

Help for vulnerable people to spot disinformation and boost online safety

- Funding awarded to improve media literacy among vulnerable and 'hard-to-reach' groups
- Will support projects across the UK to ensure everyone can protect themselves from online disinformation
- Part of the government's Online Media Literacy Strategy to help people be safe online

Elderly, disabled and other vulnerable people will get better support to stay safe online and avoid being misled by disinformation thanks to a funding boost from the government to mark UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy Week.

More than £1 million has been granted to 17 UK organisations to pilot new ways of boosting media literacy skills for people at risk of experiencing online abuse and being deceived into believing false information, such as vaccine disinformation, deepfake videos or propaganda created by hostile states.

Research shows some people struggle to engage and benefit from the range of media literacy education on offer, due to limited experience or overconfidence in using the internet, as well as a lack of awareness of how to access resources and their unavailability outside of schools and colleges.

[The Media Literacy Taskforce Fund](#) is one of two funding schemes created to target 'hard-to-reach' and vulnerable groups by investing in community-led projects to ensure everyone has the opportunity to improve their media literacy skills and protect themselves from online disinformation.

Social enterprise [Freshrb](#) will work with young people to develop their own podcasts exploring online dis- and misinformation to be aired on local radio. Another project run by charity [Internet Matters](#) will provide media literacy training for dozens of care workers and leavers in the Greater Manchester area.

Elderly people from diverse backgrounds in Leeds will have access to digital media skills training online and in community centres as part of the [Leeds Older People's Forum](#). [Parent Zone](#) is working with eight local councils including Calderdale, Luton and Middlesbrough to deliver media literacy resources tailored to parents and carers of teenagers.

A separate scheme, the [Media Literacy Programme Fund](#), will deliver training

courses, online learning, tech solutions and mentoring schemes to vulnerable internet users.

Digital Secretary Michelle Donelan said:

With the rise of online disinformation, teaching people to identify fact from fiction has never been more important to public safety.

As well as bringing forward new laws to tackle the root causes of these problems, we are funding organisations to give people the skills to stay safe online so everyone can benefit from all the internet has to offer.

Winning projects in the [Media Literacy Programme Fund](#) to receive grants today include:

- [NewsGuard](#), which will work with ageing-focused charities to, deliver workshops to older adults to support them in spotting mis- and disinformation online;
- The [Economist Educational Foundation](#) will work with disadvantaged schools and boost teachers' skills through news literacy training and support students to engage with the news and think critically about what they're consuming online;
- Online Safety charity [Glitch](#) will deliver workshops and training to vulnerable and marginalised women to support their media literacy skills including tackling online abuse.

All the schemes are part of the government's plans to deliver the [Online Media Literacy Strategy](#), a national action plan to empower people to stay safe online by giving them the skills they need to think critically about what they see and read on the internet.

Launched in July 2021, the three-year strategy supports media literacy organisations to deliver education and initiatives in a more wide-reaching and effective way. The [year two](#) plan, published in April, is backed by more than £2 million in targeted funding, including today's announcement. This is in addition to the £250,000 grant funding delivered to five organisations working with schools to adapt media literacy resources for teachers working with disabled students in our year one action plan.

The announcement coincides with the [UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy Week](#), a global initiative celebrating the progress countries have made toward making media literacy education more accessible to its citizens by implementing national media and information literacy policies.

The grant funding complements the measures in the groundbreaking [Online Safety Bill](#), which supports a safer online environment by requiring tech firms to protect children from harmful content and tackle criminal activity on their platforms.

- DCMS is backing the country's powerhouse sectors to grow the economy and

make a difference where people live.

- DCMS sectors, like tech, telecoms and the creative industries, contribute £211 billion to the economy each year and support more than four million jobs across the UK. And they are creating new jobs, with 250k more jobs filled now than before the pandemic.
- The digital sector contributes approximately £138 billion to the economy. There are 1,822,000 jobs in the sector – 250,000 more than in 2019 before the pandemic.
- The UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy Week, this year hosted in Nigeria, is an annual celebration of the progress achieved towards [Media and Information Literacy for All](#). The 2022 theme is “Nurturing Trust: A Media and Information Literacy Imperative”.
- The UK’s independent communications regulator, Ofcom, [defines media literacy](#) as the ‘ability to use, understand and create media and communications in a variety of contexts’.
- More than 170 organisations are currently involved in delivering media literacy education in the UK.
- DCMS has created a webpage offering [online media literacy resources](#).
- See the full list of grant recipients below.

Winners of the Media Literacy Programme Fund:

Winners of the Media Literacy Taskforce Fund: