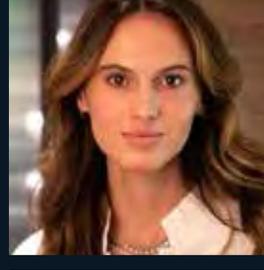


# Poynter.50 YEARS

Journalism. Truth. Democracy.



## 2025-2026 Impact Report

# Poynter.50 YEARS

Journalism. Truth. Democracy.

The Poynter Institute is a global nonprofit that strengthens democracy by improving the relevance, ethical practice and value of journalism. Through teaching, publishing, convening, fact-checking and media literacy, Poynter creates a crossroads where communities come together to use journalism to confront society's complex problems.



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## Letter from the President

# To propel journalism in tumultuous times, lead, don't lament

It is no secret to any readers of this report that what we once took for granted — the importance of a free press and the value of fact-based journalism — must now be regularly tended and protected.

The power of honest, accurate information to help each of us is utterly validated by the intense lengths nefarious forces go to undermine it. Assaults on press freedom, harassment of journalists and manipulation of hearts and minds through disinformation and technological warfare, are more concerted and sophisticated than our founder Nelson Poynter could have predicted.

But his answer — our Institute's response — is to creatively, effectively and optimistically lift up journalists and media executives to serve their communities with courage, excellence and integrity.

For Poynter, as for most all in the media marketplace, 2025 was tumultuous. At Poynter we unexpectedly faced substantial cuts to our revenue sources and yet saw greater appetite for our craft,



ethics and leadership training. We celebrated our anniversary by looking back at 50 years of service to journalism and found it to be a source of innovation to propel us to the future.

In the first half of 2025 Poynter's multi-year partnership with the Corporation for Public

Broadcasting helped more than 100 public radio and TV stations raise millions in new revenue and expand their local news reporting, even helping a TV station in Sacramento, California, start a newsroom from scratch.

So when Congress ended funding for the CPB, public media stations

had a better chance at finding a future.

"Our newsletter success, revenue growth, and systemic approach to digital innovation all stem from this collaborative program," said Clint Schaff, the general manager of KUAF 91.3, in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

"Poynter's Digital Transformation Program has given us a sense of togetherness, which we so needed at this moment, and also hope that we will survive this," said Dick Pryor, general manager of KGOU Public Radio in Oklahoma City.

In a year when money for fact-checking was substantially reduced by funders and clients like Meta, PolitiFact wrote a thousand fact-checks, tracked President Trump's campaign promises on our "MAGA-meter" and reached 23,000 subscribers with fact-checks about immigration and health care in Spanish via WhatsApp.

As artificial intelligence, through Gemini, ChatGPT and other tools, became entrenched in our daily lives — stoking both incredible opportunities and incredible volumes of mischief — we developed an ethics playbook for newsrooms. Today we offer a certificate course for journalists and creators to help them produce smarter content while battling risks like hallucinations and bias.

Meanwhile, we help citizens navigate the slop as well. We

explained how Elon Musk's AI chatbot Grok made up details on an Idaho shooting suspect, exposed AI-created fake celebrity donations after the horrific Texas flood, and revealed false war imagery circulating via AI after the U.S. military attack on Iran's nuclear facilities.

When forces in Washington and beyond waged a legal assault on the rights of journalists, Poynter launched Press Freedom Watch, a reporting and data initiative to catalog lawsuits, executive orders and other efforts that threaten news gathering and muzzle free expression.

And Poynter provided free webinars to more than 3,000 journalists, featuring First Amendment lawyers and our own research experts to help navigate legal issues and unearth critical information that the public has a right to know.

From Seattle to Bangor, journalists who attended Poynter's Beat Academy workshops — including some who received reporting grants via Poynter — reported stories on how the national immigration debate was playing out in their neighborhoods. In Los Angeles, Univision 34 produced a five-part series tracing the arc from Great Depression-era mass deportations to deportation today. That story reached nearly 650,000 viewers, led to a one-hour special and a community town hall

event.

Poynter worked with Stanford University and Google on research that reflects that our MediaWise programming strengthens digital education for citizens ranging from school-age to older citizens and improves misinformation-resilience skills by up to 20%.

With facts under assault around the globe, the International Fact-Checking Network at Poynter awarded \$2.6 million in grants to 43 news organizations in 34 countries to help sustain their debunking of toxic misinformation, scams and conspiracies. And for the 12th time, Poynter convened a global fact-checking summit. (Nearly 500 joined us last June in Brazil. Join us next summer in Lithuania.)

So at Poynter, we answer challenges with creativity and conviction. We believe the power of journalism will protect it from the threats to it.

That's not naive. Nor is it easy to bring about. But our team, our clients, our funders and our allies inspire us to lead rather than lament.

