



Co-creating community-led listening infrastructure

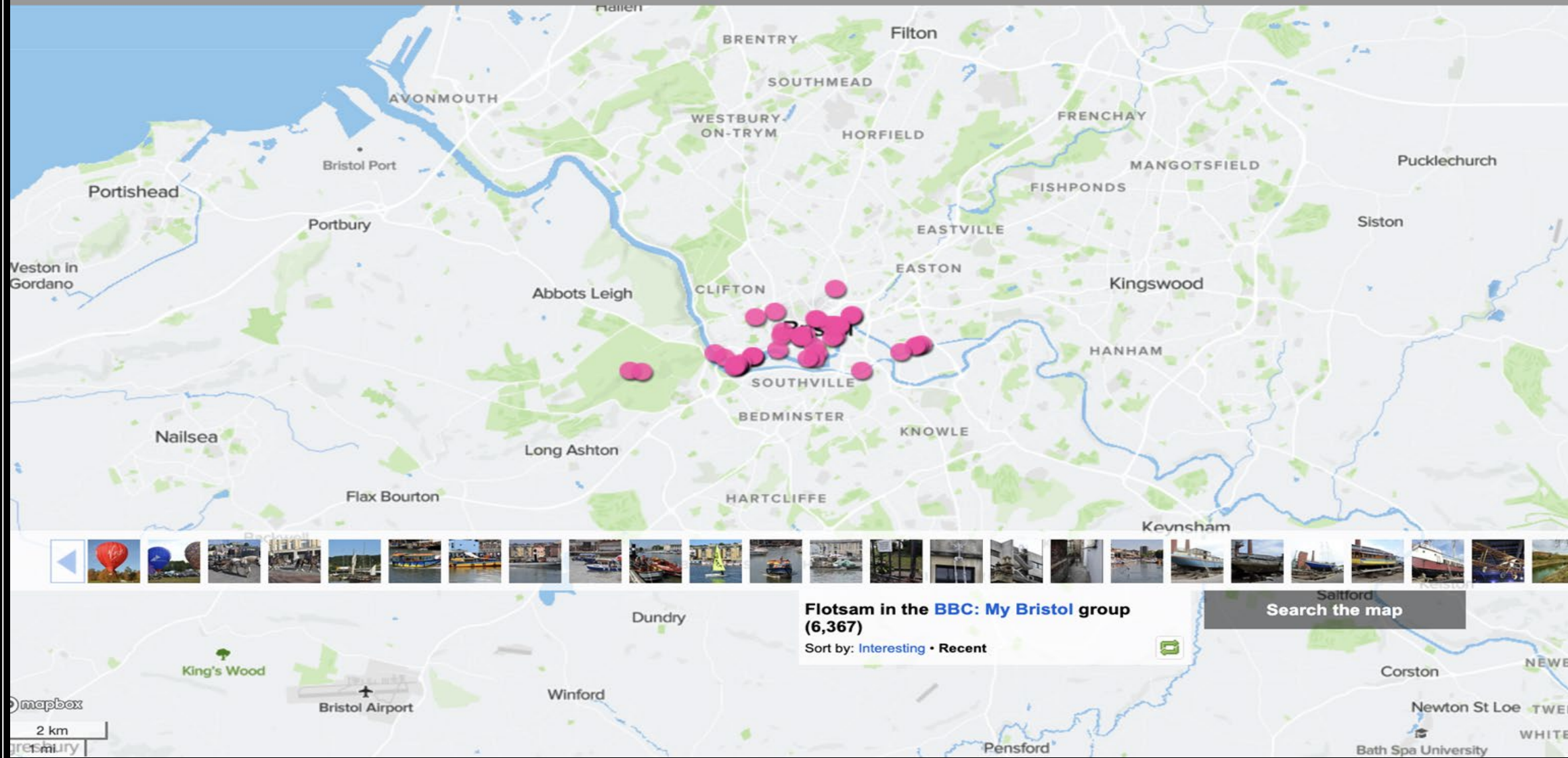
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Bute Building, King Edward VII Avenue, Cardiff, CF10 3NB
16/9/2008

Lessons

You can listen badly.

