2021 IMPACT REPORT

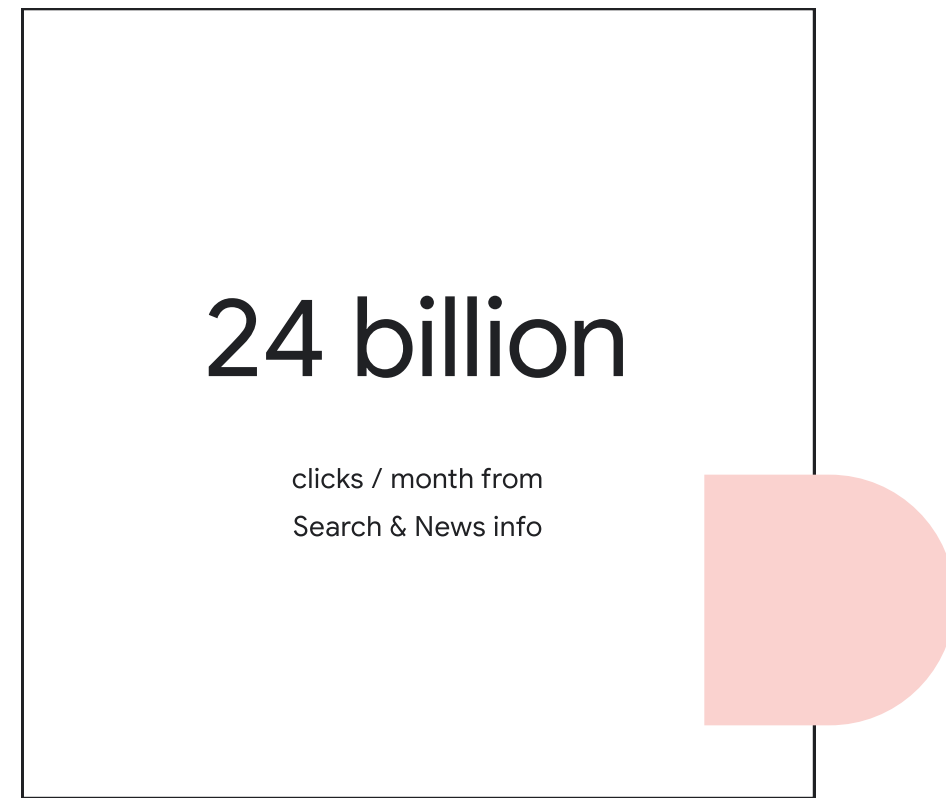Google News Initiative

WHAT'S IN THIS REPORT

Advancing the long-term sustainability of journalism and publishing

Issues that impact our world, like the global struggle with COVID-19, have highlighted the importance of reliable reporting and trustworthiness of news organizations. But news organizations are facing persistent challenges — from the spread of misinformation to shifting audience habits — as they work to stabilize their businesses and map their futures. That's why, along with other companies and civic institutions, we're doing our part to help the news industry succeed.

Through our programs, products and partnerships, Google is one of the world's largest financial supporters of journalism. Over the past 20 years, we've collaborated closely with news partners and provided billions of dollars to support the creation of quality journalism. We launched the Google News Initiative to scale our work with journalists, publishers, and industry leaders to help build a resilient future for news around the globe. Because a more informed world has always been core to Google's mission.
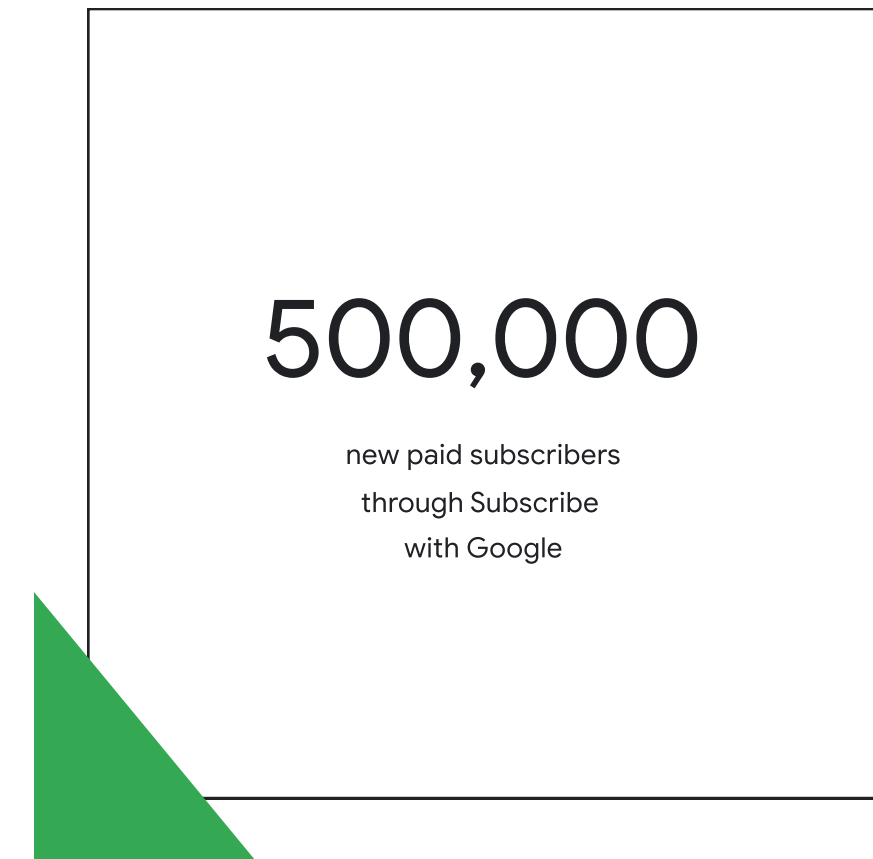
Google News Initiative

Read about Google's support of the news industry

24 billion

clicks / month from
Search & News info

Billions

paid annually to
publishers in our ad
network

500,000

new paid subscribers
through Subscribe
with Google

24 billion clicks per month (9,000 clicks per second)
from Google Search and Google News results to
publishers' websites - estimated by Deloitte to have
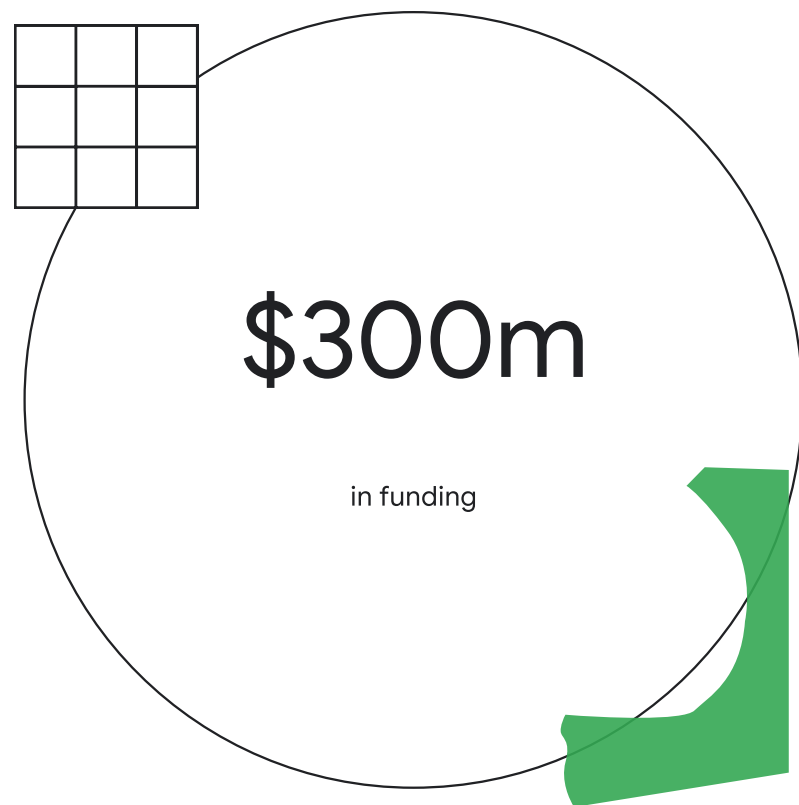a value of between 4-6 eurocents (5-7 U.S. cents)
per click
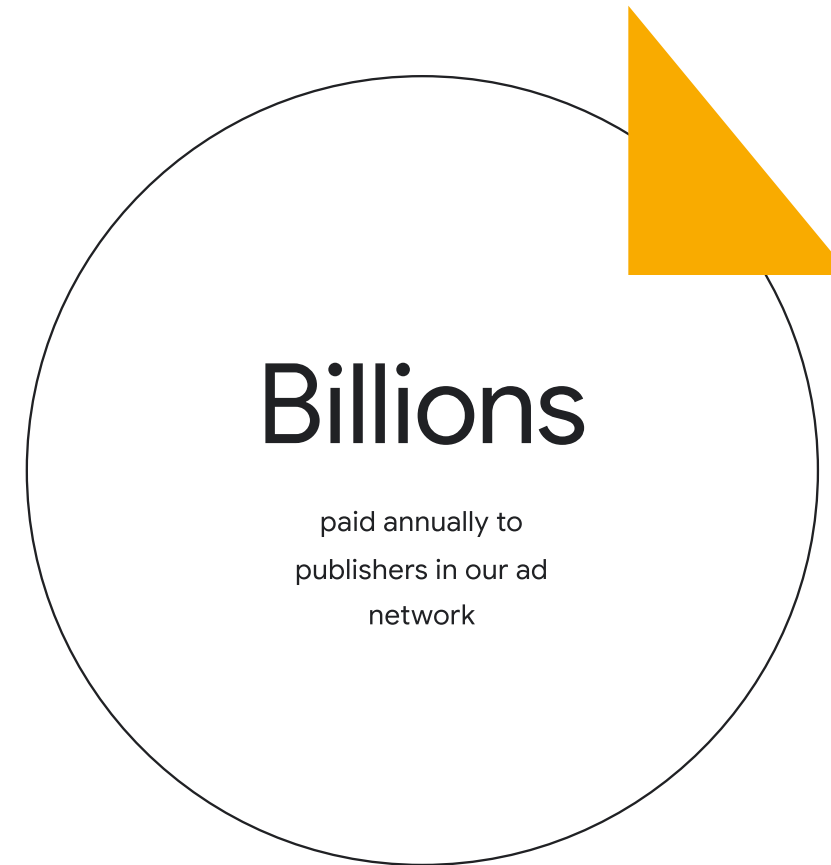
Every year, we pay out billions of dollars directly to the
publishing partners in our ad network

