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SOCIAL MEDIA FOR STEM NONPROFITS

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Who are you trying to **connect with?**

Social media can be overwhelming. Effective social engagement strategy starts with knowing who your primary target audience is and your purpose for building a relationship with them.

Different audiences have different motivations for starting and maintaining a relationship with you.

Researchers

General Public

Interest Groups

Demographic

What are their interests, needs, priorities?

What kind of relationship can they have with you?

What are barriers to engaging?

The Strategic Process

05

Executive Strategy: Who is your primary target audience?

Audience Research: What do they need, want, enjoy?

Content Sourcing: What do you offer them?

Content Creation: How can you package it in a way that helps them take next steps with you?

Put yourself in their shoes. Build a hypothesis that you can test, measure, learn from, and iterate on.

Audience Touchpoints Along Engagement Funnel That We Control

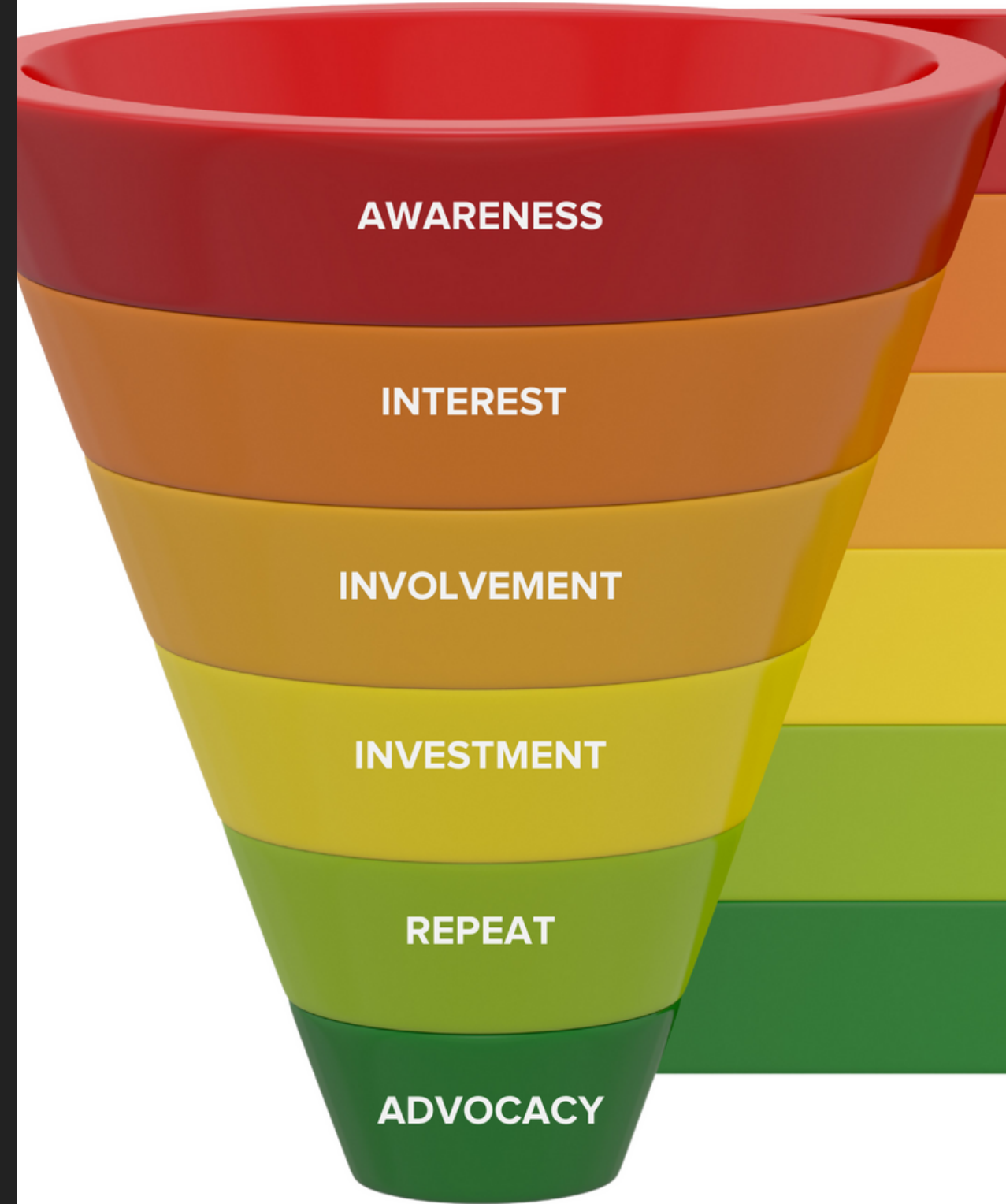Funnel stages (top to bottom): **AWARENESS · INTEREST · INVOLVEMENT · INVESTMENT · REPEAT · ADVOCACY**

What Does It Mean?	What Do We Want As Their Next Action?	Audience Touchpoints Along Engagement Funnel That We Control
NEW ENCOUNTER: In the awareness stage, supporters are just learning about you, encountering you from a variety of sources (e.g., social media, search engines, friends, partner orgs, etc.)	To move onto the next stage of the funnel, they'll need to take an action that shows their interest in your products or your mission. Show them you have a clear value-add to their lives, which they can return to, and they sign up for other socials, newsletter, etc.	*Audiences discover us.* **Hook: Topic, story, relevance.** TOUCHPOINTS: organic reach because someone shared your post, strategic boosted posts (beat the algorithm), cross-promotion with similar organizations, hopping on # for major days of celebrations.
CURIOSITY: They've read or heard a little about you and your work. Like an acquaintance, they now know a little about you and are interested in your mission, learning a bit about who you are, and what you do by this point.	To get them to move through to the next stage, they'll need to get involved with your organization. That could mean attending an event, reaching out about one of your programs, interacting beyond this first encounter.	*They know us or some subset of the brand identity.* TOUCHPOINTS: Website, socials, youtube, live/interactive experience, story syndication, referral from a trusted source.
ONE STEP BEYOND: They have participated in one of your initiatives (read one story, listened to a segment, dropped in on a program), yes, but they are not regular returners compared to your more engaged audiences and stakeholders.	To move onto the next stage, they will need to see you as something they can and must come back to. Events, gatherings are powerful for this -- think purpose-driven Twitter Spaces, IG Livestreams, AMAs.	*They follow us or sign up for something beyond the first encounter.* TOUCHPOINTS: They might save the post, follow our official accounts (as a passive fan/subscriber), on-demand search you, but less reliable engagement. You may need to survey your existing audiences to understand why you have passive, less engaged followers and how to active them or better serve their needs.
YOU'RE WORTH MY (EXPENDABLE) RESOURCES: They see their relationship with you as worth the 'investment' of time (scrolling your feed, reposting or commenting, clicking through on your links), money (purchasing ticket or other transaction), etc. Once they've made that initial 'investment,' the funnel is not over. It takes time and nurturing to either keep them here or move them onto the next level: deeper engagement.	To move from here onto the next level, the supporter wants to give shoutouts, testimonials, and help to expand your audience, bringing in new supporters from their spheres of influence.	*They care about our programming and choose or enable ways to be able to return regularly.* TOUCHPOINTS: Returning readers/commenters, they engage more regularly with content, you have an idea for when they follow-through on your calls to action. (e.g., RSVP for event, tell us your story, etc..)
RETURN, REPEAT, LOYALTY: At this point in the Engagement Funnel, they have been through a few encounters with you and continue to come back. Your relationship with them is stronger and you can rely on these folks to activate big asks like survey sign-ups, pop-up partnerships, etc.	These are defined by your organization's strategic goals. What are the biggest asks you're hoping your most loyal audiences could do for you?	*They regularly share our programming, stories, or brand, and recommend us to others.* TOUCHPOINTS: Return with more frequency. They are aware of and engage with our higher touchpoint experiences, & might openly suggest ways for you to better connect with others like them.
AMBASSADORS: Your ambassadors are here at the very bottom of the funnel. They can help you bring in a whole new audience to the top of your funnel. Keep your retention efforts in peak form to make sure these folks stick around and know their efforts are appreciated.	Similar to above.	*Long-term, deep investment in your mission, vision, values.* TOUCHPOINTS: The above plus, they strongly advocate for your work and impact. They feel a sense of reciprocated investment, and appreciate more intimate opportunities to connect with your org.

