

# A PUBLIC DELIBERATION ON PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

HOW CAN WE MAKE, SHAPE OR USE TECHNOLOGY TO ENSURE  
EVERYONE BENEFITS FROM PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA IN  
AN INCREASINGLY DIGITAL AND ONLINE WORLD?

A report by the Responsible Innovation Centre  
for Public Media Futures



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## DISCLAIMER

RIC was the commissioner, convenor and funder of the deliberation and is responsible for the report. The views expressed here are those of our participants and RIC, not the BBC. BBC R&D were the organisational partner and Elgon Social Research was the delivery partner. The participants were selected through a lottery in collaboration with the Sortition Foundation.

## ABOUT RIC

The Responsible Innovation Centre for Public Media Futures (RIC) is an independent research centre institutionally hosted by the BBC and funded by UKRI, a non-departmental public body that directs UK research and innovation funding. Find out more about RIC on the [website](#).

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# WHAT'S IN THE REPORT:

## FOREWORDS

Forewords from the RIC Director and the Chief Technical Advisor of BBC Research and Development (BBC R&D).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A summary presenting key insights across the four topic areas and implications for PSM leaders and policymakers.

## INTRODUCTION

An introduction to the deliberation, which sets the context and provides an overview of the deliberation, from who was involved through to the deliberation process.



## CHAPTERS 1-4

These chapters present the visions, priorities and recommendations from our mini-public in full, organised by topic. The chapters elaborate on participants' reasoning and conclude with an analysis by the RIC team, highlighting key points for PSM decision makers and policymakers to consider.

### CHAPTER 1: DIGITAL INCLUSION AND SAFETY ONLINE

### CHAPTER 2: CIVIC PARTICIPATION ONLINE

### CHAPTER 3: PERSONALISATION AND DISCOVERY

### CHAPTER 4: INFORMATION INTEGRITY, NEWS AND AI

## CHAPTER 5

Chapter 5 showcases the outputs from a set of creative activities undertaken by the deliberation participants focused on a future BBC.

## CHAPTER 6

Chapter 6 reflects on public deliberation as a way to involve audiences in public service media futures and reflects on what we learnt from them about their experiences.

## CHAPTER 7

Chapter 7 outlines seven overarching themes that emerged from the deliberation across the four topic areas.

## CHAPTER 8

Chapter 8 describes the implications of our deliberation for PSM and policymakers and the next steps regarding what will be done with the deliberation outcomes and insights.

## APPENDICES 1 AND 2

The appendices provide the Methodology - including details of the deliberation design, process, framing, recruitment and material creation - and outline the outputs in full.

- PSM leaders, policymakers, and researchers working on the specific topics covered by the deliberation will find chapters 1-4 particularly useful.
- Policymakers and regulators working on PSM in a digital age will find chapters 7 and 8 interesting, as they describe key themes and pull out implications.
- Public participation practitioners and others interested in deliberative research will find chapter 7 and the Methodology in the appendix useful, as they go into detail about the approach we took and what we learned about the value of public deliberation in this context.
- Participants, people and communities may be interested in what recommendations people generated in chapters 1-4, what they created in chapter 5, and their reflections in chapter 6.



**Rhianne Jones**  
Director of the Responsible  
Innovation Centre for Public  
Media Futures

## FOREWORD FROM RIC RESEARCH DIRECTOR

At the Responsible Innovation Centre for Public Media Futures (RIC) we know that public voices are vital to ensuring innovation in media technologies deliver the best outcomes for everyone. We want to equip public service media with the knowledge they need about people's changing expectations in a rapidly shifting landscape, and really bring the public into these conversations.

However, there are few spaces for people to come together to influence these debates and to guide responsible technology and innovation. So, we commissioned and delivered a first of its kind public deliberation bringing together 100 people reflective of the UK for over 30 hours, to do just this. They formed a deliberative mini-public.

It's a critical time for this work. We have new opportunities to find news and information and to learn and participate in society, but there are growing public concerns around mis- and dis-information, online safety and social fragmentation.

Our mini-public were clear that they want and expect public service media organisations to take a distinct values-led and people-centred approach to technology and innovation. We heard how technology had improved access and opened up a world of information for many, yet the social cost of these advances was broadly felt. We heard their concerns - rooted in personal experiences - about widening inequalities, developments in AI and the inherent challenges and risks as more services move online. These led to a clear call for action in several areas. For example, helping everyone, regardless of background, skills, age and access to technology, to participate and navigate the online world was a non-negotiable, with strong support for developing safer spaces that prioritise healthier and more inclusive ways for people to get involved.

People's expectations of what it means for PSM to deliver for audiences in today's online world are clearly changing. In reading this report, I invite you to reflect on what is required to create the conditions to meet these changed needs, and what actions each of us can take to help get there.



**Antonia Kerle**  
Chief Technical  
Advisor, BBC Research  
and Development  
(BBC R&D)

## FOREWORD FROM BBC R&D CHIEF TECHNICAL ADVISOR

BBC R&D has been driving forward innovation within broadcasting and public service media for over ninety years. My section hosts the Responsible Innovation Centre, which is funded through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and manages an independent programme of research of which this deliberation is a key part.

This, a first of its kind deliberation, offers us an important way to bring audiences more directly into dialogue and decisions around technology and innovation at the BBC.

As we evaluate the results I see two separate strands. First, there is the evidence that deliberations of this kind are effective. Second, there are the recommendations for how public service media organisations like the BBC should address the challenges that emerging technologies present.

For the first, it is clear that the process was a success and that the hundred or so participants engaged seriously and effectively with the questions posed so that we now have robust evidence about how a representative sample of the UK population think about PSM should respond in fast changing digital world and how it should develop. We can trust the process, and other (PSM) organisations can now feel confident that this method of public deliberation can work. I hope that we will see it being adopted more widely.

Second, we now have solid evidence for what the people who make up our audiences actually want from organisations like the BBC in the future, from safer digital spaces to sound educational programmes. They believe we should promote responsible AI, invest in technologies to help tackle mis and dis information, be open about our algorithms, and provide impartial and accessible material on digital platforms, and a lot more. All of which we will be reviewing and using to inform our work.

Lastly, I want to thank Dr Rhianne Jones and the RIC team for the enormous effort they put into this deliberation, along with their delivery partners Elgon Social Research and all who took part in this process. They have made a significant contribution to the wider debate about how we can ensure that everyone benefits from public service media in an increasingly digital and online world.

# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTICIPANTS



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Rashmi G  
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Our organisational partner:** the BBC

**RIC host** - BBC Research and Development: Antonia Kerle, Bill Thompson, Jatin Aythora with special thanks to the BBC R&D Advisory team and Blue Room and BBC subject matter experts

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**Elgon facilitating team:** Tia Butler, Suzannah Lansdell, Dr Dee Goddard, Dr Lipi Begum, Sreeja Daliparthy, Dr Itzelle Medina, Alice Haywood, Katie Spittle, Sonal Malkan, Dr Hadley Beresford, Jeffrey Kotei, Janet Biggar, Jesi Carson, Jacqueline Lim, Mariana Silva, Emily Rempel

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**Independent Advisory Board:** Catherine Johnson, Professor of Media and Communication, University of Leeds; Maggie Philbin, CEO and Co-Founder, TeenTech; Octavia Field Reid, Associate Director (Public Participation & Research Practice), Ada Lovelace Institute; Sara Wajid, Co-CEO, Birmingham Museums Trust; Shirish Kulkarni, News Innovation Research Fellow, University of Cardiff; Simeon Yates, Professor of Digital Culture, University of Liverpool; Adrian Woolard, Director of Technology at CoSTAR National Lab.

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**BBC Blue Room speakers:** Natasha Meloy, Colin Warhurst, Richard Robbins, James Hand

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**Special mentions:** Ann-Marie Yiannacou, Stephen Crone and Amna Smith.

**BBC MediaCity Events and Operations Team and stewards:** Megan Gudgeon, Niraj Arora, Mia Unsworth Kim Chau

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## THE DELIBERATION

The Responsible Innovation Centre (RIC) deliberation on public service media, technology and innovation ran throughout April and May 2026. It asked:

**“HOW CAN WE MAKE, SHAPE OR USE TECHNOLOGY TO ENSURE THAT EVERYONE BENEFITS FROM PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA IN AN INCREASINGLY DIGITAL AND ONLINE WORLD?”**

It brought together 100<sup>1</sup> members of the public from across the UK via a civic lottery and gave them the opportunity to learn about and deliberate on the key challenges facing public service media (PSM) and their audiences in a rapidly changing technology landscape.

The discussion was grouped around digital inclusion and online safety, civic participation online, personalisation and discovery, and information integrity, news and AI. This ‘mini-public’<sup>2</sup> developed visions and priorities to reflect what they felt was important for PSM in each of these areas and produced a set of recommendations for action they felt would ensure good outcomes for people, PSM, and society in the future.

## WHAT WERE THE OUTCOMES?

Our mini-public generated:

**4 VISIONS**  
**12 PRIORITIES**  
**55 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Taken together, these four visions, twelve priorities and fifty-five recommendations provide a clear view of where our mini-public believe technology can be made, shaped or used to ensure that public service media develop in ways that benefit the whole public. We present these in their own words in the report, followed by the RIC team’s perspective on the significance of what emerged.

## WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Responsible  
Innovation  
Centre

**The Responsible Innovation Centre for Public Media Futures (RIC)** was the convenor of the deliberation, responsible for commissioning it, preparing outputs including this report, and for ensuring decision makers engage with the outputs.

**B B C R&D**

**The BBC** was the organisational partner for the RIC deliberation. BBC experts helped identify key challenges for PSM, which informed the framing of the deliberation and the summit event was hosted by the BBC.

elgon  
social  
research

**Elgon Social Research** worked with the Sortition Foundation to bring a representative sample of the UK population together and then acted as the delivery partner for all elements of the deliberation.

**An Independent Advisory Board and Youth Advisory Group** provided expert input on the deliberation design and content.

**Over one hundred people** brought their personal expertise and lived experiences to the process and worked collectively as a group to deliver the final outcomes.

## WHAT DID THEY DO?

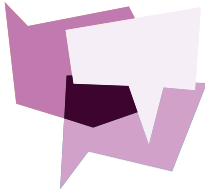
The deliberation began with five three-hour online workshops aimed at building participants’ knowledge and understanding, involving expert talks and Q&A, deliberative discussion, and the sharing of their personal experiences, accompanied by group exercises to build capacity for collective decision-making.

It concluded with a two day in-person summit at MediaCity, Salford, during which participants were tasked with creating and ratifying vision statements, priorities and recommendations for public service media across four topic areas.



1. 106 began the process and 93 participants attended the summit

2. The term mini-public is used when the group of people brought together are chosen by civic lottery (sortition) to represent a wider population



# IN THEIR OWN WORDS: VISIONS AND PRIORITIES



## DIGITAL INCLUSION AND ONLINE SAFETY

"Public service media that is inclusive and universally enjoyed in an internet first future is accessible, affordable and easy to use. PSM should work with society, government, and technology providers to support communities with continuous education for all, access, and a safe and nurturing environment to ensure no one gets left behind."



## CIVIC PARTICIPATION ONLINE

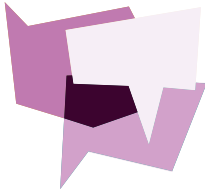
"Public service media that helps people participate in civic life online supports people to connect across diverse and intergenerational communities, by providing accessible, trustworthy information and encouraging people to take part in respectful discussion on digital platforms."

- Become a trusted source of educational resources programming, information and content that supports digital inclusion across society
- Working with governing bodies and regulators to support digital inclusion, online safety and accessibility.
- Ensuring affordable and budget friendly technology options



- Create safer digital spaces for public dialogue, governed by public service values to enable diverse engagement, bringing together local and national communities
- Ensure a baseline of trust on digital platforms through impartiality, inclusion and accessibility to enable full participation
- Work to ensure accurate information in online public spaces to help prevent misinformation





# IN THEIR OWN WORDS: VISIONS AND PRIORITIES



## PERSONALISATION AND DISCOVERY

"Public service media that helps balance individual and shared experiences is one that leads the way in delivering human-centred approaches to personalisation, equipping everyone to make informed choices, have easy ways to control their data and chosen levels of personalisation, and with content that brings different people together through local and national events."



## INFORMATION INTEGRITY, NEWS AND AI

"Public service media that fosters public trust in news and media in the age of AI is the first choice for finding verified journalism and information and leads by example in responsible use of AI nationally and worldwide in alignment with public service values, providing accessible tools that educate and empower people for a healthy collective experience."

- Set industry standards (e.g. ethical and transparent) as a benchmark for commercial organisations
- Build enhanced user controls over algorithmic recommendations
- Provide educational resources to help build people's trust and understanding of personalisation



- Fulfil a duty to promote responsible use of AI, including through their own work and collaborating with others
- PSM work together to develop understandable AI verification tools for the public
- Advocate for stricter regulation around AI that puts the public and accuracy at the forefront, for example a new regulatory body



## KEY MESSAGES

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When the RIC team listened to the discussions and debate over the summit weekend, we identified overarching themes that underpinned what our mini-public was saying. We present these here along with RIC's perspective on the implications.

- **PEOPLE WANT A STRONGER VOICE IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA**
- **PEOPLE WANT PSM TO PLAY A DISTINCT ROLE IN SHAPING TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST**
- **PEOPLE EXPECT PSM TO TAKE A BROAD APPROACH TO DIGITAL INCLUSION, HELPING EVERYONE PARTICIPATE IN DIGITAL LIFE**
- **PEOPLE WANT PSM TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND PRACTICAL TOOLS SO THEY CAN FEEL EMPOWERED TO NAVIGATE DIGITAL LIFE FOR THEMSELVES**
- **PEOPLE WANT POSITIVE, SAFER DIGITAL SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND PARTICIPATION – IN PARTICULAR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**
- **PEOPLE WANT PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TO TACKLE DIGITAL INCLUSION, ONLINE CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBLE AI**
- **PEOPLE WANT POLICYMAKERS TO TAKE STRONGER ACTION TO IMPROVE THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT AND CONDITIONS FOR PSM**

### PEOPLE WANT A STRONGER VOICE IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA

Participants highly valued the opportunity to contribute to the deliberation and wanted more forums for the public to be more directly involved in PSM. During the process our participants significantly developed their knowledge and perceptions of PSM leading to a greater appreciation of its role and their personal connection with it. We therefore recommend that PSM organisations invest in public deliberation and participation methods as a means of building trust and connections with their audience.

### PEOPLE WANT PSM TO PLAY A DISTINCT ROLE IN SHAPING TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Participants appreciated PSM's unique mission, values and standards and wanted to see this shape their approaches to technology. There is an opportunity for PSM to take a more proactive role in technology and innovation, developing digital services and partnerships that reflect public service values while contributing to a healthier and more inclusive digital environment.

### PEOPLE EXPECT PSM TO TAKE A BROAD APPROACH TO DIGITAL INCLUSION, HELPING EVERYONE PARTICIPATE IN DIGITAL LIFE

This includes convening organisations and initiatives to create a more joined-up and navigable system, and prioritising vulnerable groups so that nobody is left behind. This provides an argument for PSM to take a holistic approach to digital inclusion, working in partnership with others and looking beyond IPTV transition to renew its commitment to universality and inclusion.

### PEOPLE WANT PSM TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND PRACTICAL TOOLS SO THEY CAN FEEL EMPOWERED TO NAVIGATE DIGITAL LIFE FOR THEMSELVES

They want support to make sense of what they encounter online and see an important role for PSM as a trusted provider of digital education and literacy. We therefore recommend that PSM strengthen their collective contribution to media literacy to support people of all ages in navigating the online world.

### PEOPLE WANT POSITIVE, SAFER DIGITAL SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND PARTICIPATION – IN PARTICULAR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

There was clear dissatisfaction and concern from participants about some of the negative social impacts of current online platforms, such as misinformation, scams, bullying and child protection. To counter this PSM should invest more in participation and pro-social spaces on their platforms, ensuring more opportunities for the public to engage in civic life and dialogue. This could include safe and positive digital spaces for younger audiences, designed in partnership with them.

### PEOPLE WANT PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TO TACKLE DIGITAL INCLUSION, ONLINE CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBLE AI

However, they wanted PSM to be selective about who they partner with, preferring trusted public interest organisations to commercial technology companies. It is clear that PSM must ensure that public trust is central to their decisions about collaboration.

### PEOPLE WANT POLICYMAKERS TO TAKE STRONGER ACTION TO IMPROVE THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT AND CONDITIONS FOR PSM

For our participants this meant stronger policy, regulation and co-ordination in key areas including digital inclusion, social media, supporting the development and responsible use of AI, ensuring access to reliable and verified information and news, and maintaining the visibility of public service content across non-PSM platforms. We recommend that policymakers strengthen their role in shaping a healthier online landscape through coordinated policy and regulatory action. Policymakers should also ensure that PSM have sufficient funding and resources and an appropriate mandate to invest in technology and innovation in the public interest.

We believe that taken as a whole the outcome of the process clearly demonstrates that involving the public through deliberative methods has significant benefits for both participants and public service media. The deliberation offers a successful model of how to bring the public into plans and decisions about the future of PSM and an example of how public participation can support responsible innovation and development of technology to ensure socially beneficial outcomes.

# INTRODUCTION: ABOUT THIS DELIBERATION

## WHY LOOK AT PSM, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION NOW?

We begin from the belief that a healthy media system is essential for a functioning democracy and that providing culturally relevant content and reliable facts and information to help build shared understanding and inform attitudes to social issues, helping people to understand and trust one another, is vital to sustain democracy<sup>3</sup>.

In the last two decades the way we access and engage with media and the world around us has radically changed<sup>4</sup>. Today's online media environment offers more opportunities to find information, learn, interact with one another, and participate in society, but there are also growing concerns around mis- and disinformation, online safety and social fragmentation to name but a few. Public Service Media (PSM) in the UK clearly need to evolve to meet societal and audience needs in this changed world, but with funding declining in real terms they face financial challenges as they look to restructure and renew for the digital age. Public views about the role public service media could and should play in our digital futures are now more important than ever and can help guide how limited resources are deployed.

In the UK, PSM organisations like the BBC and Channel 4 aim to serve audiences by creating news, entertainment, and educational content in the public interest. But fierce competition from purely commercial media and a rapidly changing technology landscape make it harder than ever to reach this goal. Once operating with a traditional broadcast model, PSM now exist in a converged digital ecosystem dominated by big global technology companies like Google, Amazon, Apple, and Meta, streaming services such as Disney+ and Netflix, and video sharing and social media platforms like YouTube and TikTok.

As media services move online and the number of platforms and devices available to us expands, media content, news, and information are more accessible than ever before. Stories from a greater number of voices can be told and amplified. But this opportunity also allows the spread of false and malicious information. The intensification of personalisation on platforms helps people discover personally relevant content but can lead to diminished common understanding and reference points, can disrupt shared views of the world, and foster antagonistic relationships between groups of people who see themselves on different sides. These negative outcomes are counter to the community-building and shared identity PSM seeks to encourage. The emergence of generative AI is further accelerating and exacerbating these trends.

With increasing recognition of the impacts on people's lives and risks to democratic resilience as a country, comes a growing urgency to address these challenges. We find ourselves at a pivotal moment in media and technology policymaking in the UK, as existing laws and policy frameworks are being updated. The opportunities for change are growing; from the Media Act in 2024<sup>5</sup>, which was the biggest change to media legislation in 20 years, to the Watch This Space Green Paper<sup>6</sup> which sets a new strategic direction for media policy, and the topics under discussion for the upcoming Royal Charter review about a future BBC<sup>7</sup>. It is therefore vital and urgent that that the views of the public are heard as PSM and policymakers actively engage in shaping the media landscape for years to come. With their commitment to serve everyone in society and to innovate, questions about how PSM can use and shape technology are critical.

## NEW WAYS TO INVOLVE THE PUBLIC

As institutions have sought to bring public voices into decision-making, they have experimented with varied approaches to public participation, from large-scale citizen assemblies on global topics such as the climate crisis through to focused initiatives to solve local challenges such as the Birmingham Museums Citizens' Jury. These are all different models of deliberative engagement, designed to tackle complex problems such as how best to use technology and direct innovation towards socially beneficial outcomes.

PSM have a remit to create value for everyone and through this, a social contract with the public and the BBC has a role in developing technology and innovating in the public interest<sup>8</sup>. Yet up to this point there have been few opportunities for the public to deliberate about PSM as a shared concern<sup>9</sup> and little evidence on how deliberative methods might be used to explore complex questions about society's relationship with technology.

For PSM, public deliberation presents a unique opportunity to involve members of the public in plans and decisions about the future, strengthen credibility and legitimacy in decision making, improve organisational problem-solving capabilities and build public trust. It is also an essential component of responsible technology and innovation as a way to align technology with public expectations and values to maximise socially beneficial outcomes in the future.

With this context in mind, the Responsible Innovation Centre for Public Media Futures (RIC) convened a public deliberation on technology, innovation and public service media, with the BBC as a supporting organisational partner. This deliberation serves as a model and example of how similar exercises could be used by PSM to strengthen public participation and accountability.

<sup>3</sup>. Farrell, C. & James, L. (2025) The role of the media in democracies: what is it and why does it matter? Briefing. The Constitution Unit, UCL.

<sup>4</sup>. Ofcom, (2025) Adults' Media Lives Wave 2025 :20.

<sup>5</sup>. HMG, (2024) Media Act 2024.

<sup>6</sup>. Department for Culture, Media & Sport, (2026) Watch this space: a new strategic direction for UK media - green paper and public consultation.

<sup>7</sup>. Department for Culture, Media & Sport, (2025) Britain's Story: The Next Chapter - the BBC Royal Charter Review, Green Paper and public consultation.

<sup>8</sup>. BBC Framework Agreement, Clause 65. In: An Agreement Between Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and the British Broadcasting Corporation (Cm 9366). December 2016.

<sup>9</sup>. Moss, G., & Edwards, L. (2025). Public deliberation and the justification of public service media. International Journal of Cultural Policy, 337–322 ,(3)31.

## ABOUT THIS DELIBERATION

The RIC public deliberation was the first of its kind, bringing together 100 members of the public from across the UK to deliberate on technology and innovation and the future of public service media. It was delivered in partnership with the BBC and ran throughout April and May 2026, culminating in a two-day summit at the BBC in Salford. It asked:

### HOW CAN WE MAKE, SHAPE OR USE TECHNOLOGY TO ENSURE EVERYONE BENEFITS FROM PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA IN AN INCREASINGLY DIGITAL AND ONLINE WORLD?

To answer this remit question, our ‘mini-public’ learnt and deliberated about the changing technology landscape and key challenges facing PSM and their audiences. Participants were asked to create vision statements and priorities that captured what they collectively felt was important and wanted PSM to focus on in the future, and to develop recommendations for actions that could be taken to ensure good outcomes for people and for PSM.

The deliberation was focused around four topics that together addressed the core question. The topics and rationale for including them were:

#### **DIGITAL INCLUSION AND SAFETY ONLINE<sup>10</sup>:**

As more essential services move online, ensuring people can engage in the online world safely and confidently is of critical importance. The move towards internet first TV represents challenges and opportunities for PSM, as new technologies can support and disrupt inclusion and universality.