Subscribe with Google has created over 500,000 new,
paid subscribers for news partners

Google News Initiative

$300m

in funding

7000+

news partners

Delivering significant value and funding to news organizations

Building on nearly two decades of partnership with the news industry, we launched the Google News Initiative in 2018 to bring together our efforts across the company to help build a stronger future for news.

To date, the Google News Initiative has supported 7000+ news partners in more than 120 countries and territories through more than $300 million in global funding.

View our partners

The financials in the Impact Report reflect total spending for GNI programs including the Journalism Emergency Relief Fund and Google.org's global media literacy commitments, in $USD from March 2018 to October 2021. Amounts in other currencies are converted to $USD when the work is performed. Excludes Marketing, PR, and Travel overhead as well as payroll, benefit, and compensation as well as payroll, benefit, and compensation to Google full-time and temporary employees who are involved in programming.

The number of news partners supported reflects a count of news organizations, industry associations, academic institutions, and nonprofits that have been funded by or participated in GNI programs from March 2018 to October 2021, including the Journalism Emergency Relief Fund. The count does not combine news organizations and their parent companies in cases where each have in separate GNI programs. The count does not include operational partners, vendors, or news.

Google News Initiative

Advancing the practice of quality journalism.

Enabling diverse sources of impactful journalism is critical for a healthy society and core to Google's mission. One of our primary goals for the Google News Initiative is to support journalists with the tools, training and resources to help them find, verify, and tell engaging stories across the web.

India

"We realize that fighting misinformation is not just the job of journalists. It needs a whole society approach."

—Syed Nazakat, Founder, DataLEADS

View case study

Developing digital skills

Through both in-person and online sessions, we help journalists develop knowledge and skills in digital journalism across a range of topics and tools. The Google News Initiative Training Center provides free editorial training courses and resources for journalists in 14 languages.

Since launching a global journalist training program through the News Lab in 2015:

450k+

Journalists trained in 70 countries

2.64m

online trainings

Google News Initiative
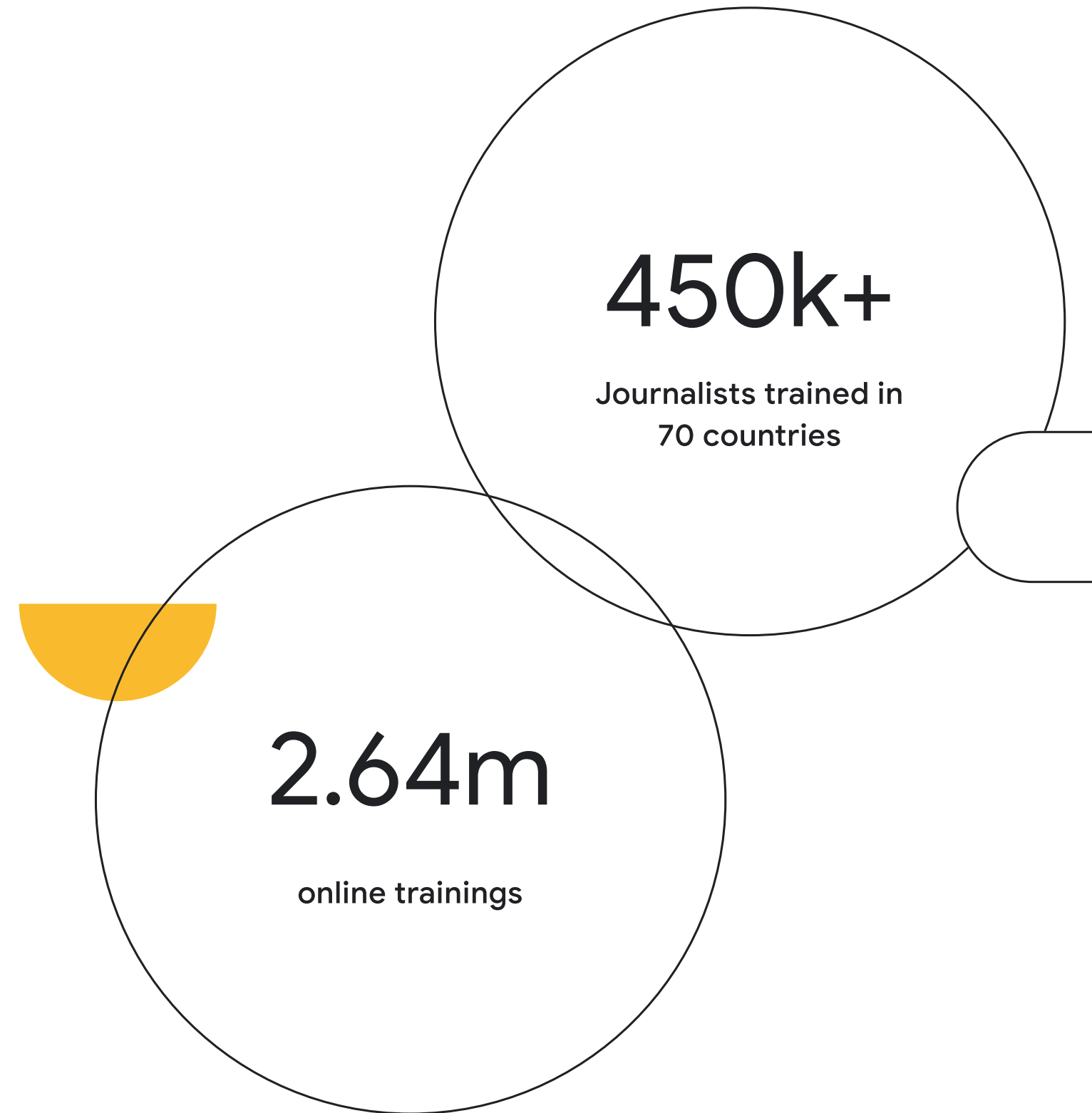
Germany

" "Verification cannot be carried out by individual journalists. Some fakes are very complex and it's important to share ideas and knowledge."

Stefan Voss, Head of Faktencheck21

View case study

Google News Initiative

Complex challenges, coordinated action

Tackling misinformation is a complex challenge that requires coordinated action with a broad range of experts and organizations. We're working with newsrooms, fact-checkers, civil society organizations, and researchers to help curb misinformation, elevate quality journalism, and support media literacy around the world.

$9.5m
committed

Fighting COVID-19 misinformaion

In 2020 and 2021, we committed $9.5 million to support the ecosystem fighting COVID-19 misinformation. Among our initiatives, 11 projects were selected through an open fund to support fact-checking organizations debunking misinformation related to vaccines for their attempts to reach underrepresented audiences, explore new formats for fact checks, and rigorous strategies to measure impact.