- Touchpoints: The moment an audience member interacts with you (a tweet, an Instagram story, a reposted Facebook link).
- What desired audience actions fit within each stage of the funnel?
- OKRs: How can we measure each of those actions?
- Prioritization: Which of those will have the most meaningful results for your organization?
- Desired: How can we better move our audiences toward those actions?
- Iteration: What improvements can we realistically pursue in terms of those actions? Understanding our limitations for resources, time, personnel -- how can we turn this into a sustainable, iterative learning experience with high impact?
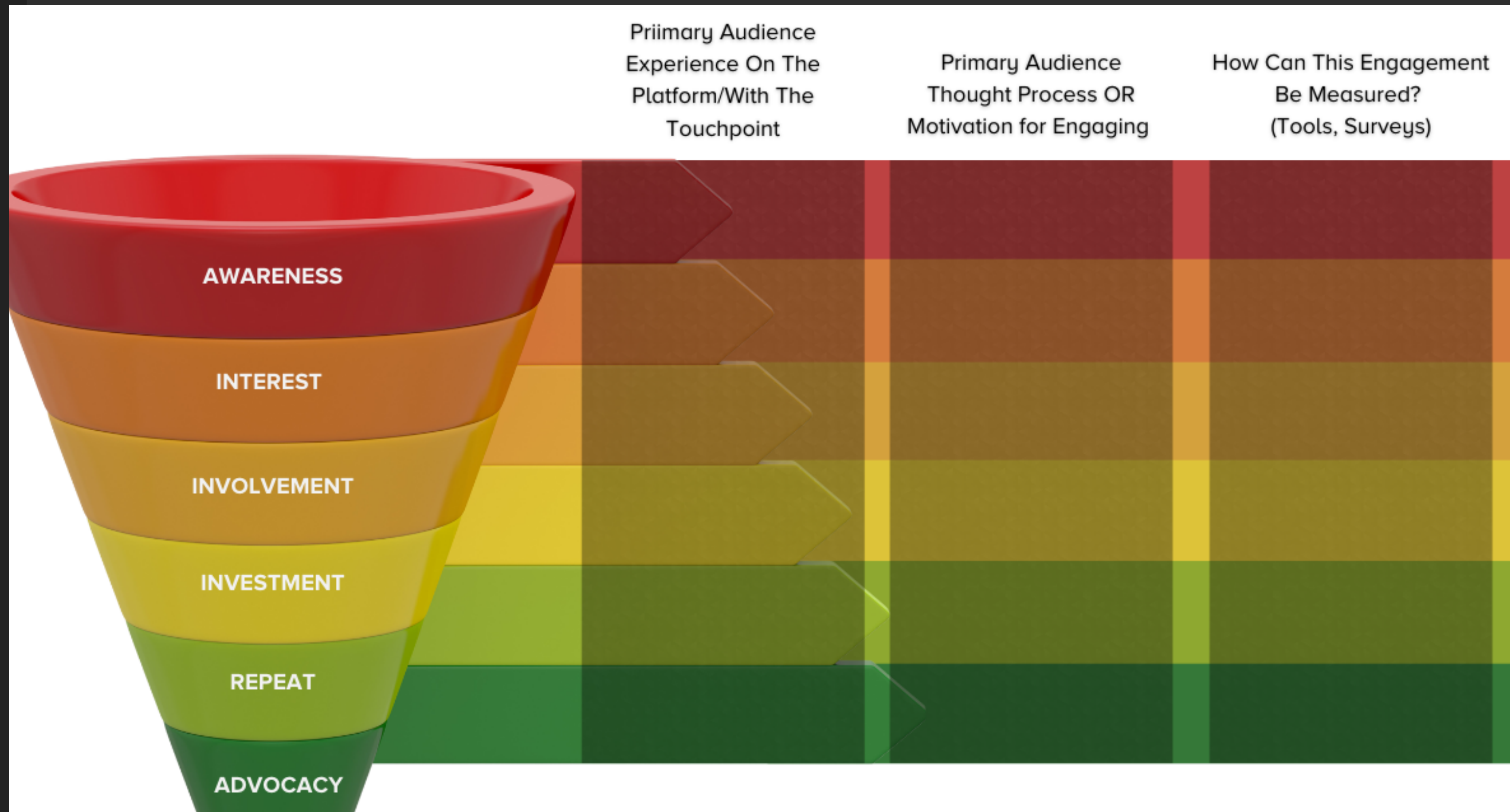
Researchers

General Public

Interest Groups

Executive Strategy: Who is your primary target audience?

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Content Sourcing: What do you offer them?

Content Creation: How can we package this message on social media?

Priimary Audience Experience On The Platform/With The Touchpoint

Primary Audience Thought Process OR Motivation for Engaging

How Can This Engagement Be Measured? (Tools, Surveys)

AWARENESS

INTEREST

INVOLVEMENT

INVESTMENT

REPEAT

ADVOCACY

Content Creation Process

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Original Content Source:
Web story, long-form video, podcast, event landing page, etc.

Who do I need to see this?:
Define the primary target audience and research how they behave on the platform.

Define your call to action:
Keep it clear. Keep it simple. Remember you have other touchpoints to do more work, so what is the ONE thing you want them to do?

Understand the platform's strengths, limitations, & culture:
Audiences interact differently in each platform. Deep engagement in Facebook happens in community groups and comments. IG is visual storytelling. TikTok is playful entertainment.

Here's what needs to happen. *Bandwidth issues?* Taking shortcuts (automating scheduled posts, where does fact-checking and gut-checks/sensitivity-checks come in) and reframing the asks for ourselves and our audiences so it's manageable.

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The Social Platorms

def., Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in *social networking*.

