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FOR A SUSTAINABLE
SECTOR



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Annual Report 2020

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The year in review

2020 reflected the ‘Superpower’ that media truly has. Media continued playing a key role in showcasing the state of our planet environmentally and socially and contributing to possible solutions. Although the pandemic turned plans for COP26 (the annual United Nations climate change conference) on its head, climate change remained a top priority. The importance of media in enabling environmental and social movements, like the Black Lives Matter protests, was emphasised in many conversations across the year. And with media consumption on the rise, issues around the ethics and trust in media are being challenged. These are some examples of the topics addressed and discussed by the Responsible Media Forum in 2020.

23
participating
media
companies ...

Media is helping to shape the reality in which we operate in. It provides a platform for free speech and inspiring the world to change. Ben Page from Ipsos Mori shared data showing that the trust in media ‘crisis’ is overplayed and the self-reported consumption of fake news is declining. This highlights the responsibility and expectancy society has for the sector

to keep telling the truth, as encouraged by Ed Matthew, E3G – to portray the state of emergency the world is in while providing hope for a better future through content.

Our events continued virtually this year, addressing prominent topics such as mental wellbeing, climate change, diversity, and trust in media. We launched the [Media Climate Pact](#); a coalition of media companies committed to tackle climate change (more on page 6). We also released ‘The Superpower of Media - Mirrors or Movers II: managing the societal impacts of content’.

We heard from many high profile speakers, including John Elkington (Co-Founder & Chief Pollinator, Volans); Solitaire Townsend (Co-Founder, Futerra); Jeremy Schwartz (former CEO, the Body Shop) and Will Skeaping (Extinction Rebellion).

The activities of the Responsible Media Forum reflect and respond to many of the sector’s most pressing issues through discussions, events, working groups and research. This Report provides a summary of our activities in 2020 and plans for 2021. We hope you enjoy it.

1 research
project

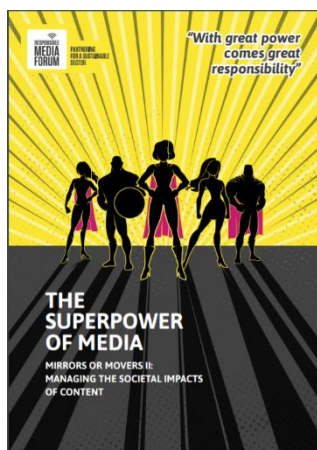
102
conference
attendees
from 18
countries

Participation in the Forum is open to large media companies operating anywhere in the world and in any media sub-sector(s). We are open to new participants, so if you are interested in joining please get in touch: info@responsiblemediaforum.org / +44 (0) 7384518837.

Research and publications

The Superpower of Media - Mirrors or Movers II: managing the societal impacts of content

We released the sequel to our influential 2013 Mirrors or Movers report, 'The Superpower of Media - Mirrors or Movers II: managing the societal impacts of content'. In the original report, we explored whether media simply reflects or actively changes society, discussed the understanding and management of media content impacts; and created six 'modes' by










which content “moves” society. In the [2020 report](#), we identified how the media landscape has changed, how the influence and expectations of media companies have evolved, and how the measurement and management of content impacts has improved since 2013. With the foreword by Christiana Figueres, former Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, we coined the term ‘Superpower’ as the title for this report. It is a ‘call to arms’ for media companies to use their combined efforts to solve the defining challenges of our time. The report identifies six key steps for good practice in creating








impactful content.

Forum meetings

Meetings are usually themed around an issue or topic which Forum participants are currently facing or is on the horizon. On a quarterly basis, we invite experts to present their perspective and insights followed by a group discussion under the Chatham House rule. These insights and discussions are designed to support and develop participants’ own work.

Following our in-person Q1 forum meeting, all our meetings became virtual due to the pandemic. Nevertheless, we still had insightful content such as a specialist top-up session in Q2. Furthermore, the virtual events enabled more overseas participants to join the meetings in real-time.

Q1 Mental wellbeing in the Workplace		
 Global Goals Live Marie Rumsby <i>UK Country Director, Global Citizen</i>	 Mental wellbeing in the workplace Fiona Cannon OBE – <i>Managing Director, Group Sustainable Business, Lloyds Banking Group</i>	 Impact for the Planet Project Toby Smith, <i>Climate Visuals Programme Lead</i> Nicole Itano, <i>Executive Director of tve.</i>
Q2 Climate change: campaigns & media's role		
 Main Meeting Will Skeaping, <i>Extinction Rebellion</i>	 Main Meeting Ed Matthew, <i>Associate Director, E3G</i>	 Specialist session: Science Based Targets Cynthia Cummis, <i>Director of Private Sector Climate Mitigation, WRI</i>
Q3 Mirrors Or Movers VIII Virtual Conference		
<i>Festival Style Conference with sessions held across three days on Trust in media companies post COVID-19, Climate Change and being a responsible media company</i>		
Day 1	 Trust in Media under COVID Ben Page <i>Chief Executive, Ipsos MORI</i>	Tech, ethics & trends in the post-pandemic world Benedict Evans <i>Independent Analyst</i>