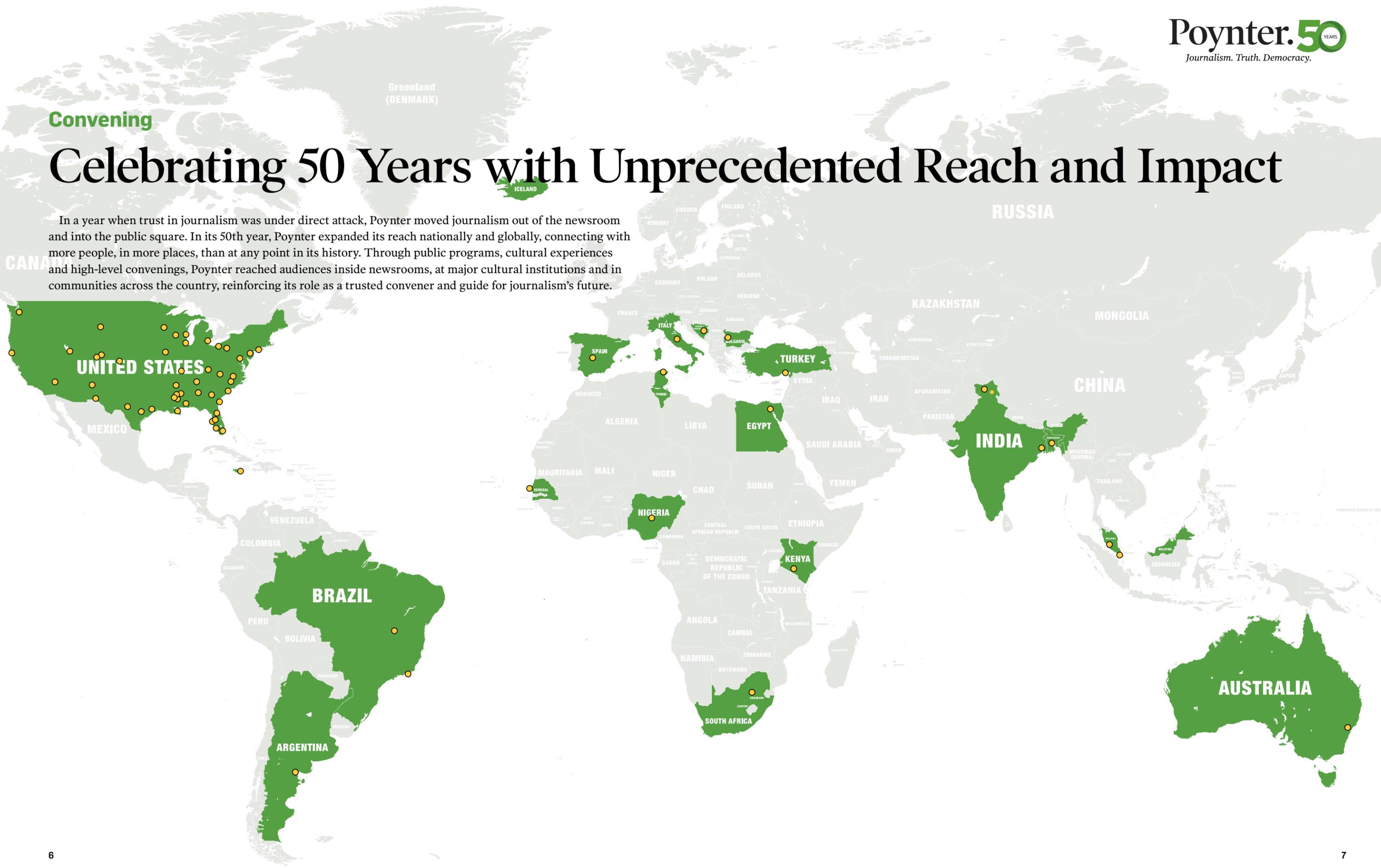
We need your ideas. We welcome your collaboration. We deeply appreciate your support.

Neil Brown

Convening

# Celebrating 50 Years with Unprecedented Reach and Impact

In a year when trust in journalism was under direct attack, Poynter moved journalism out of the newsroom and into the public square. In its 50th year, Poynter expanded its reach nationally and globally, connecting with more people, in more places, than at any point in its history. Through public programs, cultural experiences and high-level convenings, Poynter reached audiences inside newsrooms, at major cultural institutions and in communities across the country, reinforcing its role as a trusted convener and guide for journalism's future.



### The Salon Series: Evenings of Impact

Poynter’s inaugural Salon Series created a rare, trusted space for leaders shaping public understanding to wrestle with the future of truth itself. Poynter brought together journalists, creators and civic leaders in Washington, D.C., and New York for intimate conversations focused on trust, innovation and the future of news.

The 2025 series honored **Cleo Abram, Mike Allen, Dean Baquet** and **Jessica Yellin**, and offered a meaningful dialogue among established leaders and emerging voices shaping modern journalism.



**Poynter supporters gathered in New York City in October for “An Evening of Impact” salon honoring video journalist Cleo Abram and New York Times editor Dean Baquet, as they discussed serving audiences today.**

### 50 Timeless Lessons of Good Journalism

Poynter released 50 Timeless Lessons of Good Journalism, a definitive collection of wisdom distilled from five decades of teaching that journalists can rely on even when the industry changes at a lightning pace.

### Moments of Truth: An Exploration of Journalism’s Past, Present and Future

The Moments of Truth national traveling exhibit to met people where they already gather - museums, civic spaces and cultural institutions - and invited them into the story of journalism’s history and future. The exhibit traveled to five cities in five states and reached more than 35,000 people,



**The traveling museum exhibit “Moments of Truth: An Exploration of Journalism’s Past, Present and Future” made its debut at the St. Petersburg History Museum before traveling to four other cities in 2025.**



**Nearly 500 attendees at the International Fact-Checking Network’s GlobalFact conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil came together to support fact-checking worldwide, to strategize on how to improve the field and face threats such as loss of funding and crackdowns on freedom of information.**

with more than 1,500 attendees participating in related events and media literacy programs by our MediaWise team.

By placing journalism in museums and civic venues, Poynter expanded its reach beyond traditional industry audiences and invited the public into deeper conversations about truth, trust and democracy.

### The Poynter 50

Through *The Poynter 50*, Poynter highlighted 50 of the most significant people and media moments of the past half-century. From CNN’s riveting live coverage of the start of the Gulf War, to the impact of the repeal of the fairness doctrine to the effect of Craigslist on the newspaper business model, the series offers historical context and a reflection on the events that

defined the past and continue to shape the future of journalism.

