

## Understanding and Addressing Misinformation about Science: A Symposium

### Presenter Biographies

#### Welcome and Opening Remarks

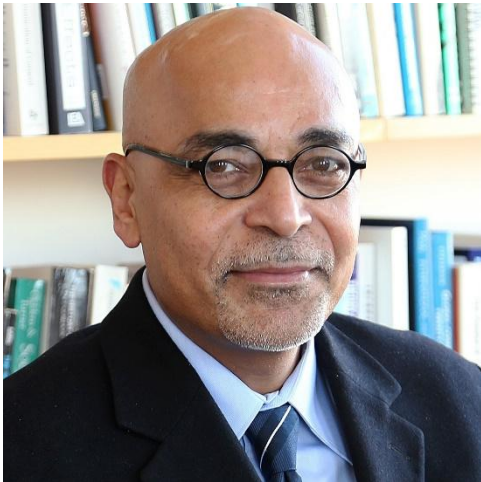


**HEIDI SCHWEINGRUBER** is the Director of the Board on Science Education at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. She oversees a portfolio of work that includes K-12 science education, informal science education, and higher education. Dr. Schweingruber joined the staff of the board in 2004 as a senior program officer. In this role, she directed or co-directed several projects including the study that resulted in the report *A Framework for K-12 Science Education* (2012), the blueprint for the Next Generation Science Standards. Dr. Schweingruber is a nationally recognized leader in leveraging research findings to catalyze improvements in science and STEM education policy and practice. She holds a Ph.D. in psychology (developmental) and anthropology from the University of Michigan.



**TIFFANY E. TAYLOR** is a Senior Program Officer for the Board on Science Education (BOSE) at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. She is currently the study director for the consensus study on Understanding and Addressing Misinformation about Science, and also provides leadership, management, and support for several ongoing projects including the Standing Committee on Advancing Science Communication, the Expert Meeting Series to Support Effective Federal Health Communications, the Expert Meeting on Implications for Science Education of Increasing AI and Robotics Capabilities, and the Convocation on Informal Science and Engineering Education. She came to the National Academies in 2017 as a Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Fellow, where she also worked with the Board on Science Education. She holds a B.S. in Biology from Howard University and a Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences from the University of California, San Diego.

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**KASISOMAYAJULA “VISH” VISWANATH** is Lee Kum Kee Professor of Health Communication at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health (HSPH) and Professor of Population Sciences at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI). He is also the Faculty Director of the Health Communication Core of the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center (DF/HCC). The central goal of the program of research in his lab is to influence public health policy and practice through knowledge translation and communication. His work draws from literatures in communication science, social epidemiology, dissemination and implementation, and social and health behavior sciences. Dr. Viswanath’s work is driven by two fundamental concerns: (a) how to center equity in drawing on translational communication science to promote health and well-being for ALL population groups, and (b) to involve community-based organizations and all stakeholders through participatory research in promoting social change. His work so far has documented the relationship between communication inequalities, poverty and health disparities, and knowledge translation to address health disparities. He has written more than 325 journal articles and book chapters and is a co-editor or co-author of five books. He has served and continues to serve on several national committees including for the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM).

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### Understanding and Addressing Misinformation about Science: Report Overview



**AFUA BRUCE** is a leading voice at the intersection of technology, data, and social impact. With a career spanning the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, she has advised organizations on leveraging technology responsibly to drive meaningful change. Afua is the Principal of ANB Advisory Group, where she helps organizations across sectors strengthen their technical and data strategies. Prior to founding ANB Advisory Group, Afua held senior science and technology roles at the White House, the FBI, and IBM. Afua is a sought-after speaker and author, known for her insights on ethical technology, responsible AI, and innovation for social enterprises. Her newest book, *The Tech That Comes Next*, explores how communities and technologists can collaborate to build a more equitable future. Afua was honored with a statue in the If/Then Exhibit highlighting women in STEM, which was displayed in the Smithsonian. She is an affiliate at Harvard Kennedy School's Berkman Klein Center, sits on the board of Code the Dream, and is a member of the Center for Democracy and Technology's Advisory Council. Afua holds a degree in Computer Engineering from Purdue University and an MBA from the University of Michigan.



