

November X, 2024

Press Release: Truth and Trust: Saving the Information Environment

The global information environment faces critical risks to truth and trust, issues that demand urgent and sustained attention. Join the co-founders of the [International Panel on the Information Environment](#) to discuss one of the most pressing issues of our time at the 2024 Web Summit: the complex, urgent intersection of technology and democratic integrity.

The IPIE is the only scientific, systemic, and global response to address the health of the information environment. More than 400 leading academics drawn from computer and data science, engineering, the social sciences and humanities were questioned from 66 countries.

Professor Philip Howard and Dr. Sheldon Himelfarb, will lead a pivotal discussion at the 2024 Web Summit to confront these emerging threats. Their fireside chat will shine a light on the drivers and dangers of misinformation, algorithmic manipulation, and the weaponization of information, all of which pose a direct challenge to democratic societies worldwide. Howard and Himelfarb will confront the hidden dangers of unchecked digital influence, urging tech companies, governments, and citizens alike to recognize the role they play in shaping resilient, trustworthy information ecosystems. With mis and disinformation on the rise, this talk will challenge participants to rethink their role in safeguarding digital spaces.

The IPIE bring together leading scientific minds to conduct applied research, with a mission to address the complexities of today's digital information environment. Their insights at the Web Summit will emphasize actionable solutions and the importance of institutional roles in preserving truth and accountability across digital platforms.

Key Themes of the Talk:

1. Combating Disinformation and the Spread of Misinformation

Dr. Howard underscores the role of social media platforms in amplifying misinformation, emphasizing, "The stakes are incredibly high. When disinformation spreads unchecked, it doesn't just mislead—it erodes trust in democratic institutions. Our research has highlighted the very real concern over the threats posed by social media owners to the global information landscape. We need concrete strategies that bring accountability to platforms and stem the spread of harmful narratives."

2. Algorithmic Manipulation and the Influence of AI

"Artificial intelligence is transforming the way information shapes public perception, but with that transformation comes tremendous responsibility," says Dr. Himelfarb. "When algorithms are left unregulated, they risk amplifying bias and manipulating what people see, believe, and even vote on. Our call is for tech that serves democracy, not destabilizes it."

3. Weaponization of Information and the Role of Institutions

Howard highlights the need for strong institutional oversight, noting, "Information has become weaponized, often by actors seeking to disrupt the very fabric of democratic societies. Institutions must rise to this challenge, creating frameworks that can both identify and counteract these attacks on truth."

Press Conference Highlights:

- **[Truth and trust: Saving the information environment](#)**
- **Speakers:** Dr. Philip Howard and Dr. Sheldon Himelfarb, Founders of the International Panel on the Information Environment
- **Location:** 2024 Web Summit, Lisbon
- **Date:** November 4, 2024
- **Time:** 2:00 PM (Local Time)

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Join us to explore how global leaders, tech innovators, and institutions can collaborate to preserve truth and trust in a rapidly evolving digital world.