### A Global Footprint

Poynter’s reach extended well beyond the United States in 2025. Through GlobalFact, the world’s largest gathering of fact-checkers, Poynter convened journalists and experts from dozens of countries, strengthening global collaboration in the fight against misinformation.

In addition, Poynter leaders attended and spoke at journalism conferences and taught programs around the world. We shared expertise in artificial intelligence, fact-checking, ethics, media literacy and journalistic craft. These engagements expanded Poynter’s international presence and reinforced its role as a global authority on the most pressing challenges facing journalism today.

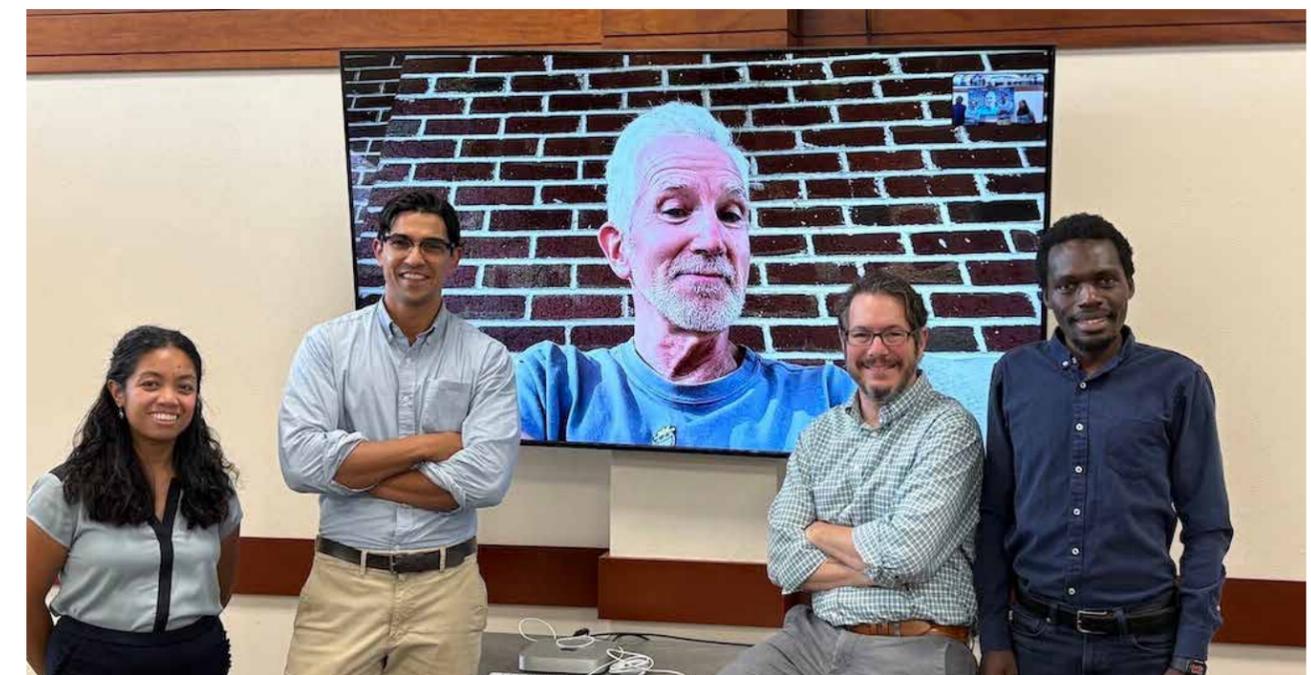
*In 2025, journalism did not simply need improvement. It needed defense, renewal and public re-engagement. With donor support, Poynter stepped into that moment by expanding its presence where trust is tested: in communities, cultural institutions and global conversations, confronting misinformation and emerging technologies. These initiatives demonstrate what is possible when philanthropy fuels leadership at a critical inflection point. Donor investment helped ensure that journalism’s core values remain visible, relevant and resilient in a rapidly changing world.*

# How Poynter is advancing journalism in a time of change

Strengthening public media, even amid cuts	Defending press freedom	Empowering the next generation	Leading ethical innovation in AI	Fact-checking that protects democracy
Supporting public media stations with low-cost change management, from training radio journalists in St. Louis to guiding newsroom mergers in Madison to helping Sacramento launch a newsroom from scratch.	Launched <i>Press Freedom Watch</i> to track federal actions against journalists and delivered a free legal-access webinar to thousands facing harassment and threats.	Building a <i>Youth News Creators Collaborative</i> to help teens and college students produce accurate news explainers on TikTok and Instagram.	Established an <i>AI Innovation Lab</i> focused on the safe, ethical and effective use of generative AI, from investigative reporting and media literacy to audience engagement.	As home to <i>PolitiFact</i> , delivering trusted accountability journalism for 18 years — and deploying 20 journalists to cover battleground elections in 10 states this year.



**Poynter’s newsroom launched Press Freedom Watch to catalog federal actions that threatened or affected freedom of the press.**



**Members of a cross-departmental team are part of Poynter’s AI Innovation Lab. L-R: Loreben Tuquero, Alex Mahadevan, Jon Greenberg, (on screen); Sean Marcus, and Enock Nyariki.**

Teaching

# Poynter Powers Local Newsrooms When It Matters Most

Poynter’s teaching mission has never been more important: make journalism better. This year, Poynter trained and coached thousands of journalists in local newsrooms from Mississippi to Maine and from Tampa to Alaska – in one of the most challenging years that local journalism has faced in its history.

Yet across America, the 35,000 journalists and media professionals that Poynter worked with didn’t just survive. They transformed their newsrooms, raised tens of millions in new revenue and audience members, launched entirely new news operations, and created quality journalism in the communities that need it most.