- Performative listening or actual listening, if it doesn't lead to action, can lead to long term consequences.

But listening well can have immediate positive results.

- If you listen, and demonstrate that you're listening by taking action, the community takes notice.



October 14, 2021

Narratives we're tracking

1. Anti-vaccine chiropractors are a rising force of misinformation
2. Schools are new battleground in war of disinformation over Covid-19 vaccines

Top fact checks

Need-to-know news from the world's best fact checkers

United States

- [There is no evidence that Southwest Airlines cancellations were caused by workers protesting COVID-19 vaccine mandate](#) - 9News.com
 - Source: Twitter and other social media [posts](#)
- [No, this isn't a picture of a parasite in the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine](#) - PolitiFact
 - Source: Viral [photo](#)
- [C-SPAN Video Does NOT Prove Fauci, HHS Officials Plotted 'Avian Flu Virus' Release To Enforce Universal Flu Vaccine](#) - Lead Stories
 - Source: Gateway Pundit/Infowars [video](#)

Europe

- [Attention, cette vidéo ne montre pas des manifestants roumains anti-vaccin en 2021 mais une manifestation contre la corruption en 2017](#) (Please note, this video does not show Romanian anti-vaccine protesters in 2021 but a demonstration against corruption in 2017) - AFP Factuel
 - Source: Facebook and Telegram [posts](#)
- [Nein, Norwegen stuft Covid-19 nicht als genauso gefährlich wie die normale Grippe ein](#) (No, Norway does not classify Covid-19 as just as dangerous as normal flu) - Correctiv
 - Source: Facebook [post](#)

Spain and Latin America

- [Oxford não publicou estudo que atesta eficácia da ivermectina contra Covid-19](#) (Oxford has not published a study attesting to the efficacy of ivermectin against Covid-19) - Aos Fatos
 - Source: Facebook posts
- [#Verificamos: É falso que 'médico' Irlandês avisou que Bill Gates e Fundação Gavi irão 'lançar' epidemia do vírus Marburg](#) (#Verified: It is false that Irish 'doctor' warned that Bill Gates and Gavi Foundation will 'launch' Marburg virus epidemic) - Agência Lupa
 - Source: WhatsApp messages

APAC

- [Fact Check-Investigation of former Australian state premier concerns matters predating pandemic, are unrelated to vaccine rollout](#) - Reuters Fact Check
 - Source: [Twitter post](#)
- [Chinese teen hacker did not cause Facebook outage](#) - AFP Fact Check
 - Source: [Facebook post](#)

Inaccurate claims and conspiracy theory about new Covid-19 medicine

The announcement of medicines that may be able to prevent or treat mild or moderate cases of Covid-19, namely US pharmaceutical giant [Merck's](#) oral antiviral drug molnupiravir and British-Swedish company [AstraZeneca's](#) antibody cocktail AZD7442, has led to misleading or false claims about their efficacy and potential safety issues. There were also inaccurate comparisons made with the Covid-19 vaccines, as well as a conspiracy theory about a purported collusion between governments and pharmaceutical companies.

- An Australia-based [Telegram channel](#) referred to the [October 8 episode](#) of US conservative podcaster Stew Peters's show with a [self-proclaimed](#) former health economist, who promoted an inaccurate claim that molnupiravir can cause "birth defects in animals," "genetic manipulation" and is a "perfect setup for cancer."

However, the genetic changes in fact happen in the machinery that reproduces the coronavirus: As the developers of the treatment explain, the virus will now be barred from multiplying thanks to [errors introduced to the medicine's genetic code](#). While data from molnupiravir's [clinical trial](#) has yet to be peer reviewed and there is a lack of details about potential side effects, there's no indication so far of any cancer risk.

- Others compared the new Covid-19 medicine to the anti-parasitic drug ivermectin. Australian MP Craig Kelly [said](#) on Telegram: "Why don't they just use the original (Ivermectin) which we know works"; [this tweet](#) states: "CNN reports that Merck is seeking EUA for Molnupiravir [sic] after testing 700 patients. 50% reduction in hospitalizations and death. IVER CRUSHES THOSE NUMBERS!"