225+
participating news organizations

Fact-checking coalitions

During major elections in Argentina, Brazil and more recently in Germany, we sought to connect news organizations and fact-checkers to share tools and resources. We'll continue with this approach in other locations in the months ahead.

Global media literacy

While navigating the uncertainty and challenges of the pandemic, it has proven more important than ever for people to access accurate information, and sort facts from fiction. Since the launch of the Google News Initiative, we've supported 15+ major media literacy projects around the globe. In addition, we've contributed €25m to the launch of the European Media & Information Fund to support media literacy, fact-checking and efforts to combat misinformation.

15+
major media literacy projects

"We have seen a growing interest and we have seen the extent to which having the curriculum ready, tested and contextualized to the region is useful for policymakers. And when they see that this is ready to use for free, then they start to pay attention."

Lina Torres
Director of Projects and Strategy, Movilizatorio

COVID-19 RELIEF

Sustaining essential reporting

The GNI Journalism Emergency Relief Fund was created to sustain essential reporting around the world by delivering emergency funding to local newsrooms during times of pressing need.

During the economic downturn prompted by COVID-19, we offered $39.5 million in funding to 5,600+ newsrooms in 115 countries and territories.

5600+
newsrooms

$39.5m
offered in funding

115
countries and territories

United Kingdom

Liberia
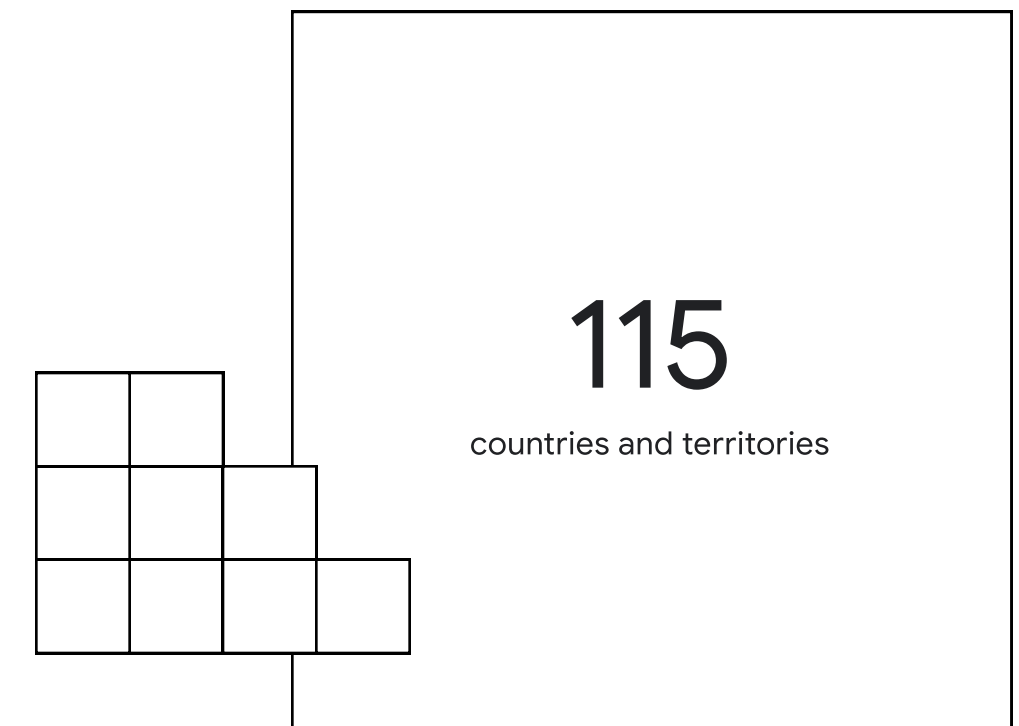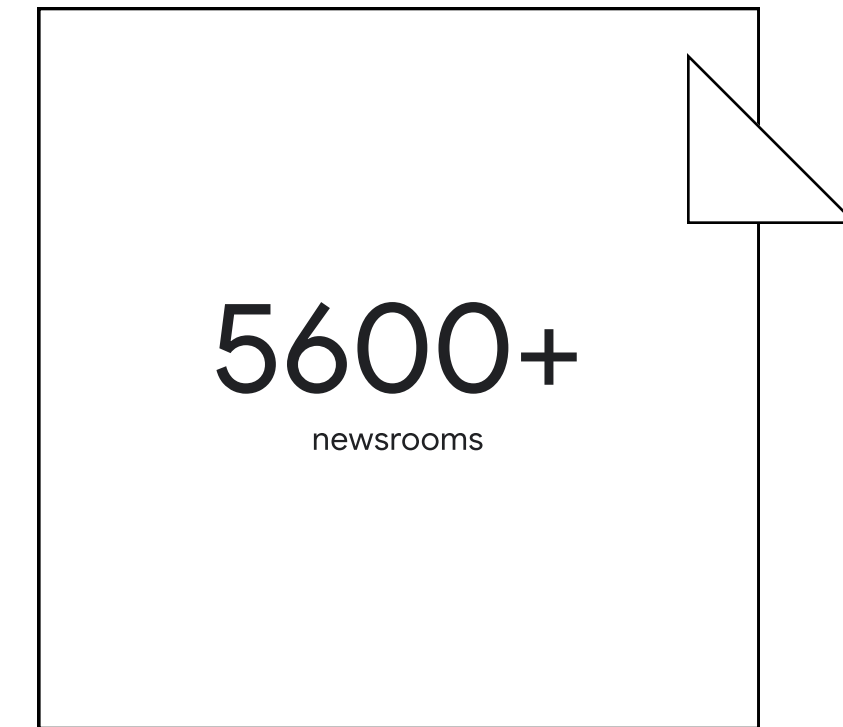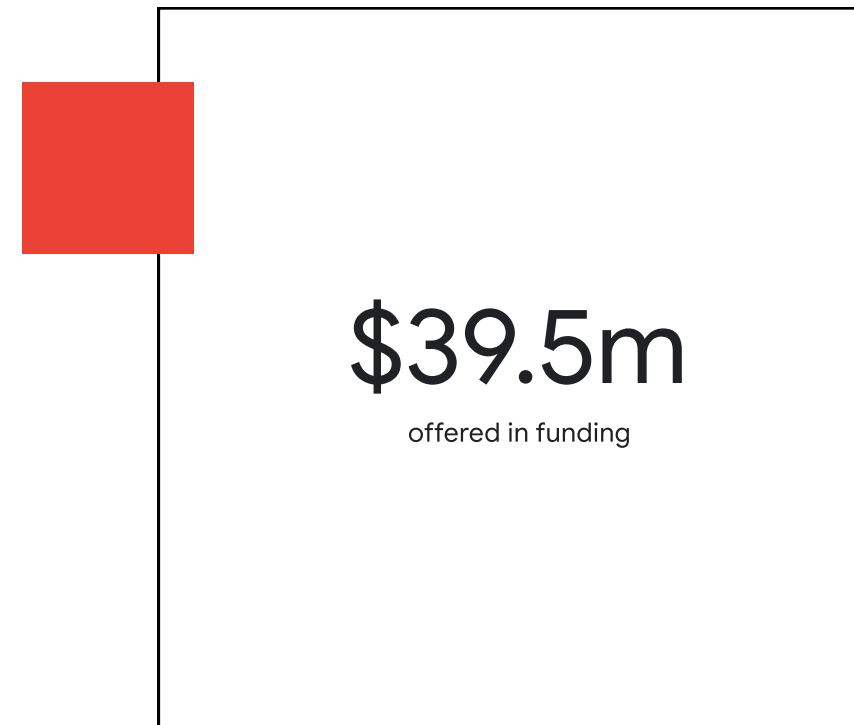
" Cornwall Reports carries no advertising on news pages. The Journalism Emergency Relief Fund therefore allowed us to develop and transmit a brand new, free-to-view current affairs programme, Behind The Headlines, offering the sort of analysis and exclusive key decision-maker interviews which were simply not available elsewhere."
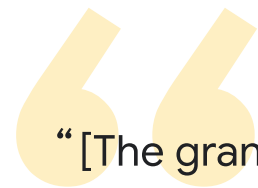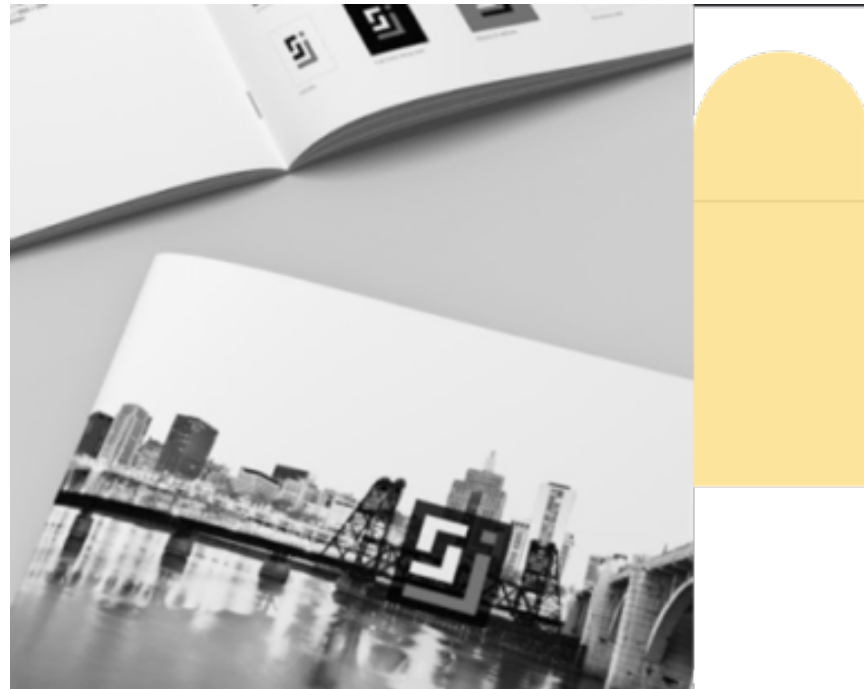
Graham Smith, Editor
Cornwall Reports