**When Local Stations Faced Collapse, They Raised Millions Instead**

“Our newsletter success, revenue growth, and systemic approach to digital innovation all stem from this collaborative program that moved us from planning to measurable results.” – Clint Schaff, General Manager of



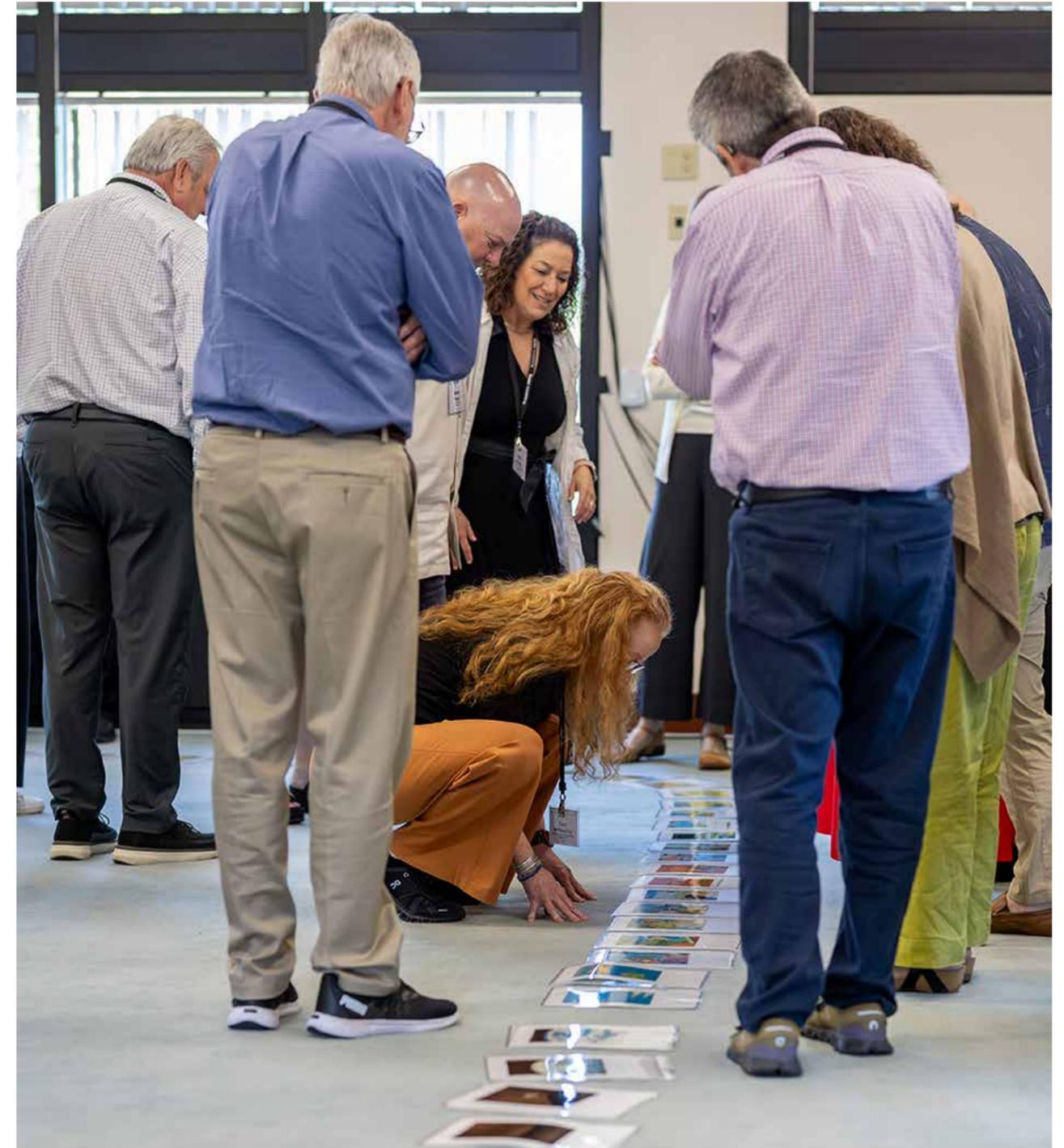
**Sitara Nieves, (left) vice president of teaching and organizational strategy, leads a session during the Digital Transformation Program in March.**

KUAF 91.3, in Fayetteville, AR  
Poynter this year worked with over 100 local public media stations in its Digital Transformation Program and Editorial Integrity and Leadership Initiative fellowships. The programs help stations become more sustainable, focused on digital audience and revenue growth, while staying true to their mission of public service.

Then, stations lost significant

funding that had been provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting - a crisis moment.

Through Poynter’s programs, stations had already launched new revenue initiatives, focused on using data to drive decisions, and had significantly changed how they worked. When the crisis hit, those capabilities became a lifeline. Stations in our programs collectively raised millions of



**Public media general managers and CEOs participated in the Digital Transformation Program to help them change their organizations to increase revenue and expand their digital audience. Participants said the skills they learned proved vital after federal funding to public media was cut.**

dollars in new revenue and reached tens of millions of new audience members.

“Being able to go through Poynter’s Digital Transformation Program has given us a sense of togetherness, which we so needed at this moment, and also hope that we will survive this,” said Dick Pryor, general manager of KGOU Public Radio in Oklahoma City. “It’s given us hope and optimism for the future.”

KVIE in Sacramento, California made a bet on local news, drawing from reserve funds to create KVIE’s first digital news service, where no newsroom existed before.

“Poynter’s leadership and digital-transformation programs helped sharpen our strategy,” said David Lowe, president and general manager. “The sessions clarified how to align mission with digital products, and reinforced the leadership skills we needed to guide a newsroom launch inside a legacy PBS station. Those trainings... gave me and key team

members practical tools and the confidence to build something ambitious.”