#### **CIVIC PARTICIPATION ONLINE<sup>11</sup>:**

Technological shifts are transforming our social, civic and political lives, creating a turbulent democratic landscape. People increasingly access and debate information on social media platforms designed to capture attention rather than serve the public interest. What role PSM can play supporting civic engagement online is a live question that would benefit from greater public input.

#### **PERSONALISATION AND DISCOVERY<sup>12</sup>:**

Broadcasting is at a turning point: from recommender systems to AI assistants, technology can now deliver hyper-personalised media experiences at scale, transforming how audiences discover and consume content and putting PSM under pressure to adapt. However, personalisation also brings dilemmas for PSM, which means understanding public views is critical.

#### **INFORMATION INTEGRITY, NEWS AND AI<sup>13</sup>:**

Developments in AI have led to systemic changes to information discovery that many consider existential for PSM and news publishers, which are having to reorganise and retool amid great uncertainty and under significant pressure. If they are to mobilise AI responsibly and foster a healthy information ecosystem in a society transformed by AI, it will be vital that public voices are central to these debates.



## OUR APPROACH

The deliberation process was designed around two core deliberative functions: capacity building in the early sessions, enabling participants to engage with complex material from an informed position; and co-production and ratification of recommendations in the later sessions. The approach also blended deliberation with futures thinking through future scenarios deployed in online workshops and creative design activities at the summit.

The deliberation was advisory in nature, which means the recommendations generated are put forward on an advisory basis for the BBC and other PSM to consider. While much of the current discourse surrounding PSM focuses on funding and editorial decisions, these topics were specifically out of scope.

In this report, we present participants' outcomes – their visions, priorities and recommendations – exactly as they were collectively agreed. We then supplement this with sections of analysis from the RIC team, which draw out what we saw as important elements of participants' discussion and reasoning, and our perspective on the implications for PSM.

<sup>10</sup>. Massey, Joe. "Digital Inclusive Futures for Public Service Media and their Audiences: A Critical Research Agenda." (2025) The Responsible Innovation Centre for Public Media Futures.

<sup>11</sup>. Knight, Sophia. "Public Service Media and Democracy in the Digital Age: A Critical Research Agenda." (2025) The Responsible Innovation Centre for Public Media Futures.

<sup>12</sup>. Jay, Helen. "Public Service Media in an Age of Personalisation: A Critical Research Agenda." (2025) The Responsible Innovation Centre for Public Media Futures.

<sup>13</sup>. Jones, Bronwyn. "Responsible AI and Public Service Journalism: A Critical Research Agenda." (2025) The Responsible Innovation Centre for Public Media Futures.

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

**The Responsible Innovation Centre (RIC)** was the convenor of the deliberation. It was responsible for commissioning the deliberation and is responsible for ensuring decision makers engage with the outputs. RIC established the governance structure and led on the design of the process and oversight of all content and materials used in the deliberation and on-site event management. The RIC team were responsible for analysis and write-up of the outcomes.

**The BBC** was the organisational partner for the RIC deliberation. It is interested in the merits of deliberation as a form of public participation and has the oldest and largest research and development capability among UK public service broadcasters, with a long history of technology and innovation and an ongoing remit to research and develop technologies in support of its public mission. The BBC contributed its expertise to help identify key challenges for PSM, which informed the framing of the deliberation. BBC representatives contributed their expertise in the deliberation itself, delivering talks and demonstrations and were observers at the summit.

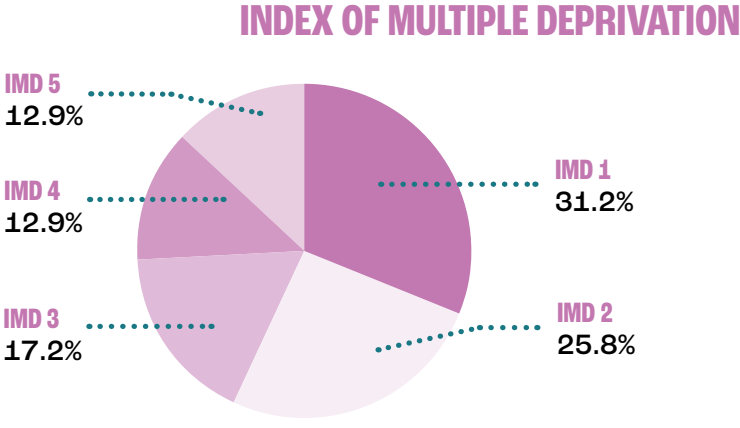
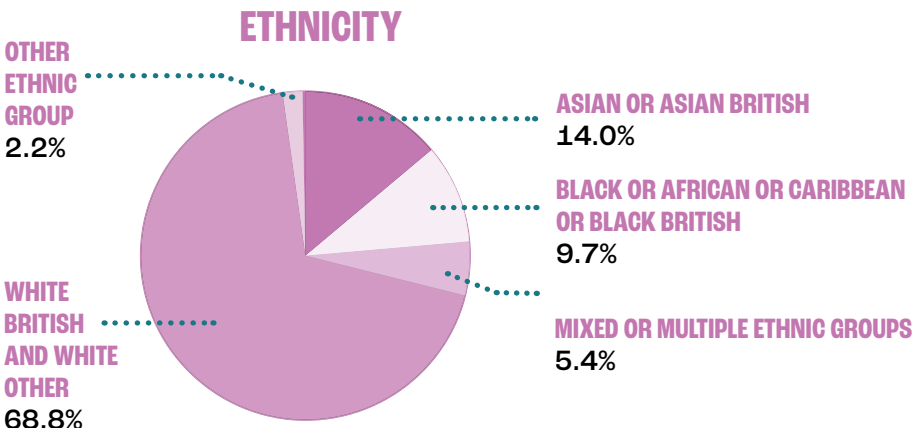
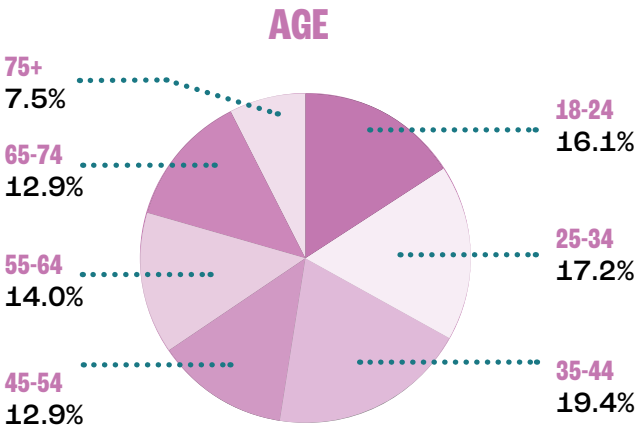
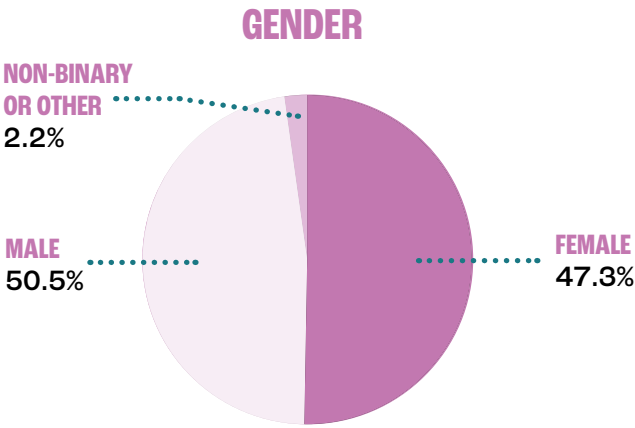
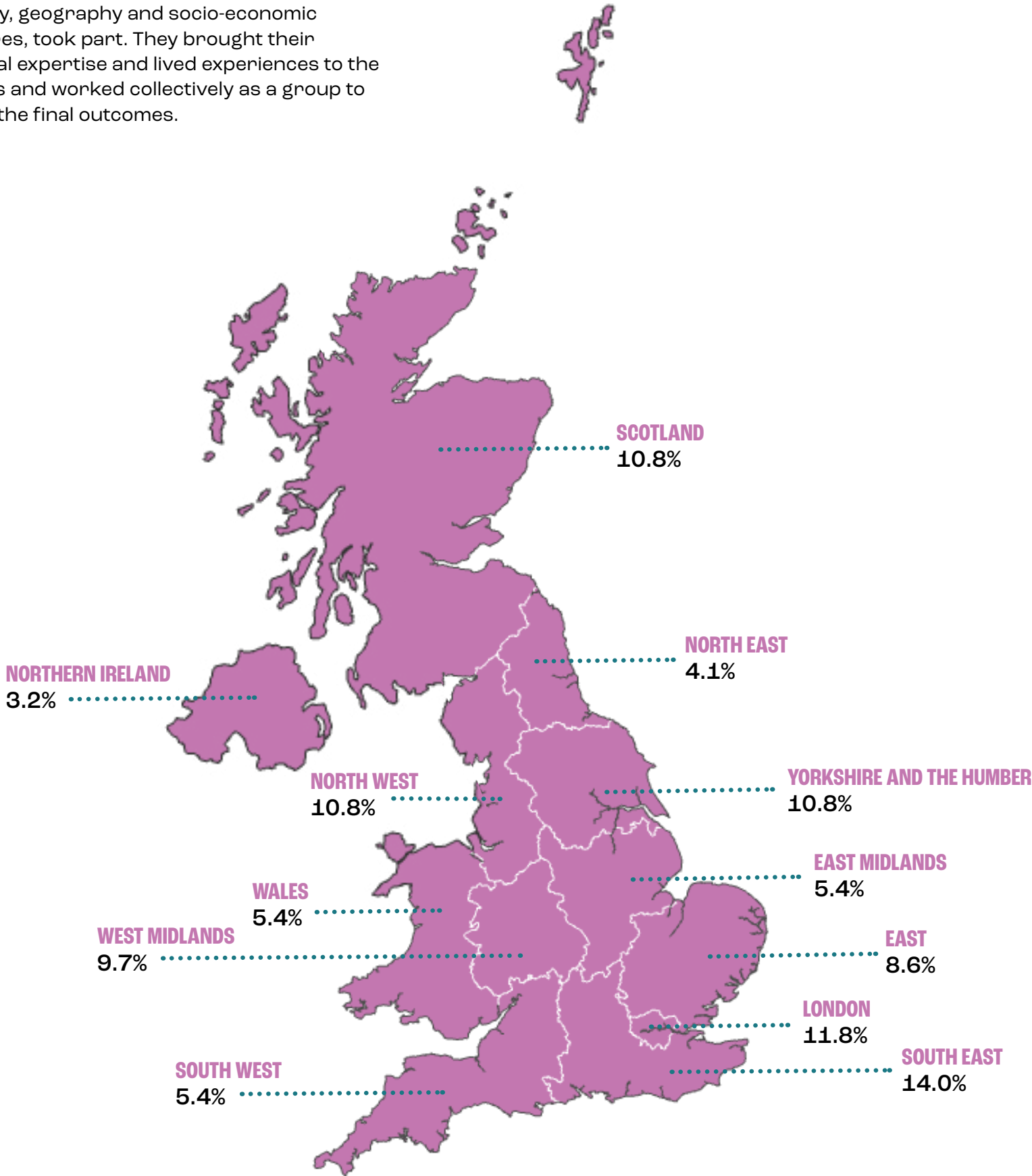
**Elgon Social Research** was the deliberation delivery partner. Elgon advised on best practice, co-shaped the approach taken and was responsible for participant recruitment. It worked with the Sortition Foundation, which ran a civic lottery to bring a representative sample of the UK population together. Elgon led on the organisation and facilitation of the online workshops, facilitation during the summit, and ensuring participations were fully supported throughout the process.

**An Independent Advisory Board and RIC Youth Advisory Group** were set up to provide input throughout the deliberation. The independent advisory board was comprised of eight professionals with expertise in the topics covered by the deliberation and in participatory research. The Youth Advisory Group included seven young people aged 16-24 from across the UK who brought prior experience working on youth participation projects.



ONE HUNDRED PEOPLE FROM  
ACROSS THE UK

One hundred people, who were broadly reflective of the UK in terms of gender, ethnicity, geography and socio-economic measures, took part. They brought their personal expertise and lived experiences to the process and worked collectively as a group to deliver the final outcomes.



## WHAT WERE PARTICIPANTS ASKED TO CONSIDER?

The central remit question for the deliberation was:

**HOW SHOULD WE MAKE, SHAPE OR USE TECHNOLOGY TO ENSURE EVERYONE BENEFITS FROM PSM IN AN INCREASINGLY DIGITAL AND ONLINE WORLD?**

Four sub-questions that are linked to the deliberation's four topic areas guided the online workshops and summit:

-  **HOW COULD PSM ENSURE EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT FROM THEIR ONLINE SERVICES AND CONFIDENTLY AND SAFELY ENGAGE ONLINE?**
-  **WHAT ROLE COULD PSM PLAY IN SUPPORTING HEALTHY ONLINE CIVIC SPACES SO EVERYONE CAN PLAY A FULL PART IN A DIGITAL SOCIETY?**
-  **WHAT ROLE COULD PSM PLAY IN HELPING TO ENSURE A BALANCE BETWEEN PERSONALISED CONTENT AND SHARED EXPERIENCES ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS?**
-  **WHAT COULD PSM DO TO HELP BUILD A TRUSTWORTHY NEWS AND INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT ONLINE?**



## HOW DID RIC DECIDE ON THIS REMIT QUESTION AND SCOPE?

In order to decide on this remit question, the RIC team of researchers mapped current debates and issues relating to PSM, technology, and innovation, alongside what is already known about public views on these issues. Over six months, they engaged with experts and decisions makers with three criteria in mind: known areas of public concern; live policy debates; and PSM industry priorities - with a particular focus on the BBC due to its central position in the UK PSM landscape and role as organisational partner for the deliberation. The team took care to ensure the questions and topics connected to people's experiences and everyday lives.



## WHAT DID PARTICIPANTS DO?

Our mini-public deliberated for over 30 hours over five online workshops and a two day in-person summit at BBC buildings in Salford, supported by a team of trained facilitators. An overview of the process can be found below.



### WORKSHOPS:

The workshops took place over a period of three weeks to allow time for learning, discussion and reflection. They were designed to build capacity and inform participants about PSM and technology, focusing on each of the four themes in turn, and to hear participants' views about them. Each workshop was three hours long and included expert talks and Q&A, lived experience sessions and group exercises focused on the group beginning to discuss and deliberate on technology and innovation priorities. In advance, participants received a bespoke companion booklet with dedicated chapters on each topic and resources to support their engagement, including short explainer videos for each topic, and links to further reading, listening and viewing.

### SUMMIT:

The deliberation culminated in an in-person summit bringing participants together to respond to the remit question by developing a collective set of Vision statements, Priorities and Recommendations for the four themes. **For further detail about the process and methodology, see Appendix 1.**

### SUMMIT DAY 1

Generating visions, priorities & recommendations in groups (n=12)

**VISION STATEMENTS:** Each group worked on a vision statement for their topic, which was a concise and outcome focused description of what they want from and for PSM in three to five years time. These were combined into an overarching vision statement for each topic, which was ratified in plenary.

**PRIORITIES:** Each group then worked on developing up to three priorities that would help them to achieve their visions, following guidance that these should be urgent, important, make a big difference to a lot of people, and could be done in the next three-five years. These priorities were combined into a long list which was then taken into plenary for voting to identify the top three priorities for each topic area. A total of 12 priorities were taken forward.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Each group was given one priority and tasked with creating an initial set of up to three recommendations, following guidance that a recommendation should relate to practical actions, ideas, or interventions that PSM should take in the next 3-5 years to help move towards the visions and priorities. Once created, these recommendations were further developed by other groups. A total of 55 recommendations were delivered at the end of day 1.

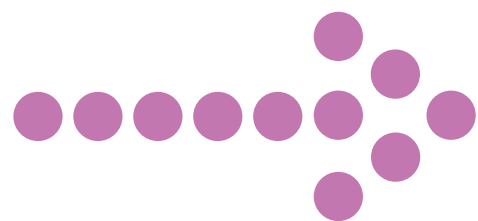
### SUMMIT DAY 2

Group review and voting in plenary

**REVIEW AND RATIFICATION:** The full list of recommendations was reviewed, amended and ratified by the entire group. Each recommendation was reviewed, discussed, amendments or objections noted and voted on. Taken together, the four visions, twelve priorities and 55 recommendations across the four topic areas provide a clear view of where our mini-public believe technology can be made, shaped or used to ensure everyone benefits from PSM in the future.

**CREATIVE WORK AND A FOCUS ON THE BBC:** Day two concluded with a creative session working on personal messages and collective visions for a future BBC, building on the deliberation process and outcomes. Participants wrote personalised messages to the BBC on postcards about how it could make, shape or use technology to ensure everyone benefits in the future and then, using craft materials, created visions of a BBC they wanted to see. Participants shared their creations in a 'Gallery of a Future BBC', where everyone was invited to explore each other's objects and ideas.

# VISIONS, PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Chapters 1-4 are organised around the four key topics our mini-public considered.

 **DIGITAL INCLUSION AND ONLINE SAFETY**

 **CIVIC PARTICIPATION ONLINE**

 **PERSONALISATION AND DISCOVERY**

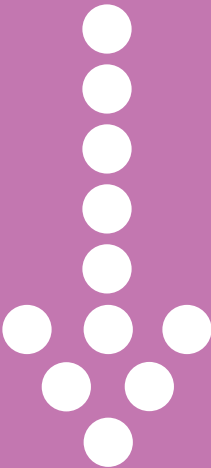
 **INFORMATION INTEGRITY, NEWS AND AI**

Each chapter presents the collective **Vision Statement**, the top three **Priorities** and the ratified **Recommendations**.

The recommendations for each priority are displayed and ranked by the support they received during the final vote, from highest to lowest. The full voting record is in Appendix 2.

They are followed by an account of the discussions that led to these outcomes - offering people’s reasoning supporting their viewpoints and positions, and highlighting areas of consensus or divergence and debate.

Each chapter concludes with a short section that offers a RIC perspective on the outcomes of deliberation in that topic area, linking them to wider discussions about technology, society and policy.



# 1.

# DIGITAL INCLUSION AND ONLINE SAFETY

HOW COULD PSM ENSURE EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT FROM THEIR ONLINE SERVICES AND CONFIDENTLY AND SAFELY ENGAGE ONLINE?



## VISION STATEMENT:



**“Public service media that is inclusive and universally enjoyed in an internet first future is accessible, affordable and easy to use. PSM should work with society, government, and technology providers to support communities with continuous education for all, access, and a safe and nurturing environment to ensure no one gets left behind”**

## PRIORITIES:

# 1

**BECOME A TRUSTED SOURCE OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES PROGRAMMING, INFORMATION AND CONTENT THAT SUPPORTS DIGITAL INCLUSION ACROSS SOCIETY**

# 2

**WORKING WITH GOVERNING BODIES AND REGULATORS TO SUPPORT DIGITAL INCLUSION, ONLINE SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

# 3

**ENSURING AFFORDABLE AND BUDGET FRIENDLY TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS**

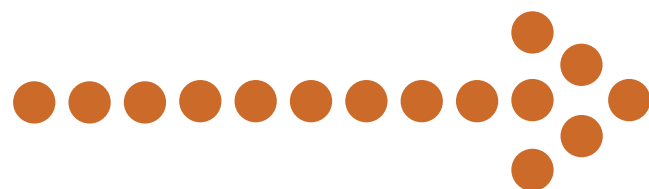
## WHAT EMERGED AS IMPORTANT:

Our mini-public's vision statement captures participants' desire for PSM to be inclusive and accessible to everyone, for it to provide continuous education to help raise digital confidence and skills for all, while also laying emphasis on the need to work collaboratively with government and industry to help support digital inclusion and online safety. This last point reflects a strong theme from across the deliberation that providing a more positive online environment was not solely PSM's problem to solve alone, but that they wanted to see PSM play a role in collaboration with others.

The three priorities that received the most votes from participants were providing clear support for PSM as a trusted source of educational resources, that it should work with partners to support digital inclusion and online safety and that they should help facilitate affordable technology options. Other priorities which received support but were not in the top three included accessible delivery formats and providing training to local communities. Providing user-friendly technology received the lowest vote count of the priorities, which was in part explained by the expectation that this should be a necessary part of the process of developing products and technologies.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The full lists of recommendations for each priority are displayed ranked by the support they received during the final vote, from highest to lowest. Each set of recommendations is supported by wider context, explaining the participants' reasoning and how they came to an agreement. **The full voting record is in Appendix 2.**



## PRIORITY 1: BECOME A TRUSTED SOURCE OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES, PROGRAMMING, INFORMATION AND CONTENT THAT SUPPORTS DIGITAL INCLUSION ACROSS SOCIETY

**1.1** Actively engage with communities to educate and inform about technology and innovation through schools, councils and community groups

**1.2** Research and collaborate with European PSM partners to understand what's been successful in tackling digital exclusion

**1.3** Set the standard for all online educational resources through extensive collaboration with libraries and universities on accreditation

**1.4** Invest in local community groups to educate how to navigate the online world safely across society

**1.5** Create learning content indicating clear levels so all can achieve the minimum level through tailored modules ensuring no one is left behind

**1.6** Develop and/or provide hardware devices to enable digital access and education for those currently excluded, potentially including internet access across society

Throughout the process there was a strong expectation that PSM should play a much more prominent role as a provider of education about technology, not just for children but for adults at all stages of life. While existing offers such as BBC Bitesize are highly valued by participants, they are seen as too narrow in scope and insufficient for the scale of the challenge.

Participants highlighted a need for practical, everyday education focused on key topics in the digital world like online safety, scams, data use, and how digital systems work. Crucially, the issue is not just the availability of resources but how they are delivered. Many people felt that those who would benefit most from this support are not actively seeking out online learning tools, meaning that purely digital provision risks missing key audiences. Instead, participants emphasised the importance of delivering education through multiple means, leaning on the mass-reach, familiar channels such as television and radio, to integrating guidance into everyday content, as well as meeting people where they are in the community. Participants felt PSM's role should expand, to become a continuous, society-wide educator, helping people keep pace with a rapidly changing digital environment.

Participants consistently framed PSM as a uniquely trusted and independent actor within an increasingly confusing, commercial and risky online world. In contrast to profit-driven platforms, which are perceived to prioritise revenue and engagement, participants expect PSM to act as a reliable point of reference. People want somewhere to go where they can verify information, understand what is real, and feel confident they are not being manipulated and misled. This expectation extends beyond traditional journalism into areas such as misinformation, scams, and emerging technologies like AI. There is a clear appetite for PSM to provide visible trust signals, clear explanations, and practical guidance that helps users interpret the wider digital world. Importantly, this role is not passive: audiences expect PSM to actively intervene in a system that currently feels opaque and overwhelming.