**LISA FAZIO** is Associate Professor of Psychology at Vanderbilt University. Her research focuses on how children and adults learn true and false information from the world around them, and on how to correct errors in people's knowledge. Her work spans multiple disciplines including cognitive, developmental, educational, and social psychology and informs basic theories about psychological processes, while also having clear applications for practitioners, such as journalists and teachers. She received the Early Career Impact Award from the Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences in 2020 and the Frank Research Prize in Public Interest Communications in 2017. Her research is currently supported by major grants from both NSF and the Mercury Project. Dr. Fazio is a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science and the Psychonomic Society. She

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earned her doctorate from Duke University and graduated summa cum laude from Washington University in St. Louis.

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**BRIAN SOUTHWELL** is Lead Scientist for Public Understanding of Science at RTI International. He also is Adjunct Professor of Internal Medicine at Duke University and Adjunct Associate Professor in Health Behavior at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In addition, Southwell hosts a public radio show called *The Measure of Everyday Life*. He co-founded the Duke Program on Medical Misinformation to improve patient-provider conversations, has published a relevant book, *Misinformation and Mass Audiences*, and has been featured in outlets such as JAMA. He has consulted with the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine and the National Institutes of Health on misinformation mitigation and served on the Advisory Committee for the Council of Medical Specialty Societies-National Academy of Medicine-World Health Organization Collaboration on Identifying Credible Sources of Health Information in Social Media. Southwell has organized summits on trust in science and misinformation with support from the Rita Allen Foundation and the Aspen Institute. He also has won awards for scholarship from the International Communication Association and National Communication Association and teaching recognition at the University of Minnesota. Southwell holds a Ph.D. and M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and a B.A. from the University of Virginia.



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**JAMES N. DRUCKMAN** (Discussant) is the Martin Brewer Anderson Professor of Political Science at the University of Rochester. Druckman has published more than 200 articles and book chapters in political science, communication, economics, science, and psychology journals. He has authored, co-authored, or co-edited seven books. His recent books include *Partisan Hostility and American Democracy: Explaining Political Divides* (University of Chicago Press, 2024), *Equality Unfulfilled: How Title IX's Policy Design Undermines Change to College Sports* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), and *Experimental Thinking: A Primer on Social Science Experiments* (Cambridge University Press, 2022). He serves as a co-Principal Investigator the Civic Health and Institutions Project (CHIP50) that has collected more than a million survey responses to study state-level opinions regarding institutional trust, health, polarization, misinformation, and more. He also sits on the boards of the Russell Sage Foundation, the American National Election Studies, and the General Social Survey.

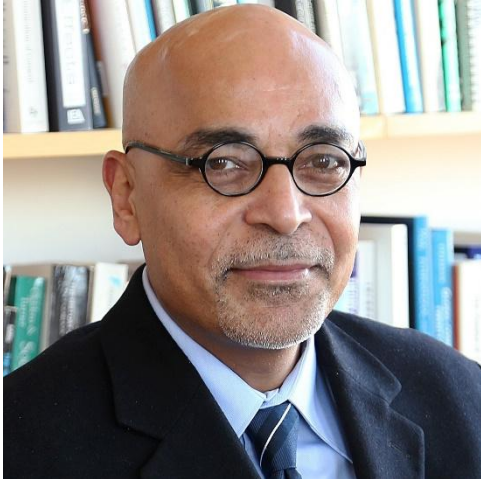


**WHITNEY PHILLIPS** (Discussant) is an Associate Professor of Information Politics and Media Ethics and John L. Hulteng Endowed Chair in Media Ethics and Responsibility in the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon. She is the author of several academic books focused on the intersections of her research areas: US politics and popular culture, political communication, politics and religion, media ethics, and media history. Her most recent book, *The Shadow Gospel: How Anti-Liberal Demonology Possessed US Religion, Media, and Politics*, was published by The MIT Press in 2025. In 2023, she published a digital ethics guide for teens with Candlewick Press titled *Share Better and Stress Less: A Guide to Thinking Ecologically about Social Media*. In addition to her books, Phillips has written a dozen-plus journal articles and book chapters on a range of communication, technology, and media studies topics, as well as numerous popular press pieces for publications such as *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, and WIRED magazine. She regularly provides expert commentary for national and global news

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stories and has been profiled by the Columbia Journalism Review, Niemen Journalism Lab, and Knight Commission on Trust, Media, and Democracy, among many others.

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**K. VISH VISWANATH** (Moderator) is Lee Kum Kee Professor of Health Communication at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health (HSPH) and Professor of Population Sciences at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI). He chaired the committee that produced the the NASEM report on *Understanding and Addressing Misinformation about Science*.

