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infodemic  
MANAGEMENT



World Health  
Organization



## Feature Artwork

Oooo, zinger!

Call it human nature or instinct, but each generation seems to follow a pattern of "let's make the world a better place for our children."

And sometimes we all need a snappy reminder not to forget where we came from, so we don't forget the lessons history has already taught us—thanks [Dawn Mockler](#).

We carry these learnings forward and build on. That's exactly what you're doing as infodemic managers today. In this watershed moment where the pandemic is showing us that an infodemic is something we need to better manage, we're nursing a wound that will be the scar we show to the next generation, so they're more immune to infodemics than we are today.

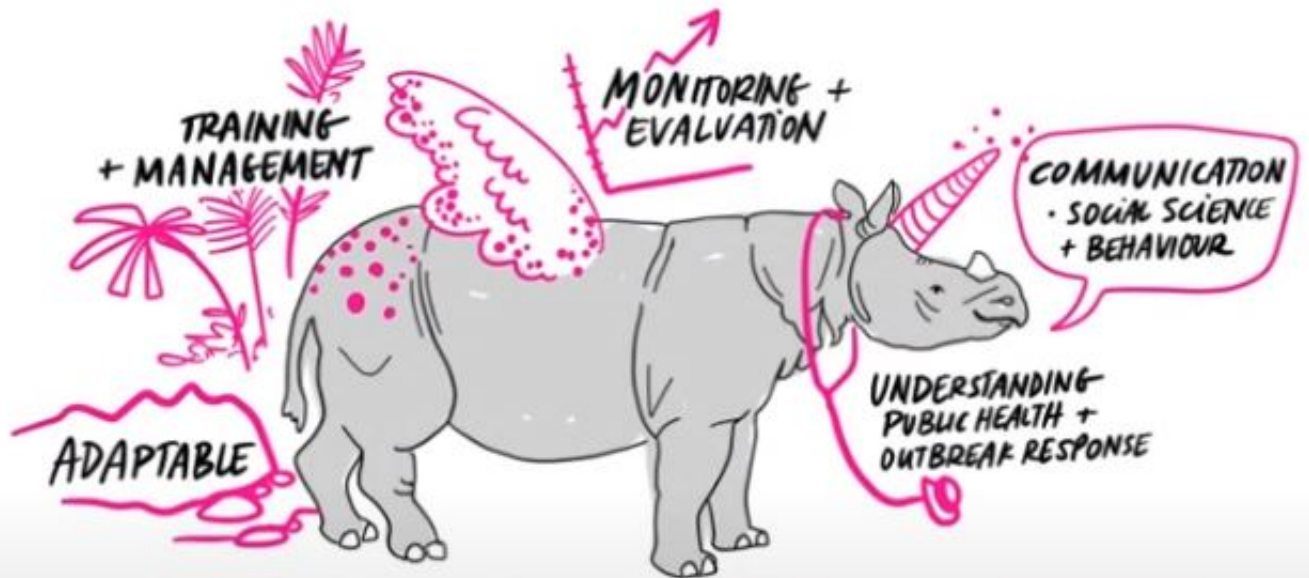
As we navigate how to approach the infodemic and leave the world better than we found it, remember that no impact is too small, and we can all play a role.

© [Dawn Mockler](#)

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## Feature Content

# WANTED: INFODEMIC MANAGER UNICORNS



Just announced! US CDC is once again partnering with WHO for the upcoming infodemic management training course—apply today!

In the [last issue](#), we announced the details for how to apply to the second-ever global infodemic manager training course, and great news, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US CDC) is teaming up with WHO once again to provide technical expertise, facilitation and support for the training.

This cohort will be the second group of professionals to become skilled and certified WHO infodemic responders. Upon completion of the training, they can be deployed to different country assignments around the globe.

Applications are pouring in and we hope to see you or people you know who would be great infodemic managers among them!