## PRIORITY 2: WORKING WITH GOVERNING BODIES AND REGULATORS TO SUPPORT DIGITAL INCLUSION, ONLINE SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY

**2.1** Committee creates recommendations and generates new research on the impact of aging technology, accessibility standards, online safety and creating inclusive public or community spaces

**2.3** Get involved in a zero-rating scheme, which means that PSM websites would not consume any data, from data or broadband plans, for certain users, so people can access PSM regardless of whether they have data left in their allowance

**2.4** PSM to lead on creating a committee to make improvements in digital inclusion that is accountable to a citizens panel, collaborating with government agencies, relevant select committees and independent bodies

**2.4** On-going citizens panel, representative of the public, hybrid, using facilitators rather than leaders, BBC well placed to host this

Participants were very clear that PSM cannot and should not tackle digital inclusion alone. There was a strong recognition that responsibility must be shared across government, industry, community organisations, and the public. In these relationships, PSM was seen as a potential coordinator or convenor, helping to connect services, amplify what already exists, and providing coherent guidance to users, building on frustration from participants about a current lack of coordination and visibility in existing digital inclusion initiatives. Participants also suggested PSM should participate in national schemes that promote access and affordability (such as a zero-rating scheme so people can access PSM services without it being part of their data allowance).

Participants felt strongly that the public should be directly involved with these initiatives. Throughout the process participants shared their experiences of digital exclusion, with a huge variety of different stories, whether personal or from a loved one, from struggling to afford internet access, through to difficulty applying to jobs and banking online. Participants felt that this lived experience was missing from current discussion and action on digital inclusion, and therefore recommended more direct involvement of the public on this issue, for example through the establishment of citizens' panels.

Whilst there was general consensus that PSM could play an important role, some participants expressed concerns about overreach, questioning whether PSM should lead initiatives that might more appropriately sit with government, particularly where funding and infrastructure would be required. Others highlighted the risks of partnering with private companies, whose commercial interests may not align with public service values.

## PRIORITY 3: ENSURING AFFORDABLE AND BUDGET FRIENDLY TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS<sup>14</sup>

**3.1** Support access to affordable technology with local community networks to help those who need it most, for example opening the doors to community hubs, libraries, schools etc.

**3.2** PSM should collaborate with all kinds of organisations, from businesses to social enterprises to charities, to enable access to affordable technology

**3.3** Offer and develop low-cost solutions to increase access to technology with other organisations such as tech donations, recycling, repairs and new funding

**3.4** Incentivise other organisations to support affordable technology through things like kitemarks, social responsibility schemes, and supporting new regulation

For participants, an inclusive approach required prioritising those most at risk of being left behind. Participants expressed a strong belief that PSM has a responsibility to prioritise those who are digitally excluded or at risk of exclusion, even where doing so may be less efficient or harder to scale. This includes older adults, people on low incomes, disabled users, and those without reliable access to devices or connectivity. The participants expressed a clear expectation that PSM should ensure that these groups are not left behind as services become increasingly digital-by-default. Importantly, participants recognised that market-driven solutions are unlikely to reach and support these audiences adequately, reinforcing the need for a public service approach. There was strong support for initiatives such as community outreach, in-person training, and partnerships with local organisations, even though they recognised these are resource-intensive and may only reach smaller numbers of people.

Developing new technology in order to address digital exclusion wasn't seen by participants as the best use of PSM efforts. While making sure that their own products and services are as accessible and usable as possible was seen as a business-as-usual role, and there was support for initiatives such as working with others to support access to affordable technology in the community and participating in low-data schemes, there were concerns around PSM focusing on technology as a means to solve digital exclusion. This was consistent with broader caution across the deliberation about whether building more technology was the answer, particularly AI. Participants felt PSM efforts were better placed around education and partnerships to support a safer and more inclusive online environment.

**“PSM can be a raft, it should be your one safe place to access things. Even if you are tech savvy, the technology is so sophisticated and changing, whatever PSM can do it should do.”**

<sup>14</sup> Recommendation 3.1 - The group wanted it noted that PSM should be a facilitator and not leading or responsible. They should promote and engage but not be the lead 'facilitating not initiating'. They also noted that the 'hubs' should be a one-stop-shop and offer training and repairs as well as access to affordable tech.

Recommendation 3.3 - Suggestion that this should consider environmentally sustainability.

Recommendation 3.4 - Suggestion to incorporate international standards, e.g. ISO.

## RIC PERSPECTIVE: IMPLICATIONS FOR PSM

PSM already play an important role in supporting digital inclusion when it comes to media, from helping people during the digital switchover to supporting media literacy and digital skills. Support for these activities is clear. For example, our mini-public acknowledges the importance of PSM efforts to develop their own products and services to be as usable as possible and to prioritise universal access. The following section covers RIC's perspective on what we heard from participants about digital inclusion during the deliberation.

### THERE IS A CLEAR ARGUMENT THAT PSM SHOULD PLAY A BROADER AND ENHANCED ROLE IN HELPING PEOPLE NAVIGATE DIGITAL LIFE

There is a clear opportunity for PSM to expand its role in digital inclusion, helping people to find essential resources and learn about the digital world, not as an optional or secondary goal but as central to PSM's mission in a digital age. People encounter a digital environment that is complex, fragmented, and often difficult to navigate and they are overwhelmed by the pace of technological change. They face daily challenges distinguishing between reliable and unreliable information, assessing risks such as scams or misleading content, and making decisions in environments shaped by algorithms and commercial incentives. Universal access does not guarantee universal benefit - differences in confidence, capability, and experience mean that some groups are less able to engage safely or to take full advantage of online services.

While many organisations compete for attention in the online world, few are perceived as acting in the public's best interest. PSM's reputation for reliability and trust are a key differentiator and strategic asset. As a result, PSM is uniquely positioned to become a navigator for digital life, helping people orient themselves in environments they do not fully understand or trust.

### GREATER IMPACT WILL COME FROM PSM PARTNERING WITH OTHERS TO SUPPORT DIGITAL INCLUSION AND ONLINE SAFETY

There is an opportunity for PSM to work with others on supporting digital inclusion within a wider system of shared responsibility and by taking on a convening role, helping to join up disparate efforts. PSM's potential future position could be not just as a provider, but as a trusted convener and connector within a broader ecosystem, balancing leadership with collaboration while maintaining its independence and public purpose. Partnerships with community groups and other public institutions were welcomed, however, PSM should be aware of people's cautious attitude towards potential partnerships with commercial entities, particularly big tech companies.

### THERE IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR PSM AS A TRUSTED PROVIDER OF DIGITAL EDUCATION AND LITERACY FOR ALL

People are struggling to deal with the online world. There is a clear expectation that PSM should play a much more prominent role as a provider of digital education and literacy across society, not just for children but for adults at all stages of life. The deliberation revealed a strong emphasis on redefining PSM's educational role, success is not simply about producing high-quality programmes and content in a digital age. There is an opportunity for PSM to play a greater role in educating everyone about digital services and technology, becoming a trusted gateway for information, education and critical literacy.

### MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE AND LEARNING DIRECTLY FROM THOSE IMPACTED IS NEEDED TO BEST SUPPORT THOSE MOST EXCLUDED

If PSM is to fulfil its universal mission in a digital context, it will need to ensure that digital services are genuinely understandable and usable by everyone, regardless of their knowledge, ability, background or means. There need to be mechanisms for the public to be directly involved with these initiatives to tackle digital exclusion, for instance through citizens' panels, the inclusion of personal experiences of different kinds of digital exclusion, and the development of community outreach programmes. Universality and access for all as media moves online is a clear priority for people but it means more than simply being able to access TV over internet (IPTV). Serving the most at-risk exclusion may require targeted, high-effort interventions, such as community outreach and in-person events, rather than purely scalable digital solutions.

# 2. CIVIC PARTICIPATION ONLINE

WHAT ROLE COULD PSM PLAY IN SUPPORTING HEALTHY ONLINE CIVIC SPACES SO EVERYONE CAN PLAY A FULL PART IN A DIGITAL SOCIETY?



## VISION STATEMENT:



**“Public service media that helps people participate in civic life online supports people to connect across diverse and intergenerational communities, by providing accessible, trustworthy information and encouraging people to take part in respectful discussion on digital platforms”**

## PRIORITIES:

1

**CREATE SAFER DIGITAL SPACES FOR PUBLIC DIALOGUE, GOVERNED BY PUBLIC SERVICE VALUES TO ENABLE DIVERSE ENGAGEMENT, BRINGING TOGETHER LOCAL AND NATIONAL COMMUNITIES**

2

**ENSURE A BASELINE OF TRUST ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS THROUGH IMPARTIALITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY TO ENABLE FULL PARTICIPATION**

3

**WORK TO ENSURE ACCURATE INFORMATION IN ONLINE PUBLIC SPACES TO HELP PREVENT MISINFORMATION**

## WHAT EMERGED AS IMPORTANT:

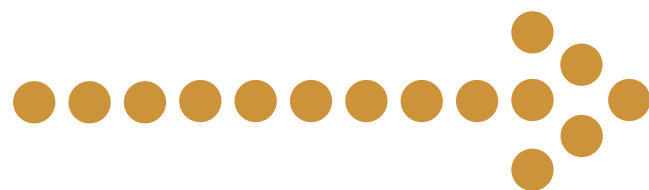
Our mini-public's final vision statement draws on key points across all three groups focusing on civic participation online, which spanned the role that PSM should play in supporting people to participate in civic life online, fostering healthy civic discussion, and upholding public values in digital spaces.

Underpinning this discussion was the participants' perception that the traditional role of PSM is to provide trustworthy information, as a way for citizens to understand the world around them and participate in civic life. In the digital age, they felt that PSM's role needed to adapt and expand to the online world, to address the challenges of misinformation and polarisation.

The top three priorities that received the most votes focused on the connection between universal access to reliable, trusted sources of information, the ability to have productive public dialogue and debate across diverse communities, and the ability for all citizens to fully participate in civic life. Of the priorities that were not taken forward, the lowest ranked priority related to the issues of moderation of mainstream social media platform spaces; while participants agreed that the issue was very important, they felt that this was not within PSM's remit.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The full lists of recommendations for each priority are displayed below, ranked by the support they received during the final vote, from highest to lowest. Each set of recommendations is supported by wider context, explaining the participants' reasoning and how they came to an agreement. **The full voting record is in Appendix 2.**



## PRIORITY 1: CREATE SAFER DIGITAL SPACES FOR PUBLIC DIALOGUE, GOVERNED BY PUBLIC SERVICE VALUES TO ENABLE DIVERSE ENGAGEMENT, BRINGING TOGETHER LOCAL AND NATIONAL COMMUNITIES

**1.1** PSM commit to making their digital public spaces available to all free at the point of use

**1.2** PSM assess/evaluate how to feasibly incorporate as many accessibility features as possible into the platform (e.g. language/translation, disability accommodations)

**1.3** PSM should work with a Parliament select committee (cross-political) and appropriate experts to create a legislative framework and regulator to govern, moderate and enforce guidance in digital public spaces

**1.4** PSM should create digital platforms with online and in-person input/engagement from local communities and currently less-involved groups (acting as consultants, pilot testers, etc.) to enable/encourage broader participation

**1.5** PSM create, monitor, and enforce strict user conduct guidelines with a strong anti-bullying focus to enhance accessibility and safe engagement

**1.6** Humans and AI tools should be leveraged for identity verification on digital platforms – the option for an anonymous profile should remain for inclusivity, but be traceable by the provider in the event of a breach in user conduct

Throughout both the summit and the workshop, many participants expressed frustration with the existing online spaces where civic participation currently takes place, highlighting click-bait, negative comments, antisocial behaviour and the promotion of controversial content as problems driven in large part by the commercial incentives of large social media platforms. These negative aspects of digital public spaces were felt by many participants to have a chilling effect, making people afraid to express their views online and allowing the most extreme voices to dominate the public debate.

In response to these challenges, there was support from many participants for PSM to create meaningful alternatives, either creating new digital public spaces and/or improving their existing spaces. Participants strongly agreed that PSM's own digital public spaces must be truly universal, through accessibility features (i.e. translation, speech-to-text transcription, BSL captioning) and ensuring that these spaces are always free for all at the point of use, rather than paywalled. They highlighted the need for independent scrutiny from experts and government over the development of these services, such as governance, design standards and funding mechanisms, in line with public service values. Finally, some participants wanted PSM to invite the public to more directly shape current and future digital public spaces through participation tools and pilots. This was seen as particularly important for local communities and those who are currently underrepresented.

One issue that was heavily debated was whether PSM should implement some level of formal identity verification in these spaces, to prove that a user is genuine, as some felt that this would help mitigate toxicity online by reducing the number of trolls and bots. At the same time, many agreed that options for anonymity were an important part of ensuring that PSM digital public spaces were accessible, as not everyone could or wanted to reveal their identity online. This point was not fully resolved by the end of the summit.

PRIORITY 2: ENSURE A BASELINE OF TRUST ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS THROUGH IMPARTIALITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY TO ENABLE FULL PARTICIPATION<sup>15</sup>

- 2.1 PSM should create online services and tools that meet people with different needs where they are at (e.g. those with visual impairment, hearing difficulties, neurodiversity) to ensure all have meaningful access to PSM online community spaces
- 2.2 Use technology (including AI) to implement an impartial verification tool which shows where information has and has not been verified in online PSM community spaces
- 2.3 Moderation of online PSM community spaces should be at least partially human-led, ideally by impartial moderators, or if not, with moderators' associations made transparent
- 2.4 Build PSM-specific moderation guidelines and procedures through public and expert consultation which are specific to moderation of facts vs. users' behaviour
- 2.5 Build accessible interfaces into online PSM community spaces with help guides which help users tailor their experiences
- 2.6 Users should be required to agree to a set of guidelines to enter PSM online community spaces, with guidelines explaining how each space is being moderated

While participants were generally supportive of PSM taking a greater role in supporting civic participation online, many felt that for these efforts to be successful, PSM needed to deepen trust with its underserved audiences. To address this barrier, participants felt that PSM should commit to making sure its digital services are always inclusive and accessible to a diverse range of people, with extensive accessibility features. In addition, participants stated that it was critical for PSM to be transparent about the technology they use and verification practices which underpin their digital public spaces, such as developing digital verification tools that empower audiences to scrutinise information for themselves.

The majority of participants wanted to see robust content moderation on PSM's digital public spaces and transparency about how decisions are made, following clear guidelines for conduct developed in partnership with experts and the public. They wanted these guidelines to be consistent with core public values, particularly impartiality. In order to build trust in the process, they felt it was important for moderation to be led by humans rather than AI, although most were open to AI playing a supporting role.

Similar to the debate over identify verification, the idea of signing up to guidelines or taking tests in order to enter into PSM digital public spaces was contentious, with some reluctant to add any additional barriers to participation.



“PSM has a unique opportunity to make a safe, trusted environment for discussion, and this is what we need”

PRIORITY 3: WORK TO ENSURE ACCURATE INFORMATION IN ONLINE PUBLIC SPACES TO HELP PREVENT MISINFORMATION<sup>16</sup>

- 3.1 More time and resource spent on actively countering mis/disinformation online. Eg through news stories and debunking
- 3.2 Develop more verification tools e.g. to identify AI content and misinformation
- 3.3 Work with regulators and government to enforce existing regulations and develop new regulations
- 3.4 Increase PSM presence in online spaces on existing platforms
- 3.5 Play a role in regulation of misinformation on social media platforms, reporting content to the platforms, provide a reporting channel for people in local communities
- 3.6 For breaking news stories, be less reactive, set PSM apart by being accurate and verified
- 3.7 Develop a new PSM social media platform

One of the participants' key concerns was that the proliferation of mis and disinformation, particularly AI-generated deepfakes, is undermining people's ability to identify and access reliable, trustworthy information in digital public spaces. Their reasoning was that reliable information is critical to informed decision-making and civic participation in a democratic society. Without it, people may become disengaged, cynical and unwilling to participate. These concerns align with the later discussion in the deliberation around information integrity, news and AI.

To address this challenge, the majority of participants felt that it was important for PSM to continue to operate in these spaces, providing fact-checking and accurate information, as well as to support efforts to improve existing social media platforms through legislation, regulation and enforcement by government and regulators. They acknowledged that PSM were likely to have little influence over the process of improving social media platforms but supported them playing an indirect role by contributing useful insights to the policy discussion.

Many supported direct technological interventions, including PSM developing free and open digital tools for factchecking and verification of AI-generated content. The most contentious recommendation and area of debate was the creation of a “new PSM social media platform” - some were against the idea as they felt that it would be expensive, that PSM would not be able to compete with existing social media platforms in terms of technology, scale and audience, and therefore resources would be wasted. However, many participants supported developing existing PSM digital spaces, with some suggesting lower-cost ways to develop new spaces using existing open-source infrastructure, or in collaboration with other institutions.

15. Recommendation 2.6 - this originally included “asking users to complete a set of exercises before entering PSM led community spaces”. There was an objection to this in the room as a prerequisite for participation so this was removed.

16. It was noted that Recommendations 3.1 and 3.5 were similar and potentially could be combined.

Recommendations 3.4 & 3.7 were originally expressed as one recommendation but were separated out during the ratification process. This is because 3 tables objected to this recommendation as worded because they had a concern around the phrasing “new social media platform”. While they broadly supported increasing PSM presence and PSM interventions in platforms that currently exist, they objected to PSM using their limited resources to create new platform. However, others remained supportive of either enhancing PSM platforms or building new platforms. We therefore agreed to split this option out in the voting, creating two options to allow people to express their support for each. The group also felt that more clarity was needed on what a PSM social media platform could be, given that some PSM platforms allow for BBC comments and this could be considered a social media platform.



# RIC PERSPECTIVE: IMPLICATIONS FOR PSM

PSM have long played an important role in supporting democracy and civic participation, providing reliable, up-to-date news and information, educational material for all, and shared cultural experiences. Our mini-public supports PSM’s continued provision of these core public goods and value the range of digital products, services and spaces PSM already provide or are part of. The following section covers RIC’s perspective on what we heard from participants about civic participation during the deliberation.

## PSM SHOULD INVEST MORE INTO DEVELOPING SAFER DIGITAL PUBLIC SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND PARTICIPATION ONLINE

People are concerned about the negative social impacts of many commercial online platforms and their expectations of PSM are changing. PSM could therefore be more ambitious in this area to meet people’s growing need for safer and more inclusive spaces for dialogue online. The opportunity here is not for PSM to build large scale social media that imitate commercial social media. Instead, PSM should invest more into developing distinct, safe digital public spaces for dialogue and participation online and consider seeking to build features onto their existing digital platforms and to harness open-source infrastructure. Another approach would be to partner with other civic institutions, including national and international PSM, universities and civil society organisations.

Crucially, these spaces would demonstrate a shift for PSM from information-flow to enabling more opportunities for participation, dialogue and interactivity, supported by safeguards around content moderation, safety features, governance and transparency. If PSM decide to create safer digital public spaces for civic discussion, they must carefully consider how to reduce the cost and maximise feasibility of these efforts.

The outputs of the deliberation align well with an emerging movement across PSM, policy and civil society to expand the scope of PSM’s support for civic participation online. Recent proposals have outlined a potential role for the BBC in prototyping alternative digital public spaces, built on democratic governance models and developed through user participation, in collaboration with partner organisations such as universities and internationally there are examples of PSM-led initiatives to develop and prototype participatory digital infrastructure.

## INVOLVING THE PUBLIC THROUGH GREATER PARTICIPATION AND CO-DESIGN WILL BUILD TRUST ALONG THE WAY

In order for PSM to take a more active role in promoting civic participation online, they must take steps to build public trust with underserved audiences and local communities, through public participation and co-design of its digital services. Participation embedded more widely within PSM could be a way to support inclusion, the development of moderation guidelines and democratic governance of PSM’s digital tools and spaces. The push towards greater public participation within PSM organisations has been echoed by a number of civil society organisations and building trust in the BBC among currently underserved audiences, including people from ethnic minority backgrounds, low socio-economic groups and those with disabilities has been highlighted as a priority by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Bringing public participation into PSM’s development of technology and innovation has the potential to support this goal.

## POLICY INTERVENTIONS SHOULD INCENTIVISE THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ALTERNATIVE DIGITAL SPACES, INCLUDING SUPPORT FOR PSM AS TRUSTED PLATFORMS TO INNOVATE

While PSM can support and develop better online spaces for civic participation, they cannot prevent online harms across the wider digital ecosystem. Robust legislation, regulation and enforcement are needed to hold commercial platforms to account. People are frustrated with mainstream social media platforms, encountering harmful content online, and struggling with being unable to leave social media without losing touch with friends, family and their wider communities. To act as a counterweight to toxic and misleading content, PSM’s presence on the social media sites that most people use regularly remains important but must be part of a strategy that also involves investing in alternatives.

Policy interventions to address online harms have primarily focused on regulation of content on social media platforms, but less on how to incentivise the design, implementation and adoption of alternative, safer digital public spaces. PSM organisations can support alternative models through targeted innovation efforts, as described above, as well as by continuing to research and trial existing digital public spaces that have additional safety and user empowerment features (i.e. the BBC Newscast Discord Channel). Policymakers can support this work by ensuring that PSM and other public-oriented organisations have sufficient mandate and resources for this kind of innovation.

# 3. PERSONALISATION AND DISCOVERY

WHAT ROLE COULD PSM PLAY IN HELPING TO ENSURE A BALANCE BETWEEN PERSONALISED CONTENT AND SHARED EXPERIENCES ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS?



## VISION STATEMENT:



“Public service media that helps balance individual and shared experiences is one that leads the way in delivering human-centred approaches to personalisation, equipping everyone to make informed choices, have easy ways to control their data and chosen levels of personalisation, and with content that brings different people together through local and national events.”

## PRIORITIES:

1

SET INDUSTRY STANDARDS (E.G. ETHICAL AND TRANSPARENT) AS A BENCHMARK FOR COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS

2

BUILD ENHANCED USER CONTROLS OVER ALGORITHMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

3

PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO HELP BUILD PEOPLE'S TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING OF PERSONALISATION

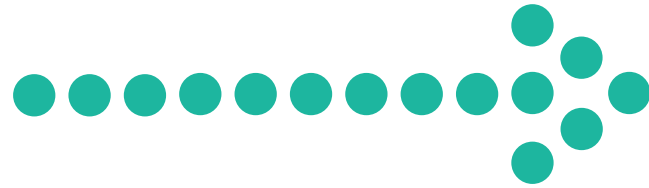
## WHAT EMERGED AS IMPORTANT:

The vision statement reflects the importance placed by participants on an approach to personalisation that gives users increased choice, information and control, one which recognises the needs of different communities, and which also prioritises bringing different people together through shared experiences. This last point was a strong theme throughout the deliberation – participants emphasised the value they attached to PSM's role in bringing people together. As a result, they want PSM to invest in content, experiences and technologies that foster this, particularly around news, sport and major events. Ideas explored including experimenting with technology to encourage in-person participation and making more of local and national occasions. In the online workshop, participants also responded positively to the idea of PSM developing digital platforms centred on shared experiences.