" The Google News Initiative Journalism Emergency Relief Fund came in at the right time. Our equipment was in dire need of repairs and generators completely down. And for this we remain grateful to the fund, it really made an impact in our newspaper when we needed it most."

Othello B. Garblah, Editor
The New Dawn"

"[The grant] helped us accelerate our ability to provide timely and reliable news information about COVID-19, the measures and directives that were coming from the state, from the city, and even to translate some of that into Somali, Hmong and Spanish."

Mukhtar Ibrahim, Sahan Journal

"Since our media promotes interactivity with civil society, seeking public solutions, and building democracy, this partnership has also allowed us to take a deep breath in difficult times."

Edy Prastyo, Production Manager
Suara Surabaya Media
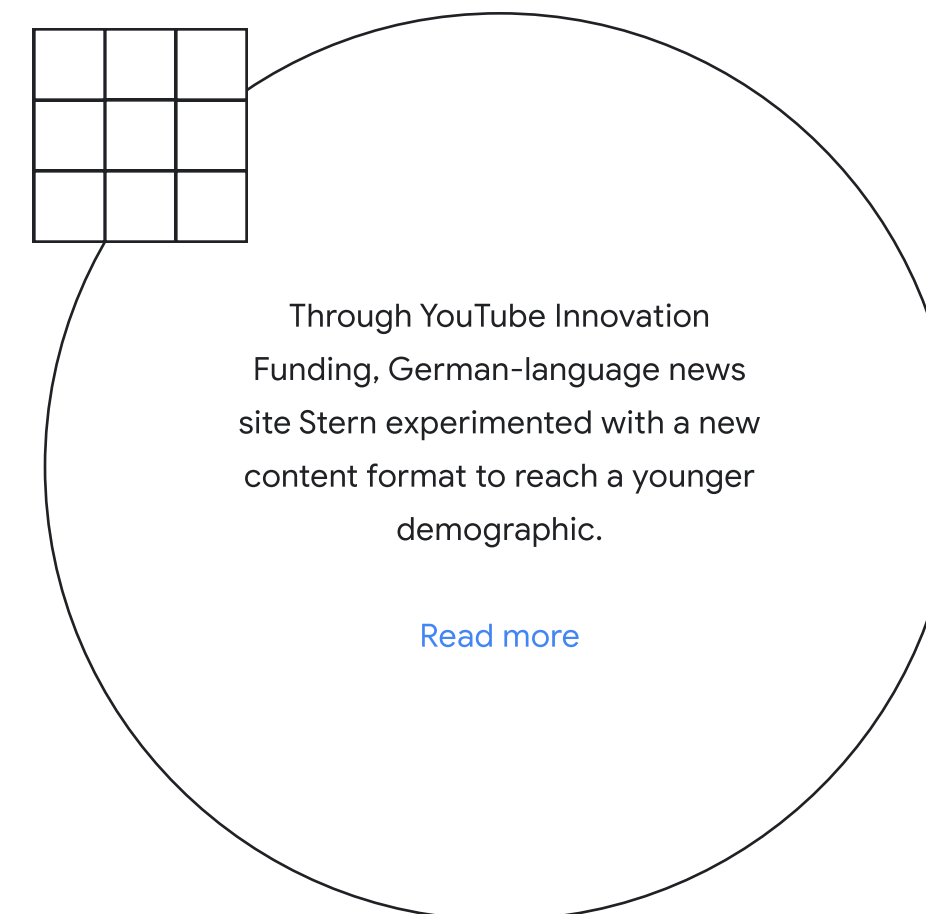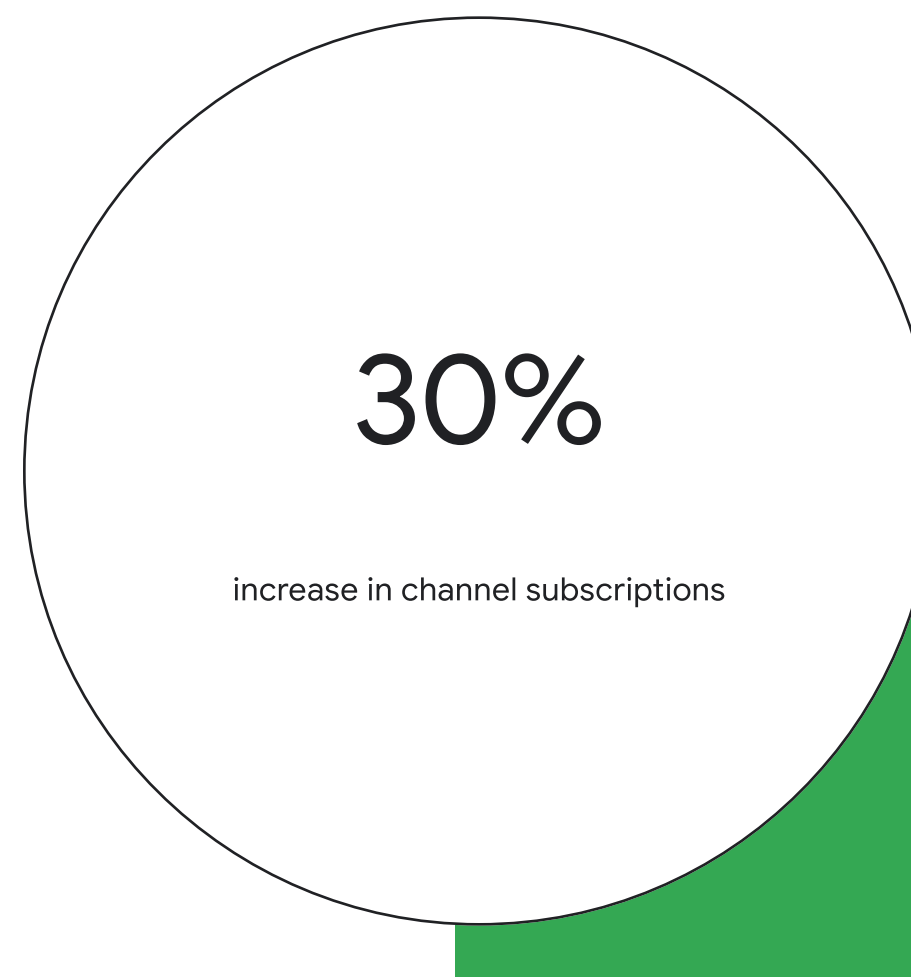
Experimenting with new formats for news

Audiences today have more choice than ever before of where to read, watch and listen to news. To help news organizations around the world experiment with new formats, we launched a $25 million program with YouTube, to help newsrooms develop sustainable video operations, and we've given more than $5 million in audio innovation grants.

YouTube Innovation Funding

YouTube Innovation Funding supported publishers across the world on projects to strengthen their online video capabilities, try out new formats for video journalism, and experiment with new business models.

87 publishers **$25m** in funding

30%

increase in channel subscriptions

Through YouTube Innovation Funding, German-language news site Stern experimented with a new content format to reach a younger demographic.

