

Paris Declaration on Freedom of Journalism Education

Adopted by the World Journalism Education Council during its plenary session, on July 8th 2019.

We, members of the World Journalism Education Council:

We believe there is a strong link between the quality of journalism education and the quality of information people to which they are entitled to.

We believe that there cannot be an environment of quality information without quality journalism.

We believe that quality journalism depends greatly on proper journalism education and training.

We believe that journalism education has a fundamental role to play towards more inclusive societies and the United Nations' 2030 development agenda.

We believe that this Declaration would help colleagues to make their authorities understand the specificity of journalism education from the academic and from the resources point of view.

Furthermore, we believe that this Declaration would contribute to strengthening the WJEC as a global network of journalism educators.

Preamble:

- *Reinforcing* the Declaration of Principles developed at the first meeting of the World Journalism Education Congress in Singapore in 2007 which advocated for journalism education as a distinct field with its own body of knowledge and theory, closely allied with the practice of journalism and deserving respect within both the academic and professional communities;
- *Noting* that journalism, as an academic discipline, plays a significant role in society including progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- *Acknowledging* that in an age of disinformation, misinformation and threat to press freedom, the role of independent journalism is more important than ever;
- *Observing* that resources allocated to journalism education are an investment in long-term institutional capacity to help guarantee strong, independent and quality journalism;
- *Responding* to the key role that journalism education can play in this historical period:

Agrees on the following principles for journalism educators and trainers, academic as well as professional:

- Maintain strong and independent governance of journalism schools and journalism departments, which should have a faculty level of power and decision-making, and have recognized academic autonomy from external actors;
- Preserve journalism education as a distinctive stream compared to other fields of mass and strategic communication;

- Mobilize the necessary funding for excellence in curricula and extracurricular outreach as required for the quality functioning of a journalism school;
- Maintain a balance between academic knowledge and the technical skills of the journalism craft;
- Recognize gender equality in and through journalism education as a cross-cutting priority;
- Promote diversity as a key factor in journalism education: diversity among students, diversity among staff, diversity among topics taught;
- Encourage a critical spirit for journalism education research, including in experiments and innovations concerning pedagogies, journalistic practices and media business models.

Therefore we, Members of the World Journalism Education Council, calls on:

- Journalism educators and trainers and their institutions and organizations to advocate for adherence to this Declaration;
- Leaders in higher education and training NGOs to take the principles into their practice;
- National departments of education, media industries, private businesses and donors, including international donors, to ensure sufficient funding for journalism education while respecting its independence;
- UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication to support this Declaration and bring it to the attention of UNESCO member states.