The top three priorities favoured by the participants related to setting ethical standards for competitors to follow, giving users greater control over recommendations and educating audiences to build trust. Better understanding of people's diverse and multi-faceted needs was the fourth and was ranked a priority by just over a third of participants. Important elements from the priorities that were not carried forward in the participant vote included: greater education as to how media consumption works, the ability to be able to choose your view, developing educational resources that help people engage with different platforms.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The full lists of recommendations for each priority are displayed below, ranked by the support they received during the final vote, from highest to lowest. Each set of recommendations is supported by wider context, explaining the participants' reasoning and how they came to an agreement. **The full voting record is in Appendix 2.**



## PRIORITY 1: SET INDUSTRY STANDARDS (E.G., ETHICAL AND TRANSPARENT) AS A BENCHMARK FOR COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS<sup>17</sup>

**1.1** PSM should lead by example in terms of ethics and transparency and in following a code of practice

**1.2** PSM should allow users to withdraw and delete their data when they stop using a service

**1.3** PSM should prioritise public interest over commercial gain

**1.4** PSM should be transparent with why, how and for what purposes data is collected and used. PSM should not be allowed to pass on data without user input

**1.5** PSM should ensure that users have the opportunity to understand, oversee and change personalisation and discovery, and in this way make the process more transparent

**1.6** PSM should actively engage with different publics, government, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders to develop a code of practice

Throughout the process, participants identified that personalisation was a useful way of filtering through content to more easily discover what they like, and that it had potential to improve accessibility. However, they also raised concerns that too much personalisation, across both traditional and social media, meant that people were becoming increasingly fragmented. Many participants worried that people are now spending more time in their own siloes and 'filter bubbles' and therefore it was harder to create shared experiences, human connections and a sense of community.

As a result, there was strong support for PSM adopting a distinct approach to personalisation from commercial platforms, rather than following others. Evident across the summit and the workshops was the value participants place on PSM's unique public role and lack of commercial incentives, and subsequently the expectation on them to act differently and lead the industry by example. They were strongly in favour of PSM establishing industry standards and codes of practice around ethical and transparent approaches to personalisation, including being transparent about methods of personalisation and data collection.

One nuance to note in relation to this distinctive role is that some of the frustrations that participants highlighted around personalisation were not a rejection of the concept itself, but reflected poor implementation – for example, being recommended content that felt irrelevant or repetitive. Rather than wanting less personalisation, these participants often wanted it to work better. This suggests that while overall there is a clear mandate for balance, some participants still valued and expected their media to have sophisticated personalisation capabilities.

<sup>17</sup> For Recommendation 1.2, it was suggested that this should also include educating users to do this on others' platforms

**“I would like more of a balance where algorithms offer you a wider breadth of choice, you don’t want to live in an echo chamber and see the same things all the time.”**

## PRIORITY 2: BUILD ENHANCED USER CONTROLS OVER ALGORITHMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

**2.1** PSM should offer users the ability to set and change their own viewing preferences over time and understand their viewing patterns

**2.2** PSM should explain to users what personalisation means in the context of their remit and offer users the ability to opt in or change their minds anytime

**2.3** For users who have consented, PSM should signpost a spectrum of future viewing options from personalisation to discovery and allow users to share recommendations with friends and family (with their consent)

There was strong support throughout the deliberation process for PSM providing easy and effective user controls that can help audiences feel more empowered. This links to sentiments articulated from across the deliberation that participants feel overwhelmed with the pace of technological change and want more control of their digital experiences. It also speaks to the need for a balanced approach to personalisation and shared experience – for participants, they want public service media to offer both, so they can then choose for themselves when they want to switch between these modes. They therefore supported features such as default settings where personalisation is switched off or adjustable, or toggles and sliding scales so they can select their own levels of personalisation.

Crucially, they wanted these features to be simple, easy to find and easy to use. Participants felt strongly that more education and guidance was needed as how to use user control tools (both on PSM and third-party platforms) and stressed the importance of inclusive and accessible design to ensure that these features are intuitive, user-friendly, and work for people from different communities, including marginalised and vulnerable groups.

## PRIORITY 3: PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO HELP BUILD PEOPLE’S TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING OF PERSONALISATION

**3.1** Provide online and offline educational resources that are accessible, incorporate diverse learning styles and user needs (and be as accessible as possible)

**3.2** There should be optional but widely accessible educational resources about personalisation across PSM platforms and on third party platforms. Algorithms could prioritise educational and public service content (as long as this maintains personal choice)

**3.3** The content for the ideal educational resource should outline how personalisation works, list the data used and how they use it, it should demonstrate the limits of personalisation and the benefits of variety, and promote understanding of data rights. Content should also utilise innovative and creative storytelling to bring different people together

Participants wanted PSM to play a role in ensuring that audiences understand how algorithmic personalisation works (including how their data is being used), how it impacts them and others, and the options and rights that they have to protect themselves (e.g. data protection rights). Several groups expressed a concern with how complex it can be to understand how personalisation works on different platforms and that ‘nobody should be left behind’. As a result, it was suggested that educational resources be co-created with audiences to ensure they weren’t too ‘top-down’ in nature.

There were some areas of disagreement around this theme – two groups noted an objection to the premise of this priority: educating people to ‘build trust’ about algorithmic personalisation noting they did not think personalisation should be trusted in its current form. Another group noted that if there was adequate transparency and user controls provided (through the proposals in Priority 2) this would reduce the need for educational resources. One group felt strongly that the recommendation to create educational resources should emphasise the importance of co-creation as opposed to being a top-down process and suggested this be amended to better capture working with communities on education and understanding marginalised needs. There was also some disagreement from groups about the idea of prioritising PSM content in third party algorithms, which led the group include the qualifier ‘optional’ in the final recommendation.



## RIC PERSPECTIVE: IMPLICATIONS FOR PSM

PSM are already working to ensure all audiences can find their content on personalised third-party platforms and developing their own personalisation in ways that deliver on their public service mission. Our mini-public supports PSM efforts to incorporate principles of serving everyone and promoting a shared, common culture in personalised products and services. The following section covers RIC's perspective on what we heard from participants about personalisation and discovery during the deliberation.

### PSM SHOULD ADOPT A DISTINCTIVE APPROACH TO PERSONALISATION THAT IS MORE TRANSPARENT AND WHICH BALANCES PERSONALISED CONTENT WITH DIVERSE OPINIONS AND SHARED EXPERIENCES

Public attitudes towards personalisation are nuanced with people valuing its convenience and utility but getting frustrated when it is poorly implemented and concerned about the balance tipping too far. They are worried about social fragmentation and filter bubbles, and highly value PSM's role in providing diverse content and bringing people together through shared knowledge, culture and community. They are therefore cautious about PSM following a trajectory towards hyper-personalisation.

There is a growing desire for the BBC and PSM to play a distinctive role in technology and innovation, more actively shaping the digital future by leading in responsible technology development and deployment. A distinctive approach to personalisation will be an important part of this, whether through accessible user controls, greater transparency, ensuring a broad and diverse range of content remains visible, balancing personalisation with digital innovation to support shared experiences, or more likely, all of the above. While current debates about transparency in PSM have largely focused on governance and institutional accountability, these findings point to an opportunity for PSM to embed principles of transparency and accountability directly into product design and user experience, and for PSM to experiment with how technology can bring people together around key events.

### A DISTINCTIVE APPROACH PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PSM TO EMPOWER AUDIENCES OF ALL AGES TO FEEL MORE CONFIDENT AND IN CONTROL OVER TECHNOLOGY

Providing greater agency over personalisation - for instance by including features like user controls that allow audiences to adjust their preferences directly - is an opportunity area for PSM, despite some industry scepticism about whether audiences would actually use them. Innovating to make user controls intuitive and accessible without adding friction to the user experience, as is often the case with existing settings or lengthy terms and conditions, is a challenge worth tackling for PSM. These features can be important for trust in and transparency of PSM, even if not used by everyone. Calls for greater agency extend beyond personalisation itself, reflecting deeper concerns and overwhelm about digital technologies as well as wider societal and structural challenges. The opportunity here is for PSM to help audiences feel more in control of technology.

This aligns with a growing demand for increased understanding and education about technology and for PSM to play a more active role in media and digital literacy to help audiences feel more confident online. While policy debates and media literacy initiatives are often aimed at promoting education for children and young people, more support, information, and guidance is needed for people of all ages. PSM could go further in providing media literacy resources to explain how personalisation works, including what algorithmic recommender systems are, how they use personal data, and how users can shape or influence them.

### IMPROVED PROMINENCE ON THIRD PARTY PLATFORMS IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE PEOPLE CONTINUE TO DISCOVER AND BENEFIT FROM PSM CONTENT

People value high-quality news and information and are concerned by what they might be missing out on as a result of algorithms making choices about what to display on their behalf. Greater government and regulatory intervention to promote the prominence of PSM on different platforms and devices, including television interfaces and remote controls, is needed to ensure people continue to discover and benefit from PSM content.

# 4. INFORMATION INTEGRITY, NEWS AND AI

WHAT COULD PSM DO TO HELP BUILD A TRUSTWORTHY NEWS  
AND INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT ONLINE?



## VISION STATEMENT:



**“Public service media that fosters public trust in news and media in the age of AI is the first choice for finding verified journalism and information and leads by example in responsible use of AI nationally and worldwide in alignment with public service values, providing accessible tools that educate and empower people for a healthy collective experience”.**

## PRIORITIES:

1

**FULFIL A DUTY TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE USE OF AI, INCLUDING THROUGH THEIR OWN WORK AND COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS**

2

**PSM WORK TOGETHER TO DEVELOP UNDERSTANDABLE AI VERIFICATION TOOLS FOR THE PUBLIC**

3

**ADVOCATE FOR STRICTER REGULATION AROUND AI THAT PUTS THE PUBLIC AND ACCURACY AT THE FOREFRONT, FOR EXAMPLE A NEW REGULATORY BODY**

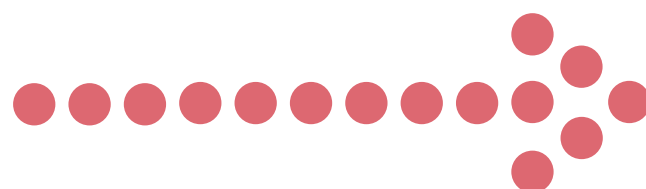
## WHAT EMERGED AS IMPORTANT:

Participants felt it was important that their vision reflected the continued core role for PSM of providing accurate and impartial news and verified information amid whatever change AI and emerging technologies may bring. This was not just about keeping up as technologies and society changes but about leading the way with best practice and setting standards to ensure PSM are people's first choice for reliable and trustworthy journalism. They discussed how this role of leading by example extended to the responsible use of AI in the UK and globally. They envisioned PSM mobilising public service values to align their own use of AI to the public interest and to guide and support others in the news media sector and beyond, with a focus on delivering not just individual benefits but a healthy collective experience. Participants envisioned PSM doing more than sharing information, by putting tools in people's hands that would help educate and empower them to verify information for themselves and to take a more active role in evaluating information, whatever their background and level of understanding.

The priorities carried forward in the participant vote made clear the set of expectations for PSM, including that promoting responsible use of AI was a duty and responsibility to be fulfilled, that collaborating with others would be key to delivering this, and that developing accessible and understandable AI verification tools would require PSM to work together. They also indicated that participants placed significant value on regulation of AI. Important elements from the remaining priorities that were not voted through included PSM working together to develop a verification model across all their platforms that meets a journalistic standard; developing principles for making technology person-centred; becoming the leading source of education about AI and information online; as well as identifying sources of funding to enable them to achieve these priorities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The full lists of recommendations for each priority are displayed below, ranked by the support they received during the final vote, from highest to lowest. Each set of recommendations is supported by wider context, explaining the participants' reasoning and how they came to an agreement. **The full voting record is in Appendix 2.**



## PRIORITY 1: FULFIL A DUTY TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE USE OF AI, INCLUDING THROUGH THEIR OWN WORK AND COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS<sup>18</sup>

**1.1** PSM should create an ongoing initiative to raise awareness on AI and trustworthy news - addressing literacy, critical perspectives and fostering PSM values

**1.3** PSM should build a fact checking and educational tool on how AI works for better news literacy

**1.2** PSM should create a verification symbol/tag to identify AI and verified non-AI generated content

**1.4** PSM should establish a cross-industry body to enable a code of practice/guidelines, identifying the biggest AI concerns and deterring bad practice

PSM were seen as having an opportunity – and a responsibility – to lead the way in responsible and value-aligned use of AI. Participants emphasised the expectation that PSM would be a beacon of best practice for the news and media industry and a key player in collaboratively working with others to drive up standards and share knowledge and skills. This was in part motivated by strong dissatisfaction with standards in the commercial technology sector and participants' own experiences of information overload and difficulty working out what news and information they could trust online. Participants backed interventions like clear labelling of AI, developing new ways to show whether and how images, video and audio have been manipulated, and setting up institutional structures to establish codes of practice around AI. Most were finding it difficult to cope with the sheer amount of news and information they had to parse and valued the counterweight that good-quality PSM news provides – but felt it wasn't cutting through on social media and the online spaces where a growing number of people spend their time.

Many saw PSM as having a duty and obligation to the public to promote responsible use of AI not only through their own working practices and via the news and content they produce, but also through partnerships, collaborations and third-party relationships. Discussion here centred around concerns that partnering and doing deals with technology platforms and AI companies, though useful for reaching audiences where they spend time and providing access to new technologies, could potentially lead to compromises in how PSM values were upheld and impact public trust. These considerations were felt to be particularly important in the high-stakes arena of news and journalism, where standards of impartiality, accuracy, transparency and accountability were viewed as crucial and contrasted with those of the big technology platforms and AI companies.

<sup>18</sup> Two groups raised a concern that the priority and associated recommendations did not address journalism and news enough, instead focusing only on AI, and it was suggested that educational initiatives should also cover understanding online news. Another group suggested that an independent body was preferable to a cross-industry body. It was noted that the environmental impact of AI was missing from the conversation

## PRIORITY 2: PSM WORK TOGETHER TO DEVELOP UNDERSTANDABLE AI VERIFICATION TOOLS FOR THE PUBLIC

**2.1** PSM develop a frictionless, easy to use default tool to verify information for all

**2.2** PSMs collaboratively develop a framework for verification of information and news for users to verify and rate reliability of information - users of which would be able to claim accreditation for a PSM standard

Participants were frustrated with how hard it is to assess the news and information they see online and on social media and determine which sources of information are credible. Many were also concerned about how AI is being used to create lots of low-quality and manipulative information online. They felt a desire for more agency and to be empowered to verify, fact-check and contextualise information and help to make judgments about credibility, not for others to make those decisions for them. They wanted PSM to develop tools for them to do this and to develop shared points of reference, such as a framework for verifying and rating the reliability of information, which other media organisations and the public could use with confidence and as a way to signal their adherence to a standard.



**“PSM should teach audiences about how AI works, how deepfakes are made, hallucinations, how recommender systems work. To help us move from passive viewers to critical users.”**

## PRIORITY 3: ADVOCATE FOR STRICTER REGULATION AROUND AI THAT PUTS THE PUBLIC AND ACCURACY AT THE FOREFRONT, FOR EXAMPLE A NEW REGULATORY BODY<sup>19</sup>

**3.1** PSM educate people of all ages about AI and its consequences

**3.2** PSM regulate all of their AI content to set the benchmark for other media organisations

**3.3** PSM expand current AI policies to set the standard and share with a new regulatory body

**3.4** PSM to lobby government for new legislation to hold big tech to account around AI and ensure they contribute financially

There was broad agreement that stronger regulation of AI was needed and some felt that PSM should play a role in advocating for it. Many participants were concerned inadequate AI regulation left them and the people they knew unprotected against new threats from deepfakes and manipulated media. This reflects a consistent theme across the deliberation that participants wanted more robust regulation of commercial platforms and technology, and that the responsibility to deliver this primarily sat with policymakers. The desire for PSM news to be more visible and prominent on social media and other platforms as a counter to mis- and dis-information and AI slop was also widely held and many felt regulation was necessary to achieve this given the lack of incentives for commercial operators to ensure high-quality news reaches people.

The need for regulation to be underpinned by legislation was implicit in the final priorities and recommendations. For example, some participants argued for legislation to secure financial contributions from big tech companies to support PSM, such as a tax or penalties for breaching the law, while others wanted big tech companies to contribute towards PSM and provide PSM prominence on platforms as a precondition for being in the UK market. Some groups were less keen on these specific proposals however, and expressed concern that regulation would drive investment out, or were sceptical that this kind of regulatory change would actually be achievable in the UK. Disagreement centred around exactly what role PSM should play towards policy and regulatory change, and what falls under the responsibility of others. For example, the group debated whether PSM should just provide expert input to governments, legislators and regulators or whether they should be involved in more proactive lobbying on specific proposals. The idea of educating people about AI was widely supported, driven by desire for AI and media literacy tailored to people of all ages and educational backgrounds.

<sup>19</sup> This set of recommendations stimulated a lot of discussion as to whether PSM should play a role in lobbying government and advocating for certain courses of action, or should only provide advice and “be the experts”. Some felt PSM should reflect public opinion, not direct it. One group questioned the use of the word ‘consequences’ when educating people about AI, suggesting instead to focus on “the responsible use of AI”. Points of clarification were also raised around which AI policies were being referred to – whether it was PSM’s own policies or global AI policies and what exactly a new regulatory body would do.

## RIC PERSPECTIVE: IMPLICATIONS FOR PSM

**PSM newsrooms have been playing an important role in countering mis- and dis-information, demonstrating responsible journalistic uses of AI, and working to improve standards of accuracy, reliability and sharing of sources by AI assistants. Support for PSM's responsible AI work is clear, particularly with regard to news, with our mini-public highlighting how much they valued fact-checking and verification efforts, including BBC Verify. The following section covers RIC's perspective on what we heard from participants about information integrity, news and AI during the deliberation.**

### PSM ARE UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO PLAY A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN RESPONSIBLE AI

There is a real opportunity for PSM grow their role as leaders in responsible AI, setting the gold standard for best practice and driving up standards in the wider news and media sector. This can be achieved through strategic application of AI (using it where there is clear public interest) and aligning AI development, deployment, standards-setting, and the education and provision of resources and tools for the public with public service values. This is not about integrating AI everywhere but setting a distinctive public service direction for AI that shapes the future of PSM and media technology infrastructure of the future.

The level of investment needed to achieve the above would be significant, particularly if accompanied by formal expansion of duties and obligations. If PSM are to be adequately equipped to play this leadership role, they will require more investment into their socio-technical research capabilities, technology and innovation capabilities, and core infrastructure for sustainable partnership work. Without this, they would not have the necessary evidence base for strategic foresight and effective decision-making, the capabilities to act on insight as the landscape shifts, or the ability to mobilise and coordinate complex multi-stakeholder projects in the public interest. Collaborating with the public should be core to such leadership and could be an important contribution towards building a society that is more resilient to information disorder. This would require working more systematically in a participatory way with people and communities over time.

### THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PSM TO EMPOWER PEOPLE WITH TOOLS TO VERIFY AND CONTEXTUALISE INFORMATION

There is an opening for PSM to develop public-facing tools and resources that can help audiences in two ways - to identify and understand where AI is being used in news media and why it matters, and to make sound judgments about the credibility of information, helping verify and contextualise news and information. This is part of a broader opportunity for PSM to grow their role in AI and media literacy by providing educational resources for all ages, working in collaboration with each other and partners that share core public service values. In doing so, they can build trust with individuals and communities, but this work should be properly connected to digital inclusion efforts and wider digital literacies work.

### PSM MUST TAKE CARE TO ENSURE PARTNERSHIPS DO NOT COMPROMISE TRUST

Which organisations PSM partner and collaborate with and the nature of their agreements will be vital to public trust. There is growing scepticism about the motives of big tech and AI companies. This means decisions about whether, and in what circumstances they can be effective partners to PSM is a sensitive topic. PSM will need to pay close attention to questions of value exchange and alignment of incentives and values in such collaborations, and be transparent and accountable to the public about this. Collaborating with other public interest-oriented organisations can unearth new opportunities to respond to people's evolving needs for news, information and civic participation and catalyse further investment in building out alternative media technologies.

### AI REGULATION IS NEEDED TO CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR A HEALTHY NEWS ECOSYSTEM

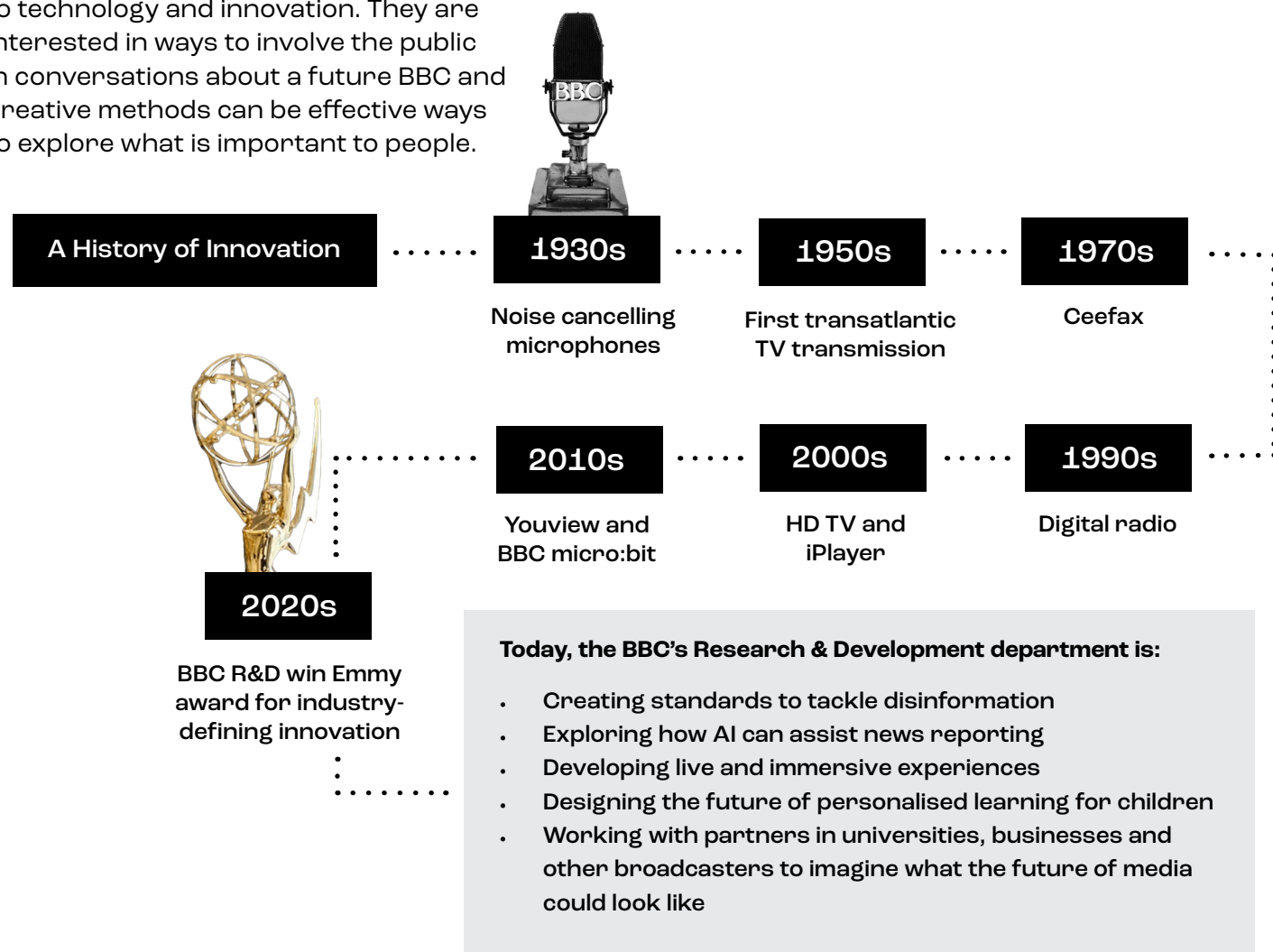
Many of the concerns the public holds about AI and its impacts on the information environment can only be addressed through more robust AI regulation and legislation. Though PSM can contribute, responsibility rests with policymakers and platforms to create the conditions for trustworthy news and public understanding to flourish as AI continues to alter the information ecosystem. For instance, attention will be needed in decisions around prominence of quality news and PSM content specifically in relation to chatbots and AI assistants, to ensure people have timely access to verified, accurate and impartial news as a counter to mis- and dis-information and information manipulation in these spaces. It should be noted that these conversations took place at a moment when use of AI agents was rapidly growing - a shift that may fundamentally reshape the news and information landscape within a relatively short horizon - but this was not yet a reality in people's everyday experiences.