Commonly used: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, WeChat, YouTube
Gained popularity during pandemic: TikTok, Clubhouse, NextDoor
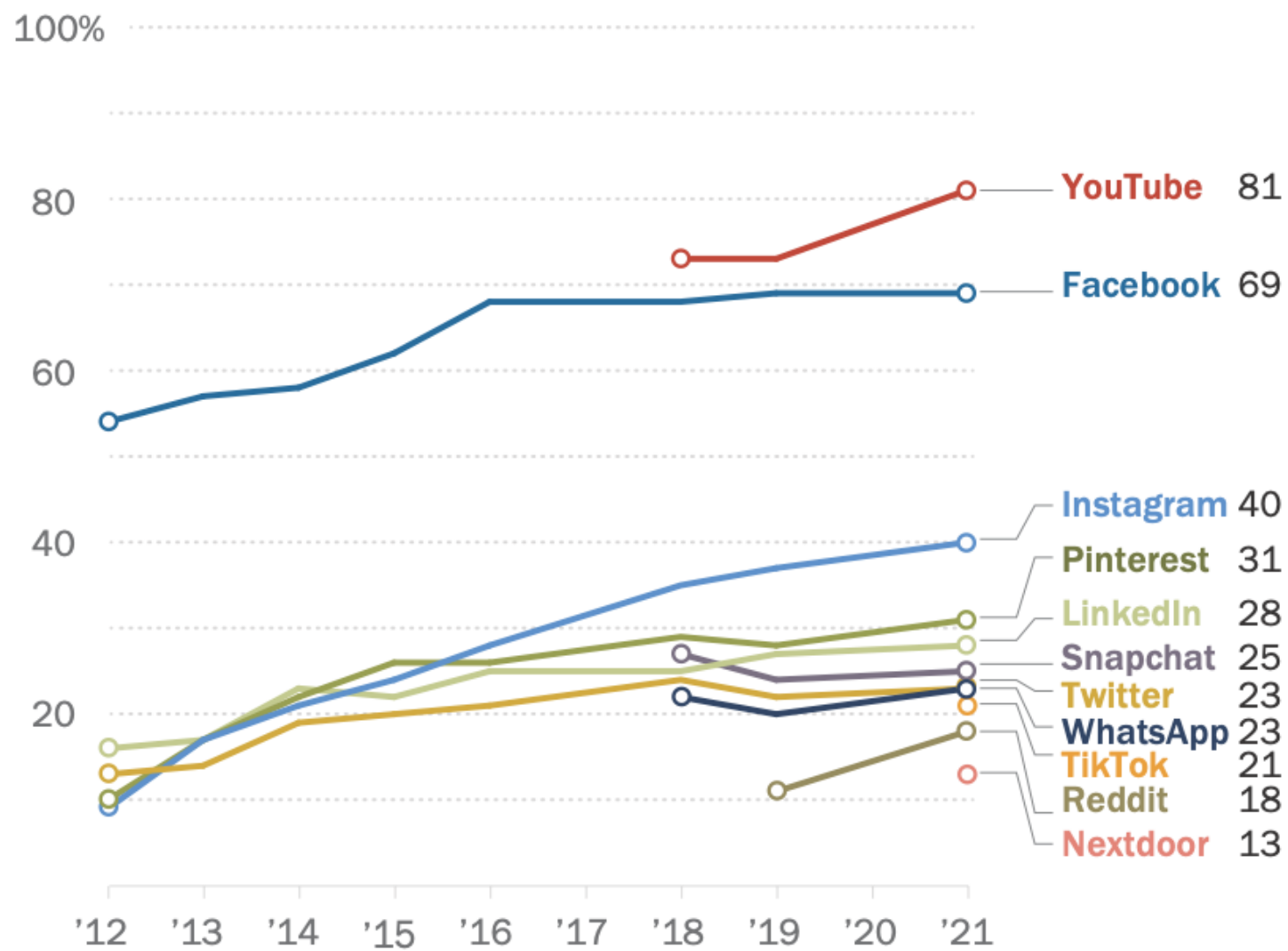Other powerful spaces: Reddit, Pinterest, Telegram

Facebook

Instagram

Twitter

Growing share of Americans say they use YouTube; Facebook remains one of the most widely used online platforms among U.S. adults

% of U.S. adults who say they ever use ...

YouTube 81
Facebook 69
Instagram 40
Pinterest 31
LinkedIn 28
Snapchat 25
Twitter 23
WhatsApp 23
TikTok 21
Reddit 18
Nextdoor 13

(Timeline chart from '12 to '21)

Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. Pre-2018 telephone poll data is not available for YouTube, Snapchat and WhatsApp; pre-2019 telephone poll data is not available for Reddit. Pre-2021 telephone poll data is not available for TikTok. Trend data is not available for Nextdoor.
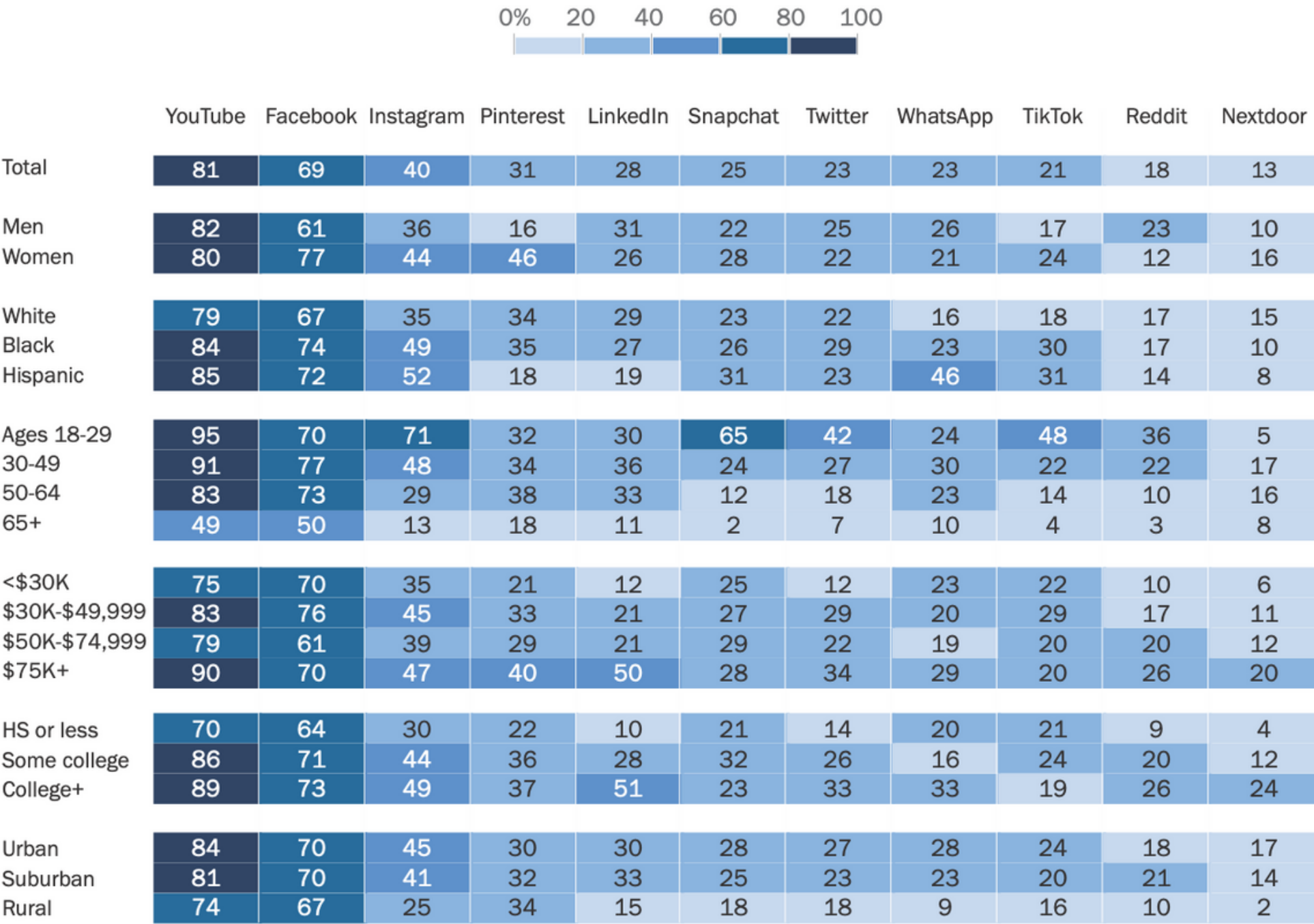Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 25-Feb. 8, 2021.
"Social Media Use in 2021"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Use of online platforms, apps varies – sometimes widely – by demographic group

