

International media groups to discuss fighting fake news

The World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (Wan-Ifra) and The Straits Times will hold a two-day conference on fighting fake news on 19-20 June 2017 at the Singapore Management University. Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law, K Shanmugam, will deliver the opening address.



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The rise of fake news has become a pressing danger to modern societies. From deliberate hoaxes, created to cause mischief, manipulate opinions and votes or make money, to media outlets re-circulating unverified or erroneous content, the misinformation ecosystem can take on many different faces. The growing use of social media platforms as a main source of information has also facilitated the emergence of a myriad 'alt-facts' or 'alt-truths' filter bubbles, which tend to isolate and confuse people.

The event will bring together media publishers, journalists, policymakers, industry players and other stakeholders with the objective to come up with concrete initiatives for fighting the spread of misinformation and improve media literacy in Asia.

'Keep it Real: Truth and Trust in the Media' is organised in partnership with The Canadian High Commission, Facebook, Google, Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Kas), the National Library Board and the Singapore Management University (SMU). The event is open to the public.

Need to create credible journalism

"The spread of fake news around the world is focusing minds on the need for good, credible and reliable journalism. Media organisations have an interest in retaining the trust of their readers," says Warren Fernandez, editor-in-chief of the English, Malay and Tamil Media group (EMTM) of Singapore Press Holdings.

“Democracies have an interest in ensuring that they have media organisations that meet voters’ needs for reliable information, to help them make good choices. This forum will delve into how these interests are best served today.”

“Universities such as SMU also have an important role to play through education and research. We can impart to students the skills in critical thinking and analysis, to be circumspect and be able to discern credible sources of information from non-credible ones, and to be open to diverse views for a more balanced perspective,” comments SMU President, Professor Arnoud De Meyer. “Our students are also required to take a course in ethics, so that they will be better at identifying and tackling various issues. Through research, our faculty can work on understanding social norms and how people can be motivated to value truth and the veracity of information.”

Lynn McDonald, High Commissioner of Canada and Ian Wilson, President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce add, “The fake news phenomenon affects us all. Addressing this issue require strong, ongoing collaboration between governments and the private sector. It is critical that we work together to preserve the integrity of news and information.”

Programme

On Day 1, the conference will look at practical fact-checking projects from Asia and around the world. Speakers will also offer a series of presentations and take part in panel discussions on what internet companies, journalism schools, government agencies and independent organisations are doing to improve media literacy and provide societies with reliable facts that enable well informed, constructive public debates.

On Day 2, selected participants will split into three workshops to discuss and identify concrete fact-checking measures and projects, including media literacy programmes and the legal and regulatory framework to tackle misinformation.

For more information, click [here](#).

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