



Journalism education for the 21st century

PROJECT REPORT

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Executive summary

This report is the summary of the project “Journalism education for the 21st century”, led by the World Journalism Education Council and supported by UNESCO. Based on the premise that journalism education is a **public endeavour and a common good**, it responds to the vision of UNESCO’s International Programme for the Development of Communication for strengthening global journalism education. The project’s objective was to bring together journalism educators from around and industry, civil society organisations and appropriate government bodies the world to discuss future of journalism education “in view of nurturing and guiding quality journalism globally” (*Purpose of the project*). Its specific goals included revisiting the role of journalism in society, its priorities and relevance, as well as the place of journalism education in bringing the potential of profession to foster democracy, dialogue and development.

The project run from May to December 2021 and involved:

Organising 17 roundtables as global consultations on the issues and challenges in journalism and journalism education.

The multi-stakeholder roundtables hosted by universities in different regions of the world.

The roundtables were organised by journalism educators in : Australia, Belgium (International Network of French Speaking Journalism Schools), Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India (2 roundtables), Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Philippines (2 roundtables, one with Vietnam), Russia, United Kingdom (2, one with Lebanon), USA;

Roundtables involved academics, journalists, government officials, and CSO representatives.

More than 1000 participants attended these roundtables; approximately 140 speakers were panellists

Discussion was guided by the WJEC Paris Declaration on Freedom of Journalism education in regard to the UN Sustainability Goals, and exploring solutions to the issue of resourcing

journalism education. The roundtable discussions highlighted the need to reconsider the changes taking place in journalism and tertiary education. Three broad themes emerged: place of journalism programmes at universities, journalism education and its relation to society, and journalism curriculum and industry.

Participants around the world share the view that the 21st century journalism is different from the journalism in the past, and therefore teaching, studying and researching journalism is and should be different from journalism education in the past. Technological advancements, 24h news cycle, globalized networks require significant changes in the ways journalism is thought at the universities. Journalism education across the world rests on the image of journalists as custodians of public interest, and while serving the public interest remains a crucial part of professional identity, teachers find themselves constantly privileging what journalism should be over what journalism actually is. The roundtable discussions focused on a need to reform and revolutionize the ways journalism curriculum reflects on, responds to and participates in social, political, economic and cultural changes of academia, society and industry.

Producing two handbooks for journalism education:

Teaching journalism online, edited by Susan Keith and Raluca Cozma, covers issues and solutions for online teaching in journalism education following the UNESCO's "Model Curricula for Journalism Education" acknowledging that journalism education is offered in many different ways by diverse universities with different educational traditions and resources, in a variety of settings, circumstances and cultures. This handbook will offer a collection of course descriptions tailored for online delivery.

Reporting artificial intelligence by Maarit Jaakkola, consist of a number of modules, along with class exercises, covering what students need to know about the technical, business, legal, ethical and policy debates in order to cover the subject and how to investigate and produce stories in this area.

Roundtables

The roundtables part of the project was designed to support collaborations between journalism educators across the globe, and civil society groups and appropriate government bodies. The ultimate goal was improving quality journalism education across the globe. The initial call asked for proposals surrounding the issues and challenges facing journalism and journalism education; the WJEC Paris Declaration, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The criteria for choosing successful candidates to run a roundtable centred around the salience of the discussion topic regarding the UNESCO and WJEC theme of furthering journalism education in the 21st Century. Also under consideration was the range of guests invited and the value of the contribution they could make from diverse standpoints and from multiple stakeholder views. WJEC wanted to ensure an even geographical spread of the events to ensure global perspectives on the subject.

We received 19 proposals to host a roundtable, 16 were initially accepted. Three changes occurred during the project:

- The on-site roundtable planned in Indonesia had to be cancelled. It's organiser, Zaenal Eko Putro from Journalism Study Program, Politeknik Negeri Jakarta (PNJ, or Jakarta State Polytechnic) informed us on the 1st of June that the campus authorities decided not to support the event
- Professor Susanne Frengler, co-editor of the UNESCO Handbook Reporting migrants and refugees, suggested organising a webinar on “Covering migration: A challenge for journalism educators worldwide”. The proposal was accepted
- Ramon Tuazon, Asian Media Information and Communication Centre, suggested organizing a roundtable on “The Future of Journalism Education in the World and in Asia Pacific “as a post-conference event following the 28th AMIC Annual Conference. The proposal was accepted

The objectives of the project were successfully met and all deliverables completed.

Deliverable 1.1.1. Detailed plan of roundtables with shared template and visibility dimensions

Detailed plan, templates and visibility projection was submitted to UNESCO on May 31st.