% of U.S. adults in each demographic group who say they ever use ...

	YouTube	Facebook	Instagram	Pinterest	LinkedIn	Snapchat	Twitter	WhatsApp	TikTok	Reddit	Nextdoor
Total	81	69	40	31	28	25	23	23	21	18	13
Men	82	61	36	16	31	22	25	26	17	23	10
Women	80	77	44	46	26	28	22	21	24	12	16
White	79	67	35	34	29	23	22	16	18	17	15
Black	84	74	49	35	27	26	29	23	30	17	10
Hispanic	85	72	52	18	19	31	23	46	31	14	8
Ages 18-29	95	70	71	32	30	65	42	24	48	36	5
30-49	91	77	48	34	36	24	27	30	22	22	17
50-64	83	73	29	38	33	12	18	23	14	10	16
65+	49	50	13	18	11	2	7	10	4	3	8
<$30K	75	70	35	21	12	25	12	23	22	10	6
$30K-$49,999	83	76	45	33	21	27	29	20	29	17	11
$50K-$74,999	79	61	39	29	21	29	22	19	20	20	12
$75K+	90	70	47	40	50	28	34	29	20	26	20
HS or less	70	64	30	22	10	21	14	20	21	9	4
Some college	86	71	44	36	28	32	26	16	24	20	12
College+	89	73	49	37	51	23	33	33	19	26	24
Urban	84	70	45	30	30	28	27	28	24	18	17
Suburban	81	70	41	32	33	25	23	23	20	21	14
Rural	74	67	25	34	15	18	18	9	16	10	2

Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Not all numerical differences between groups shown are statistically significant (e.g., there are no statistically significant differences between the shares of White, Black or Hispanic Americans who say the use Facebook). Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 25-Feb. 8, 2021.
"Social Media Use in 2021"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
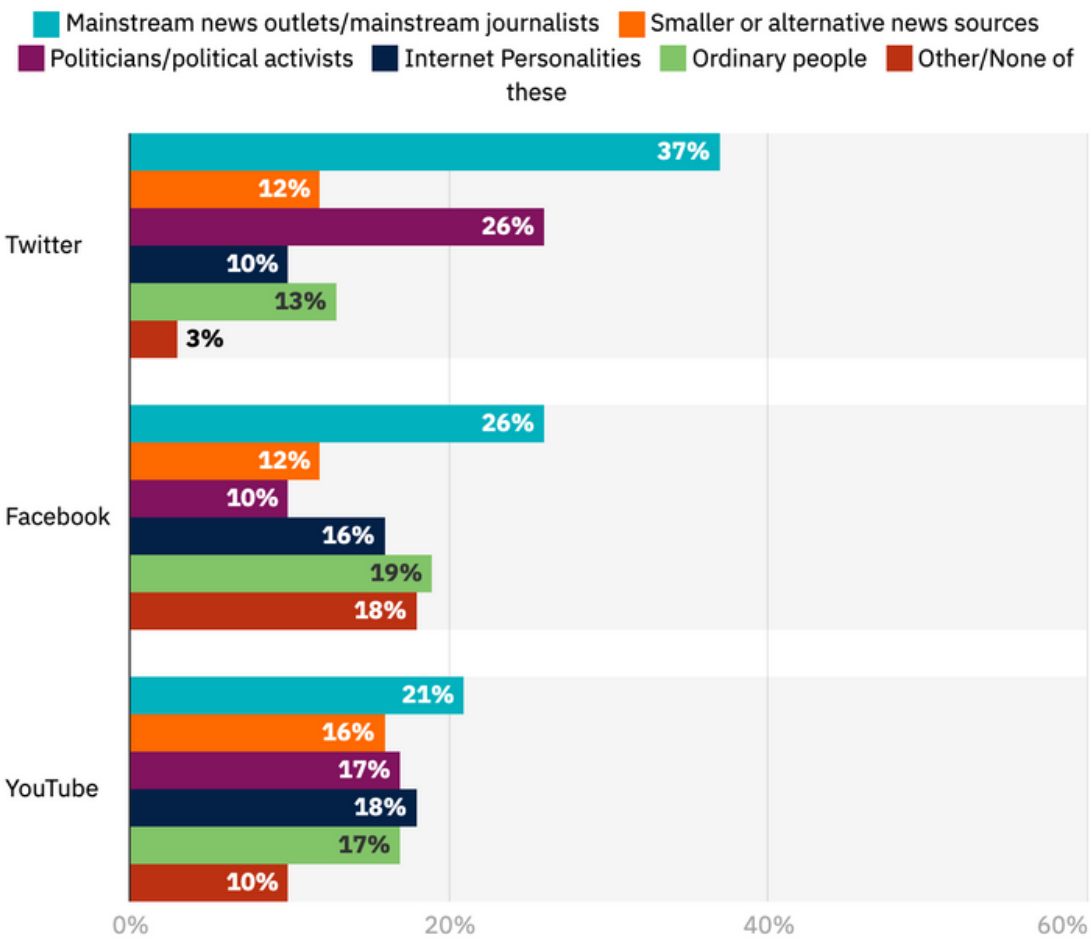
Other Ways To Learn About Your Target Audiences

Who people pay most attention to when using each social network for news

United States of America

Legend: Mainstream news outlets/mainstream journalists; Smaller or alternative news sources; Politicians/political activists; Internet Personalities; Ordinary people; Other/None of these

Twitter
- 37%
- 12%
- 26%
- 10%
- 13%
- 3%

Facebook
- 26%
- 12%
- 10%
- 16%
- 19%
- 18%

YouTube
- 21%
- 16%
- 17%
- 18%
- 17%
- 10%

Q12_Social_sources. You said that you use <social platform> for news... When it comes to news on <social platform> which of these do you generally pay most attention to? *Base: Randomly selected Twitter/Facebook/YouTube news users: 167/399/307.*