Read more
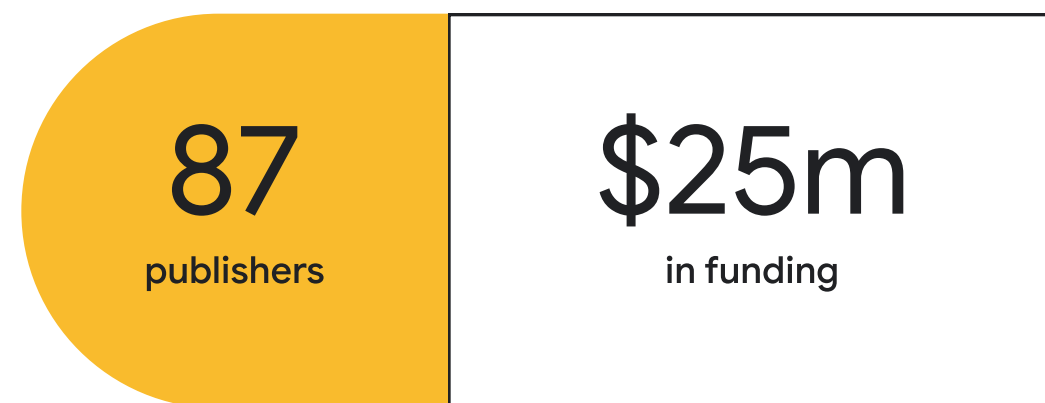
Audio journalism

Growing audio news audiences requires new capabilities and workflows. To help accelerate this innovation, we provided funding to more than 40 news organizations to support building more audio capabilities for the industry.

$5m
in innovation grants

40
global news orgs
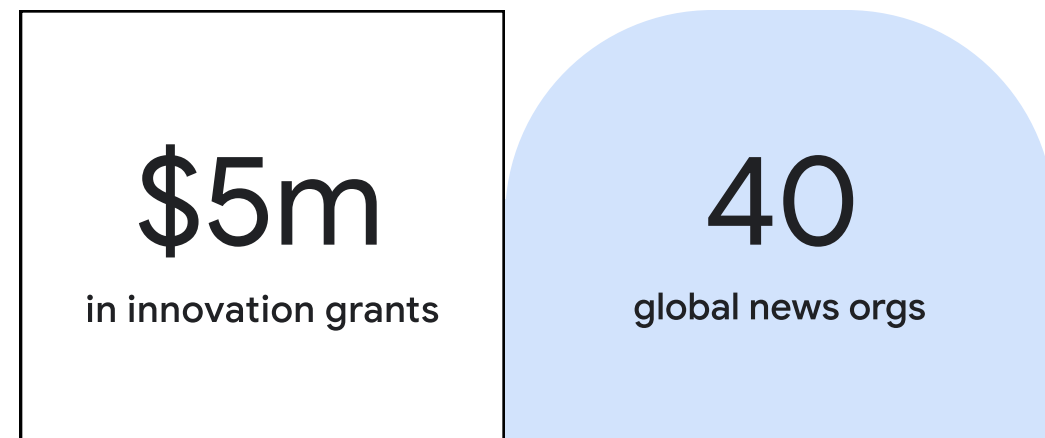
Web Stories

We created Web Stories, an engaging format for web publishers and creators, which allow readers to tap through mobile-first full screen experiences. We've seen great success with this content experience, with over 20 million Web Stories published to date.

20m
Web Stories published

New technologies, new opportunities

We help partners respond to changing news consumption habits by experimenting with new approaches to gathering information and storytelling.

Data visualization

Through our data visualization project, we've worked with designers around the world to tell stories with data — and make the results open source so they can be reused by journalists and data visualization experts everywhere.

Read more

Journalist tools

We enlisted the expertise of newsrooms to create Journalist Studio, a suite of research-focused tools that puts our AI, machine-learning, and search technology to work for writers and editors.

Read more

"In the global survey we conducted last year about the use of artificial intelligence (AI) by news organizations... Improving AI literacy was seen as vital to change culture and improve understanding of new tools and systems.

Mattia Peretti, Manager
JournalismAI

Common Knowledge Project

The Common Knowledge Project helps local journalists more easily explore, visualize, and share data about important issues in their local communities leveraging public data in their reporting.

Journalism AI

JournalismAI is a global initiative that aims to inform media organizations about the potential offered by artificial intelligence-powered technologies. It's managed in partnership with the journalism think-tank Polis, London School of Economics and Political Science.

Strengthening and evolving publisher business models

The business of news is changing rapidly. We've developed products and programs to support publishers of all sizes in their ongoing journey to digital sustainability.

"Today, Alma Preta is producing twice as many news stories. We managed to increase the number of subscriptions in our campaigns. And more than that, many doors to diversify funds opened."

—Elaine Silva, Partner and Executive Director, Alma Preta Jornalismo

View case study

Growing and Diversifying Revenue

Changing media-consumption habits present constant challenges for publishers as they work to produce relevant stories and reach new audiences, all while keeping pace and maintaining business stability. Our tools are designed to help publishers worldwide in boosting readership and revenue. We have also provided free business training, consulting and implementation support to 7K+ participants.

Reader revenue

When the Google News Initiative launched in 2018, we introduced Subscribe with Google, a platform to enable publishers to deepen their relationship with readers by making it easier for readers to subscribe and enjoy their subscription content.
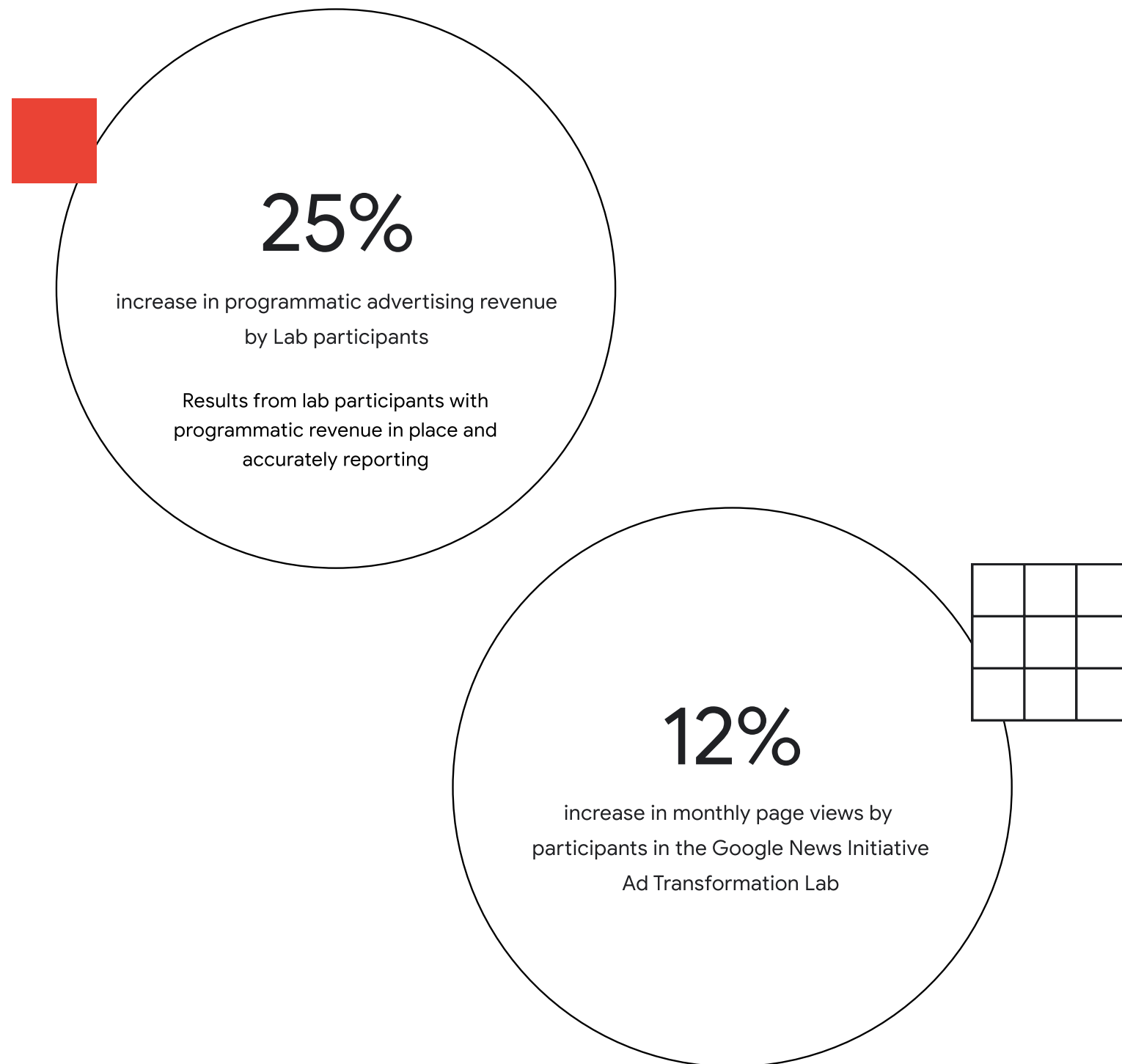
Advertising

The digital ad ecosystem continues to rapidly evolve, which can present challenges for news publishers - particularly small, local organizations. Our efforts aim to help publishers grow digital ad revenue, whether they're transitioning from print to digital or experimenting with sophisticated programmatic strategies. In addition to our core advertising products, the GNI helps publishers grow their digital advertising revenue through free online resources, workshops and cohort-based labs focused on strategy and implementation. Other revenue-based GNI labs cover topics such as sponsorships, subscriptions and more.