Merck, which developed ivermectin, released a [statement](#) earlier this year clarifying that there was no evidence for the medication's clinical efficacy in Covid patients.

- A conspiracy theory that pharmaceutical companies are in cahoots with governments to profit from the new Covid-19 drugs was also popular on multiple platforms. For instance, [this tweet](#) purports to compare molnupiravir and ivermectin and seeks to highlight that the only reason the former would be approved is because it is "funded by Fauci." [This Telegram post](#) includes a [report by right-wing blog ZeroHedge](#) that says molnupiravir is sold at a price that represents a markup of 40 times its production cost, and that the US government helped fund it. [The report](#) ZeroHedge referred to only took into account the cost of the ingredients but not other costs such as clinical trials and research and development.

The development of molnupiravir began at Emory University in 2013 — seven years before the Covid-19 pandemic — with funding from a [Department of Defense](#) agency and [NIAID](#), headed by Dr. Anthony Fauci. Clinical trials from 2020 onward found the medicine effective in keeping Covid-19 symptoms under control, but funding from US government agencies was not intended exclusively for the development of a Covid-19 medicine.

— [Esther Chan](#)

Your Misinformation Monitor

Keep track of the latest and most important misinformation narratives caught by our monitoring team each day. Find previous stories below.

Lessons

Listening that is disconnected from the communities you're trying to study is deeply problematic.

Listening with no action often has little purpose other than making people feel they're 'in the know'.

It was the case back in 2016-2021, and even more so today, that these types of 'social listening' techniques are increasingly only capturing the loudest voices.

Listening to 'speech' that is causing harm to communities can cause serious impacts on those who are doing the listening.

In this talk, I want to convince you that

1

Community listening in public health is ‘having a moment’ but is not necessarily in a good place.

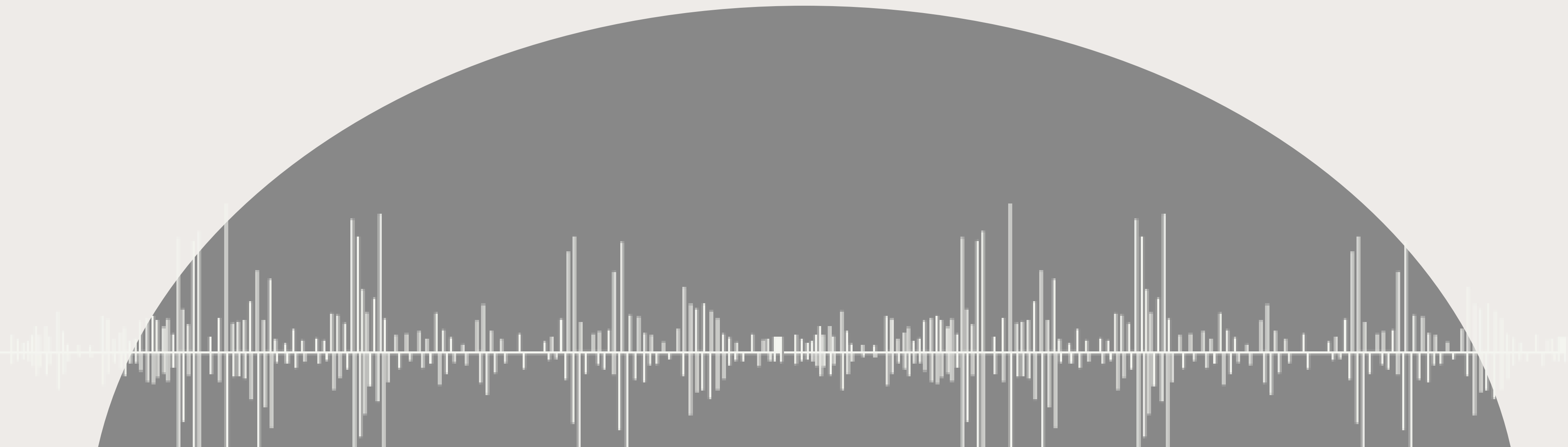
2

There are key principles for community listening, that if rolled out consistently, might help restore some of the trust that has been lost.

3

If we do this right, we could connect initiatives in ways that would build out new community listening infrastructure that would lead to better outcomes.