<p>Day 2</p>	 <p>The role of Media in creating Green Swans</p> <p>John Elkington Co-Founder & Chief Pollinator, Volans</p>	 <p>The role of Media in fighting Climate Change</p> <p>Solitaire Townsend Co-Founder, Futerra</p>	 <p>Media Reporting on Climate Change</p> <p>Richard Black Director, Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit</p>	
<p>Day 3</p>	 <p>Panel: Diversity, organisational purpose, and the role of media</p> <p>Lewis Iwu CEO & Co-Founder, Purpose Union</p> <p>Angie Gola-Ebue Founder & Principal, Intermediary</p>	 <p>Responsible advertising</p> <p>Jerry Daykin Senior Media Director, EMEA, GSK</p>	 <p>Operational sustainability: what can we learn for managing content impacts?</p> <p>Inga Ruehl Executive Director, Production Services & Operations, Sky Sports</p>	 <p>15 Years of the Responsible Media Forum: what have we learned?</p> <p>Christian Toennesen Chair, Responsible Media Forum</p>
<p>Q4 What do CEOs really want from their sustainability teams?</p>				
<p>Main meeting</p> <p>Jeremy Schwartz, ex CEO of the Body Shop, Pandora and Conival PLC; Speaker and Senior Adviser to McKinsey</p>				

Working groups

The Forum occasionally supports specialist working groups to address key issues of interest to certain participants. This year, our focus has been on developing the Media Climate Pact.

The Media Climate Pact

This year we created and launched the Media Climate Pact. The pact is comprised of two commitments: The first is an operational commitment to set science-based targets on



climate, consistent with a 1.5-degree pathway to achieve net zero as close to 2030 as possible. The second commitment focuses on content: driving behaviour change towards climate-friendly lifestyles. Seven companies signed the Pact at launch, and the Pact remains open for new signatories. We hope to welcome more signatories in 2021 and

look forward to the first progress reports from the founding signatories (due in November 2021). You can find more information about the Pact on its [website](#).

DIMPACT: Environmental impacts of digital media

[DIMPACT](#) is a project involving ten companies, developing an online tool to calculate the carbon emissions of digital content. The tool was developed by world-class computer science researchers from Bristol University, with Carnstone providing secretariat services pro bono. A working prototype is now complete, and phase II of the project is looking to improve accuracy and develop forecasting abilities.

Mirrors or Movers VIII

This year we delivered the eighth in our series of Mirrors or Movers (MOM) conferences, each of which has focused on the societal and environmental impacts of media content. Because of COVID-19, we hosted the conference virtually in a festival style with short



sessions across three days. Each day had overarching themes: trust in media in a post-pandemic world, climate change, and being a responsible media company today. The conference was open

to forum participants and external stakeholders on an invite-only basis, producing a smaller audience and an intimate virtual space for discussions and Q&A with our brilliant speakers.

Recordings of each session and the full speaker list are available [here](#).

Online

Between them, the Responsible Media Forum website and the Mirrors and Movers website, originally created for the report and conference of the same name, attracted 2,926 unique visitors during the calendar year. The [Forum website](#) holds all research published to date by the Forum, a complete list of participating companies and other relevant information. It was re-launched in late 2016, following the re-naming of the Media CSR Forum to the Responsible Media Forum. The [Mirrors or Movers website](#) hosts reports and videos, and features information relating to the eight conferences held to date. It also provides a home for future work on this subject by the Forum. The Twitter feed (@WeareRMF), established in 2010, has a follower base of 1,373.



The participants

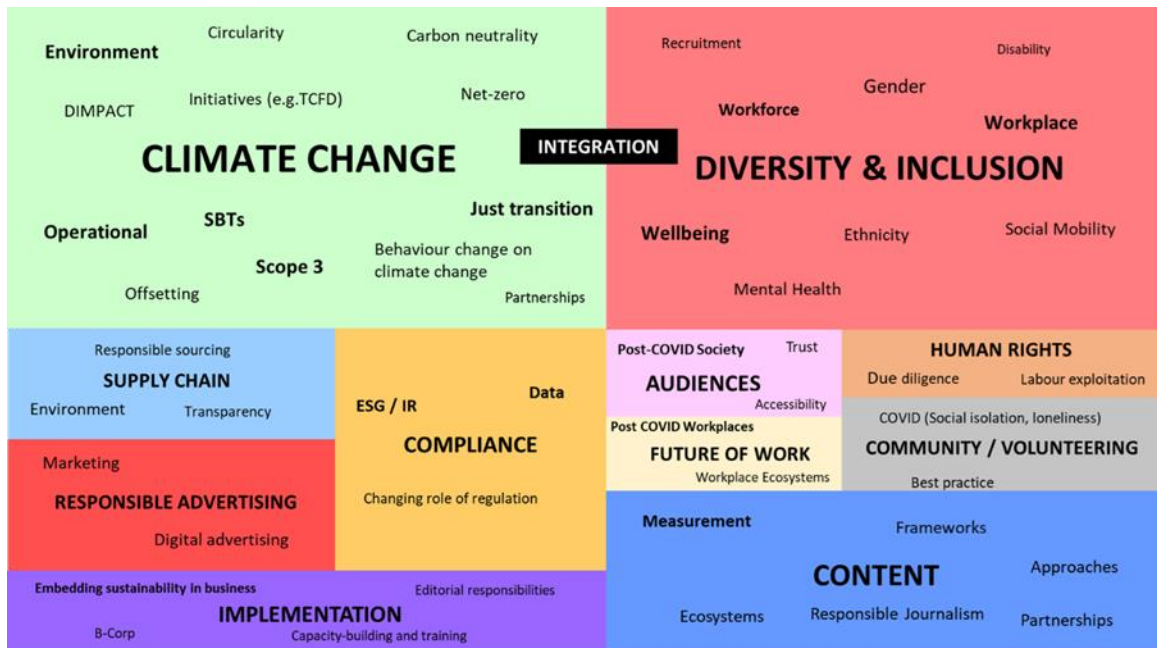
The Responsible Media Forum is a partnership between major media companies to identify and act on the social and environmental challenges facing the sector. The Forum has been going since 2001, starting as a UK initiative but with participants now drawn from around the world.