500k+

new, paid subscribers for news partners with Subscribe with Google

25%

increase in programmatic advertising revenue by Lab participants

Results from lab participants with programmatic revenue in place and accurately reporting

12%

increase in monthly page views by participants in the Google News Initiative Ad Transformation Lab

" "Operating a news site, but not being able to own the user data is is the biggest problem the Korean news industry is facing."

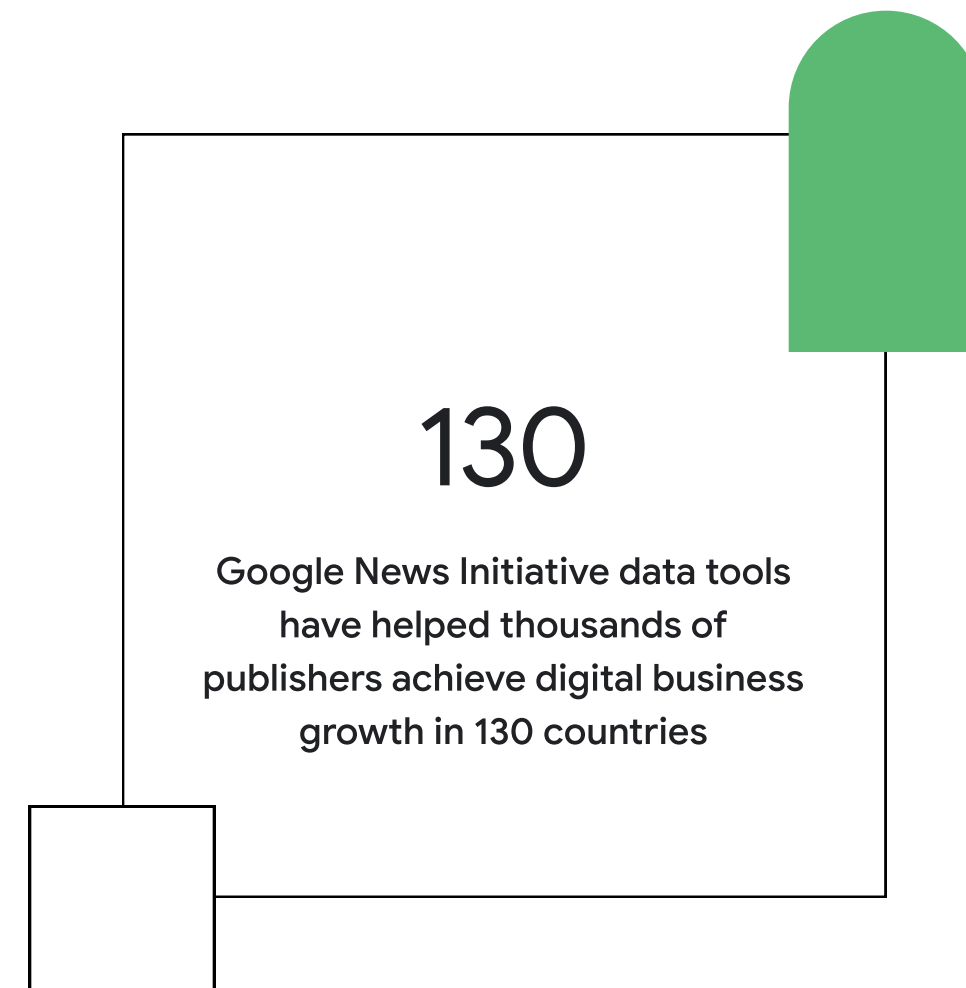Seung-Il Kim, Director of Digital Strategy
Busan Ilbo

View case study

Understanding and reaching audiences

We've teamed up with experts in the industry to provide publishers and entrepreneurs with access to helpful topics around making the business of news more efficient and effective. And with a host of free data tools, we're helping news orgs make more informed business and editorial decisions, while reaching new and loyal audiences.

Data tools

We developed News Consumer Insights, Realtime Content Insights and News Tagging Guide to help publishers make data-driven business and editorial decisions.

130

Google News Initiative data tools have helped thousands of publishers achieve digital business growth in 130 countries

30%

increase in visits

39%

increase in pageviews

5.3k+

registrants for Audience Labs

Energetic City

In Canada, Energetic City participated in the News Consumer Insights Shift Program, a free consultative program where publishers receive actionable recommendations from Google experts to improve their overall performance.

Audience labs

The Google News Initiative Audience Labs bring together small groups of news orgs over several months to address new ways to understand and grow their audiences, leveraging News Consumer Insights tools and support from Google and industry experts.

700+

local news publishers

NEWSROOM TECHNOLOGY

Empowering everyone

Partnering with others to create unique, afforable digital systems for small newsrooms.

Local News Foundry

The Local News Foundry is aimed at increasing digital monetization capabilities of local news publishers in Asia Pacific. We've launched programs in 5 countries and engaged over 700 publishers to date. Overall, publishers reported a +86% uplift in their digital ad revenue and +105% increase in monthly traffic year-over-year.
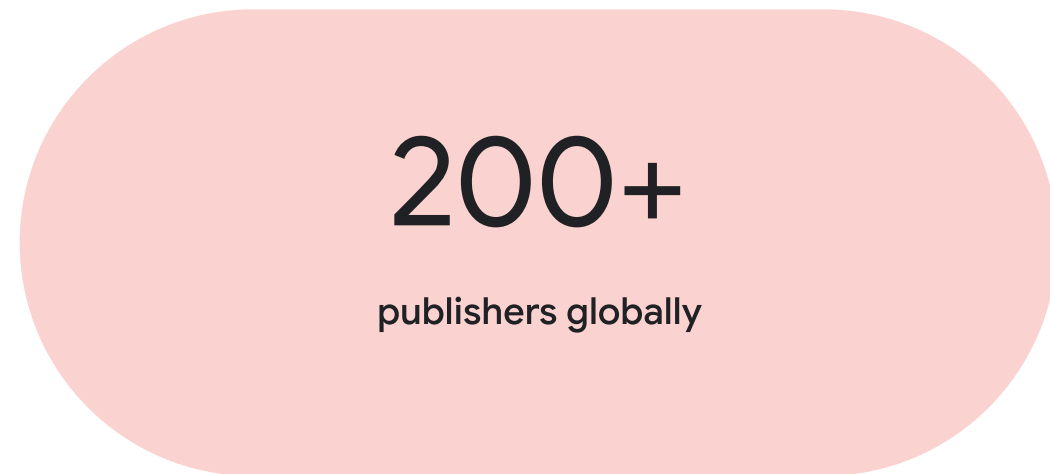
"This project is very helpful for Warta Ekonomi in increasing revenue and traffic. Hopefully this project will continue and reach more publishers throughout Indonesia."