**1. How do communities feel about
the obsession with community
listening right now?**



Communities are, quite rightly, pissed.

Some hard truths



For all of our discussions about community, they are rarely considered, or treated as true partners.





There's too much emphasis on magic dashboards, and that's certainly even more true in an age of AI.



**But when does
listening turn into
extractive
surveillance?**

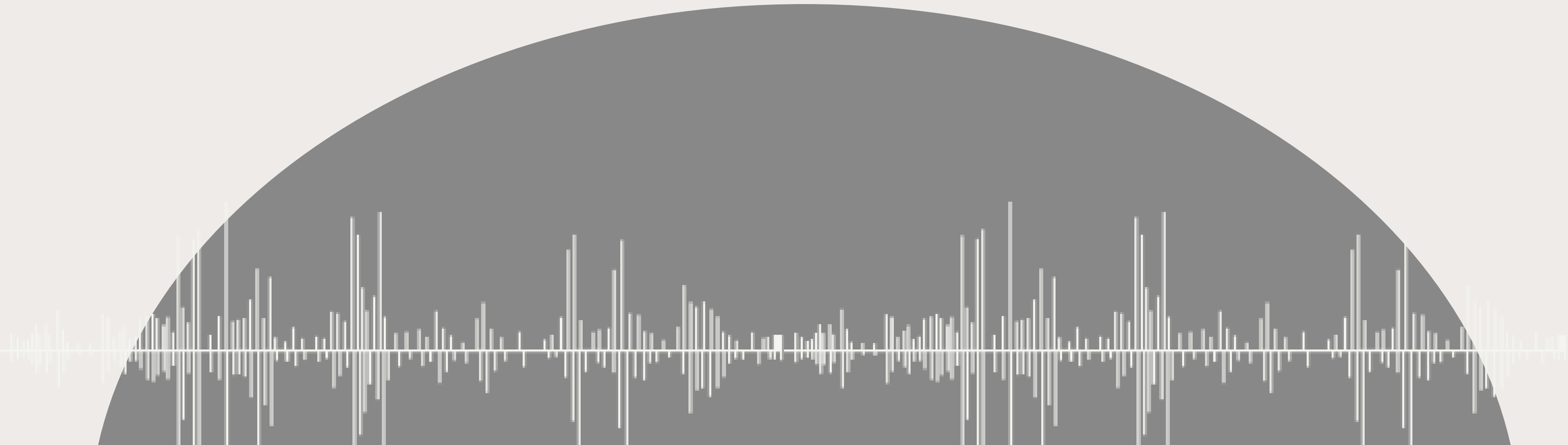
**We tend to rely on the one
'listening' technique that
has always worked. But we
need to combine
techniques with the
guidance and support of
communities.**



9 Types of Community Listening in Public Health

1. Social media monitoring (X, IG, YouTube, TikTok)
2. Polling about health (KFF)
3. Bounded Social Media Places (e.g WhatsApp, FB Groups)
4. Continuous community surveys (e.g. iHeard)
5. Community-planned gatherings (e.g. public health community meetings)
6. High-touch interactions (e.g. rapid community assessments)
7. Community sentinels (e.g. Community Health Workers)
8. Internet search trackers (e.g. Google Trends, LLMs)
9. Expressed needs trackers (e.g. 2-1-1)