Get the data • Embed
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Proportion of news users on each network saying this is their main motivation

United Kingdom

Legend: Good place to get the very latest news; Gives me perspectives not available in mainstream media; Enjoy the debate and comments alongside the news; Fun and entertaining way to pass the time; Gives me news that is personally important to me; I mostly see news while I'm there for other reasons

Twitter
- 21%
- 17%
- 13%
- 9%
- 8%
- 25%

YouTube
- 11%
- 26%
- 7%
- 15%
- 10%
- 21%
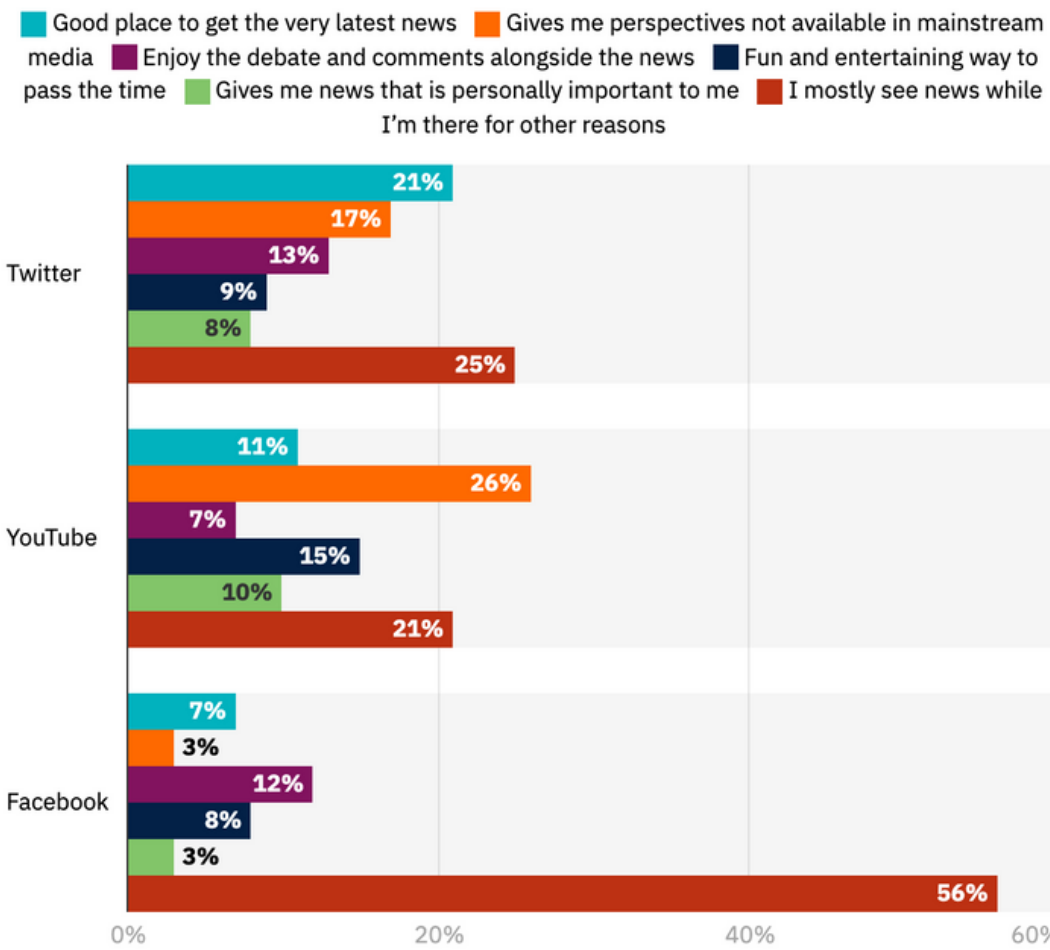
Facebook
- 7%
- 3%
- 12%
- 8%
- 3%
- 56%

Q12_Social_motivations. You said that you use <social platform> for news... What is the MAIN reason that you use <social platform> for news? *Base: Randomly selected Twitter/Facebook/YouTube news users: 237/404/133.*

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Testing how different narrative perspectives achieve communication objectives and goals in online natural science videos

Selina A. Ruzi, Nicole M. Lee, Adrian A. Smith

Published: October 13, 2021 • https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0257866

JUNE 21, 2021
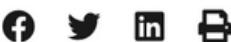
On social media, Gen Z and Millennial adults interact more with climate change content than older generations

BY CARY LYNNE THIGPEN AND ALEC TYSON

Gen Z and Millennial social media users are more likely than older generations online to engage with climate change content on social media and to express a range of emotions when they see climate-related content there – including anxiety about the future and anger that not enough is being done, according to a new Pew Research Center survey.

New to this? Where to start:

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Organization or stakeholder buy-in:
Start with your bottom-line goals, pair it with industry research, and discuss what you lose by not engaging. Connect with your first-adopters.

Try it out, keep it low stakes:
Sign up, lurk □ &□.
Find organizations and people who inspire you. If it's not the right fit, it's okay to let it go.

A/B test the same piece of content:
Send out the same core piece of content. Use different visuals, maybe tone. Try a longer blurb or just one sentence. Failures and mistakes are opportunities.

Learn when to ask for help or pass the baton:
Social media management tools, apprenticeship programs, partner with storytellers, rotating curation, get a template designer.

Sharing your social good through social media matters.
Make it feasible by setting up quarterly or project-specific bite sized goals that allow you to learn.
Use and repurpose content that exists, batchwork and create a weekly or monthly calendar.
Create or commission reusable templates. Make space to try and fail safely.