# 5. CRAFTING CREATIVE VISIONS OF A FUTURE BBC

## WHY A FOCUS ON THE BBC?

Given the ongoing remit to research and develop technologies in support of its public mission, the BBC is interested in understanding what people want, need, and expect from them with regard to technology and innovation. They are interested in ways to involve the public in conversations about a future BBC and creative methods can be effective ways to explore what is important to people.



This chapter showcases a selection of the creative outputs created by participants on the afternoon of the final day of the summit. The session was dedicated to exploring positive visions of a future BBC through activities that sought to bring the conversations, discussion and debate from across the deliberation to life. Participants were invited to engage their imaginations in some futures thinking and get hands on with craft materials in two activities.

**Gallery of a Future BBC:** Creatively envisaging a BBC participants wanted to see, using futures thinking, teamwork and craft materials to bring their visions to life. Objects were showcased on the Sunday afternoon in a 'Gallery of a Future BBC' where everyone was invited to explore each other's objects and ideas. Rather than trying to predict the future, this activity provided a creative platform for the participants to imagine a preferable future they would like to see. Three groups each made a version of:

A 'thriving online kit' to help people thrive in a future where the BBC is delivered over the internet

A 'digital public space' to represent a healthy online place supported by the BBC

A 'personalisation recipe' for personalisation and discovery of BBC content that has the right mix of elements

A 'museum exhibit' from the future, showing a BBC innovation that had helped promote reliable and trustworthy information in an age of AI

**Postcards to the BBC:** Writing personalised messages to the BBC on postcards about how they felt it should make, shape or use technology to ensure everyone benefits. Following a lot of group discussion and collective decision-making, this was an opportunity for people to express their individual perspectives.

We know people learn, communicate and express themselves in different ways. We closed the deliberation with this deliberately playful, imaginative and interactive session as a way to give participants more creative freedom to turn what they had learnt and discussed into practical and tangible artefacts that gave alternative expression to their priorities. **For more detail, see Appendix 1 (Methodology).**

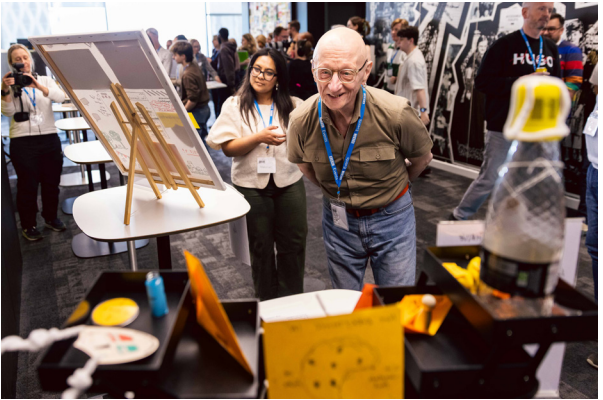
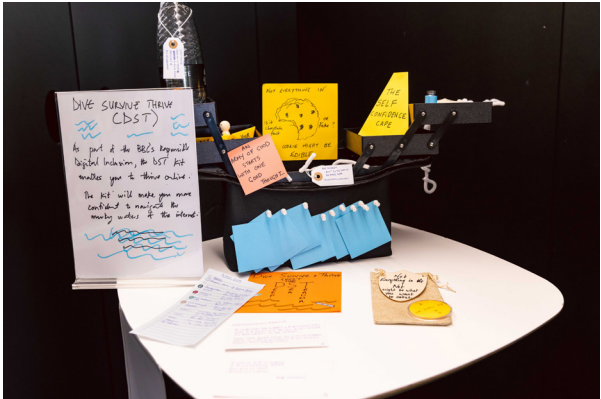
# GALLERY OF A FUTURE BBC

## DESIGN A 'THRIVING ONLINE KIT'

The three groups tasked with designing a 'thriving online kit' used a sewing box full of arts and crafts material to create a kit to help different people to thrive online in a future where the BBC is delivered over the internet. They focused on helping people with limited or no access to the internet, digital creativity and confidence, and young people online.

Their final kits focused on the importance of the BBC in providing helping support digital skills, improving people's confidence online, helping them stay safe and simplifying digital experiences and access to people when you need support.

One group took their kit and turned it upside down to represent steps and building blocks towards digital inclusion, another reimagined the remote control as a device that would help them more clearly navigate the online world.



## DESIGN A 'DIGITAL PUBLIC SPACE'

Groups imagining future BBC-inspired digital public spaces focused on the importance of them being tied to place and working for local communities. They imagined spaces where information was reliable, people could have respectful discussion, rules and guidelines are in place and there is access to experts and advice, making people feel included and safe.

The "BBC our community" space emphasised how digital cannot be disconnected from place, like the local neighbourhood, which impacts ways to be involved, from culture and creativity through to local council meetings and care in the community. Across the groups we saw a foundational pillar of their preferred future spaces was bringing people together in more pro-social and constructive ways.



## CREATE A 'PERSONALISATION RECIPE'

Groups making a 'personalisation recipe' were deciding what could go into content that has the right mix to support shared experience and diverse media diets. Defining, labelling and layering various ingredients into jars to represent different 'ingredients' helped them establish what they felt was important for good personalisation.

One group, who were thinking about personalisation for young people, filled a quarter of their jar with "proactive legislation" in a colourful illustration of how important they thought law and regulation was to ensuring protections for younger audiences and age-appropriate design. They wanted mechanisms like filters and parental controls to ensure data privacy and age-appropriate content were protected.

Ingredients others wanted in the mix included diversity of content, privacy, transparency and shared experiences – with a dash of user control.

## MAKE A NEWS RELATED 'MUSEUM EXHIBIT'

Groups making a news-related 'museum exhibit' were thinking ahead to a time in the future when an innovation from the BBC had made a real difference to people's access to reliable and trustworthy information. They wrote short newspaper articles describing how each of these helped people separate fact from fiction and have more involvement with shaping the news.

One group riffed off the skills of Sherlock Holmes to imagine how by 2036, 'BBC Holmes Verification' had opened up the "black box" of information verification for people by sharing the BBC's verification processes.

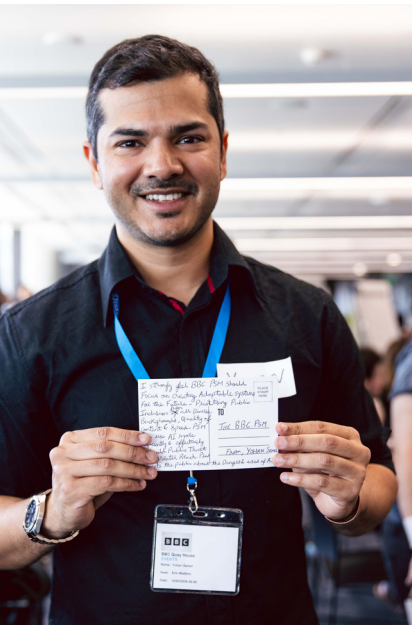


# POSTCARDS TO THE BBC

Participants were invited to put pen to paper and lay out what they want to say to the BBC about how it could make, shape or use technology to ensure everyone benefits in the future. The postcards they created underscored the importance of its public role and values and called for the BBC to remain focused on directing innovation towards creating a better digital world for the future and the importance of listening to people and communities who are impacted or stand to benefit.



“Dear BBC, Please make sure you become and stay the leaders in news and information verification, in a world where AI and other new technologies are beginning to impact our lives in a massive, largely unknown way. We are relying on you to empower us, inform and educate us to make our own best decisions, to navigate the new world.”



“

“Please stay true to the founding principles of truth, integrity, fairness and balance; Be a bastion of inclusivity, diversity and sanity in a challenging + fractious environment. Remain an educator, be a leader in best practise + innovator + user of new tech. Be unafraid to use your considerable industry-wide respect + gravitas to be a beacon for all the above. Speak truth to power and let Truth be the focus for all that you do.”



“Dear BBC, a National broadcaster should take the lead in many areas & leverage its expertise to serve the public good. I do want strong regulation but recognise that politicians have many other priorities so I want the BBC to be a beacon of excellence for others to live up to. Keep and improve on the public trust you already have & keep reaching out to those who are excluded by other services.”



”

“Dear BBC, Whilst you navigate our challenging but ‘high potential’ digital future please keep using human experience to improve our individual & communal life experiences. Plot your own course (you don’t have to try & replicate what your commercial competitors are doing) following public service values. Focus on trust & online safety for the benefit of all especially those in marginalised communities & those who need a little extra help to get the benefits you can offer. Use technology to help you achieve your aims but don’t let it rule. Human endeavour and creativity are worth paying for.”



”

“

“Dear Matt, When you start work on 18th May, please could you ensure that the BBC continues to build on its existing expertise in developing technology for the public good, and using its extensive network to inform & educate everyone of the benefits and risks that the digital media future holds for us.”

"Dear BBC. I think you, of all other entities in Britain, are well aware of how very fragmented we're right now as a society & how AI & big tech are playing a significant role in it. So, when I write to you, I write as a concerned member of society. I write as someone who has been felt small, unheard, unseen, and minoritized in this fast-changing, polarised society. And when you read this, I want you to think of me & we, our anxiety about the world order right now, and also about how you usually tend to “represent” us. I want you to think of better ways to engage with us, I want you to move beyond the politics/brownie points of representing diverse communities. I want you to think of them as human beings, most in need, most vulnerable & most targeted in this regime/world order of fear. You do have experts in your vicinity who can advise you about the “how to” bit of thinking about & for us. For starter, my suggestions are:  
1) Come, talk to us 2) Let us talk in equal terms."





## 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PSM FUTURES

Organisations are realising that old models of engaging the public that are one way are no longer working while evidence of the value of involving the public using deliberative and participatory work is growing. At the time this deliberation took place, the government and the BBC were considering approaches for involving the public that can strengthen public accountability and ensure any future plans better reflect what the public want and need. Deliberative citizens' assemblies are proposed as one approach to achieving this, yet there are few real-world examples to draw upon and learn from in assessing their value to both participants and PSM. As one such example, this large-scale public deliberation presents a valuable opportunity to reflect and learn.

This chapter does two things:

1. It shares participants' reflections on their experiences of the deliberation process as they relate to this specific context - PSM, technology, and innovation
2. It draws from these reflections and reflections from the RIC team to identify implications, insights, and lessons which may be relevant to future deliberations and other forms of public participation in which PSM may engage.



## 1. PARTICIPANTS' REFLECTIONS ON TAKING PART IN THE DELIBERATION

While there is much discussion about why PSM would involve the public through deliberation, there is little evidence about what the public think about deliberation as a way for PSM to engage with the public. We conducted two surveys to understand what motivated people to take part and their experiences of the process after taking part. Across both surveys we included a standardised set of multiple-choice questions designed to help us assess any changes in participants' self-reporting when it came to understanding the topics and issues under consideration and attitudes and perspectives before the deliberation began and after it had concluded, including a set of questions about PSM. We also included open text boxes and invited participants to share their experiences.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Participants felt it was important for PSM organisations to consult the public and valued having their experiences, concerns and views heard and taken seriously and the opportunity for this to inform live debates and organisational discussions and activity.

As a result of taking part there was a strong uplift in participants' sense of connection to PSM - and the BBC, as a partner in this deliberation, and a strengthened belief in its ongoing importance.

## DESIRE TO LEARN AND CONTRIBUTE TO BETTER OUTCOMES

There were various motivations for taking part - some participants described general curiosity, or a desire to learn more about media and technology outside of their own experiences, but many of our participants were motivated by the opportunity to share their views about and experiences of PSM, changes in technology, or both.

Most felt it was important for PSM organisations like the BBC to consult the public and that peoples' experiences, concerns and views heard and taken seriously. They also felt it was important that people were consulted and listened to in developments and debates about technology. Many felt public voices were missing in relation to how changes in technology were impacting people's lives. They valued being offered an opportunity to inform live debates and organisational discussions and activity. Recognising that the public are not always heard in debates about both PSM and technology, some participants described feeling a sense of civic duty, while others welcomed the chance to influence decisions.

**"I believe that decisions about public media and emerging technologies are too often made without meaningful input from citizens who are most affected by them. I wanted to be part of a process that takes public voice seriously."**

**"I hope to...contribute to recommendations that reflect genuine public values rather than just institutional or commercial priorities."**

**"A chance to see how media is changing and help influence decisions for the better."**

**"A chance to voice my opinions on what happens with media in this country."**

**"I hope to better understand how other citizens think about these issues, hear perspectives I might not encounter in my usual contexts."**

**"A big motivation for me was getting to learn more about the topic. I don't know much about public media, technology and innovation."**

**"I'm genuinely curious about how different people understand and experience media and innovation in their daily lives."**



## GREATER AWARENESS AND CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TECHNOLOGIES ARE IMPACTING PEOPLE AND PSM

Participants reported coming to the deliberation with varying levels of knowledge on PSM, digital media and technology. Some had not previously given much thought to this topic, others reported higher levels of interest and knowledge to begin. While some noted it had been challenging at times to grapple with what one person described as a “complex and fast evolving issue that even experts are still developing their understanding of”, they reported gaining new knowledge or perspective on the topics and PSM’s role. Many reflected on how taking part in the process had improved their awareness and understanding of how other people use and experience technology and how technology is impacting media, including PSM, in ways that had impacted or changed their thinking.



**“It made me understand more about the PSM as a whole.”**

**“I learned there is a research department in BBC that is actively trying to innovate and address future needs.”**

**“I didn’t think PSM had a role to play in this space but now I do”**

**“It helped me better understand both the opportunities and risks of AI in news and media, especially around trust, misinformation, and public service values.”**

**“It helped me look at digital issues from different points of view and understand the balance between innovation, personalisation, trust and public responsibility more critically.”**

**“Taking part in the process helped me see the topic from different perspectives and consider opinions and experiences I had not thought about before. It encouraged me to think more critically and be more open-minded during discussions”**

**“It really did change my thinking. I didn’t quite realise the process of technology behind the scenes.”**



## A GREATER APPRECIATION OF PSM AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PUBLIC

The data showed that many people left the deliberation feeling like they had a better understanding of PSM and their role and responsibility to the public. Many left with a greater appreciation for PSM knowing more about the context in which they are operating and the challenges they face when taken together with their responsibility to the public. Several specifically commented on how the BBC's involvement in the deliberation had changed how they felt about the BBC in positive ways.

**“That the BBC and public service media has a huge challenge on its plate, and is in an increasingly existential place. It simply no longer holds the same place within the fabric of the nation, as it did when I was growing up... I feel that this process over the weekend was BBC being very creative about how it will play a role in an AI and more fragmented future. It was not lost on me just what a huge exercise and investment that holding an event like this must have been.”**

**“The process has left me thinking about how import a lot of the things we discussed are and how increasingly challenging providing public service media is in our world today from a different perspective... I really appreciate the BBC in my life and other linked organisations, and I would like them to develop successfully and remain and increase their relevancy to an increasingly burdened audience.”**

**“That PSM has such a wide and varied responsibility to the public, with so much to consider. I’ve got huge respect for the massive undertaking that the BBC and other PSM organisations have got on their hands trying to stay relevant in an ever changing and increasingly tech advanced and capitalist world**

**“It made me realise that BBC are interested in what the general public think about their current service, and genuinely want our help to shape the future of PSM”**



## PARTICIPANTS VALUED BEING PART OF THE DELIBERATION

Many participants enjoyed and valued taking part in the deliberation; the opportunity to discuss their experiences and the issues with others and be part of something which could lead to change or positively impact people's lives in the future. They welcomed the opportunity to meet and work with people from across the UK - from different backgrounds and stages of life to themselves. Many reflected on the varied viewpoints they encountered along the way and points of difference and disagreement but also feeling a sense of pride and accomplishment in working through these together to arrive at their recommendations. On the whole, discussions were constructive. Many wanted to see more opportunities for the public to be involved in similar exercises in the future.

**“It felt great to be part of something that could have positive effects on people’s lives and I would love to take part in future deliberations.”**

**“It genuinely felt like a privilege to take part, despite my cynicism at times”**

**“The privilege of working with so many keen, energetic & enthusiastic people with a common goal. Thanks!”**

**“I thoroughly enjoyed meeting new people, sharing stories and the sense of community that was built.”**

**“How many differences there are regionally but also how similar we all are underneath it all”**

**“One person isn’t enough to change the world but all of us together we can.”**

## 2. THE RIC PERSPECTIVE: IMPLICATIONS FOR PSM

PSM have a remit to create value for everyone and through this, a social contract with the public, yet up to this point there have been few opportunities for the public to deliberate about PSM as a shared concern, and to our knowledge, none that consider technology and innovation. This deliberation offers a successful example of – and potential model for – large-scale public deliberation about key issues for PSM. It demonstrates the value that can be derived from these approaches as a form of public participation and has generated insights and lessons from which others may benefit.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Public deliberation offers distinct value for PSM and their audiences compared to other methods
- Meaningful participation requires careful design and appropriate investment to deliver this value



## PUBLIC DELIBERATION OFFERS DISTINCT VALUE FOR PSM AND THEIR AUDIENCES COMPARED TO OTHER METHODS

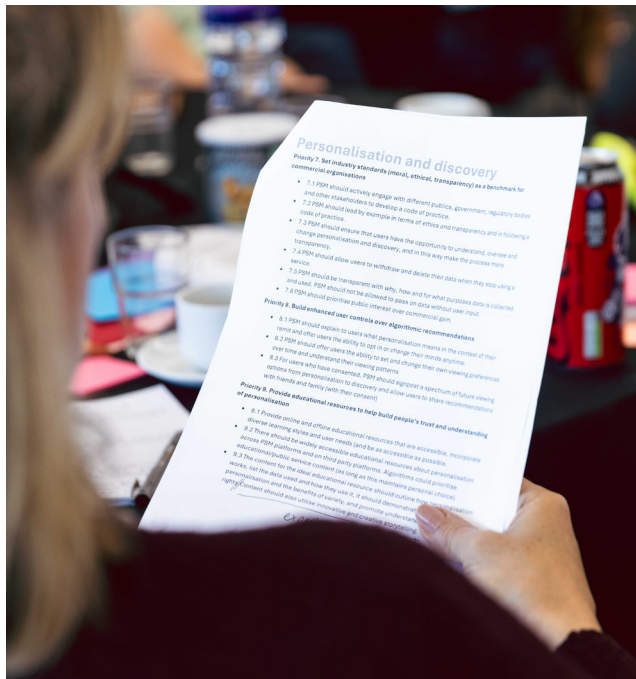
The deliberative approach adopted generated outcomes that could not be obtained from other methodologies. The research team felt the outcomes regarding the creation of trust, sense of connection to PSM, strengthened belief in its importance and understanding of its role, deeper and higher quality insights could not be replicated with another methodology.

For PSM, this offers a distinctive and valuable set of outcomes that complement existing audience research such as surveys and focus groups but go beyond what they can achieve by addressing the public involvement gap. Participants listened to each other and took into account what they had learned through the process, and their own perspectives, resulting in nuanced views. They generated considered outputs that provide important insight and evidence about where members of the public collectively stand on complex issues, opposed to aggregation or interpretation of their views or preferences and attitudes. This can be valuable when public views are needed on complex strategic or policy questions. Our evidence highlighted how many participants felt they had developed their knowledge of PSM and strengthened feelings of connection towards PSM. By being part of a deliberative exercise and learning about PSM, participants felt like they had more of a stake in the future of PSM and some described an imperative to help tackle the challenges PSM face and to improve people's digital experiences in the future. Importantly for PSM, this is an effective way to engage with demographics that are less well served by them and have weaker relationships with them – an ongoing challenge for PSM. For participants, the benefits of providing a deliberative forum were in being heard, having the opportunity to learn about issues and developments impacting their lives, having their experiences and opinions considered, and having a say in what happens in the future. Our evidence showed their perceived knowledge of media and technology issues, and their confidence expressing views about technology's impact was higher after taking part. For both PSM and participants, this approach builds understanding and trust, the benefits of which should not be underestimated. Simply, the act of being open to bringing the public into dialogue with PSM has the potential to change public perceptions of PSM and open new avenues for a more reciprocal relationship. However, if not done well, this could in fact pose the risk of destabilising trust.

## MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION REQUIRES CAREFUL DESIGN AND APPROPRIATE INVESTMENT

Public deliberation requires a lot of investment of time, money and expertise and this approach should only be used by PSM for the particular types of issues that will genuinely bring benefit. Where deliberation is appropriate, serious attention should be paid to which model and structure is best suited for each case.

Taking our case as an example, we made a number of design decisions that worked well for our context. Delivery by an independent third party instilled legitimacy and worked to counter concerns of the process serving a corporate, BBC, or political agenda. Confidence in the process and outcomes was then strengthened by the BBC's involvement and senior members of staff taking part in the workshops and the summit, as well as the summit taking place at the BBC. Because PSM organisations serve the whole population, our model involving a large sample reflective of the UK and designed to meet the quality thresholds of an assembly was best suited. This also meant inclusion had to be front and centre in our design and extensive preparations and investment into materials and wraparound support were essential. This resulted in a diversity of people, ideas and perspectives being represented - something which could not have been achieved with a smaller sample or less targeted support.



While the deliberation was structured around four key topic areas, a number of cross-cutting themes emerged consistently throughout the discussions. Together, these themes capture some of the recurring concerns, priorities and aspirations expressed by our mini-public, highlighting their expectations of public service media as well as identifying areas for policymakers to consider in order to shape a healthier digital environment.

Many participants referred to concepts such as “the public good”, “collective wellbeing”, and “societal benefit” alongside “the public interest” in their discussions. When we talk about the public interest in our analysis, we are emphasising the common or collective good as distinct from individual benefit, and the creation of value for societal benefit over private commercial gain. We recognise that what is ‘in the public interest’ is contested and negotiated in practice, and that members of the public are in fact often at the periphery of deciding how appeals to the public interest actually materialise.

