of false information is growing. From rising extremism, to baseless claims of voter fraud, disinformation is gaining a foothold in our society.

## Amid a sea of false narratives and confusion, public media stands out.

As false information spreads and conspiracy theories go mainstream, your support helps NPR and Member Stations provide the credible, fact-based journalism essential to our democracy.



NPR congressional correspondent Susan Davis on Capitol Hill. *Allison Shelley/NPR*

**Disinformation misleads, creates  
division and diminishes trust.**



Exposure to false information is linked to less confidence in government, media and other democratic institutions.<sup>1</sup>



89% of Americans say they routinely encounter made-up news online.<sup>2</sup>



83% of Americans say the creation and spread of made-up news causes significant harm to our country.<sup>3</sup>



More than 40% of surveyed Americans believe far-fetched disinformation, including claims that the 2020 presidential election was rigged and other conspiracy theories.<sup>4</sup>



Public media Jill Ament conducts an interview during the COVID-19 pandemic. Michael Minasi for the Texas Standard

## An informed public is better able to tell fact from fiction

Together, NPR and Member Stations provide credible, accurate reporting. We counter false narratives with verified facts. We are tireless in our effort to present the fullest version of the truth we can deliver—from the tiniest detail to the big-picture context. By giving people the information they need to reach their own conclusions, we achieve our **mission to create a more informed public, one better able to recognize false claims and avoid being misled.**

## Upholding the highest journalistic standards and ethics

**NPR is the only major news organization in the United States with a full-time public editor.** Once a mainstay of U.S. newsrooms, the public editor is a source of independent accountability, investigating questions of accuracy, fairness and balance raised by the public.

## America’s most trusted news source

NPR and Member Stations work hard to report the truth and reflect the experiences of all Americans. That’s why in national polls, audiences consistently rank public media **America’s most trusted news source.** Most recently, audiences ranked the NPR network #1 in being “trustworthy” and “valuable,” rising above other major media outlets including The New York Times.<sup>2</sup>

With you, public media can help counter disinformation.



### Universally accessible

Our award-winning journalism is available free of charge. On-air and online, NPR and Member Stations reach 165 million people per month.<sup>1</sup>



### Independent

Public radio is audience-supported and independent. Public service—not profit—is at the heart of everything we do.



### Global reach, local roots

With a network of more than 250 Member Stations and 17 international bureaus, public media brings you the most important stories of the day, no matter where they occur.



### Diverse perspectives

We strive to reflect the full breadth of perspectives and lived experiences in our country, taking special care to lift up the voices of people that are too often under-covered, misrepresented or left out.



**Public media can serve as a bulwark against the misinformation, disinformation and polarization running rampant in our public discourse by doing what it already does best: providing news and information that encourage democratic participation and promoting civil conversations.”**

CASEY KELLY, JOURNALIST<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nielsen, Splunk, Google Analytics and comScore, Spring 2020, based on deduplicated estimate <sup>2</sup> E-Score Brand, E-Poll Market Research; Brand ratings as of April 2021 (surveys from Feb 2020-April 2021) <sup>3</sup> “Why Biden’s presidency is the time for a funding boost for pubmedia” *Current*, Dec 2020

## NPR: fact-based, independent journalism

NPR serves the American public with award-winning reporting, analysis and storytelling that meets the highest standards in public service journalism. Its reporting connects you with the people at the heart of every story. Research shows that this kind of human-centered storytelling fosters empathy and helps to debunk false claims.<sup>1</sup>

In 2021, NPR launched a disinformation reporting team to explore how false information is shaping our country's politics, policies and culture. With reporters dedicated to topics like cybersecurity and extremism, and deep-dive investigations underway, this cross-newsroom effort will help audiences understand the origins and spread of disinformation and its solutions.

## Member Stations: building informed and engaged communities

Locally owned and operated, Member Stations are vital parts of the communities they serve. They provide high-quality local journalism and serve as trusted venues for neighbors to discuss shared challenges and reach common ground.

Today, stations are bringing even more voices into the conversation through focused audience engagement. These efforts are creating new opportunities for people to contribute ideas, shape coverage and ensure that stations reflect more of the perspectives and experiences of local residents. Through these endeavors and others, Member Stations are building the active, informed communities essential to a healthy democracy.



NPR's Audie Cornish interviews taste-maker and author Dapper Dan.  
*Christina Cala/NPR*



Public media provides trusted information to help people make informed decisions in their communities. Pictured: A young man waits in line to vote.  
*Angela Kocherga/KTEP*



**During this period when rigorous, fact-based and context-rich journalism has never been more important, public media is delivering trusted information to audiences across the nation as never before."**

JOHN LANSING, NPR PRESIDENT AND CEO

# Journalism that makes a difference

In May 2021, NPR reported that just 12 people are responsible for the bulk of the misleading claims and outright lies about COVID-19 vaccines that proliferate on social media. The story was based on a report from the Center for Countering Digital Hate, which identified the accounts.

Both members of Congress and state attorneys general had previously urged Facebook and Twitter to ban the “disinformation dozen,” but the social media companies had been slow to act.

After NPR’s reporting, Facebook stepped up their fight. The company removed accounts of many of the identified individuals and placed restrictions on others.

Public media’s journalism has a long history of holding the powerful to account and sparking real change. Philanthropic support makes this kind of reporting possible, strengthening our network’s ability to tell impactful stories that make the world a more just, civil and informed place.

## Building a more informed society

At this inflection point for our country and our democracy, your support helps NPR and Member Stations to play an essential role in informing the public.

With you, we will dismantle falsehoods, broaden perspectives and deliver quality information to counter the endless stream of disinformation.

Together, we will touch lives and build trust one story at a time, creating opportunities for people to hear each other’s voices across all of the lines that divide.