- Online training runs for four weeks from 1 - 30 June 2021
- Deadline for submission is 9 May 2021 at 18:00 Geneva, Switzerland time

[Find the full guidelines for how to apply here.](#)

# VIRAL FACTS AFRICA

ABOUT CONTACT US

👉 Follow & share! 👈



**Viral Facts Africa arrives on the scene just in time.**

Well it's official!

[Viral Facts Africa](#) is now more than a social media account with a regular crafty video you can forward to a friend. This is now a full-blown operation backed by the [Africa Infodemic Response Alliance \(AIRA\)](#), a WHO-hosted network that coordinates actions and pools resources to manage the infodemic by information gaps and tackling misinformation around the COVID-19 pandemic and other health emergencies in Africa.

During the testing phase, Viral Facts Africa products were viewed over 20 million times on social media. Information on COVID-19 alone was shared and viewed over 16 billion times and mentioned more than 6 million times on Twitter and web-based news sites between November 2020 and March 2021 in the 47 countries of the WHO African Region.

All Viral Facts Africa products are open for anyone to use and are available in



English and French, with more languages planned. The official launch comes as 90 million more COVID-19 vaccines are set to arrive in Africa in the coming months.

Follow and amplify Viral Facts Africa on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), get the latest from Viral Facts Africa [right in your inbox](#) and check out coverage of [VFA on this BBC podcast](#) (~32.50)!



# United Nations

## **Start planning your activities for Global Media and Information Literacy Week.**

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and its Member States have recognized that we all could use stronger media and information skills to better protect ourselves from the harmful impacts of infodemics. Because there are digital divides (including gender digital divides), there are data inequalities, and because lifelong learning requires information in different formats for different generations, more must be done. Governments, NGOs, private sector and civil society can all facilitate competency improvement so that people can learn what they need to learn, to make informed decisions.

This recognition has driven the UN to establish [24 to 31 October of each year as the Global Media and Information Literacy Week](#), where Member States and all relevant organizations can promote awareness and educational activities that tackle the issue of mis- and disinformation, and to implement policies, plans and strategies to counter mis- and disinformation.

Now is a great time to start thinking about how you can encourage participation from your organizations during that week.

# Opportunities for Action



## Take this free MOOC.

From now through 25 April, media professionals and anyone developing content on the COVID-19 vaccine can [follow a free massive open online course \(MOOC\)](#) on “Covering the COVID-19 Vaccine: what journalists need to know.” The course is organised by the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas at the University of Texas at Austin in partnership with UNESCO, WHO, UNDP, and co-funded by the European Union.

It runs in English, French Spanish and Portuguese from 29 March - 25 April and will soon thereafter be made available in additional languages in a Self-Directed Format.

Register here:

- [English](#)
- [French](#)

- [Spanish](#)
- [Portuguese](#)



## Apply for this scholarship.

[TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases](#), supports low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to strengthen capacity for health research through a range of activities, including its Postgraduate Training Scheme. As the Scheme's first phase (2015-2021) comes to an end, the process of selecting universities to participate in the second phase (2022-2026) now starts with this call.

The objectives of the scheme are to:

- Increase the numbers of researchers in LMICs trained in implementation research (IR) on infectious diseases of poverty
- Support the development of IR as a field of study
- Increase the capacity of universities in LMICs to manage training grant schemes and mentor students

Only applications from universities in LMICs with experience in managing international master's courses in public health will be considered. The selection of universities will be on a competitive basis. Applications will be reviewed by an independent selection committee.

**Deadline is 10 May 2021.** [Find full details here.](#)

MARCH 2021

# A framework for information incidents

## Consultation document

Provide Full Fact with feedback on how to fight online misinformation.

Since last year, [Full Fact](#) has been working alongside internet companies, fact checkers and governments to create a simple, coherent product that can be used when future disaster strikes, as a common reference tool for action.

Now they need your feedback on their model framework.

Until 14 May, they want to hear from organisations that tackle misinformation and groups that are affected by misinformation.

