



PARTNERING
FOR A SUSTAINABLE
SECTOR

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Annual Report 2021

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The year in review

Reliance on media grew throughout 2021. With the ongoing pandemic, the sector was challenged to build resilience and create authentic content to sustain society. Internally, significant strides were made by media companies with more focus on diversity and ambitious goals to tackle climate change. By the end of 2021, 39 media companies had committed to science-based targets, 18 of which are now approved to align with the business ambition for 1.5 degrees.

26
participating
media
companies ...

Media remains a platform for inspiring the world to change, but there are still barriers. Wolfgang Blau, Visiting Research Fellow at Reuters Institute for Journalism, said at [Mirrors Or Movers IX](#) that 'journalists are the historians of the moment': they are not future orientated, and therefore not well-placed to report on the most significant developments.

The pandemic has enabled an 'infodemic'. Polly Curtis, former Managing Director, PA Media, shared that although trust grew by 8% in the UK news, the World Health Organisation (WHO) identified that there is an overabundance of information. This shows that there is a need for media to produce content that cuts through the noise, reflects the world we live in and engages audiences.

70
conference
attendees.
113 views on
YouTube.

Most of our events continued virtually this year, addressing prominent topics such as climate change, the future of work and diversity and inclusion. We carried out research on materiality in the media sector, (more on page 3) and we released the [Media Climate Pact](#) one-year progress report detailing the actions taken by its seven founding signatories (more on page 6).

We were lucky to see some of our participants face-to-face for a hybrid ninth edition of Mirrors Or Movers, where we heard from high-profile speakers including Bill McKibben (Veteran Environmentalist & Founder of 350.org); Dr Linda Papadopoulos, (Author, Psychologist, and former contributing editor at Cosmopolitan) and Genevieve Gunther, (Founder and Director of End Climate Silence).

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 2021 and plans for 2022. We hope you enjoy it.

1 research
project

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

Media Materiality Report 2021

This year, we carried out a materiality exercise to better understand the material issues since our last report in 2018. This research included a review of the external reporting frameworks and investor indices and a review of the latest materiality assessments held by RMF participants. Interviews were held with experts from Ofcom, the European Broadcasting Union, the Institute for Public Policy Research, UN Principles for Responsible

Investment (UN PPRI) and Cambridge Judge Business School. From this research, all the material issues identified were mapped out into a materiality matrix and banded into four issue categories: material, strategic, operational, and emerging. Two new material issues for the media sector coming out of this research were ‘Cybersecurity’ and ‘Sustainable Value Chain’. ‘Climate Change’, ‘Responsible Content’, ‘Diversity, Equity & Inclusion’ and ‘Data Privacy’ came out as the top material issues.



A full report summarising the findings from this research will be released in Q1 of 2022.

Forum meetings

Forum meetings are held on a quarterly basis, focused issues and topics of interest relevant to the RMF participants. Experts are invited to present their insights, followed by group discussions under the Chatham House rule. These insights and discussions are designed to help support and inspire each participants’ own work.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, all three of our forum meetings were held virtually. Nevertheless, in October 2021 our annual Mirrors or Movers conference was held as a hybrid event. The conference enabled speakers and participants to join the meetings in real-time virtually or in-person. The event was hosted and held at Informa in London.

Q1 | Climate Change: Net Zero targets & offsetting



Main meeting

Eli Mitchell-Larson

Climate researcher based at the University of Oxford; Advisor at Carbon Direct and Project Lead at Carbon Removal Advocacy Europe

Q2 | The Future of Work



Main meeting

Will Stronge

Co-found & Director, Autonomy

Working Group: offsetting

Q3 | Mirrors Or Movers IX Hybrid Conference

A one-day conference with sessions held on how media can help society build resilience in the face of disruption

Session 1



The future of media and its contribution to societal resilience

Polly Curtis

Former Managing Director, PA Media

Session 2: Climate Change



Media's role in driving action on the climate emergency

Bill McKibben
Veteran Environmentalist & Founder of 350.org




Journalism and the climate crisis: Hopes and limitations

Wolfgang Blau
Visiting Research Fellow, Reuters Institute for Journalism



Communicating Climate

Dr Genevieve Guenther
Founder & Director, End Climate Silence

<p>Session 3</p>	<p>How can media companies create authentic representation on and off screen? Sereena Abbassi <i>Independent Equity, Inclusion & Diversity Consultant and former Worldwide Head of Culture & Inclusion, M&C Saatchi Group</i></p>
<p>Session 4</p>	<p>The media’s role in building healthy societies: Lessons from the pandemic and beyond Dr Linda Papadopolous <i>Author and Psychologist</i></p>
<p>Q4 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">  Main meeting Val Garside <i>Human Resources Director, Penguin Random House</i> Specialist Session: Duty of Care to talent Working Group: offsetting </p>	

Working groups

The Forum occasionally supports specialist working groups to address key issues of interest to certain participants. This year, we held two sessions for an ongoing working group on Carbon Offsetting as well as a specialist session on Duty of Care. The working group will continue their discussions on definitions and the latest SBTi guidance on carbon offsetting as well as decarbonising the supply chain in 2022.

The Media Climate Pact

The [Media Climate Pact](#) is a coalition of media companies committed to tackling climate change through two major commitments: one operational and one focused on content. One



year on, the seven founding signatories have shared their progress. All signatories have set a net zero target and the majority have met the operational commitment to implement science-based targets on climate. Similarly, significant progress has been made in content, with signatories providing internal training opportunities, launching sustainability-related campaigns, and integrating climate-related content across their portfolios.

The efforts of these leading media companies to reduce their own emissions and drive wider behaviour change towards climate-friendly lifestyles is encouraging and we hope to inspire media companies to join us in our effort to tackle climate change.