### Building Capacity for Public Communicators of Science



**CLAUDIA FRACCHIOLLA** is Head of Public Engagement and Informal Science Education at the American Physical Society (APS), where she leads initiatives to foster inclusive science communication and strengthen connections between physicists and society. She also serves as Secretariat Coordinator for the UNESCO-endorsed International Year of Quantum Science and Technology 2025, overseeing global operations, partnerships, and events. With a background in physics education research and experience in international science diplomacy, Claudia works to create opportunities for dialogue between scientists, policymakers, and diverse communities worldwide.

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**JULIA MACKENZIE** is the Chief Program Officer for the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), leading a diverse array of high-impact programs that increase scientific excellence through inclusion and connect science and scientists to federal and state policymakers, judges, local newsrooms, global diplomats and communities of faith. She previously led the AAAS Center for Science Diplomacy and served as the Executive Editor of the policy journal *Science & Diplomacy*. Prior to her time at AAAS, Julia served as a Senior Technical Advisor in the U.S. Department of State, helping coordinate and oversee the PEPFAR research portfolio and serving as the Designated Federal Officer for the PEPFAR Scientific Advisory Board, an independent FACA-chartered group. She is a member of the Polaris Council of the Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics team of the Government Accountability Office (GAO); an affiliate of the Center for Innovation in Global Health at Georgetown University; a former member of the Organizing Committee of the World Science Forum and alumni of the AAAS S&T Policy Fellowship program. She has a PhD in immunology and microbial pathogenesis and MPH from Northwestern University.



**KRISTEN PANTHAGANI** is an emergency medicine physician and nationally recognized science communicator. She writes the newsletter *You Can Know Things* which provide simple, easy-to-understand explanations about science and health rumors. She additionally runs a popular Instagram account creating animated videos and data visualizations and is a contributing writer for *Your Local Epidemiologist*, and highly respected public health newsletter. Her work has reached millions around the world and been featured in prominent outlets including *The New York Times*, *MedPage Today*, *Forbes*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Vox*, and *FactCheck.org*. Dr. Panthagani earned her MD and PhD in Genetics at Baylor College of Medicine studying the human microbiome. She is currently a Yale Emergency Scholar completing a combined emergency medicine residency and research fellowship at Yale New Haven Hospital. Her work focuses on bridging the



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communication gap between medicine, science, and the public, with a focus on health communication via social media and other nontraditional platforms.

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**SAMEER VOHRA** was appointed Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) effective August 1, 2022, by Governor JB Pritzker who charged him with continuing to shape a stronger IDPH for the 21st Century. Dr. Vohra is a pediatrician with degrees in medicine, law and public policy and is a cross-disciplinary leader in state and national health policy formulation. Since becoming Illinois' top doctor, he has led the state through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency and is now focused on efforts to strengthen Illinois' public health infrastructure and build a unified vision for health in every corner of the state.

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**BRIAN SOUTHWELL** (Moderator) is Lead Scientist for Public Understanding of Science at RTI International. He also is Adjunct Professor of Internal Medicine at Duke University and Adjunct Associate Professor in Health Behavior at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is a member of the authoring committee for the NASEM report on *Understanding and Addressing Misinformation about Science*.



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### Addressing Misinformation about Science Across Sectors



**TIARA GREEN** was appointed President of Accessia Health in April 2024, bringing more than 20 years of leadership experience in public health and the nonprofit sector. Prior to her appointment, she served as Interim President beginning in June 2023, following a decade of dedicated service to the organization. Her tenure includes key leadership roles, most notably as Senior Vice President of Programs and Policy, where she led strategic initiatives focused on health equity, program development, and operational efficiency. In her current role, Ms. Green is spearheading a comprehensive effort to enhance Accessia Health's impact model, disease-specific funds, and service programs. This work is designed to more effectively address the complex and evolving needs of the diverse communities the organization serves. Her leadership is characterized by a commitment to inclusive care, organizational excellence, and the professional development of staff. Ms. Green has also played a pivotal role in expanding Accessia Health's educational resources for patients and families, ensuring that support is accessible, relevant, and culturally responsive. She holds a Bachelor of Science from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master of Science in Education from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, with a concentration in community health and health promotion. She is an active member of the Virginia Council of CEOs, the American College of Healthcare Executives, and the Forbes Nonprofit Council. Her visionary leadership continues to drive Accessia Health's mission to advance equitable access to healthcare nationwide.