# 7. OVERARCHING THEMES

THEMES THAT UNDERPINNED WHAT OUR MINI-PUBLIC WAS SAYING:

**1** PEOPLE WANT A STRONGER VOICE IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA

**4** PEOPLE WANT PSM TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND PRACTICAL TOOLS SO THEY CAN FEEL EMPOWERED TO NAVIGATE DIGITAL LIFE FOR THEMSELVES

**7** PEOPLE WANT POLICYMAKERS TO TAKE STRONGER ACTION TO IMPROVE THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

**2** PEOPLE WANT PSM TO PLAY A DISTINCT ROLE IN SHAPING TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

**5** PEOPLE WANT POSITIVE, SAFER DIGITAL SPACES – IN PARTICULAR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

**3** PEOPLE EXPECT PSM TO TAKE A BROAD APPROACH TO DIGITAL INCLUSION, HELPING EVERYONE PARTICIPATE IN DIGITAL LIFE

**6** PEOPLE WANT PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TO TACKLE DIGITAL INCLUSION, ONLINE CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBLE AI

## 1. PEOPLE WANT A STRONGER VOICE IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA

The RIC deliberation provides clear evidence that people want to be more involved in shaping the future of public service media, including the future of the BBC itself. It showed that involving the public in this way leads to positive changes in how they understand and appreciate the role of PSM, and their personal connection to it.

Our evidence shows:

- Taking part in the deliberation led to a strengthened view on the importance of PSM and improved participants' sense of connection and appreciation for it, based on a greater awareness of challenges and difficulties it faces, and understanding of PSM's role in society
- Participants were motivated to take part in the deliberation beyond the remuneration they received, often driven by a desire to learn and contribute their views to deliver better outcomes for people
- Our experience adds to the growing evidence base of the benefits of deliberation in terms of building empathy with others and strengthening a sense of civic duty

There is a clear opportunity for PSM, including the BBC, to gain valuable public input on complex issues and future plans by developing a programme of public participation. This would likely also improve PSM's standing, reputation, and trust with audiences. There is a risk that limiting public involvement to questions of oversight and governance misses an opportunity to utilise the full potential of deliberative and participatory approaches – to involve the public as key stakeholders in public service media.

## 2. PEOPLE WANT PSM TO PLAY A DISTINCT PUBLIC INTEREST ROLE IN SHAPING TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

The deliberation demonstrates strong support for public service media, and the BBC specifically, playing a highly distinctive role in technology and innovation to achieve public interest goals and outcomes. Our mini-public saw public service values as PSM's unique selling point and wanted them to utilise these values to deliver visibly different digital products, services and experiences for audiences. They also wanted PSM to help shape the wider technical infrastructure and environment to support public interest and pro-social goals. This distinctive public values-led approach was a foundational pillar for participants.

Our evidence shows:

- Participants highly valued PSM organisations playing a greater role in technology and innovation rooted in PSM's mission, values and standards, as a counterpoint to this existing environment
- They wanted to see PSM supported and funded to do research, development and innovation work after learning about the work the BBC and other PSM organisations were doing.
- Participants saw PSM organisations as well-placed to provide safe and reliable alternatives to global commercial offerings (such as education and tools to help people make sense of information, verify, and detect AI; safe and inclusive digital platforms to support healthier public participation and dialogue; and distinct approaches to personalisation that support shared experiences)
- PSM investment into responsible use and development of technology is both expected (as a duty) and appreciated, particularly in relation to AI, where public expectations for ethical standards and sector leadership are high

- Involving people and communities in the design and development of technology and in innovation processes, as well as being transparent with the public about these processes, was seen as an important way to differentiate PSM from global commercial platforms.

There is an opportunity for PSM to strengthen its leadership in responsible technology, driving forward standards and best practice, creating new forums to enable civic participation and playing a more ambitious role in the development of digital infrastructure for public good. There is a risk that by adopting or pursuing approaches that resemble those of the commercial sector, PSM could diminish their own distinctiveness and fail to meet people's expectations for higher standards of social responsibility. However, any broader mandates around technology and innovation should be matched with sufficient resources. Given the size, scale and complexity of the challenges and opportunities identified, without appropriate levels of funding to ensure a well-resourced and state-of-the-art research, development and innovation capability, it will not be feasible to meet the public expectations and needs that emerged from this deliberation.



### 3. PEOPLE EXPECT PSM TO TAKE A BROAD APPROACH TO DIGITAL INCLUSION, HELPING EVERYONE PARTICIPATE IN DIGITAL LIFE

The deliberation made clear that digital inclusion is a wide-ranging issue that needs to be viewed through a holistic lens. Participants wanted an expanded role for PSM and this came up in discussions across all topics. The goal for PSM as they saw it is not just enabling everyone to access their services online and on digital devices but helping people understand, engage and participate in digital life. They wanted PSM to work with government, public institutions, and community organisations to ensure everyone gets access to the knowledge, skills and opportunities they need to fully participate.

A large part of this expanded role was convening - helping to join up information and support, prioritising vulnerable groups so that nobody is left behind. This is not just about getting people connected online but rather helping people stay up to date with knowledge and skills, from understanding how technologies work through to learning about environmental concerns. This wasn't focused on a single technology, such as smart television sets or AI assistants, but the full range of products and digital services impacting people's lives. Participants wanted an expanded role for PSM around media and digital literacy, acting as a gateway to trusted information, education, courses, resources and critical skills relating to technology. This was seen as a natural extension to PSM's existing commitment to universality. People saw this as an area where there is huge potential for added value, working in partnership with other publicly minded organisations and institutions.

Our evidence shows:

- Resounding support for PSM's commitment to universality and inclusion as a basis for participation in digital life
- Ensuring PSM platforms are accessible, safe, and usable is a baseline expectation
- Support for targeted interventions to help those most in need through, for example, initiatives such as community outreach and working with local organisations
- A desire for an expanded role for PSM to provide media and digital literacy about a wide range of technology, from television interfaces and AI assistants to data rights and personalisation

There is an opportunity for PSM to take on a greater role in helping people of all ages navigate and make informed decisions in a fast-changing and complex online world. PSM goals of ensuring people can access their programmes over the internet and use their digital products and services remain important, but now sits alongside the imperatives to foster empowered and resilient individuals and communities.



### 4. PEOPLE WANT PSM TO PROVIDE EDUCATION AND PRACTICAL TOOLS SO THEY CAN FEEL EMPOWERED TO NAVIGATE DIGITAL LIFE FOR THEMSELVES

The deliberation provided strong evidence that people are struggling with information overload and want greater support to navigate the online world. Participants felt they lacked control over the technology shaping their lives and wanted more ability to determine their own digital experiences. Therefore, they were cautious about simply introducing more information or more technology. Instead, they wanted support to make sense of what they encounter online, including tools to understand and verify information, as well as features that empower them to shape their own digital experiences. Notably, this view was shared by both those who expressed trust in the BBC and those who were more sceptical of the BBC and mainstream media. They also wanted an honest broker to help them make sense of information they encounter across digital services, platforms and apps, and felt that organisations like the BBC are well placed to lead on this given their expertise in fact-checking and verifying information.

Our evidence shows:

- A desire for greater understanding, involvement and influence over technology which was seen as moving too quickly
- Strong support for PSM to develop free and open digital tools to assist with verifying accurate information and detecting AI, for example by expanding on the existing success of BBC Verify and the Content Credentials initiative (C2PA)

There is an opportunity for PSM, including the BBC, to take a more prominent role in helping people navigate digital life with greater confidence and agency. This could include education, practical tools and product features that support informed choices about the information people consume and the experiences they want online.

## 5. PEOPLE WANT POSITIVE, SAFER DIGITAL SPACES – IN PARTICULAR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

People want positive and safer digital spaces and see a role for PSM in developing these. In particular, evidence from our deliberation - supported by the experiences and views shared through the RIC youth advisory group - point to ongoing concerns from young people about technology and social media and a strong interest in sharing their views to help shape better digital experiences for other young people. The deliberation provided strong evidence for an evolved role for PSM that transcends a one-way broadcasting model and positions them as somewhere people go to participate, via platforms that support healthy engagement with public life.

Our evidence shows:

- Recognition of the benefits of existing platforms and services but deep concerns and anxiety about the negative impacts they were seen to have on society (e.g. spreading mis- and disinformation, enabling scams, bullying and other online harms)
- Young people recognised both the benefits and risks of social media, AI and online spaces
- While access to trusted information is important to young people, they are struggling to find local content or opportunities to gain valuable life skills
- Young people had concerns about upcoming younger generations based on their own lived experiences and want to share their ideas for how digital experiences and online spaces could be improved for their peers and the next generation

There is an opportunity for PSM to be more involved in providing spaces for public dialogue and participation that offer alternatives to dominant commercial social media - going beyond narrow forms of interaction to help people get more involved and participate in local and national life, online and offline. This is particularly urgent for young people up to the age of 25, where it could be valuable for PSM, and the BBC specifically, to develop dedicated online services or spaces. A sustained programme of youth participation to develop and innovate digital offers that centre young people's experiences and views will ensure this meets their needs while improving PSM's relationship with younger audiences at a vital time. Ad-hoc programmes of engagement are unlikely to deliver on the potential benefits; it needs sustained commitment and to evolve with audiences and technology.



## 6. PEOPLE WANT PSM TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TO TACKLE THESE ISSUES BUT EXPECT THEM TO BE SELECTIVE ABOUT WHO THEY PARTNER WITH

Participants recognised that public service media organisations could not be the sole actors taking on these challenges and therefore emphasised the importance of working in partnership with others. However, they consistently favoured partnerships with trusted public interest organisations, such as government, charities and community organisations, over commercial technology companies. They perceived the former to be more likely to act in the public interest and presented less risk to PSM.

Our evidence shows:

- Collaboration between PSM organisations was welcomed as participants felt working together would help them pool resources when it came to technology
- Partnering with other public, civic and community organisations came through strongly in areas including digital inclusion, education and media literacy, developing industry standards on ethical approaches to personalisation and responsible AI, and co-designing alternative digital infrastructure
- Many felt partnering with big commercial technology companies carried risks for PSM of commercial agendas dwarfing or co-opting PSM agendas, given the asymmetry of size and power, despite recognising potential benefits of these partnerships for modernising PSM. Concerns around partnerships with big tech companies were underpinned by a concern and perception of an unfair value exchange, where benefits (such as PSM's trusted reputation or access to content or data) are inherited or leveraged by the big technology company but the value PSM gets back in return is unclear

There is an opportunity for PSM to build stronger relationships and trust with the public by collaborating with organisations that have shared values.



## 7. PEOPLE WANT POLICYMAKERS TO TAKE STRONG ACTION TO IMPROVE THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Our mini-public did not just look to public service media to improve technology – they also expressed strong support for legislative and regulatory action.

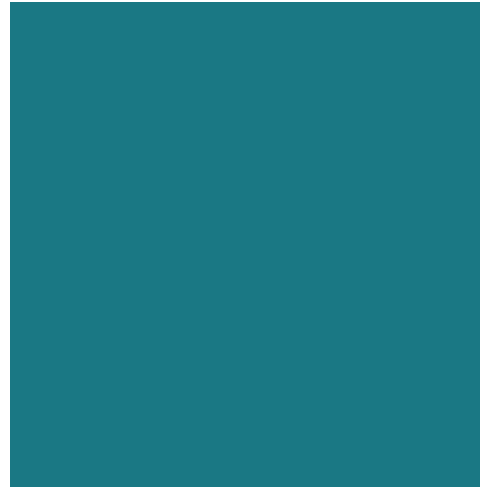
People want policymakers to hold platforms to account and take action in key areas such as digital inclusion, tackling harassment and abuse on social media, the development of ethical AI and supporting reliable and verified information and news. They also wanted policy measures to support PSM operate in these conditions – such as ensuring PSM content is visible and accessible across third-party platforms and in newer contexts like AI chatbots.

Our evidence shows:

- Calls for the government to do more to support people with reliable and affordable internet access, skills, technology, data, and online safety. Participants saw a role for PSM to support digital inclusion in collaboration with others, playing an important role in convening (bringing pieces of the digital inclusion puzzle together) and communicating to the public
- Desire for government and regulators to ensure PSM is easily accessible and discoverable on devices audiences use (e.g. remote controls, smart TV interfaces) without the requirement for them or PSM to have to pay for this
- People want news from PSM to be more visible on social media, video and online platforms, as well as chatbots and AI assistants, to ensure people have timely access to verified, accurate and impartial news. Participants were concerned that platforms would not enable this voluntarily. They noted this was something PSM is not in control of and that this would require changes in the conditions within which they operate

- Consistent calls for stronger regulation of technology platforms and for the government and regulators to take firmer action, for instance in relation to AI, and to tackle harassment and abuse on social media, which they felt was impacting how people engaged in civic discussion online. They wanted PSM to help by contributing useful insights to policy discussions and by helping to drive up standards

Many of the recommendations from the deliberation cannot be delivered by PSM alone. Policymakers must also create the conditions that enable PSM to deliver on the public's expectations.





Here we draw out the implications of the outcomes of the deliberation for different decision makers. We distinguish between actions that public service media can take directly and those that require support from policymakers. Given the BBC's role as an organisational partner for this deliberation, we have also identified some specific implications for the BBC. Together, they provide a practical response to the priorities expressed throughout the deliberation and identify opportunities to strengthen the role of public service media in supporting people to navigate an increasingly complex digital world.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA ORGANISATIONS

- We recommend that PSM organisations put greater emphasis on **public deliberation and participation methods** as a means of building trust and connections with their audience and ensuring the voice of the public is at the centre of their digital strategies and services. The BBC should go further in this regard, because of its unique relationship to licence-fee payers, and build out a new capability for public deliberation to shape a future BBC. This specialist capability requires a ring-fenced budget, specialist expertise, and a defined remit to deliver a sustained programme of participatory work in partnership with vetted specialist delivery partners.
- We recommend PSM take a **more proactive role in technology and innovation**, developing digital services and partnerships that reflect public service values while contributing to a healthier and more inclusive digital environment. Given the BBC's history and remit in this area, it should play a leading role in developing public interest technologies and digital services that are distinctive from commercial platforms. This could include creating safer spaces for dialogue and participation, developing approaches to personalisation that promote shared experiences and common ground, and helping shape wider technical infrastructures that support public interest and pro-social goals.
- There is a strong argument for PSM to take a holistic approach to **digital inclusion**. For the BBC, this would involve a more ambitious and joined-up approach that looks beyond IPTV transition and renews its commitment to universality and inclusion. We recommend a strong partnership model where the BBC works with public institutions, civil society organisations and local community groups to become a trusted gateway to essential information and education that blends critical thinking, digital skills and creativity.
- We recommend PSM strengthen their collective contribution to **media literacy** by working collaboratively with each other and with trusted public interest partners to support people of all ages in navigating the online world. Given its existing strengths in educational content, the BBC should provide an expanded offer to audiences of lifelong education and critical media and digital literacy. They could also provide audiences with practical tools to help them make sense of information online, which will supplement and enhance its world leading reputation in journalism.
- We recommend PSM invest more in **participation** on their platforms, ensuring more opportunities for the public to engage in civic life and dialogue. For the BBC in particular, with its record in research and development, we recommend investing in building and trialling participatory experiences and features that go beyond what is currently on offer and are distinct from social media. We see a clear opportunity for focusing on safe and positive digital spaces for younger audiences to provide essential places online to engage in civic life, community life and with their peers.
- PSM must ensure that public trust is central to decisions about **partnership and collaboration**. We consistently heard from our mini-public greater confidence in partnerships with other public interest organisations (such as other PSM, civil society, community groups and government) than with commercial technology companies. As the BBC develops its approach to partnerships, consideration should be given to the alignment of partners' values, interests and incentives, and how these support the BBC's public service objectives.

# 8. IMPLICATIONS FOR PSM AND POLICYMAKERS

## IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

- Participants want to see an expanded role for the BBC in many areas – including technology and innovation, digital inclusion, media literacy, responsible AI and civic participation. This can only be delivered against if the Government provides the BBC with a **sustainable funding model** as part of the Charter Review process, so that adequate resources can be allocated to these areas. Policymakers more broadly should ensure that PSM organisations are adequately resourced to invest in technology and innovation in the public interest.
- The Charter Review process should also set out **an appropriate mandate** for the BBC having a leading role in socio-technical research, development and innovation in the public interest. This could include supporting experimentation in areas such as civic participation, responsible AI, and emerging technologies. This requires adequate funding and the resources to carry out commitments and desired actions.
- As part of ongoing Charter Review process, any enhanced remit for greater **participation of the public** in BBC plans and decision-making should be accompanied by adequate support for meaningful and sustained participatory work.
- Government should lead a co-ordinated national approach to **digital inclusion**, drawing on the expertise of public service media, civil society organisations and local community groups. This should include direct engagement with the public through community outreach and mechanisms such as citizens' panels.
- Government and regulators should **hold commercial platforms to account more strongly**, particularly in areas such as online harms, data protection, and algorithmic recommendations. They should also consider how they incentivise the development of safer alternative spaces for civic discussion online, including via public service media.
- Policymakers should strengthen **policy and regulatory frameworks to secure the prominence and discoverability** of PSM. Participants consistently highlighted the importance of ensuring trusted public service content remains visible and discoverable across connected devices, social media platforms and emerging AI services.

## NEXT STEPS

RIC is sharing participants' recommendations widely and is working with the BBC, other public service media and a network of partners to take this work forward. RIC has shared the outputs with the BBC, and the insights are already informing BBC R&D's approach to future strategy and work.

# APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY – THE DELIBERATION PROCESS

## HOW WAS THE DELIBERATION DESIGNED?

Deliberative work can take many forms, so why did we choose our approach?

The deliberation adopted a hybrid design, combining five online workshops and a two-day in-person weekend summit. This structure was chosen deliberately to balance breadth of access with depth and quality of deliberation, different goals that can be in tension with one another in public engagement design, as well as to balance resource constraints.

Online workshops offered national reach, reduced geographical and financial barriers to participation, and could be supported with accessible materials, digital training and wraparound practical assistance. The in-person summit, by contrast, allowed for a quality of face-to-face interaction, creative co-production and sustained collective deliberation that is difficult to replicate in digital formats.

The deliberation amounted to 30 hours structured deliberation over the course of four weeks, 15 hours online on weekday evenings, and two full days at the in-person summit, providing the depth of engagement necessary to generate meaningful, participant-owned recommendations.

The process was designed around two core deliberative functions: capacity building in the early sessions, enabling participants to engage with complex material from an informed position; and co-production and ratification in the later sessions, through which participants developed, refined and formally adopted their visions, priorities and recommendations.

Our approach also blended deliberation with futures thinking through future scenarios deployed in the online workshops and creative activities at the summit.

## WHO WAS INVOLVED?

RIC was the convenor and commissioner of the deliberation, responsible for ensuring decision makers engage with the outputs, establishing the governance structure, leading design of the process, overseeing all content and materials, on-site event management, and analysis and write-up of the outcomes. The BBC was the organisational partner, contributing expertise to help identify key challenges for PSM which informed the framing of the deliberation, and delivering talks and demonstrations. Elgon Social Research was the delivery partner, advising on best practice, co-shaping the approach, working with the Sortition Foundation on recruitment, leading the organisation and facilitation of online workshops, facilitating the summit, and ensuring participations were fully supported throughout the process.

An Independent Advisory Board and Youth Advisory Group were set up to provide input throughout the deliberation. The Independent Advisory Board was comprised of eight professionals with expertise in the topics covered by the deliberation and in participatory research. It met twice as a group, once during the set up and planning phase and once after the deliberation had finished. Members were also invited to review materials and consulted individually in relation to their areas of expertise.

Youth voice was central to the design of the deliberation through the Youth Advisory Group, which included seven young people aged 16-24 from across the UK who each have prior experience in youth participation projects. In monthly sessions, the group discussed the four proposed deliberation areas to share their views on the opportunities and challenges affecting young people. Their views shaped the discussion topics for the deliberation and the youth perspectives in the participant booklet and advise on best practice for supporting young people throughout the deliberation.

## WHAT WERE THE PARTICIPANTS ASKED TO DO AND CONSIDER?

The central remit question for the deliberation was:

**How should we make, shape or use technology to ensure everyone benefits from PSM in a digital age?**

Four sub questions guided the online workshops and summit:

- 1. How could PSM ensure everyone can benefit from their online services and confidently and safely engage online?**
- 2. What role could PSM play in supporting healthy online civic spaces so everyone can play a full part in a digital society?**
- 3. What role could PSM play in helping to ensure a balance between personalised content and shared experiences on digital platforms?**
- 4. What could PSM do to help build a trustworthy news and information environment online?**

At the summit, participants were asked to consider:

- Their visions: What they want from and for public service media in the future
- Their priorities: What the focus for PSM should be when it comes to technology and innovation
- Their recommendations: What needs to happen in next 3-5 years to help move towards this future

The deliberation was advisory in nature, which means the recommendations generated are put forward on an advisory basis for the BBC and other PSM to consider.

## HOW DID WE DECIDE ON THE DELIBERATION FRAMING AND REMIT QUESTION?

RIC set the remit question and scope of the deliberation. Framing is a critical part of deliberation design and several key factors influenced what this deliberation focused on and how the remit question was framed. Firstly, RIC has a research focus on addressing the challenges facing public service media in a digital age and the implications of the rapid development of media technologies has risen to the top of the agenda for these organisations. The organisational partner for the deliberation, the BBC, is interested in understanding what the public expect and want from PSM's technology and innovation activities in this changing landscape. The scope, framing, remit question and topics were decided after extensive research and consultation with experts by the RIC research team and reflect topics and important questions that remain unsettled and where public input is needed and would be valued. Funding and editorial decisions were out of scope for this deliberation.

The RIC team of researchers mapped current debates and issues relating to PSM, technology and innovation, alongside what is already known about public views on these issues. Over a -6month period, they engaged with experts and decisions makers across the media industry, policy arena, academia and subject matter experts at the BBC. They did this with three criteria in mind: known areas of public concern; live policy debates; PSM industry priorities, with a particular focus on the BBC. Input was also gathered from RIC's Youth Advisory Group and Independent Advisory Board. This process ensured the deliberation connected not only to the big developments impacting people's experiences of media, but also what was happening in the industry, and important policy areas, which helped to ensure the greatest opportunity for impact from the outcomes of the deliberation within the BBC and beyond.

There are benefits to this higher level of structuring of the issues before deliberation. It can avoid the discussion becoming too broad and vague and can be useful for decision makers and policymakers, improving the likelihood they engage with and act on the outputs. Recognising

that highly structuring can carry a risk of diminishing the ability of those consulted to freely elaborate on their views and position, we framed the questions openly to allow those taking part to determine what is needed to deliver good outcomes – allowing space for participants to bring their experiences, view and suggestions to the issues. The advisory nature of the deliberation and the specific nature of the BBC's involvement was clearly explained to manage expectations.