The Pact remains open for more signatories in 2022.

DIMPACT: Environmental impacts of digital media

[DIMPACT](#) is a collaborative project involving 18 media companies, developing an online tool to calculate the carbon emissions of digital content downstream. The tool was developed by world-class computer science researchers from Bristol University, with Carnstone providing secretariat services. 2021 saw the addition of 9 new companies, the set-up of a steering committee and working groups, and the development of new modules within the tool. Whilst the tool remains at the centre of DIMPACT, industry collaboration to drive carbon reductions across the value chain is becoming an increasingly important part of the project.

Mirrors or Movers IX

In 2021 we delivered the ninth edition of our Mirrors or Movers (MOM) conferences. This conference focuses on the societal and environmental impacts of media content and was held as a hybrid event.



The overarching theme of the day was ‘Building resilience in the face of disruption’ and included four key sessions: The future of media and its contribution to societal resilience, Climate change, Diversity and inclusion and Media’s role in building healthy societies; lessons from the pandemic. The conference was open exclusively to forum participants in the morning, creating space for internal forum discussions and then the afternoon was open to the wider public.



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

Online

Between them, the Responsible Media Forum website and the Mirrors or Movers website, originally created for the report and conference of the same name, attracted 6,352 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 1,393.



The participants

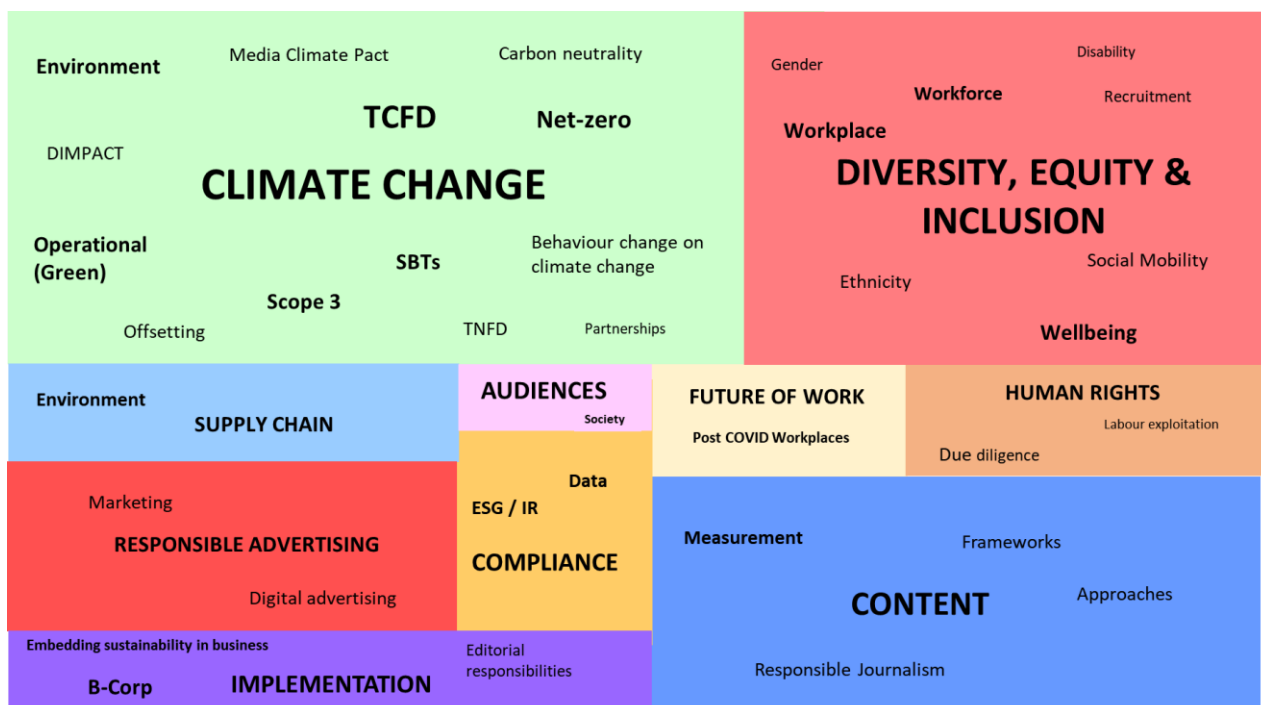
The Responsible Media Forum is a partnership between major media companies to identify and act on the social and environmental challenges facing the sector. The Forum has been going since 2001, starting as a UK initiative but with participants now drawn from around the world.

During 2021, the Forum consisted of 26 participating companies, and we welcomed News UK and Euromonitor to the group. 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, Communications, Marketing, and Investor Relations. Together, we work to define and develop responsible business practices for the media sector.

Plans for 2022

Forum meetings

Following our annual consultation, our 2022 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 2022 programme to include:

- Three quarterly meetings, in Q1, Q2 and Q4, centred around the centre issues: climate change, diversity, equity & inclusion, and content.
- One public conference, Mirrors or Movers X, 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 arise. This will include a working group on offsetting.
- Plus, any additional meetings on an extraordinary basis.

Mirrors or Movers X

The Forum plans to host its tenth conference in 2022. This will be a one-day hybrid event, hosted in London 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 2022. 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 2022 is £ 3,300 (+ VAT).

Income

The Forum budget comes entirely from participation fees:

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
£46,600	£49,500	£48,250	£55,200	£58,125	£69,112.50

Governance

The Responsible Media Forum is a multi-client project run by Carnstone Partners Ltd, with a project team consisting of Rosie Towe, Daniel Witte, Valentina Okolo and Simon Hodgson. 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