

A Call for Ideas to Curb the Spread of Misinformation

Solutions Forum and \$75,000 in Prizes Will Catalyze Ideas Focusing on Sharing Behavior

Much of the current discussion of misinformation as a societal concern has highlighted how much inaccurate information is available online or in news media. Yet what makes misinformation a particularly acute problem today is its ability to spread rapidly and pervasively—as people post false advertising or less than credible news stories on social media, highlight fabricated information in conversation with each other, or cite false information when addressing various audiences. Less well explored are the human behaviors and decisions that go into this sharing of misinformation—with a host of potential motivations at play that go beyond a simple lack of knowledge. Behavioral science offers a growing body of knowledge that can be leveraged to **curb the sharing of misinformation** and, on the other hand, **encourage productive sharing and discussion about accurate information**. Many other fields hold potential keys to solutions as well—including technology design, public health, journalism, education, health care, community organizing and social science.

On **October 4, 2018**, a **Misinformation Solutions Forum** at the **Aspen Institute** in Washington, D.C., will bring together academic researchers, technologists, data scientists, journalists, educators, community leaders and funders to explore **up to five promising ideas** for curbing the spread of misinformation. We are now seeking submissions for the featured ideas. Interventions should be focused on **reducing behaviors that lead to the spread of misinformation or encouraging behaviors that can lead to the minimization of its influence**. We encourage proposals for interventions with technological, educational, and/or community-based components. Projects involving science communication, public health and diverse populations are of special interest.

Ideas should be submitted by **teams of at least two people with skills, expertise, experiences and networks** that can help their solution take shape and reach key audiences. We welcome submissions from a wide array of innovators, including academic researchers, communication and technology professionals, journalists, health professionals, community leaders, advertisers and educators. Ideas can include plans for primary research, but the research should be designed in collaboration with someone (e.g., a government official, technologist, or community leader) in the position to put findings into action. Teams must designate a sponsoring U.S.-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization able to receive and manage grants on behalf of the team (note that the sponsoring nonprofit is considered the official entrant). All team members and their sponsoring nonprofit organizations should be comfortable with names and professional affiliations being made public if they are selected for forum participation.

Teams whose ideas are selected will receive **travel funds for up to two team members to participate in the forum**, which will be an opportunity for up to five teams to further hone and develop their ideas with input from a variety of industry professionals, funders and experts. To catalyze further development and deployment of solutions, as part of the forum **two of the participating teams will be selected to receive Misinformation Solution Prizes**, with a **top prize of \$50,000** and an additional prize of **\$25,000**. These prizes will recognize the ideas with the most promise to positively shift the information-sharing landscape. While we welcome ideas bringing in an international perspective, to be eligible teams must have a sponsoring U.S.-based nonprofit organization that may receive grant funds. Teams may not include individuals who are currently or formerly employed by the presenting or sponsoring partners, are officers or members of their boards, or who have a family member with one of these affiliations.

The forum and prizes are presented by the **Rita Allen Foundation** in partnership with **RTI International** and the **Aspen Institute**, with additional support provided by **Craig Newmark Philanthropies** and **Democracy Fund**.

Electronic submissions are due May 31, 2018, and will be judged through a blind review process by a diverse committee of expert judges with individuals from the Rita Allen Foundation, as well as external institutions such as Democracy Fund, the National Institutes of Health, Poynter Institute, First Draft and academic institutions. Ideas selected for participation in the forum will be announced in August, and winners of the top prizes will be announced following the forum.

For more information and to submit an idea, please visit:

<http://ritaallen.org/misinformation-solutions-forum>

Please contact MisinformationSolutions@ritaallen.org with any questions.