## HOW PEOPLE WERE SELECTED TO TAKE PART

### A CIVIC LOTTERY FOR A UK REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE

Recruitment was conducted using a civic lottery approach, delivered in partnership with the Sortition Foundation. Civic lottery is a methodology that ensures the random selection of a group of people from a prior data set such as a postal address folder (PAF in the UK), to ensure that in principle, anyone from that data set could have the opportunity to participate.

The Sortition Foundation specialises in stratified random sampling in the UK to assemble citizen panels that are broadly representative of the wider population - a method rooted in the democratic tradition of selecting participants by lot rather than self-selection or election. Unlike open-call recruitment, which tends to attract those already engaged in public life, a civic lottery reaches people who would not ordinarily put themselves forward, producing a panel that more accurately reflects the range of views, experiences and backgrounds present across society and includes those least likely to engage. PSM exist to serve everyone in the UK and are known to underserve certain demographics – so this approach was particularly well-suited to both ensuring a representative sample of UK society and including the voices of groups underserved by PSM.

Sortition is considered one of the most effective mechanisms to select assembly participants according to the principles of randomness, representation and equality but it is not without some limitations, and some have highlighted the risk of low participation from marginalised communities. Given the importance of the

inclusion of groups who may use PSM a balance of ensuring broad national representation with inclusion shaped the ultimate design of the recruitment sample through the identification of boosts for groups underrepresented with respect to those the BBC.

The recruitment process was designed from the outset to produce a group that was both descriptive and represented the diversity of the UK public, with deliberate and structured provision for two groups whose voices matter most to this work: young people aged 16-25 and individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds. These groups face well-documented structural barriers to participation in formal public dialogue, including digital exclusion, caring responsibilities, financial constraints, and limited prior experience of civic engagement, and targeted efforts were made to ensure their meaningful inclusion. They also have been shown to use PSM services less than other demographics. Through this approach we sought to balance considerations of the need for both representation and inclusion.

The Sortition Foundation maintains a database of individuals who have actively opted in to be contacted for civic participation processes. At the time of recruitment, this database held approximately 9,000 contacts across the UK, all of whom were contacted as part of the initial outreach for this process. From these initial expressions of interest, the Sortition Foundation then applied the quota framework to this pool of interested individuals, selecting those whose participation would best fulfil the required demographic profile. From this, 116 participants were invited to take part in the process. The remaining opted-in contacts who had expressed interest but were not selected in the initial round were retained as a reserve list.

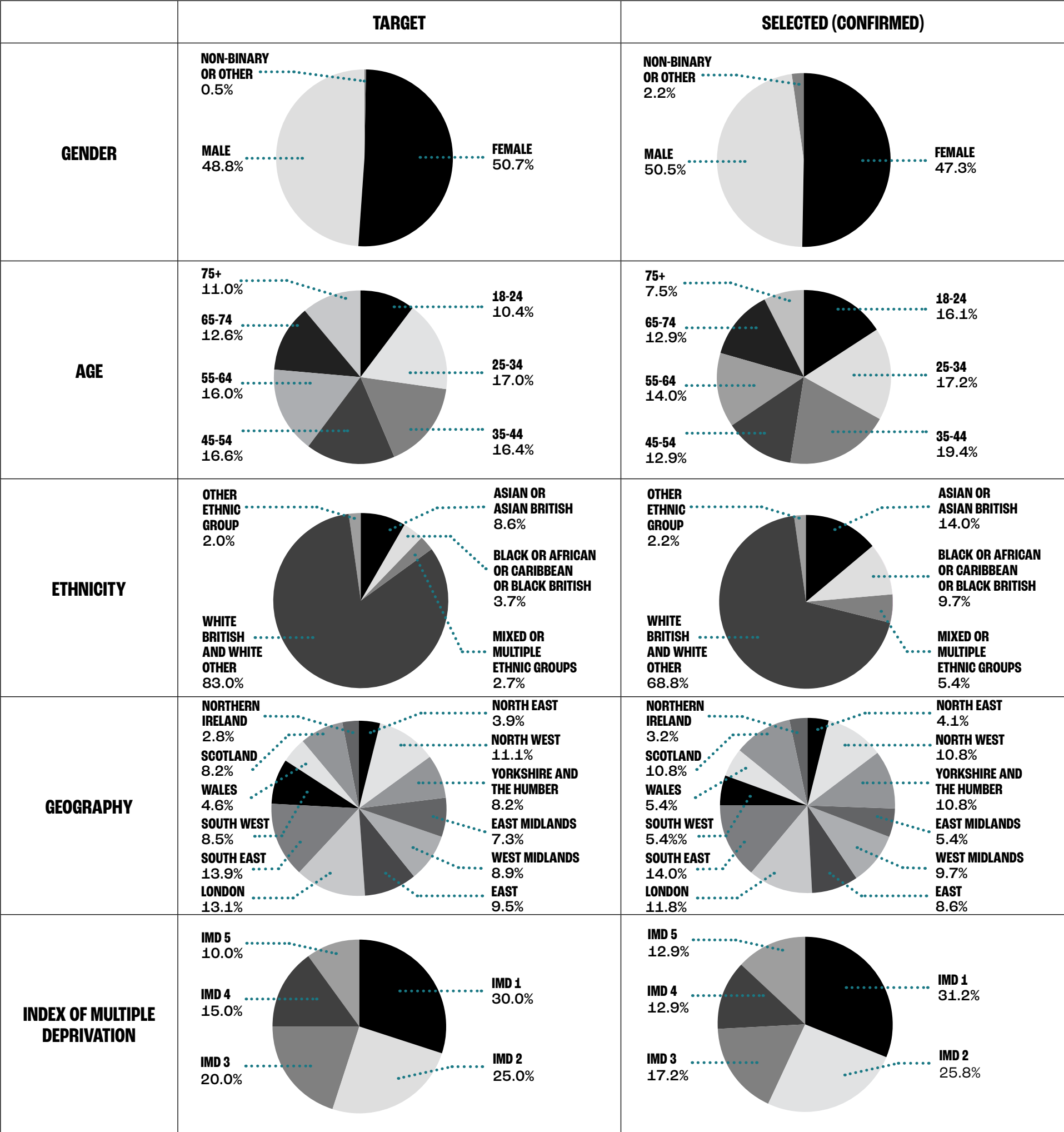
Where participants subsequently dropped out, replacements were drawn from this reserve list using the same quota-matching approach, ensuring that the overall demographic composition of the panel was maintained throughout the process. People who held roles at the BBC or other public service media organisations or who were involved in the BBC Charter Review process were excluded from the sample.

Attrition is a recognised challenge in deliberative exercises, particularly those with multiple stages as participants drop out over time. Our deliberation had an attrition of 10 before the initial workshop, leaving 106 confirmed. Attendance for individual workshops ranged between 81-89. We ran two supplementary workshops for those who had missed a session or were brought in to replace dropouts. We had 93 participants attend the summit, including four individuals recruited through the targeted top-up exercise described above.

Dropout was high among younger age groups (18-24), and the reserve list was exhausted like-for-like replacement available. To address this, four additional participants were recruited from the next age bracket up (25-34). Recognising that these participants were joining the process at a later stage, a dedicated single online workshop was designed and delivered to bring them up to speed with the material and discussions covered in the earlier sessions, ahead of their attendance at the in-person summit. This ensured they were able to participate fully and meaningfully in the co-production work at the summit rather than arriving without the foundational context that other participants had built up over the preceding workshops. The sampling and recruitment design process was overseen by the RIC team who shaped the identification of the criteria for selection and shared with the Independent Advisory Board for input. **See next page for a full demographic breakdown.**

|                                     |                                                | Desired Sample |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Age                                 | 18-24                                          | 23-24          |
|                                     | 25-34                                          | 22-23          |
|                                     | 35-44                                          | 16-17          |
|                                     | 45-54                                          | 16-17          |
|                                     | 55-64                                          | 15-16          |
|                                     | 65-74                                          | 12-13          |
|                                     | 75+                                            | 10-11          |
| Gender                              | Male                                           | 56-57          |
|                                     | Female                                         | 58-59          |
|                                     | Non-binary or other                            | 1-2            |
| Ethnicity                           | Asian or Asian British                         | 13-14          |
|                                     | Black or African or Caribbean or Black British | 6-7            |
|                                     | Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups                | 5-6            |
|                                     | White British and White Other                  | 86-87          |
|                                     | Other ethnic group                             | 2-3            |
| Region                              | East                                           | 4-5            |
|                                     | East Midlands                                  | 8-9            |
|                                     | London                                         | 15-16          |
|                                     | North East                                     | 4-5            |
|                                     | North West                                     | 12-13          |
|                                     | Northern Ireland                               | 3-4            |
|                                     | Scotland                                       | 9-10           |
|                                     | South East                                     | 16-17          |
|                                     | South West                                     | 9-10           |
|                                     | Wales                                          | 5-6            |
|                                     | West Midlands                                  | 10-11          |
|                                     | Yorkshire and The Humber                       | 9-10           |
| IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation) | IMD 1                                          | 34-35          |
|                                     | IMD 2                                          | 28-29          |
|                                     | IMD 3                                          | 23-24          |
|                                     | IMD 4                                          | 17-18          |
|                                     | IMD 5                                          | 11-12          |
| Disability                          | Yes                                            | 27-28          |
|                                     | No                                             | 88-89          |

Notwithstanding the attrition challenges, the final composition remained broadly aligned with the original quotas across most demographic dimensions. The main area of divergence was in the youngest age group (18-24) where dropout rates exceeded available reserve capacity to meet the boosted figure.



**INTERGENERATIONAL DESIGN WITH A YOUTH LENS AND DEDICATED SUPPORT**

Rather than creating a separate parallel process for younger participants, the decision was made to boost representation of young people aged 18-25 within the main panel through the recruitment process itself. This meant that younger voices were present and active throughout the full deliberative process, engaging directly alongside participants from older age groups rather than in a siloed setting. This was a deliberate design choice.

An integrated intergenerational format enables empathy and mutual learning across generations, both of which are important to a process concerned with PSM's long-term future and ensures that younger participants' perspectives are heard and tested within the full group rather than reported back to it separately. Boosting the proportion of younger participants within the panel, rather than convening them apart from it, treated young people as full deliberative participants rather than a separate consultee group.

The RIC Youth Advisory Group were consulted on the topics proposed for the deliberation and shared their views on the opportunities and challenges affecting young people. Their views shaped the framing of the topics for the deliberation and the youth perspectives in the participant booklet. They also used their experience and knowledge from their involvement in prior youth participation projects to advise on best practice for supporting young people throughout the deliberation.

**INCLUSION, ACCESSIBILITY AND WRAPAROUND SUPPORT**

Participants were remunerated for their time Participants were remunerated for their time in line with the living wage. Hotel rooms were provided and they were reimbursed for travel. Food and refreshments were provided on site and participants were provided with a meal voucher in the evening. Particular attention was paid to ensuring that the design was genuinely accessible to participants facing financial, digital or logistical barriers. Support measures built into the process included:

- Financial support for time, caring responsibilities and other participation costs, including participant honoraria
- Equipment loans and mobile data packages for participants facing digital exclusion, 1-1 call and needs assessment, onboarding and digital confidence-building sessions prior to the main programme
- Plain-language accessible materials provided in advance of each session and use of subtitled videos
- Travel and accommodation arrangements for the in-person summit
- Workshops scheduled for weekday evenings to best accommodate the widest number of people's availability, including those with caring responsibilities
- For those who said they would feel more comfortable attending with someone, the option to bring a chaperone to the summit or bring a companion to the hotel

These measures were considered essential to the equity objectives of the process, and not optional additions. Without them, meaningful participation by lower-income and digitally excluded participants would not have been achievable.

**HOW DID PARTICIPANTS REACH THEIR VISIONS, PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS?**

**CAPACITY-BUILDING AND DELIBERATION IN ONLINE WORKSHOPS**

Workshops were designed to give all participants a grounding in the workshop topic, an understanding of key considerations for public service media, and of differing perspectives on what could be done to address the related challenges. They enabled capacity building through peer and expert learning, alongside respectful group discussion and targeted deliberation to reach group decisions. Trained facilitators supported this process. The opening workshop also involved onboarding the participants to build understanding of the deliberation process and grow confidence to take part, setting expectations and building rapport between organisers, facilitators and participants.

During the 15-hours of online workshops, participants learnt about and discussed:

**Workshop 1:** The contemporary media and technology landscape, the role of public service media organisations in the UK and the challenges facing them.

**Workshop 2:** Digital inclusion and online safety

**Workshop 3:** Civic participation online

**Workshop 4:** Personalisation and discovery

**Workshop 5:** Information integrity, news and AI

Each 3-hour workshop followed the same structure, including an introduction from the RIC team, a demonstration from the BBC Blue Room, a discussion of lived experiences in breakout rooms, a topic introduction video, expert presentations and Q&A, discussion on future scenarios, a token allocation exercise and polls.

During this time, participants shared their lived experiences with each other, questioned experts, had in-depth discussion around the questions and issues raised and their preferred futures, and took part in token allocation exercises designed to help them surface trade-offs and group preferences. They began forming views, reflecting on their own and others' values and

priorities, and identified some interventions they felt would be important opportunities to do things differently.

**CAPACITY BUILDING: MATERIALS AND EXPERT CONTRIBUTORS**

Providing balanced, accurate and comprehensive information was a core requirement of the design of materials and selection of expert contributors and the information they covered.

Participants were provided with bespoke materials, all created by the RIC research team and overseen by the Independent Advisory Board. In advance of the deliberation, all were given access to a companion booklet covering important information on the topic and each topic area. This was organised by workshop.

The materials created for the workshops included: short topic introduction videos, expert speaker videos. A list of key additional resources was also provided for those who wanted to explore the topic further. These were shared after it had taken place for them to revisit, along with responses to questions they had asked. These materials can be found on the RIC website or on request to the RIC team.

Ten speakers were invited to the online workshops to provide an expert view on the topic and associated key issues to participants. The role of speakers was to assist participants to understand the topic context and make sense of different perspectives and arguments. They answered questions in a formal Q&A session and informally during breaks and in small group sessions.

Each workshop also included a live demonstration session from the BBC Blue Room – a team focused on understanding emerging technologies. These demonstrations were part of the learning process and sought to bring key changes, challenges and opportunities to life, through examples and demonstrations of technologies and key issues outlined in the companion booklet, showing how these issues played out in different contexts.

| Workshop                                          | Session content                                                                                                                                                                       | Blue Room technical demonstrations                                                                                                                                                                                          | Group work<br>Sharing lived experience                                                                      | Expert speakers and Q&A                                                                                                                                                                      | Group work<br>Discussing PSM & technology and innovation                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: PSM in a changing media & technology landscape | Exploring the current media environment and changing audience behaviours. Introduction to public service media and opportunities and challenges they face in a digital age.           | Showing an overview of some of the biggest changes impacting the media environment and how this is changing how people consume media.                                                                                       | Small group discussion sharing experiences of media and PSM                                                 | Kristian Porter, CEO, Public Media Alliance<br><br>Catherine Johnson, Professor of Media and Communications, University of Leeds<br><br>Bill Thompson, Head of Public Value Research BBC R&D | Small group discussion around role and expectations of PSM                                                                                            |
| 2: Digital inclusion and online safety            | Exploring changes in media brought about by the internet, including IPTV. How PSM could ensure everyone benefits from their online services and engage confidently and safely online. | Showing how media consumption has moved online (particularly broadcast TV to internet TV), and the benefits opportunities and challenges this can bring (e.g. accessibility, usability, skills and literacies).             | Small group discussion sharing experiences digital media and inclusion                                      | Simeon Yates, Professor of Digital Culture in the Department of Communications and Media, University of Liverpool<br><br>Helen Burrows, Controller Distribution, BBC                         | Small group discussion around different potential areas of PSM investment when it comes to digital inclusion, and token allocation exercise           |
| 3: Civic participation online                     | Exploring media in terms of participation. Developments brought about by the internet and participatory technologies and PSM's role in supporting civic life on and offline.          | Showing how the internet and new technologies support participation in media and examples of associated challenges and issues                                                                                               | Small group discussion sharing experiences of using technologies to participate in social and cultural life | Carl Miller, co-founder of the Centre for the Analysis of social media (CASM)<br><br>Miranda Marcus, Head of Product and AI in BBC Nations, BBC                                              | Small group discussion around different potential areas of PSM investment when it comes to participation, and token allocation exercise               |
| 4: Personalisation and discovery on platforms     | Exploring developments in personalised media and how PSM is developing its platforms and services to meet changing audience expectations, and uphold PSM values,                      | Showing and explaining types of personalisation on platforms and devices e.g. TVs and related issues of prominence and how content itself can be adapted (e.g. by language).                                                | Small group discussion sharing experiences of personalisation                                               | Georgina Born, Professor of Anthropology, University College London<br><br>Helen Burrows, Controller Distribution, BBC (stand in for colleague who couldn't attend)                          | Small group discussion around different potential areas of PSM investment in relation to personalised media, and token allocation exercise            |
| 5: Information integrity, news and AI             | Exploring developments in AI and how PSM could help to build a trustworthy news and information environment online.                                                                   | Showing and explaining some of the latest developments in Generative AI e.g. how easy it is to create text, images, audio and video that is convincingly real and the issues this raises for media providers and audiences. | Small group discussion sharing experiences of AI and media                                                  | Charlie Beckett, Professor, Department of Media and Communications at London School of Economics<br><br>Hicham Yezza, Principal Data Scientist for Responsible AI, BBC                       | Small group discussion around different potential areas of PSM investment when it comes to developments in AI and news, and token allocation exercise |

SUMMIT: RECOMMENDATIONS AND RATIFICATION

The summit was the deliberative centrepiece of the process and shifted attention from learning to deep deliberation and co production. It brought the participants together in person over two days to respond to the remit question by developing a collective set of Vision statements, Priorities and Recommendations over a time horizon of the next five years. At the start of the first day, participants were provided with summaries of the workshops that reflected the groups’ deliberation to that point to help them reorient to the subject matter. The summit then proceeded as follows:

- **Vision statement development:** Participants were arranged into 12 groups with three groups allocated to discuss one of the four themes in detail. Every group created a vision statement related to their theme following the guidance that it should describe what success would look like in three to five years’ time, be concise and outcome focused. The RIC team combined the vision statements for each area into an overarching Vision statement, which was brought back to the group in plenary for review.
- **Priority generation and voting:** Each group then generated a set of three priorities for action by PSM and other parties. They were given the guidance that a priority should be urgent, important, will make a big difference to a lot of people, and can be done in the next three-five years. The RIC team took the priorities and prepared them for voting, combing priorities where there was duplication. The priorities were then voted on by all participants using Mentimeter. This process identified the three priorities with the most support per topic area, meaning a total of 12 priorities across the four topics were taken forward to the next stage.
- **Recommendation development and ratification:** Each group was given one priority and tasked with creating an initial set of up to three recommendations. They were given the guidance that a recommendation should be the practical actions, ideas, or interventions that PSM should take in the next 3-5 years to help move towards the visions and priorities.

Once created, these recommendations were circulated to three other groups, such that each group was able to input into each topic. The groups discussed, refined and could add further recommendations if they felt it was necessary. Finally, the recommendations were returned to the original group for a final review.

The full set of recommendations (55 in total) were then brought back into plenary to be reviewed, discussed, amended and ratified. Each recommendation was discussed by each group before they could express any comments, additional considerations, or objections in plenary, which were noted by the facilitating team. Where the group agreed on an amendment, we implemented this and made this amendment clear before voting. Each individual then communicated their level of support for each recommendation using Mentimeter, voting on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Agreement levels were assessed using the proportion of respondents selecting Agree or Strongly Agree. A statement was considered to have achieved agreement where more than 50% of respondents selected one of these response categories. A statement was considered to have achieved strong agreement where more than 75% of respondents selected Agree or Strongly Agree. Statements falling below the agreement threshold (less than 51%) should be interpreted as lacking majority support, which may represent divided opinion, a high proportion of neutral responses, or differing perspectives across respondents.<sup>20</sup>

The deliberation produced 4 visions, 12 priorities and 55 recommendations for public service. The recommendations made by participants are not directed towards a particular PSM organisation per se but rather collectively lay out the range of measures they prioritised as needing to happen to ensure everyone benefits from PSM in a digital age, including at times interventions by policymakers and others with decision-making power. After participants concluded their final recommendations, they were reflected on by the Responsible Innovation Centre Director who then outlined next steps. The Chief Technical Advisor for BBC Research and Development, who was in attendance at the summit, also thanked everyone for contributions and outlined BBC R&D’s plans to engage with the outputs.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES AND A FOCUS ON THE BBC

The afternoon of the second day was dedicated to two creative activities that focused participants’ attention on the BBC. In the first, they worked on personalised messages to the BBC on postcards. This gave participants an opportunity to think about what they had learnt and discussed throughout the deliberation and consider what they would want to say to the BBC about how it could make, shape or use technology to ensure everyone benefits from the BBC in the future.

In the second activity, participants worked on creative visions of a future BBC, which was designed to allow creative expression around what they want to see from the BBC in the future in relation to the four topics covered in the deliberation. Inspired by the history of the BBC in 100 objects, this session provided space for the participants to creatively showcase their ideas about a preferred future for the BBC in 12 objects, to be showcased in a ‘Gallery of a Future BBC’.

Participants were given a self-led handbook with a series of prompts, and asked to use creative thinking, teamwork and craft materials to bring their visions to life. This was an opportunity for a fun, practical, creative, and collaborative engagement. It was not about predicting what will happen – it was about imagining a future BBC they wanted to see.

Each group were given a set of craft materials and an activity guide.

**1. Ideating** – spending time individually reacting to the prompt from the guide

**2. Discussing** – working together to pull out the key points of agreement

**3. Creating** – utilising the materials provided to bring their visions to life

**4. Showcasing** – sharing their creations with the other participants in the ‘Gallery of a future BBC’

The activities were split by the core themes of the deliberation and were shared amongst the tables. Within each theme, each table had a slightly different focus, leading to three slightly

different objects connected by the core theme. Three groups designed a ‘thriving online kit’ to help people thrive in a future where the BBC is delivered over the internet. Participants used a sewing box full of arts and crafts material to create a kit for different people to thrive online, focusing on helping people with limited or no access to the internet, digital creativity and confidence, and young people online.

- Three designed a **‘digital public space’** to represent a healthy online place supported by the BBC where people feel connected and respected. Participants used a canvas to lay out a map showing all the important elements of this digital public space that the BBC would be involved in.
- Three created a **‘personalisation recipe’** for personalisation and discovery of BBC content that has the right mix to support shared experience and diverse media diets. Participants used different supermarket ingredients to represent different inputs to an algorithm, showing the proportions required for a BBC algorithm.
- Three groups made a **‘museum exhibit’** to show how in the future, the BBC’s innovation had helped promote reliable and trustworthy information in an age of AI. Participants created an exhibit box to display the objects created using arts and craft materials, and a newspaper article about the object, which focused on helping people find trustworthy news and information, helping people separate fact from fiction, and helping young people engage with and shape BBC News.

Once completed, their creations were taken to a dedicated area representing a ‘Gallery of a Future BBC’ and everyone was invited to explore each other’s objects and ideas as we wrapped up two days of debate and discussion. The afternoon produced 12 creative artefacts of a future BBC and 91 messages for the BBC about making, shaping and using technology to ensure everyone benefits in the future.