**A Renewed Focus on Craft**

2025 marked an evolution in how Poynter teaches writing, reporting, producing and editing – craft with greater audience service in mind.

We launched new initiatives to meet the needs of journalists and content creators right now and expanded our Beat Academy program for reporters, delivering free workshops to almost 500 journalists on critical topics including polarization, renewable energy, immigration and state’s rights..

More advanced reporting workshops focused on topics like immigration, thanks to generous grant support. Poynter awarded \$80,000 in grants to 14 newsrooms, funding local news coverage in more than a dozen states in 2025.

**Leading the Way on AI Ethics and Application**

Poynter has become the industry’s trusted voice on responsible AI use—combining ethics, practical application, and leadership.

This year, the Institute launched a comprehensive AI for Journalists and Content Creators certificate program, a self-directed online course that goes beyond simple prompting to focus on strategy, usage, and ethics. Led by Alex Mahadevan, Poynter’s director of MediaWise and a leading voice on AI, the program covers the AI landscape in journalism, teaching journalists how to streamline research and generate smarter drafts while spotting AI risks like bias, misinformation, and hallucinations before they harm their work.

Poynter is now where journalists turn to navigate AI use responsibly—not with fear, but with the confidence to use AI transparently and ethically while maintaining audience trust.



**There’s a strong demand internationally for Poynter training. Top photo, Poynter Director of Craft and Local News Kristen Hare (front) poses with members of the Korean Press Foundation who visited Poynter in November. At left, Poynter faculty Tony Elkins provides training to journalists at SPH Media in Singapore.**

**Poynter’s Impact by the Numbers:**

In 2025, when local journalism faced some of its hardest challenges, Poynter stepped in to support newsrooms and the industry:

**50,000**

The number of training hours Poynter faculty delivered to over 35,000 participants

**3,000+**

Journalists who took our free webinars about urgent issues facing journalists, including countering legal threats, using public records, immigration and local elections.

**100+**

Public media stations trained, leading to tens of millions of new revenue raised

**175**

Number of new journalism funders trained by Poynter on journalism ethics and the value of local news (supported by the Knight Foundation).

Newmark Ethics Center

# Strengthening Ethics and Trust in a High-Stakes Moment

The Newmark Ethics Center evaluates and strengthens newsroom standards, helping media leaders build cultures that support honest reporting and trustworthy storytelling.

With donor support, the center guides journalists through complex ethical challenges, holds media institutions accountable and equips newsrooms to deliver news that truly serves their communities. In 2025, that mission was more urgent than ever.

## Leading the Field in AI Ethics for Newsrooms

As artificial intelligence rapidly transforms journalism, Poynter provided more than 2,000 journalists with essential AI ethics resources, including a free audience-facing toolkit and a starter kit to help newsrooms create ethical AI guidelines without compromising trust.

The center also convened more than 100 newsroom leaders at our Summit on AI, Ethics and Journalism in New York City, hosted with The Associated

Press. Led by Ethics Chair Kelly McBride, MediaWise Director Alex Mahadevan and faculty member Tony Elkins, participants developed practical ethical frameworks for AI use — tools newsrooms are already applying to reporting, verification and workflow decisions.

## Transforming Crime Coverage in a Politically Charged Moment

As claims about crime increasingly shape political rhetoric, including misleading statements from national leaders and the deployment of military resources based on inaccurate narratives, Poynter’s work to reform local crime coverage took on new urgency.

Through the Transforming Crime Coverage initiative, 17 newsrooms worked with Poynter to move away from clichés, distortion and fear-based reporting toward more accurate, community-centered journalism. The program emphasized practical policies, sustainable newsroom systems and

accountability to local audiences. This brings the total number of newsrooms that have reformed their crime coverage to more than 100.

Participants reported meaningful impact in a 2025 survey:

“We developed practical plans that should impact our coverage, rather than just having philosophical discussions.”

“Gave us tools to make real change, improve the paper and help our community.”

## Public Accountability and Trust in Real Time

Ethics Chair Kelly McBride continued her service as the NPR Public Editor, offering transparent explanations of newsroom decision-making to NPR’s audience of more than 40 million weekly listeners and readers. Her work remains a national model for public accountability and strengthens audience trust at a time of deep political polarization.



Shown are some of the journalists, news organization leaders and technologists who attended Poynter’s second Summit on AI, Ethics and Journalism in New York City, hosted with The Associated Press. The group helped hone guidelines for newsrooms to responsibly use AI. Below are members of one of the summit’s panels, Garance Burke, AP; Lam Thuy Vo, Documented; Phoebe Connelly, formerly of The Washington Post; Nikita Roy, Newsroom Robots.



The Poynter Newsroom

# Tracking Threats to a Free Press in a Year of Unprecedented Pressure

In 2025, Poynter’s newsroom sharpened its focus on one of journalism’s most urgent challenges: protecting the freedom of the press amid escalating political and institutional pressure. Through original reporting, explanatory journalism and a new tracker, Poynter documented how federal actions are reshaping the ability of journalists to report and the public’s ability to access information.

That work culminated in the launch of Press Freedom Watch, which tracks concrete actions that undermine press freedom during President Donald Trump’s second term. The project catalogs detentions, funding cuts, investigations and other government measures affecting journalists and public information, offering an ongoing record of how press freedoms are being constrained.

In addition, Poynter’s newsroom analyzed the implementation of Project 2025 media proposals, reported on how journalists cover immigration enforcement while living through it, and investigated new Pentagon restrictions on media access. Together, these stories helped readers understand not just individual incidents, but the broader patterns shaping press freedom in the United States.



