



# research for journalists

Busting fake news and disinformation

**fray**college  
of Communications



# research for journalists

Duration: 4 weeks online eLearning

Poor research can lead to mistakes, complaints or even litigation that the best media lawyer would not be able to save you from. For individual reporters, research skills are the difference between a successful career and good reputation rather than infamy and the forced career change that comes with it. A mistake can travel around the world faster than you can hit send, and can haunt you and your career long after you've hit delete.

Ensure your career and reputation are secure through fraycollege's Research for Journalists. Join award-winning journalist Paula Fray as she shows you the tools you need to conduct research like a media pro and help you to ensure you're trading in fact and not fiction.

## OUTCOMES AND GOALS

- A fail-safe method to get your research right
- Planning and research time management
- Accessing the necessary information
- Time conscious fact-checking strategies
- Using different forms of sources – documents, experts etc.
- Understanding numbers and technical data
- Gathering and compiling information
- Sifting and selecting information for your story
- Building a story from the information
- Record keeping
- Cutting down the time needed for future story research

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Sound research is what separates you as a professional journalist from bloggers and casual social media posters. In an era where misinformation and disinformation are rife and 'fake news' is the catch-phrase of the day, public trust is the currency of modern journalism, and your reliability is your reputation.

As media practitioners, we have always been entrusted with bringing the public news and content that is factual, objective and relevant. But with the rise of online satire, clickbait, propaganda and more mistakes from colleagues as they try to keep up in digital-first newsrooms, even journalists are struggling to separate fact from fiction.

Fact-checking is an invaluable skill and a vital tool in your mission as a truth-teller. This has never been more true than in this era of internet content production and the ease and speed with which information now spreads. Your mistake can travel the world before you have a chance to correct it, and 'fake news' becomes 'fact' before a retraction can be issued.

As a journalist or writer, you must be able to differentiate between information, disinformation, misinformation and propaganda. To do this, you need to base your reporting on sound research and reliable sources. If you fail at this, your credibility and hard-earned professional reputation could suffer irreparable harm.

News, by definition, can be independently verified and is upheld by the principles of journalism and media integrity. While writing is an important part of your job as a journalist, it's more important to ensure that the information you are basing your stories on factual, accurate and truthful, and that your representation of those facts are fair and unbiased.

The course should take you a maximum of 4 weeks and features interactive educational games, resources, a final quiz and assignments.

*\*\* This course is aligned to Unit Standard 115081 Write technical text within a specific field, which will earn you 10 credits should you choose the accredited option. You will receive a statement of results for this from the Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority (MICT Seta).*

# media courses

Master key media concepts and gain in-depth knowledge that will help you keep pace with the latest trends and new technologies

## LEADERSHIP

- Media Management

## FUNDAMENTALS

- Presenting Story Ideas
- Research for Journalists
- Mastering the Press Code
- Writing for Journalists
- Social media for journalists

## WRITING

- Writing Winning Proposals
- Column Writing

## REPORTING

- Court Reporting (South Africa)
- Specialist reporting

## LAW AND ETHICS

- Introduction to Media Law
- Online Ethics for Journalists

## AUDIO AND VISUAL

- The Ultimate Radio Sales Course
- Introduction to Podcasting



### CUSTOMISED COURSE PROGRAMS

We know your organisation is unique, and that means your training should be too! At fraycollege we will work closely with you to customise training programmes, offering you tailor-made interventions that meet your personal and organisational learning needs.



### SETA FUNDING FOR YOU OR YOUR TEAM

fraycollege deals with five Sector Education and Training Authorities (Setas) and can assist you in obtaining funding for your leadership and communication training programmes.



### GROUP DISCOUNTS ON SELECTED COURSES

Take advantage of our special group rates and discounts when you book three or more spots on a course and ensure that your entire team reaps the benefit of our world-class fraycollege training programmes.



# about **fray**college

**fray**college provides short courses and qualifications in journalism, as well as communication training to all sectors and industries across the African continent and beyond. Over the past 14 years, we have refined our programmes to ensure our learners gain theoretical knowledge and practical skills in line with national, regional and international best practice.

Our **fray**college facilitators are qualified industry experts with a passion for learning, training and information sharing. The college operates under pan-African impact communication firm **frayintermedia**, which boasts media specialists and a newsroom that produces traditional and new media content.

Our dynamic training courses are offered both online and in person, based on the latest learning trends and developments within the South African and international training sphere. The **fray**college trainers and facilitators have worked with groups and individuals for more than a decade across 31 African and Middle Eastern countries, training participants in journalism, communication and social media skills in line with the latest global trends and standards.

## our team



### Paula Fray

CEO

Paula Fray has worked in media for more than three decades as a journalist, editor, trainer, and media manager. Paula was the first female editor of the Saturday Star newspaper in South Africa. She is currently the managing director of the pan-African media training organisation **frayintermedia**, which she founded in 2005. The organisation has trained journalists, media leaders, civil society organisations, government officials and corporate leaders during its decade-long existence.

She is President of The New Humanitarian news agency, a board member of Africa Check and of Accountability Lab SA. She is a Print and Digital Media SA fellow and a public representative on the Press Council of South Africa.

Paula graduated with a BJourn degree from Rhodes University and has a Woman and Law Certificate from UNISA. A recipient of the prestigious Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University, she is a former member of the Nieman Foundation Advisory Board at Harvard.

### Dr Sandra Roberts

Academic Head



Dr Roberts heads **fraycollege**. She has worked in media development for over 18 years and was lead developer of the learning materials and contributed to the EISA of the new Journalism Certificate. Dr Roberts specialises in the development and application of practical journalism and communications training.

Most recently she was research and academic head of **frayintermedia**, before which she was the Centre Manager of the Centre of Excellence in Human Development at the University of the Witwatersrand. She was previously the Writing Unit Manager of the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism and the Head of Research of Media Monitoring Africa. Dr Roberts has her degree in Information Science, her honours and Masters (cum laude) in Sociology and her D Litt et. Phil in Sociology.



# our clients



**fray**college has been an excellent sounding board for Media24 in terms of strategy, the approach we should be taking in terms of learning and development. They have become a true business partner as they understand our organisation and its needs so well

Adam Cooke  
Head: Media24 Academy  
Media 24

fraycollege, has provided Soul City with training for story writing, column and formal report writing as well as web and online skills. They have provided these high-quality services timeously and at an effective cost.

Phinah Kodisang  
Chief Executive Officer  
Soul City

fraycollege is a professional and efficient organisation and we recommend their services, we have been more than happy with the service we've received

Kate Skinner  
Executive Director  
SANEF

The logo for Fray College of Communications features the word "fraycollege" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font, with "of Communications" in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font below it. The text is enclosed in a white rectangular frame that is open on the top and right sides.

**fraycollege**  
of Communications



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