<sup>20</sup>. These thresholds are represented in the tables in Appendix 2, where depth of colour represents strength of agreement.

DIGITAL INCLUSION

Original Vision statements

Table 1: By 2031, PSM is inclusive, safe, affordable and easy to use. It is supported in communities through education and increased access to technology.

Table 2: An inclusive, safe and responsible PSM digital space should incorporate accessibility as standard, with different formats and delivery. Focus on education for both older & younger generations, and those with disabilities. This should also include engagement with tech service providers.

Table 3: A world where digitalisation is normal, and no one is left behind, where all people have the continuous education and access to technologies in a safe and nurturing environment, supported by society, government and PSM.

Final combined Vision statement

Public service media that is inclusive and universally enjoyed in an internet first future is accessible, affordable and easy to use. PSM should work with society, government, and technology providers to support communities with continuous education for all, access, and a safe and nurturing environment to ensure no one gets left behind.

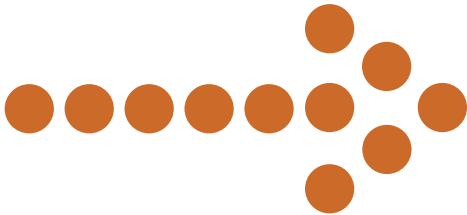
| PRIORITY                                                                                    | VOTES IN TOP 3 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Become a trusted source of information and education across society                         | 58%            |
| Collaboration with governing bodies to regulate and support online safety and accessibility | 54%            |
| Educational resources, programming and content to support digital inclusion                 | 41%            |
| Ensuring affordability and budget friendly technology options                               | 31%            |
| Personalisation options added to account to control site wide accessible delivery format    | 30%            |
| Local community training and engagement around technologies                                 | 29%            |
| Increased accessibility through AI, mentoring initiatives catering for everyone             | 20%            |
| Engaging with tech service providers to ensure appropriate guardrails in digital spaces     | 19%            |
| Access to inclusive and user-friendly technologies                                          | 15%            |

Final Priorities

Become a trusted source of educational resources, programming, information and content that supports digital inclusion across society (combination of 1 & 3)

Working with governing bodies and regulators to support digital inclusion, online safety and accessibility. (2)

Ensuring affordable and budget friendly technology options (4)



| RECOMMENDATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | STRONG<br>DISAGREE |    |    |    | STRONG<br>AGREE | TOTAL VOTES | AGREEMENT |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----|----|----|-----------------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>PRIORITY: BECOME A TRUSTED SOURCE OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES, PROGRAMMING, INFORMATION AND CONTENT THAT SUPPORTS DIGITAL INCLUSION ACROSS SOCIETY</b>                                                                                  |                    |    |    |    |                 |             |           |
| PSM should invest in local community groups to educate how to navigate the online world safely across society                                                                                                                           | 6                  | 9  | 15 | 26 | 33              | 89          | 66%       |
| Set the standard for all online educational resources through extensive collaboration with libraries & universities on accreditation                                                                                                    | 3                  | 7  | 24 | 25 | 30              | 89          | 62%       |
| Actively engage with communities to educate and inform, about technology and innovation through schools, councils and community groups.                                                                                                 | 3                  | 1  | 6  | 30 | 49              | 89          | 89%       |
| Create learning content indicating clear levels so all can achieve the minimum level through tailored modules ensuring no one is left behind.                                                                                           | 4                  | 10 | 25 | 22 | 28              | 89          | 56%       |
| Research and collaborate with European PSM partners e.g., ZDF & ARD in Germany to understand what's been successful in tackling digital exclusion                                                                                       | 2                  | 4  | 21 | 31 | 31              | 89          | 70%       |
| Develop and/or provide hardware devices to enable digital access and education for those currently excluded, potentially including internet access across society.                                                                      | 12                 | 10 | 19 | 11 | 37              | 89          | 54%       |
| <b>PRIORITY: WORKING WITH GOVERNING BODIES AND REGULATORS TO SUPPORT DIGITAL INCLUSION, ONLINE SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY.</b>                                                                                                            |                    |    |    |    |                 |             |           |
| PSM to lead on creating a committee to make improvements in digital inclusion that is accountable to a citizens panel, collaborating with government agencies, relevant select committees and independent bodies.                       | 7                  | 9  | 16 | 29 | 28              | 89          | 64%       |
| On-going citizens panel, representative of the public, hybrid, using facilitators rather than leaders, BBC well placed to host this.                                                                                                    | 8                  | 12 | 15 | 29 | 25              | 89          | 61%       |
| Committee creates recommendations and generates new research on the impact of aging technology, accessibility standards, online safety and creating inclusive public or community spaces.                                               | 6                  | 3  | 16 | 32 | 32              | 89          | 72%       |
| Get involved in a zero-rating scheme, which means that PSM websites would not consume any data, from data or broadband plans, for certain users, so people can access PSM regardless of whether they have data left in their allowance. | 9                  | 3  | 15 | 22 | 39              | 88          | 69%       |
| <b>PRIORITY: ENSURING AFFORDABLE AND BUDGET FRIENDLY TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS</b>                                                                                                                                                             |                    |    |    |    |                 |             |           |
| PSM should collaborate with all kinds of organisations, from businesses to social enterprises to charities, to enable access to affordable technology.                                                                                  | 6                  | 5  | 16 | 18 | 44              | 89          | 70%       |
| Incentivise other organisations to support affordable technology through things like kitemarks, social responsibility schemes, and supporting new regulation.                                                                           | 11                 | 11 | 22 | 24 | 21              | 89          | 51%       |
| Offer and develop low-cost solutions to increase access to technology with other organisations such as tech donations, recycling, repairs and new funding.                                                                              | 5                  | 12 | 14 | 24 | 34              | 89          | 65%       |
| Support access to affordable technology with local community networks to help those who need it most, for example opening the doors to community hubs, libraries, schools etc                                                           | 4                  | 2  | 7  | 22 | 55              | 90          | 86%       |

CIVIC PARTICIPATION ONLINE

Original Vision statements

Table 4: PSM supports and encourages people to participate in civic life online across communities, leading by example and providing accessible, sustainable, and responsible information and diverse platforms.

Table 5: PSM connects and promotes civic life by being balanced, respectful, trustworthy, engaging, inclusive and accessible to everyone.

Table 6: PSM platforms will have healthy, intergenerational, civic debates in all kinds of social issues that impact different communities, moderated by PSM guidelines and a hybrid human and AI technology solution that defends the truth.

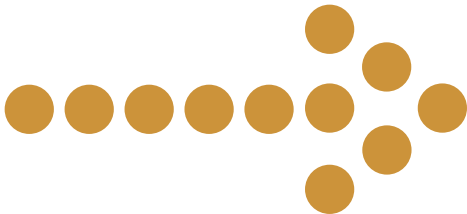
Final combined Vision statement

Public service media that helps people participate in civic life online supports people to connect across diverse and intergenerational communities, by providing accessible, trustworthy information and encouraging people to take part in respectful discussion on digital platforms.

| PRIORITY                                                                                                                                         | VOTES IN TOP 3 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| PSM to endorse accurate information online to prevent misinformation                                                                             | 44%            |
| Promoting civic engagement, by creating safer spaces for public dialogue, developing national projects from local, and encouraging civic feeling | 43%            |
| Accessibility and inclusion, building trust through impartiality as the underlying basis for civic engagement                                    | 43%            |
| More local reporting, both researching local issues and empowering local media                                                                   | 33%            |
| Move towards a public-led impartial funding model                                                                                                | 31%            |
| Develop new platforms that enable safe and diverse engagement alongside education on how to use it                                               | 30%            |
| Universality and access of PSM platforms for all                                                                                                 | 27%            |
| Review and develop existing platforms to include those not already engaged                                                                       | 27%            |
| Publicly funded actors to moderate and educate the online space                                                                                  | 21%            |

Final Priorities

- Work to ensure accurate information in online public spaces to help prevent misinformation (1)
- Create safer digital spaces for public dialogue, governed by public service values to enable diverse engagement, bringing together local and national communities (2)
- Ensure a baseline of trust on digital platforms through impartiality, inclusion and accessibility to enable full participation (3)



| RECOMMENDATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | STRONG DISAGREE |    |    |    | STRONG AGREE | TOTAL VOTES | AGREEMENT |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----|----|----|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>PRIORITY: WORK TO ENSURE ACCURATE INFORMATION IN ONLINE PUBLIC SPACES TO HELP PREVENT MISINFORMATION</b>                                                                                                                                         |                 |    |    |    |              |             |           |
| More time and resource spent on actively countering mis/disinformation online. Eg through news stories and debunking                                                                                                                                | 6               | 4  | 10 | 20 | 49           | 89          | 78%       |
| Play a role in regulation of misinformation on social media platforms, reporting content to the platforms, provide a reporting channel for people in local communities                                                                              | 12              | 6  | 17 | 30 | 23           | 88          | 60%       |
| Develop more verification tools e.g. to identify AI content and misinformation                                                                                                                                                                      | 6               | 2  | 15 | 12 | 54           | 89          | 74%       |
| For breaking news stories, be less reactive, set PSM apart by being accurate and verified                                                                                                                                                           | 14              | 19 | 15 | 18 | 22           | 88          | 45%       |
| Increase PSM presence in online spaces on existing platforms                                                                                                                                                                                        | 9               | 4  | 20 | 24 | 32           | 89          | 63%       |
| Develop PSM online platforms                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 40              | 11 | 16 | 7  | 13           | 87          | 23%       |
| Work with regulators and government to enforce existing regulations and develop new regulations                                                                                                                                                     | 3               | 5  | 22 | 21 | 38           | 89          | 66%       |
| <b>PRIORITY: ENSURE A BASELINE OF TRUST ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS THROUGH IMPARTIALITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY TO ENABLE FULL PARTICIPATION</b>                                                                                                     |                 |    |    |    |              |             |           |
| Use technology (including AI) to implement an impartial verification tool which shows where information has and has not been verified in online PSM community spaces                                                                                | 5               | 8  | 10 | 22 | 41           | 86          | 73%       |
| Build accessible interfaces into online PSM community spaces with help guides which help users tailor their experiences                                                                                                                             | 5               | 5  | 27 | 31 | 17           | 85          | 56%       |
| Moderation of online PSM community spaces should be at least partially human-led, ideally by impartial moderators, or if not, with moderators' associations made transparent                                                                        | 6               | 1  | 17 | 23 | 39           | 86          | 72%       |
| Build PSM-specific moderation guidelines and procedures through public and expert consultation which are specific to moderation of facts vs. users' behaviour                                                                                       | 7               | 3  | 19 | 26 | 32           | 87          | 67%       |
| Users should be required to agree to a set of guidelines to enter and complete a short set of exercises before entering PSM online community spaces, with guidelines explaining how each space is being moderated                                   | 25              | 16 | 19 | 14 | 12           | 86          | 30%       |
| PSM should create online services and tools that meet people with different needs where they are at (e.g. those with visual impairment, hearing difficulties, neurodiversities) to ensure all have meaningful access to PSM online community spaces | 5               | 2  | 12 | 22 | 46           | 87          | 78%       |
| <b>PRIORITY: CREATE SAFER DIGITAL SPACES FOR PUBLIC DIALOGUE, GOVERNED BY PUBLIC SERVICE VALUES TO ENABLE DIVERSE ENGAGEMENT, BRINGING TOGETHER LOCAL AND NATIONAL COMMUNITIES</b>                                                                  |                 |    |    |    |              |             |           |
| PSM should create digital platforms with online and in-person input/engagement from local communities and currently less-involved groups (acting as consultants, pilot testers, etc.) to enable/encourage broader participation                     | 9               | 9  | 10 | 24 | 37           | 89          | 69%       |
| PSM should work with a Parliament select committee (cross-political) and appropriate experts to create a legislative framework and regulator to govern, moderate and enforce guidance in digital public spaces                                      | 6               | 8  | 13 | 25 | 37           | 89          | 70%       |
| PSM create, monitor, and enforce strict user conduct guidelines with a strong anti-bullying focus to enhance accessibility and safe engagement                                                                                                      | 8               | 6  | 13 | 18 | 41           | 86          | 69%       |
| Humans and AI tools should be leveraged for identity verification on digital platforms – the option for an anonymous profile should remain for inclusivity, but be traceable by the provider in the event of a breach in user conduct               | 6               | 15 | 17 | 18 | 33           | 89          | 57%       |
| PSM commit to making their digital public spaces available to all free at the point of use                                                                                                                                                          | 3               | 1  | 12 | 20 | 53           | 89          | 82%       |
| PSM assess/evaluate how to feasibly incorporate as many accessibility features as possible into the platform (e.g. language/translation, disability accommodations)                                                                                 | 6               | 2  | 15 | 18 | 48           | 89          | 74%       |

PERSONALISATION AND DISCOVERY ONLINE

Original Vision statements

- Table 7: PSM that helps balance shared an individual experiences is one:
- Where no one is left behind
  - The voices of different stakeholders are heard and included (different publics including vulnerable groups government communities, charities/libraries)
  - People have resources and knowledge to engage (education, hardware, internet)
  - People and their data are safe and secure
  - People have easy and understandable control of levels of personalisation
  - Content is creative and brings people from different bubbles together
  - And accountability

Table 8: In 5 years, PSM will recognise us as multifaceted and evolving consumers and equip us to make our own informed choices balancing personalised and shared experiences

Table 9: PSM (with BBC leading) leads proper human personalisation and control, and local and national event making

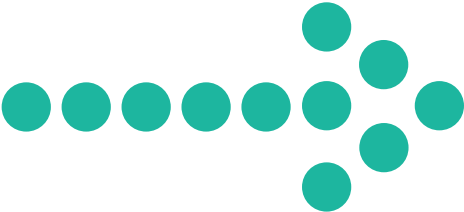
Final combined Vision statement

Public service media that helps balance individual and shared experiences is one that leads the way in delivering human-centred approaches to personalisation, equipping everyone to make informed choices, have easy ways to control their data and chosen levels of personalisation, and with content that brings different people together through local and national events.

| PRIORITY                                                                                             | VOTES IN TOP 3 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Setting moral, ethical and transparency standards that commercial providers must follow              | 56%            |
| Control over recommendations - don't have to choose between personalisation and broadening horizons  | 49%            |
| Educate and engage consumers about personalisation in order to build trust                           | 46%            |
| Understand diverse and multi-faceted consumer needs                                                  | 44%            |
| Collaboratively develop resources and provide access to education to engage with different platforms | 43%            |
| Traditional viewing format kept and ability to choose your view                                      | 31%            |
| Education on how media consumption works now                                                         | 24%            |

Final Priorities

- Set industry standards (moral, ethical & transparency) as a benchmark for commercial organisations (1)
- Build enhanced user controls over algorithmic recommendations (2)
- Provide educational resources to help build people's trust and understanding of personalisation (combination of 3, 5, 7)



| RECOMMENDATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | STRONG<br>DISAGREE |   |    |    | STRONG<br>AGREE | TOTAL VOTES | AGREEMENT |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---|----|----|-----------------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>PRIORITY: SET INDUSTRY STANDARDS (MORAL ETHICAL &amp; TRANSPARENT) AS A BENCHMARK FOR COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                    |   |    |    |                 |             |           |
| PSM should actively engage with different publics, government, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders to develop a code of practice                                                                                                                                                                                        | 1                  | 2 | 10 | 18 | 56              | 87          | 85%       |
| PSM should lead by example in terms of ethics and transparency and in following a code of practice                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 1                  | 1 | 4  | 13 | 69              | 88          | 93%       |
| PSM should ensure that users have the opportunity to understand, oversee and change personalisation and discovery and in this way make the process more transparent                                                                                                                                                          | 3                  | 1 | 8  | 25 | 50              | 87          | 86%       |
| PSM should allow users to withdraw and delete their data when they stop using a service                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 3                  | 0 | 6  | 11 | 67              | 87          | 90%       |
| PSM should be transparent with why, how and for what purposes data is collected and used. PSM should not be allowed to pass on data without user input                                                                                                                                                                       | 3                  | 2 | 5  | 12 | 65              | 87          | 89%       |
| PSM should prioritise public interest over commercial gain                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 1                  | 2 | 7  | 11 | 67              | 88          | 89%       |
| <b>PRIORITY: BUILD ENHANCED USER CONTROLS OVER ALGORITHMIC RECOMMENDATIONS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                    |   |    |    |                 |             |           |
| PSM should explain to users what personalisation means in the context of their remit and offer users the ability to opt in or change their minds anytime                                                                                                                                                                     | 5                  | 2 | 4  | 17 | 60              | 88          | 88%       |
| PSM should offer users the ability to set and change their own viewing preferences over time and understand their viewing patterns                                                                                                                                                                                           | 6                  | 0 | 4  | 22 | 56              | 88          | 89%       |
| For users who have consented, PSM should signpost a spectrum of future viewing options from personalisation to discovery and allow users to share recommendations with friends and family (with their consent)                                                                                                               | 9                  | 4 | 11 | 21 | 42              | 87          | 72%       |
| <b>PRIORITY: PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO HELP BUILD PEOPLE'S TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING OF PERSONALISATION</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                    |   |    |    |                 |             |           |
| Provide online and offline educational resources that are accessible, incorporate diverse learning styles and user needs (and be as accessible as possible)                                                                                                                                                                  | 2                  | 1 | 10 | 26 | 50              | 89          | 85%       |
| There should be widely accessible educational resources about personalisation across PSM platforms and on third party platforms. Algorithms could prioritise educational/public service content (as long as this maintains personal choice)                                                                                  | 7                  | 5 | 16 | 28 | 32              | 88          | 68%       |
| The content for the ideal educational resource should outline how personalisation works, list the data used and how they use it, it should demonstrate the limits of personalisation and the benefits of variety, and promote understanding of data rights. Content should also utilise innovative and creative storytelling | 8                  | 4 | 20 | 19 | 38              | 89          | 64%       |

INFORMATION INTEGRITY, NEWS AND AI

Original Vision statements

Table 10: PSM enables trust in news and information through access for all to tools to verify information to educate and empower and PSM leads by example in responsible use of AI nationally and worldwide

Table 11: PSM that fosters trust in news and media in an age of AI is the first choice of finding verified journalism and information that helps the public trust journalism and information in the age of AI.

Table 12: PSM that fosters trust in news and media in an age of AI ensures PSM is the gold standard for how AI is only applied in alignment with public service values, making it a healthy collective experience. PSM provide tools for everyone making AI uses that are visible, understandable, and accessible.

Final combined Vision statement

Public service media that fosters public trust in news and media in the age of AI is the first choice for finding verified journalism and information and leads by example in responsible use of AI nationally and worldwide in alignment with public service values, providing accessible tools that educate and empower people for a healthy collective experience.

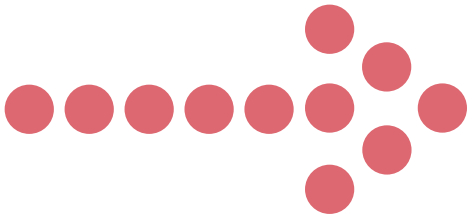
| PRIORITY                                                                                                | VOTES IN TOP 3 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| PSM collaborate to develop AI verification tool for the public multiplatform and understandable         | 51%            |
| A new regulatory body that puts the public and accuracy at the forefront                                | 48%            |
| PSMs must fulfil a duty to promote responsible use of AI through their own work and collaborations      | 43%            |
| Advocate for stricter regulation and identify funding                                                   | 42%            |
| Develop a verification model across all PSM platforms widely accessible to journalistic standard        | 39%            |
| Investment is needed in tools and technologies to help verify information and build AI tools to deliver | 36%            |
| Lifelong education – PSM must be the leading source of education on AI and information                  | 20%            |
| PSM develop principles on how to approach changing technology to be person-centred                      | 19%            |

Final Priorities

PSM work together to develop understandable AI verification tools for the public (Combination of 1, 5 & 6)

Advocate for stricter regulation around AI that puts the public and accuracy at the forefront, for example a new regulatory body (Combination of 2 & 4)

Fulfil a duty to promote responsible use of AI, including through their own work and collaborating with others (3)



| RECOMMENDATION                                                                                                                                                                                       | STRONG<br>DISAGREE |   |    |    | STRONG<br>AGREE | TOTAL VOTES | AGREEMENT |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---|----|----|-----------------|-------------|-----------|
| PRIORITY: PSM WORK TOGETHER TO DEVELOP UNDERSTANDABLE AI VERIFICATION TOOLS FOR THE PUBLIC                                                                                                           |                    |   |    |    |                 |             |           |
| PSMs collaboratively develop a framework for verification of info and news for users to verify and rate reliability of info - users of which would be able to claim accreditation for a PSM standard | 4                  | 5 | 8  | 21 | 44              | 82          | 79%       |
| Develop frictionless, easy to use default tool to verify information for all                                                                                                                         | 4                  | 2 | 10 | 17 | 49              | 82          | 80%       |
| PRIORITY: ADVOCATE FOR STRICTER REGULATION AROUND AI THAT PUTS THE PUBLIC AND ACCURACY AT THE FOREFRONT, FOR EXAMPLE A NEW REGULATORY BODY                                                           |                    |   |    |    |                 |             |           |
| PSM expand current AI policies to set the standard and share with a new regulatory body                                                                                                              | 10                 | 9 | 19 | 19 | 26              | 83          | 54%       |
| PSM regulate all of their AI content to set the benchmark for other media organisations                                                                                                              | 8                  | 5 | 8  | 17 | 44              | 82          | 74%       |
| PSM to lobby govt for new legislation to hold big tech to account around AI and ensure they contribute financially                                                                                   | 23                 | 9 | 18 | 13 | 19              | 82          | 39%       |
| PSM educate people of all ages about AI and its consequences                                                                                                                                         | 7                  | 5 | 6  | 21 | 44              | 83          | 78%       |
| PRIORITY: FULFIL A DUTY TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE USE OF AI, INCLUDING THROUGH THEIR OWN WORK AND COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS                                                                             |                    |   |    |    |                 |             |           |
| PSM should create an ongoing initiative to raise awareness on AI and trustworthy news - addressing literacy, critical perspectives and fostering PSM values                                          | 1                  | 5 | 11 | 22 | 44              | 83          | 80%       |
| PSM should build a fact checking and educational tool on how AI works for better news literacy                                                                                                       | 2                  | 3 | 14 | 27 | 36              | 82          | 77%       |
| PSM should establish a cross-industry body to enable a code of practice/guidelines, identifying the biggest AI concerns and deterring bad practice                                                   | 14                 | 6 | 15 | 20 | 29              | 84          | 58%       |
| PSM should create a verification symbol/tag to identify AI and verified non-AI generated content                                                                                                     | 4                  | 5 | 14 | 14 | 46              | 83          | 72%       |

#### SUGGESTED CITATION

Rhianne Jones, Bronwyn Jones, Joe Massey, Helen Jay, Jaspal Samra, Alice Weavers, Sophia Knight, 2026, A public deliberation on public service media, technology and innovation. Report by the Responsible innovation Centre for Public Media Futures. September 2026.

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