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PROJECT CENSORED’S
Andy Lee Roth awarded a Reynolds Journalism Institute Fellowship

Roth will build an interactive resource to bolster journalists’ algorithmic literacy and help them resist shadowbanning and other forms of online censorship.

Project Censored is proud to announce that associate director Andy Lee Roth has been awarded a prestigious Reynolds Journalism Institute (RJI) fellowship. Based at the top-ranked University of Missouri School of Journalism, RJI funds projects that develop innovative technologies and test new approaches to producing, designing, and delivering news and information “to strengthen journalism in the service of democracy.” Each year, RJI selects its fellows from a competitive pool of several hundred applicants. Roth’s was one of seven applications chosen in this year’s rigorous selection process. He worked with grant writer Lyssa Schmidt of Presence & Company to craft a proposal that showcased his keen insight into the challenges facing journalists today and his years of acclaimed work with Project Censored. As an RJI fellow, Roth joins a cohort of top media experts whose work has resulted in stronger newsrooms nationwide.

The fellowship, which begins July 1, 2024, and runs for eight months, comes with a $25,000 stipend to develop an innovative tool or program that can aid reporters in navigating a changing media landscape. Working with Project colleagues, Roth will build an interactive resource to enhance journalists’ understanding of how artificial intelligence (AI) influences the creation and reach of their work and prepares them to recognize and resist shadowbanning, demonetization, and other forms of online speech filtering that restrict them from reaching a wider audience.
“Most working reporters and editorial staff lack the time or the training to fully appreciate the impacts of artificial intelligence on their daily work routines,” Roth says. The tools designed with the support of the RJI fellowship address this reality. “Every journalist, regardless of specialty, can benefit from enhanced algorithmic literacy.”

Project Censored has long been one of the preeminent organizations exposing and opposing censorship in all its forms. Since its founding in 1976, the Project has provided tools and training to students, journalists, and the general public to hone their critical media literacy skills and resist infringements on freedom of information and freedom of expression. Throughout its history, Project Censored has sounded the alarm on how technological innovations can be weaponized against the free speech rights of journalists and citizens. Roth's work with RJI continues this important tradition.