



POLITICS

## Fighting fake news — Knight Foundation tackles media trust issue, bolsters fact-checking

BY CARLI TEPROFF  
[cteproff@miamiherald.com](mailto:cteproff@miamiherald.com)

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The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation has launched an initiative aimed at strengthening the public’s trust in media and supporting the critical role the press plays in democracy.

The multimillion-dollar initiative will be led by the Knight Commission on Trust, Media and Democracy, a diverse panel of 24 men and women from across the nation including Knight Foundation President and CEO Alberto Iburgüen and Miami Dade College President Eduardo Padrón.

“You cannot effectively run a community in a democracy if you do not have an informed citizenry,” Iburgüen said. “We need to find ways to reestablish the trust that has been lost in American institutions, including the press. There is a general lack of trust and we need to figure out how to fix that.”

On Monday, the foundation announced it will spend more than \$2 million to fund seven projects focused on fact-checking, accuracy and trust. As part of the initiative, the foundation already allocated \$1 million to about 20 different groups for early-stage experiments that could improve the accuracy of news. The effort will also include researching new ideas.

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“We want to figure how to get back to the place where those institutions are trusted and there is good reason to trust them,” said Jennifer Preston, vice president of journalism for the foundation.

Here's a deeper look at the seven groups that will be funded by this program:

- Cortica, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit, will receive \$900,000 to help newsrooms tell stories that resonate in a fragmented society.
- Duke University Reporters' Lab will receive \$880,000 to launch the Duke Tech & Check Cooperative to create fact-checking tools for journalists and the public. The Lab, which also received funding from Facebook, will also track automation projects focused on addressing misinformation around the world.
- President and Fellows of Harvard College will receive \$250,000 to fund First Draft, a research and learning lab that is now a part of the Shorenstein Center for Media, Politics and Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School.
- The Associated Press will receive \$245,000 to augment its fact-checking efforts. The AP will work with its member news organizations and customers to integrate new fact-checking tools and experiment with new storytelling platforms.
- Reynolds Journalism Institute in Missouri will receive \$100,000, to grow the institute's Trusting News project, which develops news engagement experiments and trains journalists on ways to increase trust with their audiences.
- Markkula Center for Applied Ethics in California will receive \$100,000 to help fund the center's Trust Project, which is developing open-source software toolkits to help newsrooms convey a commitment to accurate reporting.
- The Jefferson Center in Minnesota will receive \$75,000 for the Your Voice Ohio project, which strengthens connections between local newsrooms and communities across Ohio.



Ibargüen **Miami Herald** file photo

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