Breakout Group Exercise (10m):
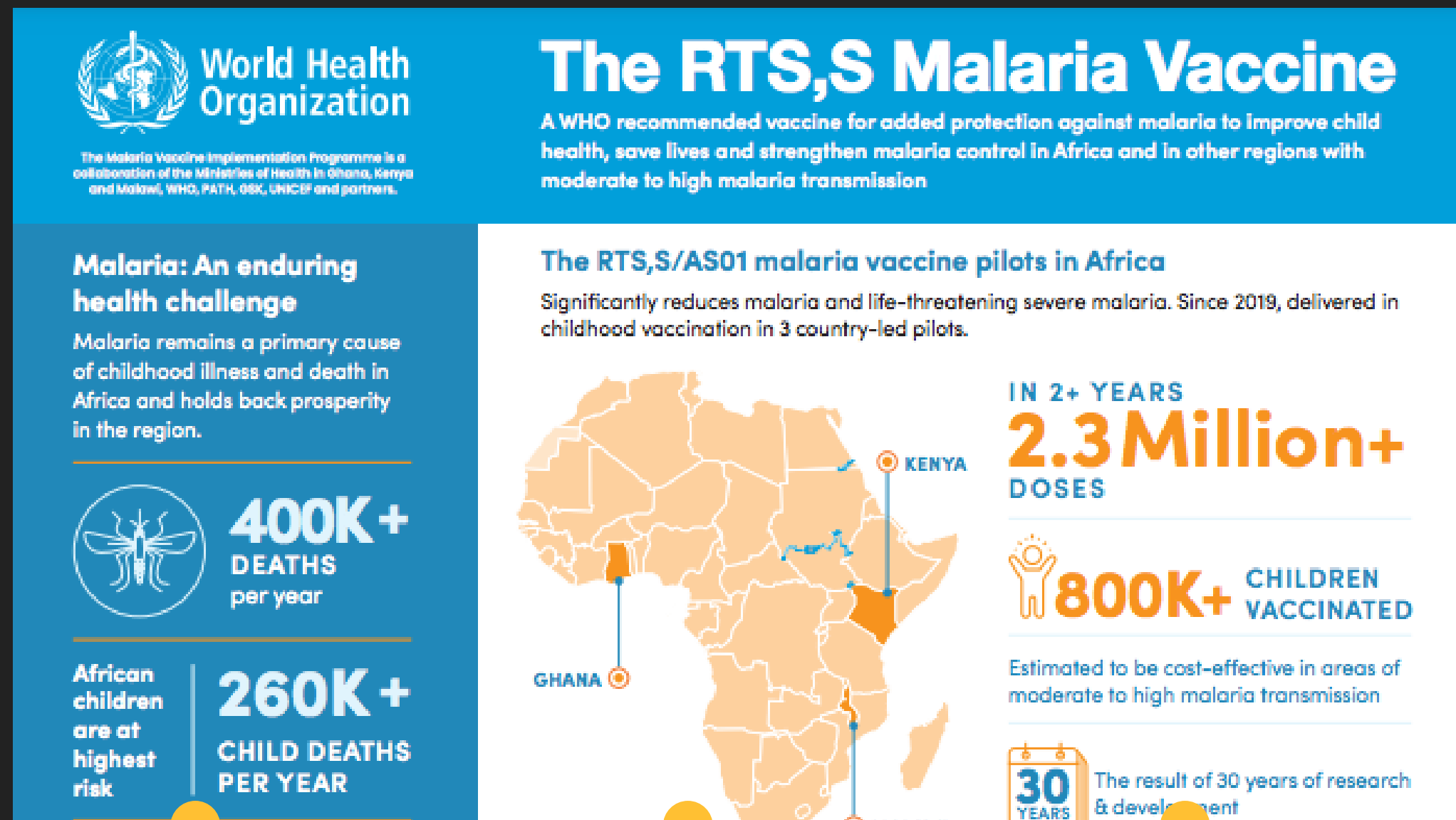## Brainstorm Sharing With Your Audience

1) Who is your organization's primary target audience? What action do you want them to take with your organization?

2) What part of this malaria vaccine news story could make them think about your organization's mission, vision, values, or latest offering?

Spotlight Sharing (2 volunteers please):
Social Storytelling For Your Audience

World Health Organization

The Malaria Vaccine Implementation Programme is a collaboration of the Ministries of Health in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi, WHO, PATH, GSK, UNICEF and partners.

Malaria: An enduring health challenge

Malaria remains a primary cause of childhood illness and death in Africa and holds back prosperity in the region.

400K+ DEATHS per year

African children are at highest risk | **260K+ CHILD DEATHS PER YEAR**
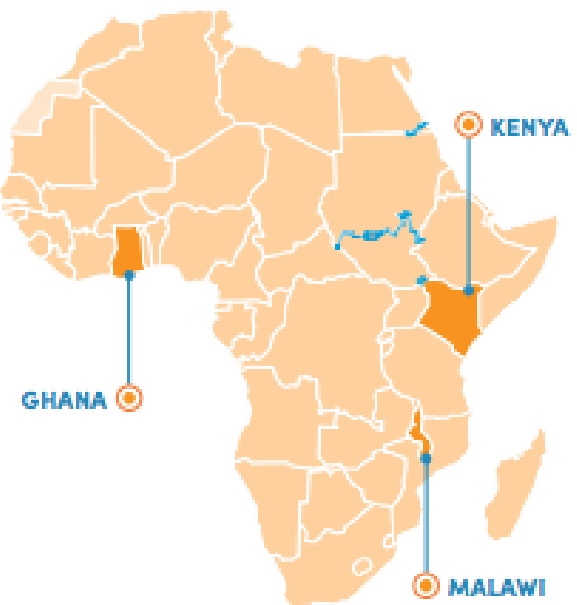
The RTS,S Malaria Vaccine

A WHO recommended vaccine for added protection against malaria to improve child health, save lives and strengthen malaria control in Africa and in other regions with moderate to high malaria transmission

The RTS,S/AS01 malaria vaccine pilots in Africa

Significantly reduces malaria and life-threatening severe malaria. Since 2019, delivered in childhood vaccination in 3 country-led pilots.

KENYA

GHANA

IN 2+ YEARS
2.3 Million+ DOSES

800K+ CHILDREN VACCINATED

Estimated to be cost-effective in areas of moderate to high malaria transmission

30 YEARS The result of 30 years of research & development

1) Who is your organization's primary target audience? What action do you want them to take with your organization?

2) What part of this malaria vaccine news story could make them think about your organization's mission, vision, values, or latest offering?