Cahyo Prayogo, Managing Editor at Warta Ekonomi

View case study

200+

publishers globally

$5.2m

in contributions

114

publishers

Google News Initiative Cloud Program

We launched the Google News Initiative Cloud Program in September 2018 to support local, small and medium-sized news organizations globally and help them develop their business and storytelling capabilities through the power of Cloud. Over 200 publishers have used their free G Suite licenses and Google Cloud Program credits to improve security, productivity, cost-savings, and product launches.
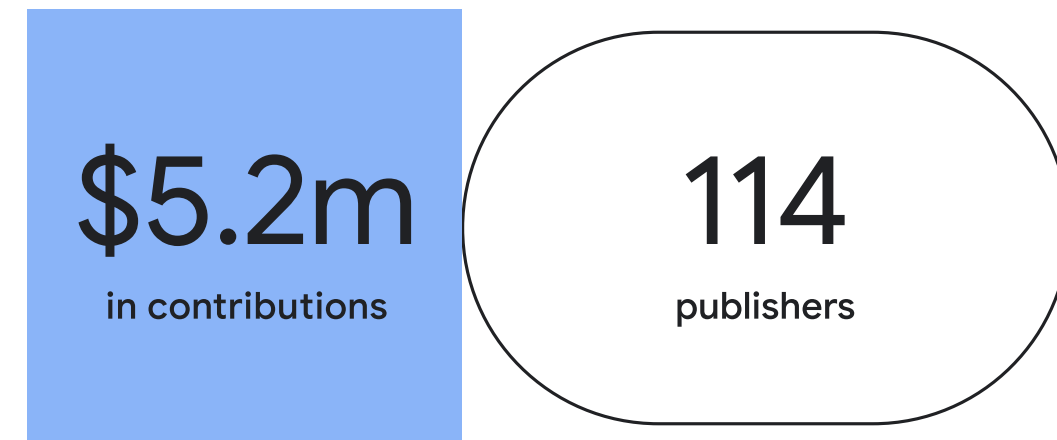
Newspack

We've partnered with Automattic and Wordpress to develop Newspack, a fast, secure, low-cost CMS tailor-made to the needs of small newsrooms. So far, we've contributed $5.2 million towards the project and platform, which has supported 114 publishers since launch.

NEW MODELS

A stronger future for local news

Empowering local publications, news startups and digitally-focused publishers explore new ways of doing business.

200+
funded

$30m+
offered in funding

New Models for Digital Journalism

The Google News Initiative Innovation Challenge is an application-based program open to news organizations of all sizes. Since 2018, we've initiated eight regional editions of the Innovation Challenges program, designed to drive innovation in news through over 200 projects in 94 countries. The Innovation Challenge builds on learnings from the DNI Fund in Europe, which awarded over €140.5 million to 660+ digital news projects in 30 countries from 2015 - 2019.
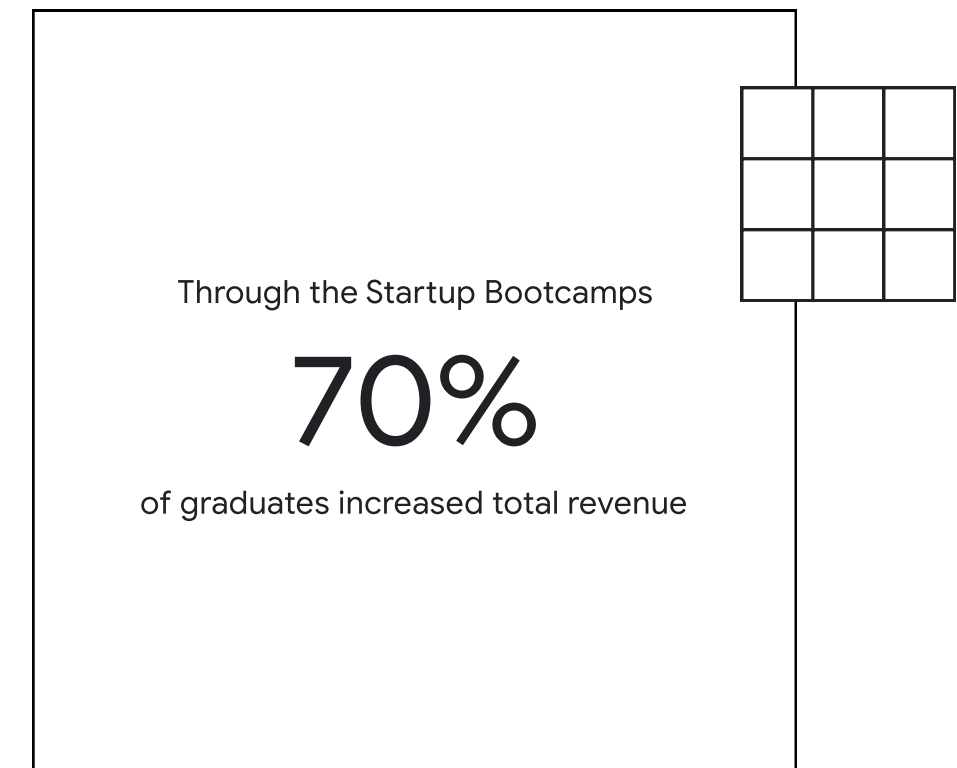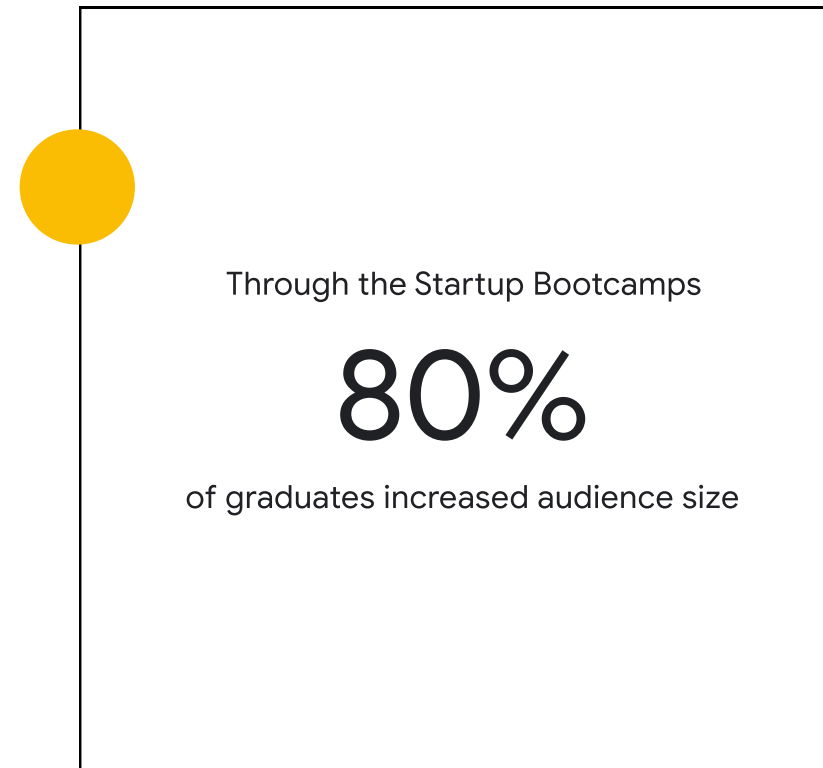
"One of the biggest challenges immigrants have is it's harder to get local news, especially in their language. So it's very important for us to be able to help this community."

Rocio Tirado, Chief Operating Officer
Jambalaya News Louisiana

View case study

Startups

We've directly supported 122 news startups through our Startups Labs and Boot Camps. These programs support diverse groups of early-stage journalism entrepreneurs in designing, launching and accelerating sustainable news businesses.

Through the Startup Bootcamps

80%

of graduates increased audience size

Through the Startup Bootcamps

70%

of graduates increased total revenue

Local News Experiments Project

The Local News Experiments Project aims to create sustainable, all-digital news orgs in communities currently underserved by local news. So far, we've funded six new digital news outlets with local publishers in the US and UK. We've experimented with for profit and non-profit business models across a wide range of different communities and tested product thinking techniques, audience acquisition and monetization strategies, and then shared the findings with the larger industry.

USA

" The Oaklandside launched in June 2020, in the midst of pandemic closures and disruption. Providing a news organization dedicated to the needs and concerns of Oaklanders at such a crucial time for trusted information provoked a welcome surge of reader and community support that helped put The Oaklandside on a clear path to sustainability."

Lance Knobel, CEO and co-founder Cityside

View case study

Cultivating a global news community

Bringing others together to tackle the most pressing concerns facing journalism is at the center of the Google News Initiative. That's why we're researching and investigating topics critical to the future of the business.

"Citizen journalists are literally at the center of the community. They make sure that these stories in these rural areas are really told on a national platform."

—Duncan Masiwa, Sinelizwi Project Lead, Foor for Mzansi

View case study

Wider, truer representation

Creating a thriving and representative media for everyone. We champion inclusivity and aim to improve representation in journalism by reflecting diversity, equity, and inclusion principles in Google News Initiative programs. We developed nearly 20 new programs that support underrepresented journalists and advance the digital transformation of diverse news organizations.

20
new programs

Chicas Poderosas

We partnered with Chicas Poderosas to launch a leadership program aimed at addressing workplace dynamics in Latin American newsrooms. The program will provide mentoring and training to journalists at local and hyperlocal startups founded by women and people who identify as LGBTTQI+. Participants will work with experts to create a plan to strengthen innovation, collaborative work, diversity and gender perspectives on their teams.