2. What are the non-negotiables when listening with community?

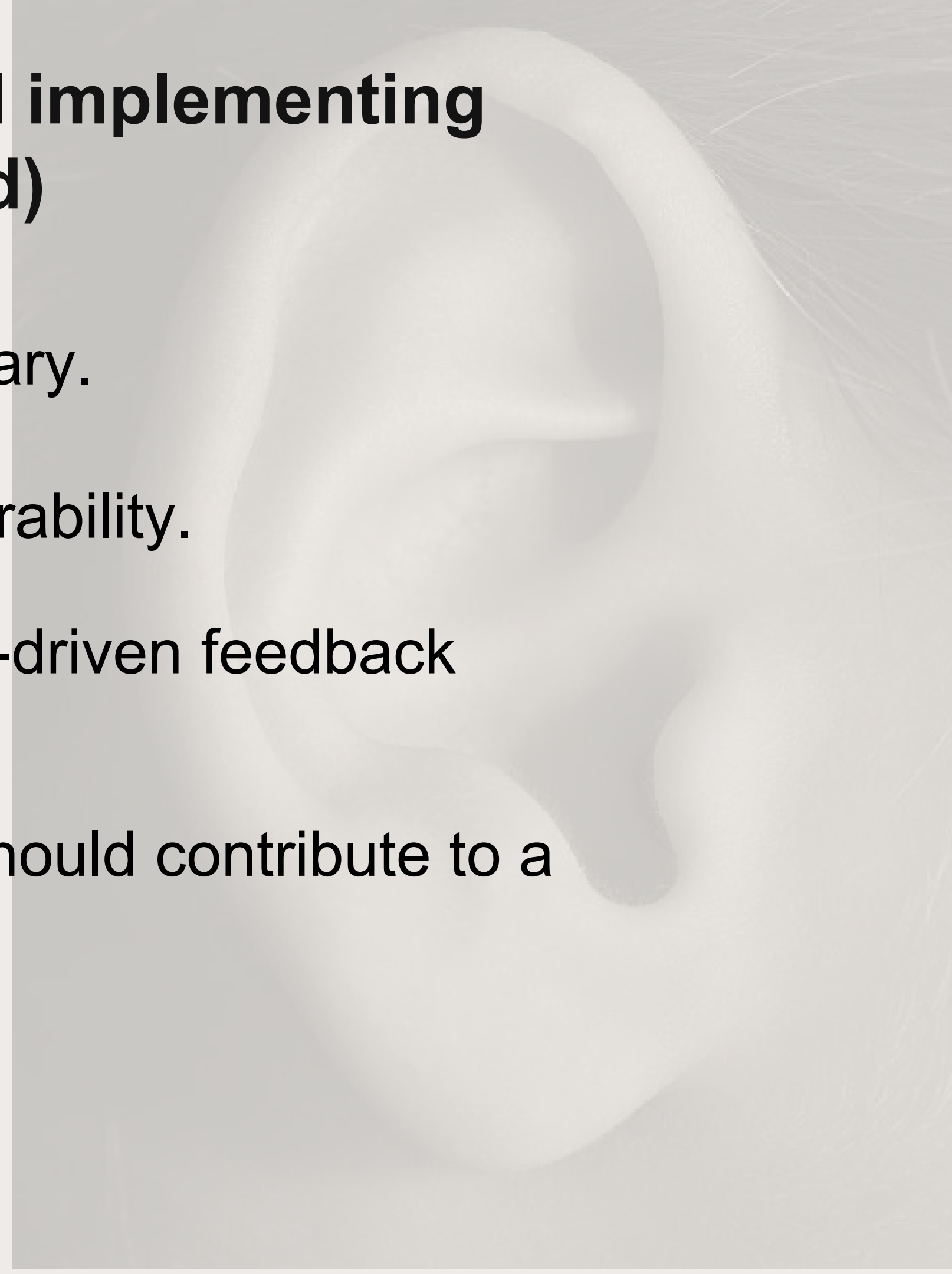


9 Key Principles when designing and implementing community listening initiatives

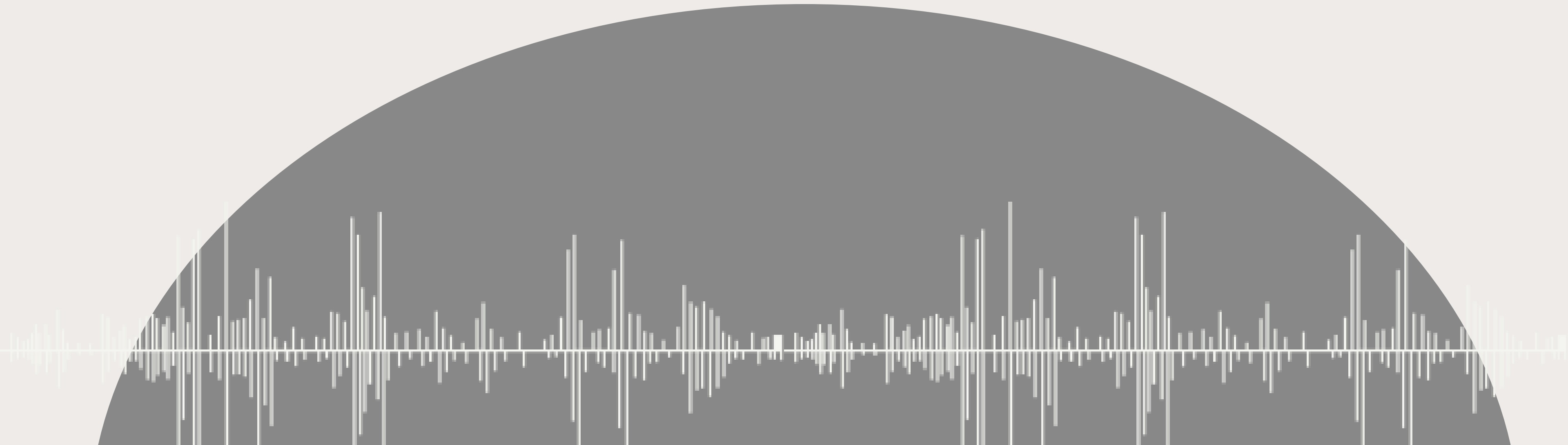
1. Listening must have a clear purpose and objective, developed in partnership with communities/participants.
2. Those being “listened to” must be actively involved in co-creating the system.
3. Listening should focus not only on needs but solutions.
4. Listening must include mechanisms to monitor both continuous and episodic hazards.