[Read the framework and submit your feedback here.](#)



# Public Health Communications COLLABORATIVE

**Get guidance from the Public Health Communications Collaborative on how to respond to popular misinformation.**

Knowing what misinformation is being shared can help you generate effective messaging. The [Public Health Communications Collaborative](#) offers insights on popular rumours that are based on a combination of automated media monitoring and manual review by public health data analysts. Media data are publicly available data from many sources, such as social media, broadcast television, newspapers and magazines, news websites, online video, blogs and more. Their key for how to respond can help you decide what to do when you encounter misinformation.

[Find more details here.](#)

## Journal of Communication in Healthcare

Strategies, Media, and Engagement in Global Health

**Submit your paper for a special December issue of the Journal of Communication in Healthcare.**

This special issue will cover the topic of "COVID-19 and Health Inequities: Insights from Communication Research and Practice."

With this [call for papers](#), the Journal of Communication in Healthcare: Strategies, Media, and Engagement in Global Health, a leading peer-reviewed journal published by Taylor & Francis, seeks to:

- Contribute to the ongoing debate on the challenges ahead during and post-COVID-19
- Encourage submissions on research studies, evidence-based interventions, and case studies that highlight the role of communication research and practice in addressing this important issue

**Deadline for submission is 3 May 2021.** [Find full submission guidance here.](#)



**Enroll in a workshop on human-centred design for public health intervention development.**

[This hands-on training workshop](#) (24 - 26 June 2021) will introduce public health practitioners to the concept of Human-Centred Design (HCD).

Traditionally, HCD has been used in engineering, business and marketing to codevelop optimal products and services. More recently, HCD has been used in the public health sector by institutions such as UNICEF, PSI and USAID to develop sustainable prevention and intervention programs for a range of health topics including health systems, obesity, infant mortality, and HIV/TB.

Participants will work in teams to apply HCD methods to tackle a significant public health challenge. During this introductory workshop, they will:

- Understand what HCD is and how to apply it to public health
- Practice design research methods and apply appropriate frameworks to

understand community needs

- Synthesize insights to uncover opportunities for intervention
- Cultivate a creative approach to develop contextually appropriate interventions
- Understand how to prototype and refine these concepts with target communities

Registration is open. [Download the syllabus and flyer for the workshop here.](#)

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## Job Opportunities

- **WHO:** [Technical Officer, Risk Communication & Community Engagement](#) (Multiple Locations)
- **WHO:** [Technical Officer, Polio Eradication](#) (Geneva, Switzerland)
- **WHO:** [Chief Learning Officer, WHO Academy](#) (Lyon, France)
- **UNICEF:** [Consultancy – Product Manager, Office of Innovation](#) (USA)
- **UNICEF:** [Digital Communication Officer – Social Media Editor, Health & Immunization](#) (USA)
- **UNOPS:** [ICT Senior Analyst, Infodemics Researcher, Multiple Positions](#) (Remote)
- **IFRC:** [Project Manager, COVID-19 Mobile Testing Initiative Project](#) (Budapest, Hungary)
- **Thomson Reuters:** [Fact-checking Producer](#) (Mexico City, Mexico)
- **Harvard University:** [Executive Director, Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy](#) (Cambridge, MA, USA)
- **Wikimedia Foundation:** [Trust & Safety Specialist, Disinformation](#) (Nairobi, Kenya/Remote)
- **Mercy Corps:** [Sr. Specialist - COVID - 19, Social and Behavior Change](#) (Remote)

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# Upcoming Events



[8-9 April 2021](#)

The NNLM Virtual Symposium would be an opportunity to engage with all NNLM Network Members to address misinformation and mistrust, raise awareness about the pandemic, and efforts to combat it. The symposium will be an opportunity to understand COVID-19 and share strategies and programs to help Network Members engage with these communities.