**The Poynter Report Podcast with Tom Jones, now in its fourth season, offers enlightening conversations with some of the media’s leading voices. This year, Tom has talked with Karen Attiah, left, who was controversially fired from The Washington Post, Chuck Todd, middle, formerly of NBC; and Jen Psaki, right, MSNOW host.**



**Poynter’s extensive coverage of the media industry, from its newsroom on Poynter.org and through the flagship newsletter The Poynter Report by Tom Jones, draws a loyal audience for its reporting and analysis. Above, Poynter’s veteran senior media business analyst, the late Rick Edmonds, talks about Jimmy Kimmel’s suspension with CNN.**

## Industry Coverage that Explains Why Change Matters

Alongside this work, The Poynter Report newsletter continued to lead national conversations about media accountability, ethics and industry transformation. With 232 editions reaching roughly 25,000 daily subscribers, the newsletter offered sharp reporting on newsroom leadership changes, AI-driven reporting tools, platform power and the pressures facing local, national and digital newsrooms. “The Poynter Report Podcast”

expanded its reach across 22 episodes in 2025, featuring in-depth conversations with editors, reporters, academics and technologists. Guests included former White House press secretary Jen Psaki, who discussed political communication in a high-stakes election year, and former “Meet the Press” moderator Chuck Todd, who explained why it was time for him to leave NBC News after 20 years. Through an ongoing partnership with the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, the podcast also provided students with hands-on experience in

journalism production.

## Growing Engagement With Poynter’s Industry Journalism

Across platforms, Poynter’s newsroom generated 5.6 million pageviews and 3.1 million engaged minutes in 2025. Together, Poynter’s press freedom reporting, newsletters, podcasts and enterprise stories reinforced its role as a trusted resource for journalists, educators and the public at a time when journalism’s role — and its protections — are under pressure.

**PolitiFact**

# Fighting Misinformation Where It Harms the Most

PolitiFact is the largest U.S. political fact-checking organization, providing fact-based information about news events and politicians through daily, thorough and nonpartisan reporting. In 2025, PolitiFact extended that mission beyond politics to confront a fast-growing spread of health and medical misinformation, offering clarity at a time when misleading claims increasingly influence public understanding and public policy.

**Expanding Fact-Checking to Meet the Moment**

This year, PolitiFact published more than 1,000 fact-checks and explanatory stories, examining statements from elected officials, influencers and institutions while responding to viral rumors that shaped national conversations. The team broadened its coverage to include consistent reporting on personal health topics — vaccines, medication, nutrition and infectious diseases — that

have become central to public debate and are common targets for misinformation.

**Protecting the Public With Trusted Health Reporting**

Recognizing a surge in misleading healthcare narratives, PolitiFact launched sustained fact-checking on personal health claims amplified through social platforms and political rhetoric. PolitiFact’s monitoring of social and political discussions meant

**Reporter Sara Swann discusses PolitiFact’s work with Syracuse University broadcast journalism graduate students at the SU in DC center in July 2025.**



**PolitiFact chief correspondent Lou Jacobson taught economics students at George Washington University about making charts and graphs during one of his many teaching engagements in 2025.**

it met the moment as the public sorted through confusing federal guidance. This work provided audiences with accessible, evidence-based reporting and countered messages that can lead to real-world harm.

Of 20-plus health stories published since August, 60% were republished by our national and international partners, including PBS, and Al Jazeera and KFF Health News. Other reporters, including a 19th News health reporter, and vaccine experts have shouted out our work.

**Accountability in a High-**

**Stakes Information Environment**

Even outside an election year, PolitiFact held leaders in Washington, D.C., and many states accountable for their messages on crime, immigration, public spending, education and healthcare access. Its reporting helped readers navigate a polarized environment and evaluate claims that shaped local and national policy discussions.

Of 20+ health stories published since August, 60% were republished by our national and international partners, including PBS, and Al Jazeera and KFF

Health News. Other reporters, including a 19th News’ health reporter, and vaccine experts have shouted out our work.

**Reaching Millions Through PolitiFact**

PolitiFact continued to grow as a trusted destination for accurate information, offering detailed fact-checks, accompanying source materials and explanatory journalism. Amid industrywide declines in reach through search, PolitiFact grew social media and newsletter subscribers.

- Reached 22 million pageviews in a nonelection year.



A screenshot from training that PolitiFact staffers Maria Briceño and Maria Ramirez Uribe provided for Mexican fact-checkers at El Sabueso.

- Average users spent 22,742 hours, or 9,281 days, on site.
- Passed 100,000 Instagram followers.
- Grew newsletter subscribers by 35%, hitting 133,000 in 2025.
- Hit 23,000 subscribers on our Spanish-language Whatsapp channel, where users can submit questions to PolitiFact en Español tea. A user who asked us about rumors that President Trump had ended marriage-based residency said this when we debunked the claim: “Thank you very much. I understand everything now.”

### A Resource for Journalists Worldwide

PolitiFact reporters also provided

training and insight to newsrooms and fact-checkers nationally and internationally, strengthening professional standards and supporting efforts to fact-check politicians and online hoaxes in countries such as Mexico, Poland and South Korea.

### An Authoritative Voice in the Age of AI Slop

PolitiFact published at least 40 stories on AI this year, twice as many AI stories and twice as many fact checks of AI-generated content than in the previous year.

- **Exposing AI-fueled myths after high-profile events.** We explained how Grok made up

details on an Idaho shooting suspect, that fake celebrity donations proliferated after the Texas flood, and how AI aided false war imagery circulating after the U.S. military attack on Iran nuclear facilities.

- **AI chatbots need fact-checkers and PolitiFact.** Grok routinely cites PolitiFact in its responses to people asking for fact checks. PolitiFact showed up in reference lists of hundreds of Grokikipedia articles. We wrote about an X account posing as an Iranian journalist and Grok almost exclusively cited us in 20+ posts that collectively gained thousands of views.



