

The Carnegie Plan for Better Journalism

The Carnegie UK Trust has a long-standing interest in news media and its critical role in a democratic society. We have now published a new report – *Better Journalism in the Digital Age* – written by Carnegie Fellow Blair Jenkins OBE.

This report sets out the *Carnegie Plan for Better Journalism*. The Plan aims to address the two overarching objectives for achieving better journalism. We need to ‘raise the floor’ and ensure that acceptable, minimum standards of behaviour are applied by all those who wish to be seen as credible news providers. At the same time, we must also aim to ‘raise the ceiling’. High quality news journalism is a vital part of the necessary checks and balances of a healthy democratic society. Minimum standards are not enough – we must strive to support innovation and excellence across the industry.

In order to achieve these twin goals the *Carnegie Plan* makes 7 key recommendations:

- 1** The adoption of a new, industry-wide code of conduct by all journalists and news organisations which gives much clearer guidance on the higher ethical and editorial standards expected – standards which ought to be universal and transferrable between all bona fide press, broadcast and online news services.
- 2** The maintenance or strengthening of public service broadcasting, to ensure not all new ventures are commercially driven, and that the public has access to services with guaranteed impartiality and fairness.
- 3** Civil society organisations to help fund new initiatives in journalism, with an emphasis on technical and editorial innovation, to ensure greater quality and diversity of news sources and more journalism that holds the powerful to account.
- 4** A renewed emphasis in journalism education and training on professional ethics as well as production skills, including a clear commitment to understanding and upholding the public interest.
- 5** Extending and completing the availability and take-up of high speed broadband to enable universal access to a wide range of digital news services and participatory media.
- 6** The encouragement by industry regulators, universities, civil society organisations and the news media themselves of more public debate around issues to do with media ethics and behaviour and more serious discussion of editorial decisions and challenges.
- 7** A new and more evidently independent press regulator with more substantial (but not statutory) powers to investigate unethical behaviour and the ability to impose significant sanctions including financial penalties.

We believe that by working together to deliver these recommendations, the media industry, public bodies, civil society organisations and citizens can help to achieve the better news media that we need.

We are keen to work in partnership and we welcome your views on the Plan and how it can be put into action. For further information on our work, or to discuss the Carnegie Plan for Better Journalism, please contact Douglas White, Senior Policy Officer at douglas@carnegieuk.org.