During 2020, the Forum consisted of 23 participating companies. We welcomed Axel Springer during the year. Participants represent the full breadth of the media spectrum, from public service broadcasters, to data analytics providers, to advertising agencies and event organisers. Individual representatives include CR and Sustainability Directors, HR Directors, Company Secretaries and Directors of Risk, Audit and Compliance. Together, we work to define and develop responsible business practices for the media sector.

Plans for 2021

Forum meetings

Following our annual consultation, our 2021 programme of activities will reflect priority topics and themes amongst participating companies. The Treemap below depicts the issues participants are currently focused on. The larger blocks indicate the issues that are most prioritised across the forum.



We anticipate the 2021 programme to include:

- Three quarterly meetings, in Q1, Q2 and Q4, centred around the centre issues: climate change, diversity & inclusion, and content.
- One public conference, Mirrors or Movers IX, in Q3
- Specialist sessions focused on niche topics, from sub-issues and smaller blocks in the Treemap.
- Working groups where action-led topics and initiatives and arise.
- Plus, any additional meetings on an extraordinary basis.

Mirrors or Movers IX

The Forum plans to host a ninth conference in 2021. This will be a one-day event, likely to take place in London and/or virtually in the Autumn. The conference will further explore how media content influences society and how media companies can adopt effective strategies to manage these impacts. As in previous years, we expect to make at least part of the full day's proceedings available freely to the public. Anyone interested in attending can sign up to our mailing list via our [website](#), and follow us on twitter, [@WeareRMF](#).

Research

Carnstone and the Forum have a track record of producing pieces of original research and analysis and preparing strategic commentary for the sector which are published in the form

of reports. Past reports include our recent sequel to Mirrors or Movers; 'The Superpower of Media - Mirrors or Movers II: managing the societal impacts of content' (2020) and '2018 Media Materiality' to name a few.

All publicly available reports by the Forum can be viewed [here](#).

We expect to conduct more research in 2021. The topic will be decided in consultation with Forum participants.

About the Forum

Objectives

The Forum provides a platform for participating companies to:

- Learn from each other and leading organisations in other sectors;
- Identify trends and areas for prioritisation based on sound research and robust discussions;
- Engage with stakeholders, be they campaigners, policy makers, academics or peers; and
- Run collaborative projects and events on key issues.

In short, the Responsible Media Forum gives participating companies access to insights and collaboration that few organisations could manage on their own.

Participating in the Forum

This Report provides an overview of the Forum's activities. In brief, participants enjoy an open environment in which to discuss, under the Chatham House rule, the responsibility issues faced by the sector. The Forum uses its collective size to engage with a range of key stakeholders on pressing issues, both through internal meetings and public events. Lastly, the Forum produces original research.

Participation is restricted to large media companies. Subsidiaries or brands, whether wholly or partially owned, are expected to join the Forum in their own right; however participating companies may occasionally extend invites to their colleagues, who will be admitted on a discretionary basis.

The participation fee for 2021 is £2,850 (+ VAT).

Income

The Forum budget comes entirely from participation fees:

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
£45,000	£46,600	£49,500	£48,250	£55,200	£58,125

Governance

The Responsible Media Forum is a multi-client project run by Carnstone Partners Ltd, with a project team consisting of Christian Toennesen, Rosie Towe, Simon Hodgson, Daniel Witte and Valentina Okolo. We are open to new participating companies, as well as input and enquiries about media sustainability from investors, academics and the third sector, but please note that we are unable to provide funding for projects and research, however interesting and worthwhile they may be.

Carnstone meets on a 1:1 basis with participants at the end of each year to gather feedback on how the Forum is meeting their needs and to discuss potential themes and speakers for the following year. Actions and initiatives arising from this review are then discussed and agreed by participants in a consensual manner.

Daniel Witte is the first point of contact for stakeholders and new participant enquiries:

Email: info@responsiblemediaforum.org **Telephone:** +44 (0) 7384 518837