

The Conversation attends Global Fact 4, with fact-checkers from around the world

Written by Lucinda Beaman, FactCheck Editor, The Conversation



Delegates at Global Fact 4 in Madrid. IFCN/Mario Garcia

In the first week of July The Conversation joined media organisations from 53 countries at [Global Fact 4](#), the fourth annual fact-checking summit hosted by the [International Fact-Checking Network](#).

Among the 188 delegates in Madrid were journalists and editors from [The Washington Post](#), [BBC Reality Check](#),

[PolitiFact](#),

[Africa Check](#),

[Full Fact](#),

[Le Monde](#),

[Climate Feedback](#)

and our Australian friends from [RMIT/ABC Fact Check](#).

Representatives from [Google News Lab](#), [Facebook](#), [Wikimedia](#), [Duke Reporters’ Lab](#), [First Draft News](#) and academic experts were also among the speakers.

These high-profile groups were brought together to discuss the challenges facing the media and democracy when more content than ever is available, but so much of it lacks the evidence-base and rigour necessary for citizens to make informed decisions.

I'm pleased to report that many of the initiatives discussed as best practice for fact-checking in the years ahead are already underway at The Conversation.

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It was encouraging to see academics – including University of Western Australia/MIT researcher [Briony Swire-Thompson](#) – sharing [research](#) on the science relating to the [spread of misinformation](#)

, and [how best to tackle it](#)

In a session on how fact-checkers can adapt their formats and methods to overcome the rejection of evidence by readers, [Dr Guillermo Solovey](#) suggested more collaboration between fact-checkers and academics. Solovey recommended the publishing of peer-reviewed fact-checks – a model first introduced by The Conversation in 2013.

Following Solovey's session, I was pleased to explain The Conversation's [fact-check process](#) to all delegates, and lead a discussion about our process in a breakout session with editors from PolitiFact, Full Fact, Africa Check and others.

Among the issues discussed at the summit was the need for [collaboration between news organisations](#) to stop the spread of misinformation as quickly, efficiently and comprehensively as possible. Delegates learned more about successful collaborations between dozens of rival news organisations

[in France](#), and between fact-checking and verification organisations [in the UK](#), during the 2017 general elections in those countries.

Another collaborative project is now [underway in Norway](#), with the non-profit organisation [Faktisk](#) bringing together journalists from two of Norway's most-read online news organisations, the public broadcaster and a commercial television station in an effort to bring more evidence-based information to the public debate.

Also discussed was the need for the [automation](#) of certain parts of [fact-checking](#) and [publishing processes](#) to maximise the spread of accurate information. The Conversation is currently working with the Duke Reporters' Lab to have our academic-authored fact-checks promoted in Google searches when inaccurate claims surface.

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Veteran journalist and media critic Tom Rosenstiel from The American Press Institute [proposed a shift](#)

from 'claim-based' fact-checks towards 'issues-based' fact-checks, as one way to reduce the rejection of facts based on partisan divides.

At front of mind throughout Global Fact 4 was the fostering and maintenance of trust between fact-checkers and the public, especially with the term 'fact check' now being abused by propagandists and other groups spreading misinformation. To combat this, the International Fact-Checking Network has created an [international code of principles](#) to help people identify which fact-checking sources to trust.

The Conversation was proud to be [one of the first two](#) fact-checking units in the world to be accredited, alongside The Washington Post Fact Checker. At the Global Fact 4 summit, we were thrilled to see this list has now grown to 25, and is expected to keep growing.

It will take a collaborative, global effort to turn the tide against the spread of misinformation that threatens the functioning of democracy. The Conversation is committed to working with academics and news organisations in Australia and around the world to achieve this goal.

You can read The Conversation's FactChecks [here](#) , and learn more about our FactCheck process in this [72-second video](#) .



The Conversation FactCheck is accredited by the International Fact-Checking Network.

The Conversation's FactCheck unit is the first fact-checking team in Australia and one of the first worldwide to be accredited by the International Fact-Checking Network, an alliance of fact-checkers hosted at the Poynter Institute in the US. [Read more here](#) .

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Have you seen a “fact” worth checking? The Conversation’s FactCheck asks academic experts to test claims and see how true they are. We then ask a second academic to review an anonymous copy of the article. You can request a check at checkit@theconversation.edu.au. Please include the statement you would like us to check, the date it was made, and a link if possible.

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