PolitiFact executive director Aaron Sharockman (right) speaks about the fact-checkers' work with State of the State in Reno, Nevada.

- **Influential voices cite PolitiFact.** Our reporting on a proposed AI state regulation moratorium (once included in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act) was cited by John Oliver's “Last Week Tonight” and Theo Von's interview with OpenAI CEO Sam Altman.

### Commitment to Complicated Immigration Reporting

PolitiFact continued to prioritize immigration as one reporter's focused beat, part of a 10-year commitment to untangle complicated data and laws in an unprecedented, fast-moving year for immigration policy.

- PolitiFact published more than **155 immigration-related stories, fact-checks and promise updates** in 2025.
- We ended the year with a special report on two brothers who came to the U.S. as children, tried to gain legal status and were deported to El Salvador after a routine check-in with immigration authorities. Their case illustrated public data showing how the Trump administration's public commitment to prioritizing “worst of the worst” immigrants for deportation was not meeting reality.
- During the historic government shutdown, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer held up a large

version of our fact-check on the main misleading narrative that the Democrats shut down the government to give immigrants illegally in the U.S. health care.

### We asked readers: What do you get from PolitiFact that you can't get anywhere else?

“PolitiFact makes me think more deeply about the issues of the day.”  
 “A belief that what I'm reading is factual & well researched.”  
 “Balance. Clear information. A feeling of ‘I know what my sources are.’”

IFCN

# The Global Leaders of Defending Truth

Facts are under assault around the globe, targeted by organized disinformation campaigns, fast-moving scams and AI-driven manipulation designed to overwhelm what people can know and trust. In the middle of that storm, the IFCN helps by setting standards that protect credibility, providing funding that helps fact-checkers survive and sustain their work, and convening a cross-border community that can respond to misinformation at global scale.

The International Fact-Checking Network is the global leader in setting and enforcing standards for fact-checking journalism. More than 170 newsrooms in over 80 countries are verified signatories to the IFCN Code of Principles, strengthening trust and consistency in fact-checking



**International Fact-Checking Network Director Angie Holan speaks at GlobalFact 12 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the world's largest annual gathering of fact-checkers.**



**GlobalFact 12 brought together hundreds of fact-checkers from 87 countries in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.**



**Maldita.es' Clara Jiménez Cruz, Aos Fatos' Tai Nalon and The Quint's Ritu Kapur participate in the panel "Telling our story: false narratives about fact-checking and how to counter them" at GlobalFact 12.**



**An audience of fact-checkers and journalists listen in on a session at GlobalFact 12.**

## IFCN By the Numbers (2025)

<b>170+</b> Verified fact-checking organizations in the IFCN network	<b>80+</b> Countries represented across the IFCN Code of Principles	<b>444</b> GlobalFact attendees to GlobalFact 12	<b>90</b> GlobalFact speakers	<b>\$2.6M</b> in grant funds committed	<b>43</b> newsrooms awarded grants	<b>34</b> countries	<b>6</b> Continents represented
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**An attendee at GlobalFact 12, poses for a photo with Laura Zommer, co-founder and CEO of Factchequeado, who participated in a panel on human rights and technology.**

worldwide.

In 2025, rapid changes in AI and platform policies accelerated the speed and scale of deception. When Meta ended third-party fact-checking in the United States, IFCN documented the impact and made the public case for professional verification, while

continuing direct support for fact-checkers through the Global Fact Check Fund. Since its 2023 launch, the fund has distributed more than \$8 million to 174 organizations in 72 countries, providing operational support and helping fact-checkers build more sustainable organizations.

IFCN also convened the global community at GlobalFact 12 in Rio de Janeiro, drawing 444 participants from six continents. The conference tackled urgent frontline problems, including verifying AI-generated content, responding to platform withdrawals and countering



**Panelists at GlobalFact 12 participate in the panel “The impact of disinformation in the crisis in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.”**

coordinated attacks on fact-checkers’ credibility.

As part of its strategic evolution, IFCN began a comprehensive review of the Code of Principles to address AI standards, safety and commercial boundaries, while exploring how fact-

checking expertise can support verified information in emerging technologies. The work continues toward GlobalFact 2026 in Vilnius, Lithuania, with a continued focus on cross-border collaboration and defending truth through professional standards.

With your support, the IFCN ensures that professional fact-checking can continue to grow, sustain operations and uphold rigorous standards that strengthen public trust in information.

## MediaWise

# Equipping the World for an AI-Driven Information Era

False information about vaccines, elections, AI and the news reaches billions of people worldwide, shaping choices that affect health, safety and democracy. MediaWise gives people of all ages the practical skills to separate fact from fiction, and donor support ensures these programs reach those who need them most.

MediaWise is a global leader in digital media and AI literacy, equipping people with practical skills to identify false information and make informed decisions. Since its launch, MediaWise has reached more than 151 million people worldwide, delivering education where misinformation spreads most.

In 2025, MediaWise expanded its reach to millions of people in high-



**Alex Mahadevan, director of MediaWise and a member of the Poynter faculty, speaks with content creators at the Microsoft office in Sydney, Australia, about misinformation, AI and how audiences engage with news and information.**

risk information environments. Media literacy content and resources reached more than 18 million older adults through YouTube, YouTube TV and AARP campaigns, while the Teen Fact-

Checking Network engaged young audiences in nine countries with peer-created content on TikTok and Instagram. WhatsApp-based courses in Brazil, Spain, France, Guatemala and Turkey grew their

### Metrics for MediaWise since 2018

**151 million+**

reached across all social media platforms, globally, by MediaWise and our in-country partners publishing MediaWise-branded content since our inception.

**21,000+**

trained by MediaWise staff in-person and virtually worldwide.