Executive Strategy:
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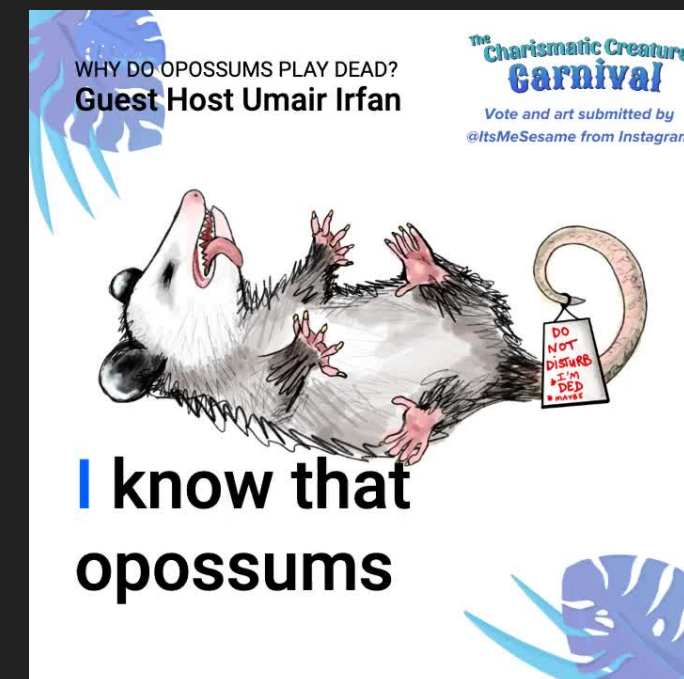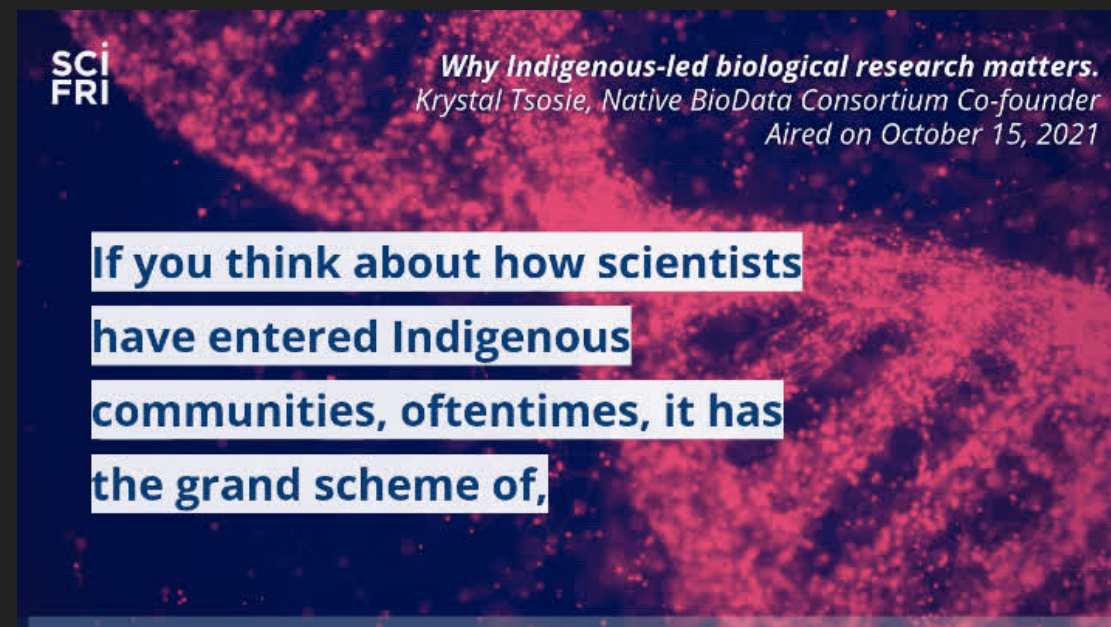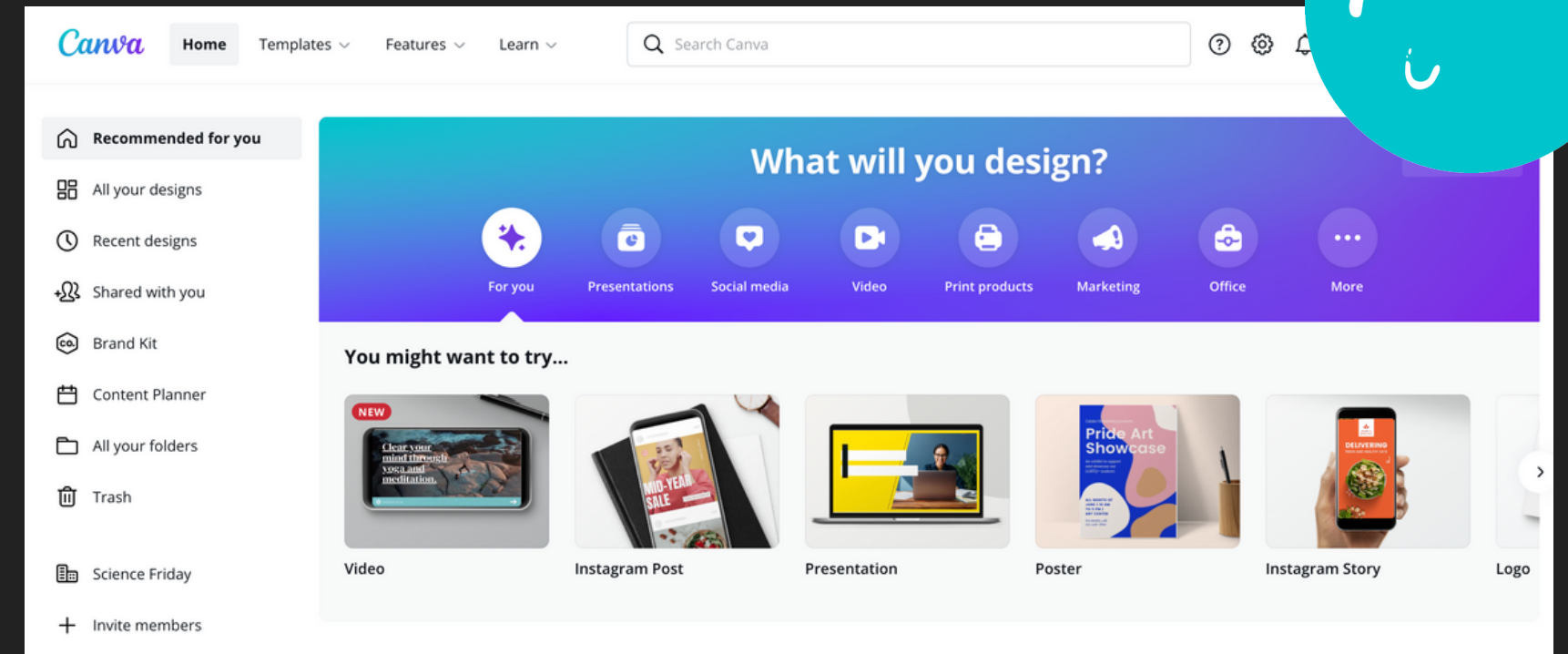How can we package this message on social media?

Tools for Content Creation

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"We're losing generations. We have to pay attention now because if you're out of the first decade of life and think life is not worth pursuing, that's a signal to say something is going really wrong."

-Sean Joe, national expert on Black suicide, professor at Washington University in St. Louis

HEADLINER
FREE VIDEO EDITOR. BUILT FOR CREATORS.

descript

Giphy or GIF Brewery
Powerpoint, Keynote,
Google Slides

Tools for Content Management

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Create your own spreadsheet or calendar.
Content management tools: MeetEdgar, SproutSocial, Hootsuite.
Learn more: LinkedIn Learning, Hubspot Academy

Shortcuts & Templates For Efficiency

Community **Guidelines**

Some general guidance we are using to plan for harmful engagement:
- Pin community guidelines as a comment underneath the post.
- We aim to respond with empathy, but must decide on what the line is when it comes to unproductive comments. The story we are elevating tomorrow is specific to giving a voice to the people who are directly impacted by proposed legislation.
  - Please feel free to reach out to SciFri's Engagement Producer kviterbo@sciencefriday.org if needed.
- Block anyone who crosses the line, no first strike. As we generally do not have enough resources to moderate a two-strike system for social media, especially on weekends, we choose to block and delete or hide harmful comments.
- We do not respond to any troll comments as it risks validating their harmful rhetoric and it also draws more hateful speech.
- We also recognize our efforts will not fix the problem entirely, and so we choose to do the best we can in the moment.
- Abuse on social media can lead to vicarious trauma, both for moderators and for bystanders/viewers. If it becomes too much, please choose your health first and do not hesitate to reach out to us.