Deliverable 1.1.2. Organisation of roundtables and promotion to interested parties through a range of media

We organised 17 roundtables in six months, July to December:

	Country	University	Contact person	Topic
1.	Australia	RMIT	Alexandra Wake	Fact Checking and Verification as Core Curriculum
2.	Belgium	Réseau Theophraste	Amandine Bisqueret	What is the impact of the COVID 19 crisis on the teaching of journalism in Francophonie?
3.	Brazil	Rio de Janeiro State University; INTERCOM (Brazilian Association for Interdisciplinary Studies in Communication)	Sonia Virginia Moreira	Journalistic information to overcome misinformation during the pandemic (and beyond)
4.	Canada	Mount Royal University	Archie McLean	Publishing student journalism in the digital age: Opportunities and challenges
5.	China	Shanghai International Studies University and Communication University of China	Ke Guo	The Shifting Landscape of Journalism and Communication Education in China after Covid-19

6.	France	Conférence des Écoles de Journalisme (CEJ)	Pascal Guenee	Teaching Journalism in the 21st Century, during and after the Covid Crisis
7.	Germany	Erich Brost Institute for international Journalism	Susanne Frengher	Covering migration: A challenge for journalism educators worldwide
8.	India	Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC)	Surbhi Dahiya	Multidisciplinary Approaches to Journalism Education
9.	India	Utkal University	Tanaya Mohanty	Quality journalism education in Eastern India: Media, Ethics and Social Justice
10.	Kyrgyzstan	Association of Communicators in Kyrgyzstan	Elira Turdubayeva	Journalistic education in Kyrgyzstan: problems and ways to solve them
11.	Nigeria	University of Lagos	Ralph Akinfeleye	Journalism Education. Training and Practice in Nigeria; Bridging the Gap between the Classroom and the Newsroom
12.	Russia	South Ural State University/European Journalism Training Association	Anna Krasavina and Nico Drok	Journalism education in the era of social networks and artificial intelligence: digital technologies and moral values
13.	The Philippines	Asian Media Information and Communication Centre, Inc. (AMIC)	Ramon Tuazon	Roundtable Discussion on Integrating Labour Migration Reporting in the Journalism Curriculum: The Philippine Experience

14.	The Philippines - Vietnam	Asian Media Information and Communication Centre, Inc. (AMIC) and	Ramon Tuazon	How Journalism Educators Across The Globe View The Future of A Profession in Transition
15.	UK	Association for Journalism Education (AJEUK)	Margaret Hughes	Journalism & Climate Change - Civic Responsibility
16.	UK (Northern Island) - Lebanon	Ulster University	Colm Murphy	New models for effective training and resilience building for journalists working in dangerous environments internationally
17.	USA	Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC)	Susan Keith	What is the Role of Journalism Programs at a Research University?

Each roundtable ensured visibility of UNESCO and WJEC logos and majority of them have UNESCO and WJEC representatives present. They were supported by social media campaigns and covered in mainstream media outlets. For details, please see attached roundtable reports.

Deliverable 1.1.3 Production of summary reports and synthesis report

Links to livestreaming of the roundtable events were posted both by host institutions and WJEC. Prior to the events we sent announcements using UNESCO and WJEC logos. Social media campaign about the events was run through professional and personal accounts. Actions such as live-tweeting and sharing links to the events was done through Facebook and Twitter.

A number of press releases was sent out appropriate media within the region. Further promotional activities included recording the event discussions in full.

All reports and news about the events were published on WJEC website (<https://wjec.net/wjec-unesco/>).

Major issues, challenges and recommendations

What it means to be a journalist in the 21st century reflects social changes and the changes in cultural industries as a whole. Curriculum in journalism schools might be different but the broad aims of j-schools in terms of equipping students with knowledge and understanding of the media's role in society and the skills necessary to produce stories in a variety of media formats remains the same. However, studying journalism as critical engagement with the political, social, economic and cultural development of society and acquiring skills necessary to produce stories that ensure a well-informed citizenry becomes challenged by the realities of under-resourced and understaffed newsrooms students aim to enter.

Discussions at the WJEC-UNESCO roundtables were an opportunity to revisit the old “training” versus “educating” debate. The argument has been made that the journalism curriculum needs a shift towards defining journalism as an approach to knowledge and not only a career or job. This would require exploring both industry-centered models of journalism education and emerging community-oriented models of teaching.