**30,000+**

visitors to libraries and museums to view MediaWise's curated journalism history traveling exhibit.

**30 countries**

reached across five continents through workshops, mobile courses and video series.



**Alex Mahadevan leads a discussion at Australian Association Press in Sydney, Australia, focused on information integrity and the future of fact-checking.**

lifetime reach to more than 6 million learners, helping them spot false claims before misinformation could take hold.

MediaWise also trained more than 15,000 people across five continents through in-person and virtual workshops, giving educators, journalists and community leaders the skills to teach others to evaluate information critically. Its work now spans more than 30 countries

and is amplified by 41 ambassadors ranging from journalists to content creators who deliver trusted media literacy messages at scale, strengthening communities' resilience to the rapid spread of false and misleading information.

Research in five countries, conducted with Stanford and other universities, shows that MediaWise programming improves misinformation-resilience skills by up to 20%—meaning

participants are measurably better at spotting false claims before they spread, protecting themselves and their communities from harm. As part of Poynter's AI Innovation Lab, MediaWise continues to lead efforts to help communities understand and verify AI-generated content in a rapidly changing information environment.



Participants in the Egypt Media Forum, including Alex Mahadevan (second from right,) pose for a group photo in Cairo, where the forum explored the future of news and how the industry must adapt to a “Google Zero” environment.



Brittani Kollar, deputy director of MediaWise, presents at Instituto Palavra Aberta's annual media literacy conference in Brazil, highlighting how Poynter's MediaWise engages audiences through direct community interaction, global partnerships and the empowerment of local leaders.



Alex Mahadevan participates in Sarasota.tech's Creative Town Hall with Sarasota-area tech leaders on the intersection of art, media and technology.

Engagement

# Reaching Audiences Everywhere

Social media isn't just a distribution channel; it's where news happens. Poynter expanded its digital and social storytelling in 2025, reaching millions through platform-native content — from shareable graphics and memes to vertical video and interactives — that engages diverse audiences and brings trusted journalism content to the places conversations are happening.

Some notable impacts:

- Poynter saw significant growth on key social platforms, including 31% growth on Instagram, a key platform for building community and loyalty among adults under 40, ensuring the institute's work reaches new audiences. And we grew the core professional development audience on LinkedIn by nearly 30%, increasing the reach of Poynter's expertise and



Poynter staff celebrate the institute's 50th anniversary in November with cake and balloons in the Poynter courtyard.



Ellen Hine, second from right, works with visiting journalists from the Korea Press Foundation at Poynter, where they received training on emerging newsroom practices and audience engagement techniques.



Poynter's TyLisa Johnson, left, Jessika Lewis, center, and USA Today content creator and audience editor YuKwon Toney, right, discuss Jessika's experience participating in Poynter's Diversity Leadership Academy in 2024 in a video posted on Poynter's Instagram (@poynter\_institute).



Alex Mahadevan gives advice on how to safely use artificial intelligence to analyze confidential documents in a video posted on Poynter's Instagram (@poynter\_institute).

training offerings.

- PolitiFact's audience team launched an innovative "100-Day Sprint" strategy over the summer to reverse a broader industry trend of declining search traffic. Working across the newsroom, the team successfully increased search impressions by 37% and search pageviews by 23%, while driving a 79% year-over-year growth in PolitiFact Daily newsletter subscribers and generating over \$11,000 in immediate new donor revenue.

- Poynter's audience team expanded the digital reach of the annual Bowtie Ball and training promotion with a high-impact influencer strategy, partnering with journalist YuKwon Toney to bring real-time event coverage and exclusive VIP interviews to a diverse, younger audience, resulting in over 63,000 total views and nearly 20,000 unique accounts reached on Instagram alone.

- Poynter's audience team led a LinkedIn-centric video strategy for GlobalFact 12 in Rio de Janeiro, the world's largest gathering of fact-checkers. By amplifying insights from top voices like Justice Alexandre de Moraes and Patrícia Campos Mello, the team reached a global professional audience, generating over 65,000 total impressions and interactions.

The team's work ensured Poynter's journalism traveled far, resonated deeply and met audiences wherever they consumed news.

Follow Poynter on social media for updates on how donations strengthen ethical journalism.



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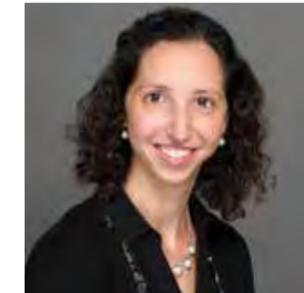
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## Donor Recognition

“From the very beginning of our democracy, the founders understood that journalism was essential to a free society. Newspapers helped create a shared commitment to truth and civic life, and that principle has never been more important than it is today. Poynter carries those values forward as a global leader, investing in journalists locally and around the world so democracy can continue to thrive. That work depends on donor support, which is why I give.”

**Terry Hynes, dean emerita, College of Journalism and Communications, University of Florida.**

“For more than 25 years in broadcast journalism, Poynter was always there. When we needed stronger leaders, we sent people to Poynter. When we faced ethical questions, we called Poynter. As the pace of news accelerates and the platforms keep changing, that role is more important than ever. Poynter is a treasure for our industry, and donor support ensures it can continue setting the standard for what responsible journalism looks like in a rapidly changing world.”

**Brian Bracco, Vice President of News Hearst Television. Retired Vice president KSHB-television Scripps Media**

“I first encountered Poynter through a required training, without fully understanding what it was. Then I walked into a Poynter room and realized I wasn't alone. I met people facing the same challenges, asking the same questions and trying to do journalism the right way. Poynter broadened my worldview and gave me a community. That is why I support it. When journalism feels lonely and uncertain, Poynter reminds you that you have backup.”

**Julie Sidoni, Director of Journalism WVIA Public Media**

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