5. Listening efforts should avoid redundancy and duplication.

9 Key Principles when designing and implementing community listening initiative (Cont'd)

6. Listening efforts should be cross-disciplinary.
7. Listening efforts should prioritize interoperability.
8. Listening efforts should have stakeholder-driven feedback mechanisms
9. Established community listening efforts should contribute to a common listening system.



3. What would community-first, interconnected listening infrastructure look like?



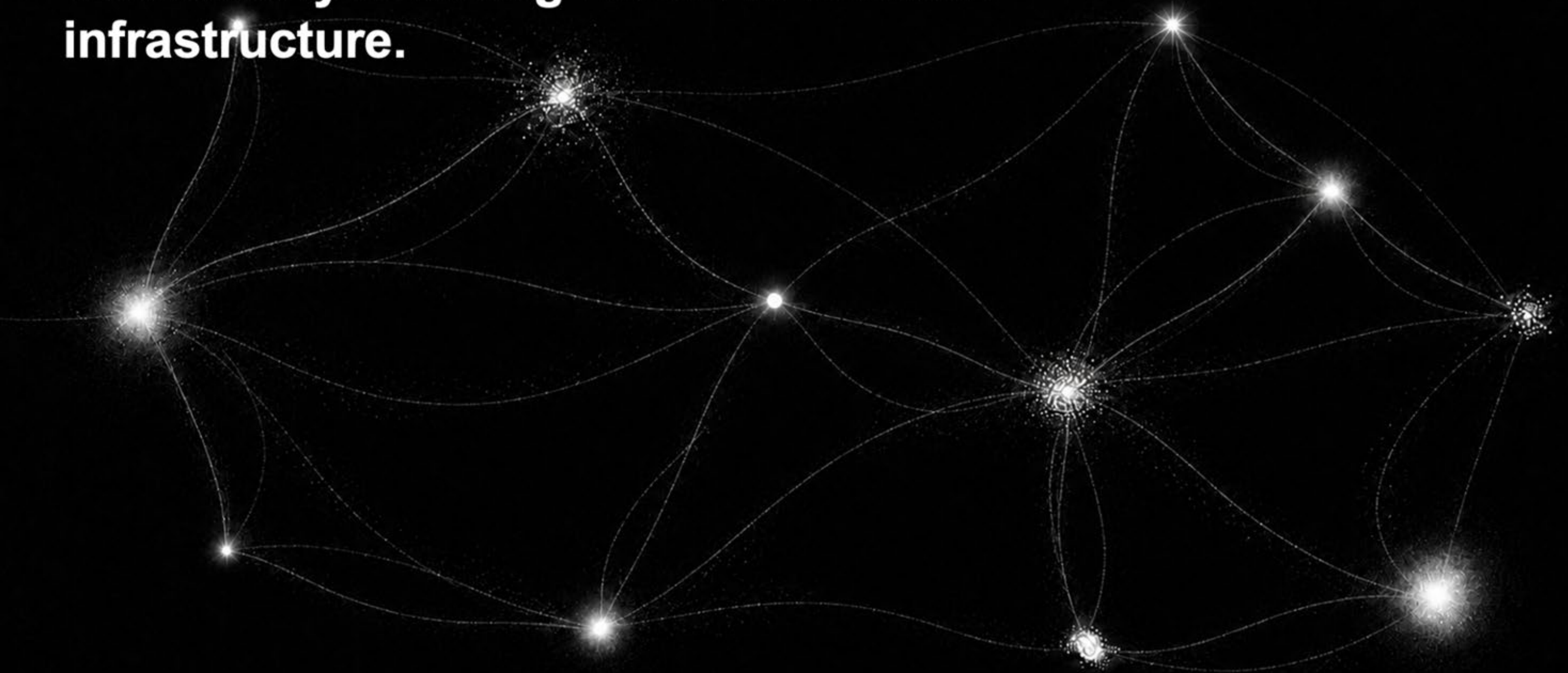
The challenge isn't that nobody is listening.