After attending the symposium, participants will be able to:

- Identify key issues that impact medically underserved populations in accessing accurate health information related to COVID-19 and vaccines.
- Apply case studies of presenters and panelists to reproduce activities in their own communities
- Design an outreach and education program to the specific populations they serve

On 8 April, WHO will present two paper presentations on "Listening to Community Concerns in the COVID-19 Infodemic: A “WHO Digital Approach”



and "50 Global Actions to Manage the COVID-19 Infodemic: A WHO Framework." [Register to attend.](#)



**MÉRIEUX FOUNDATION**

A family foundation  
fighting infectious disease

[15 April 2021](#)

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has been exacerbated by the dissemination of misinformation obstructing the way preventive strategies like social distancing, use of masks and vaccination. The dismissal of these strategies ultimately impacts disease control. The spreading of false or inaccurate information seems to be one major public health threat that needs to be assessed and understood.

The Mérieux Foundation Vaccine Acceptance Initiative is hosting [two webinars](#) to bring together international experts to discuss misinformation challenges faced during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

[Register to attend.](#)



# CHI 2021

Making Waves, Combining Strengths

7 May 2021

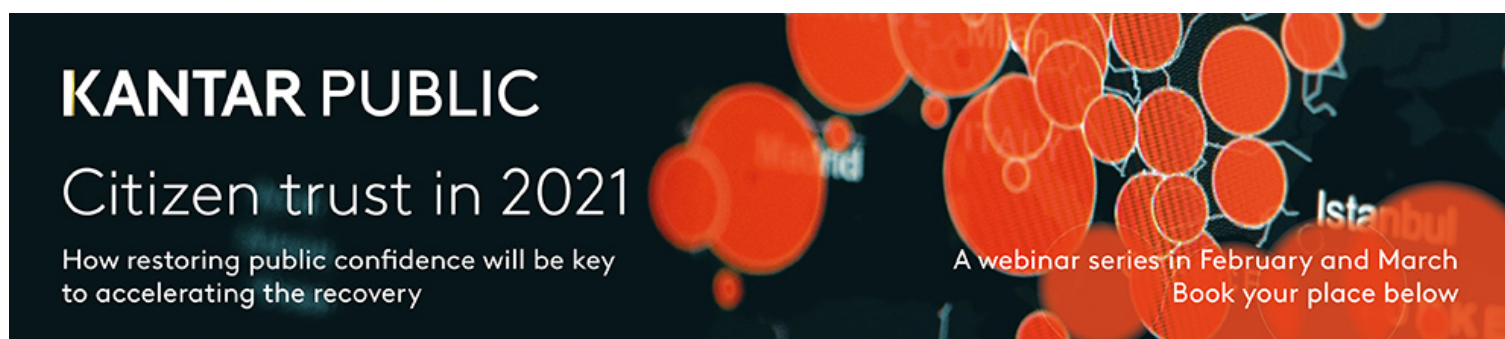
Two European research projects, Co-Inform and Eunomia, are hosting a workshop to discuss and build upon existing tools and approaches to stop misinformation spreading, shedding light on the ethical implications typically neglected when new digital solutions to tackle misinformation are conceived.

This hands-on workshop proposes to unpack the state-of-the-art on social, societal and political studies, as well as socio-technical solutions to stop misinformation, challenging the participants to first critically reflect upon limitations of existing approaches, then to co-create a future—integrating perspectives focusing on ethical aspects and societal impact.

Spaces are limited. [Register to attend.](#)

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# Recent Events



## 23 March 2021

Kantar is the world's leading data, insights and consulting company. The final webinar in their Citizen Trust Series explored public trust in media and government communications. Speakers shared findings and insights from:

- Research on the issues of public use and trust in the media and social media both before and during the pandemic
- Public opinion about fake news, disinformation and the impacts
- Research into the YouTube algorithm and impacts on public exposure to misinformation
- Practical actions to address misinformation and improve community engagement

[Watch the recording](#). You must select the webcasts and register to view the recording.