Teaching journalism is interdisciplinary. The ideal 21st century curriculum requires knowledge and understanding of history, political science, sociology, the study of language and literature, and in most recent years informatics and computer sciences. Journalism education involves engagement with the multidisciplinary body of knowledge that generates insights into how the news media operate in modern societies, and development of skills involved in gathering, researching, writing, editing, and presenting information and comment on a wide range of subjects.

The exchange of knowledge is fundamental for the advancement of journalism studies discipline and ingrained to the approaches to teaching. Journalism across the world reflects

the political, social, and cultural context of a particular country but rests on a number of universal features that transcend national boundaries. Playing a central role in informing, representing, and interpreting social reality, journalism serves as a vehicle of public conversation. Its practice of mediating reality rests on noble social objectives such as serving the public interest that is possible to achieve with knowledge and skills gained from a variety of disciplines. A multidisciplinary underpinning of journalism education captures the essence of current approaches to journalism itself as a self-determining practice that contributes to understanding the world around us.

The last roundtable was held at the end of December so full analysis of all discussions is to come. For this report we would like to bring some of the highlights that outline directions for future WJEC work:

- The age of misinformation asks for revisiting the notion of objectivity (understood as detachment and neutrality) in the light of curriculum that asks for facts and truth but also poses questions such as whose fact is this, where is it coming from, who produced the fact (Roundtable in Australia)
- The role of journalism schools is twofold process of educating journalism students and informing the public. Journalism professors and journalists have the duty in educating the public and in shaping critical audience (Brazil)
- The imperatives of running a “real” news site and running a university class are often in opposition,; funding remains a key challenge for teaching practical skills, required by the industry(Canada)
- It is vital to cultivate journalism students by providing mid-level theory and micro knowledge while emphasizing humanistic orientation of the profession (China)
- Under the challenge of the pandemic, the ultimate goal of both journalism and journalism education has not changed and values knowledge and literacy (all roundtables)
- The idea of journalism as a fourth pillar of democracy is predicted on journalists being aware of the dynamics of the societies that they emerged from and that they were telling stories about (India, IIMC)
- Collaboration of journalism schools across the country and internationally contributes significantly to advancing curriculum (Kyrgyzstan)

- Newsrooms and classrooms are capital intensive in the age of digital technologies. Media regulatory agencies should be mindful of the proliferation of journalism schools which is negatively affecting journalism practice and standards (Nigeria)
- Platformization brings many challenges for journalism. it is essential for journalism education to apply core values for creating practices of producing, publishing, sharing and engaging and applying core values for creating practices of reporting on and with AI (Russia)
- Journalism curricula require flexibility and adaptability to the new technologies, the new obstacles, as well as the increased treats to journalism. Safety in journalism is not just a conflict zone problem, but impacts all aspects of journalistic coverage, from protests and civil unrest coverage to investigative journalism , as well as cyber bullying (UK-Lebanon)
- There is an urgent need to raise literacy about the climate change issues (UK) as well as other defining issues of our time (All roundtables)

Outcomes

The WJEC-UNESCO roundtable discussions led to a number of initiatives that will take place in 2022 and beyond.

Online conference

Following on the major issues raised at the roundtables we decided to continue discussion and organise an online conference “Reimagining journalism education in the age of change’. The conference to be held in real time, on June 30, 2022, from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. US Central Time.

The 2022 WJEC online conference will focus on reimagining journalism curriculum, the future of j-education and the challenges it currently faces. Journalism pedagogy has been a central theme in the WJEC gatherings since its first congress in Singapore, but the shift to online teaching, triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, necessitates a paradigm shift.

The conference will follow the global conversations about “Journalism education for the 21st century,” a series of roundtables organized by WJEC, with the support of UNESCO. The 2022 WJEC online conference will run in parallel streams. Inspired by the format of WJEC syndicates, these sessions will focus on the following themes:

- Covid-19 and journalism education
- Teaching journalism online
- Journalism education in the age of misinformation
- Bridging the gap between the classroom and the newsroom
- Teaching journalism in the era of social networks
- AI and the journalism curriculum
- Journalism education and inclusive society
- Research-led journalism education
- Teaching crisis reporting
- Journalism education and climate change
- Press freedom and journalism education
- Journalism education and cancel culture

Books

France: Encouraged by the public who attended the roundtable, the organisers are considering publication of a book which could include the contributions of the day

Brazil: The organizers are planning the edition of bi-lingual e-book (Portuguese and English) with the transcript of the presentations in order to increase the outreach of the roundtable's content

Handbooks

The full manuscripts have been completed, each handbook is currently under review. We expect to have them published by the end of 2022.