The challenge is that our listening isn't connected.



**Community listening needs to become
infrastructure.**



If we had foundational,
interconnected,
community-led listening
infrastructure, imagine
what might be different....





My Challenge To You

One

If you're currently leading a listening initiative that has no discernable outcome for the community itself, stop.



My Challenge To You

Two

If your community listening initiative is not connected to other initiatives, start thinking about ways to do that.



Some inspiration

Advocati
model for
informat

Received: 12 August 2024
Accepted: 17 April 2025
Published online: 16 June 2025
Check for updates

“Más Información”
An Information Needs Assessment
of Latino Immigrants

LISTENING POST
COLLECTIVE
a project of Internews

JOURNAL OF APPLIED COMMUNICATION RESEARCH
2026, VOL. 54, NO. 1, 117–129
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00909882.2025.257>



‘Can’t trust the fact-checkers’
approaches can strengthen
information ecosystems

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ABSTRACT

The United States is a diverse country with diverse information needs. Contemporary digital media environments fail to meet these needs, compounded by institutional and societal trends that disadvantage these dynamics. This article explores a partnership between the intergenerational We Are Más and Brown University School of Public Health work explores how historically marginalized communities in chaotic information spaces, including what information is available and how misleading content resonates. Anchored in co-centered frameworks, the article documents a pilot initiative supported trusted messengers in Spanish-speaking communities in Florida in co-creating and sharing quality information. Observations include that members of underserved communities often face significant barriers to accessing relevant, information. The authors offer key recommendations, highlighting the importance of social relationships, culturally competent storytelling, and community ownership in efforts to rebuild and strengthen local information infrastructures.

NEJM
Catalyst

IN DEPTH

Combating Misinformation as a Core Function
of Public Health

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Published January 18, 2024
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JMIR Public Health and Surveillance



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Published on 24.Oct.2024 in Vol 10 (2024)

Preprints (earlier versions) of this paper are available at <https://preprints.jmir.org/preprint/51909>, first published 18.Aug.2023.



Infodemics and Vaccine Confidence: Protocol for
Social Listening and Insight Generation to Inform
Action

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Cited by (4)

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Citation

Please cite as:

Kolis J, Brookmeyer K, Chuvileva Y, Voegeli C, Juma S, Ishizumi A, Renfro K, Wilhelm E, Tice H, Fogarty H, Kocer I, Helms J, Verma A
Infodemics and Vaccine Confidence: Protocol for Social Listening and Insight Generation to Inform Action
JMIR Public Health Surveill 2024;10:e51909
doi: [10.2196/51909](https://doi.org/10.2196/51909)
PMID: [39447166](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39447166/)
PMCID: [11544329](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11544329/)

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