## 23 March 2021

The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies hosted a webinar

on "The COVID-19 Infodemic: Ensuring universal access to credible health information," with a keynote address delivered by WHO's Christine Czerniak . With the surge of information, some accurate, some not, accompanying the COVID-19 pandemic, information gaps plus a mix of misinformation and malicious disinformation have led to confusion around the choices we are making to protect ourselves and each other. Improving the management of this 'infodemic' is critical for a successful pandemic response. Panelists tackled these issues and proposed tactics to bolster the toolkit and strengthen the global response.

[Watch the recording.](#)



Physicians for  
Human Rights

Resources | Webinar

## COVID-19 Misinformation and Disinformation

[5 March 2021](#)

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) hosted a discussion on the consequences of mis- and disinformation during the pandemic, how the spread of false information impacts especially at-risk communities and solutions for mitigating its spread.

[Watch the recording.](#)



[19 November 2020](#)



Médias en Seine was the first international festival to imagine the media of tomorrow. The festival was a place for discussion and reflection that brought together French, European and American media professionals as well as the general public.

In imagining a world after the COVID-19 pandemic, WHO's Dr Sylvie Briand, Director of Global Infectious Hazards Preparedness contributed to a panel on "How do scientists fight misinformation in times of the pandemic?" She reminds us of the importance of diffusing verified correct information including adapting and codeveloping resources to ensure that they are well understood by their intended audiences.

[Watch the recording.](#)

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## What We're Reading

**nature**

[Shifting attention to accuracy can reduce misinformation online](#)

17 March 2021

**PNAS**

[The echo chamber effect on social media](#)

2 March 2021

**PLOS ONE**

[Classification aware neural topic model for COVID-19 disinformation categorisation](#)

18 February 2021



SOCIAL DATA  
SCIENCE CENTER

[Tracking Global COVID-19 Vaccination Uptake and Sentiments in 200+ Countries](#)

# nature human behaviour



EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH

[and Territories](#)

16 February 2021

[Measuring the impact of COVID-19 vaccine misinformation on vaccination intent in the UK and USA](#)

5 February 2021

[Exposure to COVID-19-Related Information and its Association With Mental Health Problems in Thailand: Nationwide, Cross-sectional Survey Study](#)

2 February 2021

[Denialism: what is it and how should scientists respond?](#)

20 January 2021

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## Fun With Numbers

# 2 April

Did you know that 2 April is International Fact-Checking Day?

Of course you knew that!

Each year, the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) hosts this event in partnership with fact-checking organizations around the world. This year, they've brought together 100+ fact-checkers

from 70+ countries to fight COVID-19 misinformation, and have mobilized a [#CoronaVirusFacts Alliance](#) and a searchable database of COVID-19 fact-checks with over 3,000 submissions so far.

Fact-Checking Day is an annual celebration that's meant to be a fun and practical way to encourage more facts in public health, journalism, and everyday life. And during a pandemic, we're seeing that fact-checking has never been more critical.

[Find out more about International Fact-Checking Day, and how to take part in the global conversation here.](#)

## About the News Flash

An infodemic is an overabundance of information—some accurate, some not—that spreads alongside a disease outbreak. Infodemics are nothing new, but in the digital age, they spread in real time and create a breeding ground for uncertainty.

Uncertainty fuels skepticism and distrust, which is perfect environment for fear, anxiety, finger-pointing, stigma, violent aggression and dismissal of proven public health measures. To manage an infodemic, we need to understand what contributes to it. So that's why we're sending you these updates. In each issue of the WHO's Infodemic Management News Flash we'll share the latest work happening at the global level, as well as highlight some of the challenges and solutions with infodemics in local contexts. We'll also provide you with a few takeaways to help you be an effective infodemic manager in your daily life.

If you have a tip on infodemic management or an idea for a future News Flash, email us at [infodemicmanagement@who.int](mailto:infodemicmanagement@who.int). Thanks for joining us on this journey.



**Our mailing address is: [infodemicmanagement@who.int](mailto:infodemicmanagement@who.int)**

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