

Title: Be Media Smart: A National Media Literacy Campaign for Ireland

Abstract

This paper presents Ireland's public awareness campaign – 'Be Media Smart' - which was launched in Spring 2019 to combat misinformation and fake news and encourage people of all ages to stop, think, and check that information they see, read or hear across any media platform is reliable. Be Media Smart is an initiative of Media Literacy Ireland (MLI), an independent group facilitated by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) to enhance Irish people's understanding of, and engagement with, media. Group members include large media and social media companies, Government bodies, libraries, academia and voluntary sector organisations.

The paper will provide an overview of this national campaign particularly in terms of how a range of organisations including all library sectors worked together to help empower Irish citizens to make informed media choices about the media content and services that they consume, create, and disseminate across all platforms. Some of the key observations and findings of the Be Media Smart campaign will be presented including the role of libraries and the value of the cross-sector collaborative approach. Challenges, lessons learned and future development plans will also be outlined.

'Be Media Smart' provides a best practice example of how a unique Irish initiative has helped to advance media and information literacy at national level.

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Bio

Philip Russell is Deputy Librarian at the Technological University of Dublin, Ireland. He has over 20 years' experience working in the library and information sector and previously held professional posts at Accenture, Trinity College Dublin and the Central Bank of Ireland.

Philip is Chair of the Library Association of Ireland's Literacies Committee and a member of Media Literacy Ireland. He has published widely on the subject of media and information literacy and is a regular contributor to national and international conferences and seminars.

Philip holds a BA (Hons) in Arts from University College Dublin (UCD) and an MSc. in Information and Library Studies from Robert Gordon University (Aberdeen).