



**Swiss journalists join drive for news literacy at school:  
News literacy project Lie Detectors launches in Switzerland  
with Verlegerverband SCHWEIZER MEDIEN**

Brussels / Zürich – 3 May 2021 – Lie Detectors, the pan-European news literacy project, is bringing its award-winning programme of classroom visits to Switzerland in partnership with the country's German-language news publishers association Verlegerverband SCHWEIZER MEDIEN.

The campaign, which is already active in Austria, Belgium and Germany, will select up to 75 Swiss journalists together with SCHWEIZER MEDIEN and train them to deliver interactive news-literacy training sessions in German-speaking classrooms in Switzerland.

"Having successful operations in three EU countries and three languages, we are delighted to be launching in Switzerland," said Juliane von Reppert-Bismarck, Lie Detectors founder and director. "It's terrific to work with the widely respected Verlegerverband SCHWEIZER MEDIEN, which has already been placing an important focus on fostering media literacy."

"Furthering media literacy is a priority for the Verlegerverband SCHWEIZER MEDIEN, said SCHWEIZER MEDIEN incoming director Stefan Wabel. "We're very happy to be working on this important subject with Lie Detectors and thereby adding to our own programmes and activities."

Over the course of a year, Lie Detectors and Schweizer Medien will be arranging classroom visits by journalists for children aged 10-15 and their teachers to talk about how to spot fake news and how professional journalism works. During the pandemic and to reach far-flung parts of Switzerland, visits will be conducted via video-conferencing. Journalists conduct interactive sessions using an approach developed with children, educators and psychologists. All of this at no cost to schools: Lie Detectors is a non-profit organisation that is philanthropically funded by Hansjörg Wyss and the Wyss Foundation.

"The COVID pandemic has highlighted to us all the role that critical media literacy must play in stemming disinformation and the havoc it plays with democracy and human health," says von Reppert-Bismarck. "Switzerland can play an important role in the international debate over integrating critical media literacy into all curricula," said von Reppert-Bismarck. "This debate is ongoing at UN and OECD level."

"The workshops deal with a highly topical and important topic," said Marianne Läderach, the head of SCHWEIZER MEDIEN's Media Institute, who coordinates the Lie Detectors initiative in Switzerland. "Pupils learn how they can critically evaluate information and recognise disinformation in a digital media landscape that has become confusing. At the same time, the journalists provide an exciting insight into their work. They also show how mistakes can happen in even in professional journalism and how this differs from intentional disinformation."

Lie Detectors won the Digital Skills Award 2018 in the field of education in a European Commission competition, the award recognising that the sessions are adapted to different languages and media landscapes. It is active in English, German and French and advises EU institutions and governments on smart policies on stemming disinformation and its corrosive effect on democracy. It advocates for



the systematic inclusion and integration of news literacy into the curricula in schools and universities of teacher education.

“The vast majority of this age group already travels very far on the net and on social media and takes in much of what is circulating as information. We remind them of what most learn as toddlers: that it is unwise to accept candy from strangers. In times of information overload, they need the appropriate messaging skills so that they don't swallow everything that is presented to them and know the value and characteristics of reliable information,” said von Reppert-Bismarck.

A member of the Erasmus+ initiative's Friends of eTwinning campaign, Lie Detectors also delivers journalist-led teacher-training.

### **If you are interested in a school visit:**

Teachers are welcome to contact us: write to Marianne Läderach [marianne@lie-detectors.org](mailto:marianne@lie-detectors.org). Teachers need the following for a Lie Detectors visit: 90 minutes, a video-conferencing platform and internet access and, of course, bright students aged 10-15. Once matched with a journalist, school groups receive materials to prepare for the journalist's visit. More information about Lie Detectors at [www.lie-detectors.org](http://www.lie-detectors.org). More information about Verlegerverband SCHWEIZER MEDIEN at [www.schweizermedien.ch](http://www.schweizermedien.ch).

### **Press inquiries:**

For press inquiries or to arrange an interview, contact  
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### **Lie Detectors**

**Lie Detectors** is an independent and award-winning organisation headquartered in Brussels that works internationally to further news literacy. The organisation works with more than 250 professional journalists from public and private print, broadcast and online media. In its drive against disinformation Lie Detectors advocates for sustainable policies and measures in the fields of education and digital rights, both internationally and nationally.

[www.lie-detectors.org](http://www.lie-detectors.org)



### **Verlegerverband SCHWEIZER MEDIEN**

Verlegerverband SCHWEIZER MEDIEN is the industry association of private Swiss media companies with a focus on print and online media. It represents more than 100 companies and industry-related



associated members who together publish around 300 newspapers and magazines and offer various news platforms and electronic media. Together with the two regional language organisations, MÉDIAS SUISSES and STAMPA SVIZZERA, SCHWEIZER MEDIEN is committed to safeguarding the interests of private media companies in Switzerland. The association was founded in 1899. Its headquarters are in Zurich.

[www.schweizermedien.ch](http://www.schweizermedien.ch)



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