100
women from 18 countries

Latin America

80+
newsroom leaders

250
page handbook

Diversity Guide for German Media

We jointly launched the Diversity Guide for German Media with Neue deutsche Medienmacher*innen (NdM), engaging 80+ newsroom leaders. The 250-page handbook is the first comprehensive handbook for German publishers and broadcasters that aims to provide diversity data, local and international best practices, and resources on team culture, recruiting, and reporting.

PARTNERSHIPS

Global Collaboration

We collaborate closely with more than 125 news associations around the world to help drive broad connections and thought leadership across the news industry.

125

new associations around the world

12+

participating publishers

40+

countries included in RISJ's annual
Digital News Report

ADEPA

To advance our commitment to news in Argentina, the
GNI has partnered with newspaper association ADEPA
to launch product and UX improvement programs,
collaborate on ADEPA's Innovation Awards and also
sponsor Master in Journalism Innovation scholarships at
the Universidad Miguel Hernandez.

Reuters Institute for the Study of
Journalism (UK)

We partner with RISJ at Oxford University to co-
sponsor the annual Digital News Report, which
surfaces insights on digital news consumption in 40+
countries including the US and UK.

Gatherings for news orgs

We host dozens of live and virtual events each year. From the Google News Initiative Global Summit to our regional and local events, such as working groups and country-level Summits, we provide opportunities for news organizations to connect with each other throughout the year.

Trusted Media Summit

With First Draft and the International Fact-Checking Network at Poynter, we've co-hosted four annual Trusted Media Summits, which bring together industry experts involved in fact-checking and fighting misinformation from across Asia Pacific. In 2021, participants from 33 countries gathered (virtually) in 11 languages to discuss new fact-checking technologies, ways of connecting readers to trustworthy media, and strategies to improve media literacy.

750
participants

28
countries
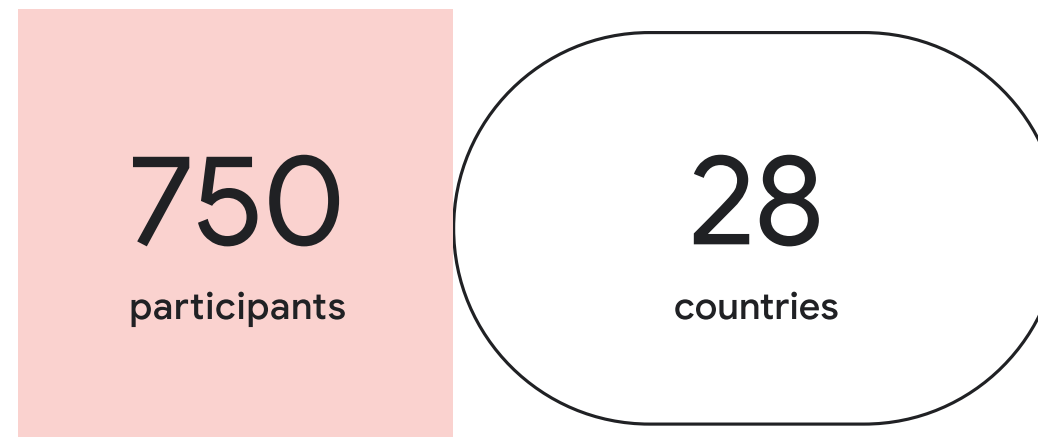
Fighting Misinformation Online Summit

In Europe, we hosted the Fighting Misinformation Online Summit in partnership with the European University Institute and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. The event brought together over 400 academics, policymakers, publishers, and technology companies to find ways to tackle misinformation.

400+
attendees

20+
speakers

Google News Initiative
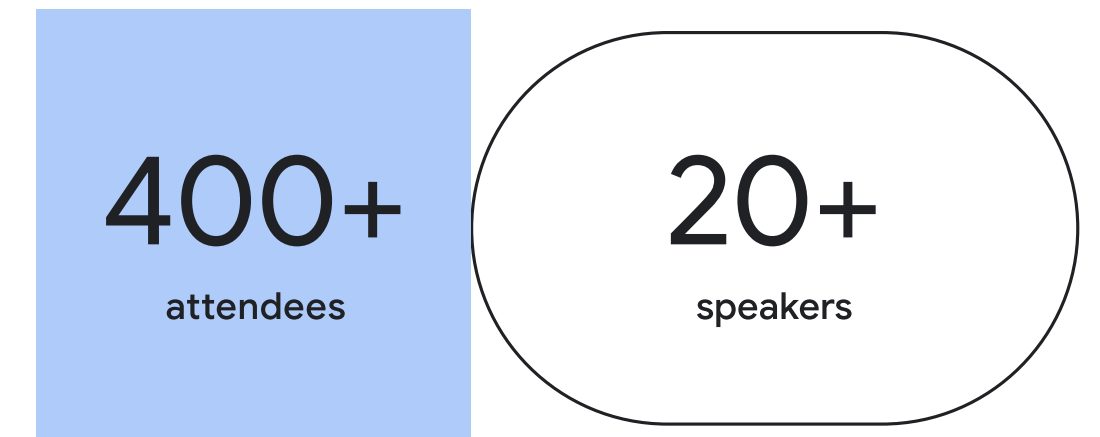
23 Years of Impact
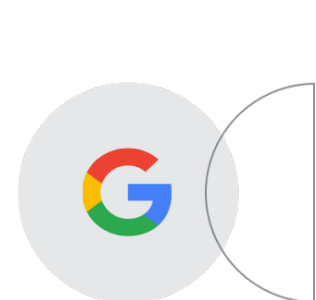
1998

Google founded

2002

Google News launches as one of the first products outside of core Search, organizing news articles to make it easier to see a range of sources on the same topic

2008

Doubleclick acquired, expanding our relationship with web publishers and providing new technology and expertise to support their display advertising businesses
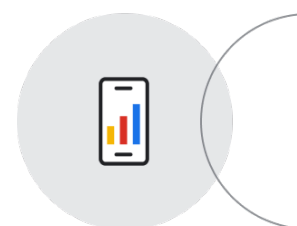
2013

Newsstand launches as a platform for publishers to produce and optimize their content into magazine-like editions designed for viewing on mobile devices

Launched a global journalist training program through Google for Media
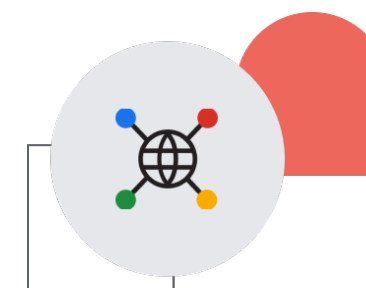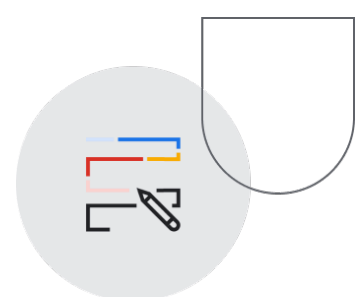
2015

Google News Lab launches to empower journalists with new technology

Digital News Initiative forms to collaborate with the European news ecosystem around product, training, research, and innovation

Google News Initiative

23 Years of Impact

2016

The AMP Project launched, an open source web components library that helps publishers easily create fast-loading and engaging online experiences

Fact Check labels added to help readers find fact-checking in large news stories

2017

Flexible Sampling introduced to help publishers grow subscriptions revenue

Funding Choices launched to help publishers recover lost revenue due to ad blockers

2018

Google News Initiative launched to help centralize and scale our efforts across the company to help build a stronger future for news

View Full Timeline

2020

Google News Showcase launches with $1 billion commitment to support creation of quality content

2021

We're proud of what we and our partners have achieved, but there's more work to do.

Google News Initiative

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Syed Nazakat, Founder,
DataLEADS

Watch Now

" One of the biggest challenges immigrants have is it's harder to get local news, especially in their language. So it's very important for us to be able to help this community."

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Watch Now

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Elaine Silva, Partner and Executive Director,
 Alma Preta Jornalismo

Watch Now

" Anyone can publish a rumor or make a mistake in a publication. We need to protect our children so they can protect themselves and develop a critical mind."

Mélanie Jalans, VP Digital & Marketing,
PlayBac Presse

Watch Now

" Operating a news site, but not being able to own the user data is is the biggest problem the Korean news industry is facing."

Seung-Il Kim, Digital Editor of Strategy,
The Busan Ilbo

Watch Now

What's next?

Our engagement with the news industry — via the Google News Initiative and our ongoing product and partnership commitments — has provided enormous insight into the challenges facing journalists and publishers and the needs of the communities they serve. They have also provided direction on where and how we can be most helpful, forging deep relationships with news organizations and civic institutions alike. We are committed to a long and productive relationship with the global news community as we work together to create a better future for journalism.

Learn more about the Google News Initiative

Google News Initiative