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**LIZZY HAZELTINE** leads the North Carolina Local News Lab Fund, a pooled fund that invests in a network of news organizations and trusted communicators to reinforce local news service and access in NC and the home of Press Forward NC and Press Forward Charlotte. The Fund's grantees expand who in NC can find and trust the news and information they need to thrive. She has built organizations' digital products, revenue, and strategic futures inside and outside of local news. Her focus on growth, healthy operational development, community centric design, and race-class analysis ground her and anchor the Fund's ecosystem building. Under her leadership, the Fund has invested more than \$6 million in the state and marshalled nearly as much in aligned funding since 2017. Lizzy is a lifelong resident of the South, and has spent her professional career in North Carolina's entrepreneurial, economic development, academic, and social change ecosystems.

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**EMMA SLAYTON** is a Data Education Librarian at the Carnegie Mellon University Libraries. She has expertise in Data Visualization, Data and AI literacies, as well as GIS Specialist. As a social scientist, she focused on using computer modeling analyze big data and have experience communicating that research to STEM and Humanities researchers or the public. She has specific expertise in supporting researchers and students develop their own data stories for publication and sharing. She holds a PhD. in Archaeology from the University of Leiden and an MPhil from the University of Oxford.

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**TRISHA PASRICHA** is an instructor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and the “Ask A Doctor” columnist for The Washington Post where she translates complex medical topics into must-read insights—with a touch of humor—for millions each week in her written columns and social media videos. A graduate of Harvard College, Dr. Pasricha earned her medical degree from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine and a Master of Public Health from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Her training includes an internal medicine residency at The Johns Hopkins Hospital and gastroenterology and motility fellowships at Massachusetts General Hospital. Currently, Dr. Pasricha serves as director of the Institute for Gut-Brain Research at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, leading an NIH-funded research laboratory at the forefront of gut-brain science. She is the author of the forthcoming book “You’ve Been Pooping All Wrong” (Penguin Random House, 2026).



**LISA FAZIO** (Moderator) is Associate Professor of Psychology at Vanderbilt University. She is a member of the authoring committee for the NASEM report on *Understanding and Addressing Misinformation about Science*.

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### Fireside Chat

#### Fostering a Healthy Information Ecosystem in the Current Policy Context



**NORA BENAVIDEZ** is Senior Counsel and Director of Digital Justice and Civil Rights at Free Press. Nora works at the intersection of law, tech and democracy, elevating interdisciplinary solutions to complex threats facing our society. Benavidez leads Free Press' democracy and tech initiatives, including its policy, legal and campaign efforts to curb disinformation, hate and other manipulation online while protecting digital civil rights, privacy and free expression. Benavidez has appeared before the U.S. Congress, the Federal Trade Commission, the Canadian House of Commons and other regulatory bodies. Previously, Benavidez served as director of U.S. Free Expression Programs at PEN America, guiding the organization's national agenda on First Amendment and free expression issues. Benavidez launched and led PEN America's media-literacy and disinformation-defense program. Benavidez is the founder of Build the Bench, a network for Latina women entering law and public service. She sits on Issue One's Council for Responsible Social Media, serves on the Georgia First Amendment Foundation board and chairs the Georgia State Bar Section 1983 Litigation conference.



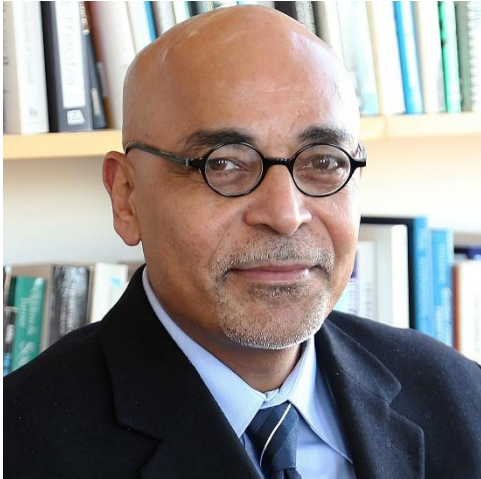
**OLIVIER SYLVAIN** is a Professor of Law at Fordham University and a Senior Policy Research Fellow at Columbia University's Knight First Amendment Institute. His research is on information and communications law and policy. His most recent writing, scholarship, commentary, and congressional testimony are on online intermediary liability, commercial surveillance, and artificial intelligence. His forthcoming book analyzes the incentives and policies that drive the online services and calls for a new legal regime that protects consumers over platforms. The National Science Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation have awarded him grants to support this work. He was a Senior Advisor to the Chair of the Federal Trade Commission from



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2021 to 2023. Before entering academia, Olivier was a Karpatkin Fellow in the National Legal Office of the American Civil Liberties Union in New York City and a litigation associate at Jenner & Block, LLC, in Washington, D.C.

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