An example of how we pin community guidelines to stories that generate harmful, unproductive engagement:
Science Friday will be using this specific language underneath our posts where comments sections cannot be disabled or monitored regularly:
- *In accordance with our community guidelines, please note that any and all violent, transphobic, racist, misogynist or discriminatory comments will be hidden and accounts banned. As a community, we will not tolerate demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech. Science Friday will continue reporting on issues of justice and their intersection with healthcare, the pandemic, the environment and many other realms of science because it is our responsibility to do so.*

Resource list for trans and nonbinary audiences who may reach out:
https://transequality.org/additional-help

Resources for handling transphobic harassment:
Trans Journalists Association style guide (Section 1.4: Guidance on covering anti-trans hate and disinformation, Section 2: Terms and Phrases To Avoid) - https://transjournalists.org/style-guide/
- We recommend muting, hiding, or deleting anti-Trans comments.
  - *"Like anti–gay rights groups or climate science deniers, anti–trans rights groups and individuals push a fringe, radical agenda. Leading medical and psychology organizations like the American Medical Association and the American Psychological Association affirm trans people exist; these organizations also state that trans people need access to gender-affirming care, gender-appropriate public resources, and jobs where they can be themselves. Giving anti–trans groups a platform isn't being unbiased, but rather giving fringe ideology outsized influence."*

Local News Lab's "How to Protect Yourself From Online Harassment"
https://localnewslab.org/2021/04/02/local-fix-how-to-protect-yourself-from-online-harassment/

Equity Lab's Anti-doxxing Guide
https://medium.com/@EqualityLabs/anti-doxing-guide-for-activists-facing-attacks-from-the-alt-right-ec6c290f543c

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Science Friday/Kaiser Health News - Resources For Reporting On And Combatting Suicide
NOTE: This living document was compiled on August 19, 2021 to support the publication and airing of Science Friday's upcoming segment, "Pandemic Unveils Growing Suicide Crisis For Communities Of Color." The story airs on August 20th.

Some general guidance we are using to plan for harmful engagement:
- Pin community guidelines as a comment underneath the post.
- We aim to respond with empathy, but must decide on what the line is when it comes to unproductive comments. The story we are elevating tomorrow is specific to giving a voice to the people who are directly impacted by the rising suicide crisis.
  - Please feel free to reach out to SciFri's Engagement Producer kviterbo@sciencefriday.org or KHN's Social Media Manager chaseedawg@kff.org if needed.
- Block anyone who crosses the line, no first strike. As we generally do not have enough resources to moderate a two-strike system for social media, especially on weekends, we choose to block and delete or hide harmful comments.
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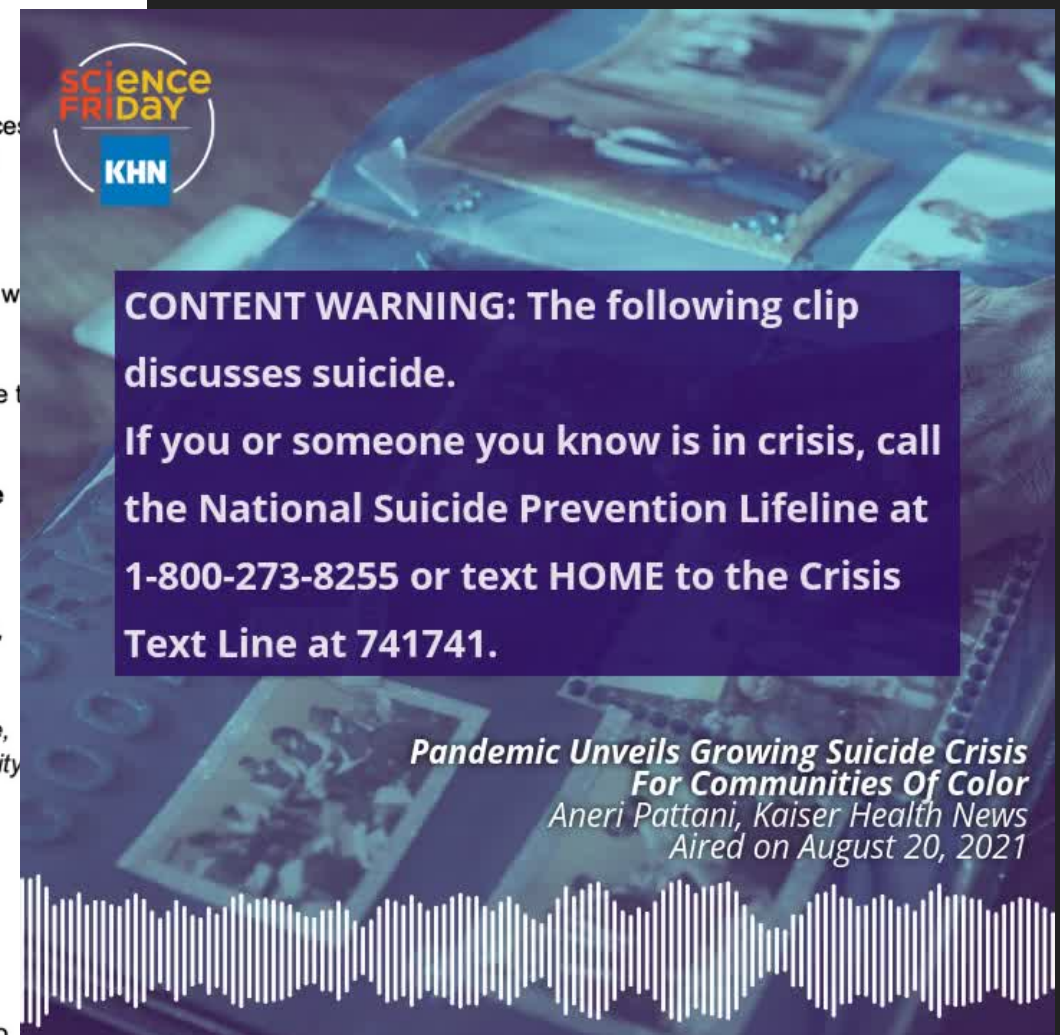Science Friday will be using this specific language underneath our posts where comments sections cannot be disabled or monitored regularly:
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Resource list for media organizations:
Research-supported guidelines for reporting suicide and self-harm, and to decrease risk of "*suicide contagion*"
- American Association of Suicidology's reporting recommendations for journalists & media partners (2018) suggest:
  - Cover the story in a non-sensationalistic, sensitive way that respects the individual who died by suicide and those surviving this painful loss
  - If you decide to include narrative that could cause intense emotional distress, use the phrase "Content Warning" or use a visual cut so that users can click to read additional material after a neutral description of the article
  - If images are used, choose images that show the individual who died by suicide engaging in life rather than clutching his/her/their head, depressed and/or disheveled

CONTENT WARNING: The following clip discusses suicide.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or text HOME to the Crisis Text Line at 741741.

Pandemic Unveils Growing Suicide Crisis For Communities Of Color
Aneri Pattani, Kaiser Health News
Aired on August 20, 2021

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Questions?

If you'd like to discuss more, you can connect with me on LinkedIn or Twitter or email via: kviterbo@sciencefriday.com

Your Common Painpoints:

- COPYEDITING: jargon, 'translating for audience,' fact-checking

- OBJECTIVES & KEY RESULTS (OKRs): social media & conversion

- SOCIAL POLICY & GUIDELINES: privacy, trust, disclosure
  - "cancellation" = accountability, transparency, learning

- BARRIERS: subculture of hot-takes, opinions, click-bait, mis- & disinformation, bad actors, your mental health & safety, buy-in