



Draft Agenda: Defending Democracy in the Disinformation Age
Thursday, April 11, 2024

9:30 – 9:45 AM Welcome Remarks

- Paul Fagan, Democracy Programs Director, McCain Institute
- Battinto Batts, Dean of Cronkite School of Journalism, ASU

9:45 – 10:30 AM Panel 1: Digital Divides: Navigating Tech's Role in American Democracy

Event Synopsis:

For decades, technology strengthened democratic institutions and principles including representation, transparency, and individual liberties. Yet, over time, technology has been deployed as a tool by nefarious actors to undermine democracy. This forward-looking conversation will explore the intersection of technology and democracy, and what it means for American citizens and institutions.

Panelists:

- Dhanaraj Thakur, Center for Democracy and Technology
- Matt Masterson, Microsoft
- Moderator: Kristy Roschke, Cronkite School, ASU

10:30 – 10:45 AM BREAK

10:45 – 11:30 PM Panel 2: The Arizona Effect: Arizona's Impact on American Democracy

Event Synopsis:

As the 2024 Election looms, Arizona has become a centerpiece in the national conversation. The state's unique demographics, political dynamics, and policy priorities construct an important case study for other purple states. This panel convenes former election officials and civil society to evaluate the challenges and opportunities Arizona faces this year and in election cycles to come.

Panelists:

- Bill Gates, Maricopa County Supervisor
- Avery Xola, AZ Clean Elections Commission
- Don Henninger, Carter Center
- Moderator: TBD

11:30 – 12:15 PM Panel 3 - Securing the Vote: Countering Foreign Threats to American Elections

Event Synopsis:

In recent electoral cycles, foreign adversaries have tried to undermine American democratic systems. How we address election security may determine whether the United States deepens its democracy or faces an erosion that gradually weakens the system. This discussion will examine the ways foreign adversaries have attempted to subvert American elections and what the US can and should do to respond.

Panelists:

- David Levine, Alliance for Securing Democracy, GMF
- Hazel Kwon, ASU
- Moderator: Paul Fagan, McCain Institute

12:15 – 1:30 PM LUNCH: Fireside Conversation: Paul Fagan + Jack McCain (Confirmed)

1:30 – 2:15 PM Panel 3: Safeguarding Vulnerable Communities in the Digital Age

Synopsis:

In an era where misinformation affects many aspects of society, vulnerable populations face heightened risks of being targeted by these campaigns. This panel brings together experts from diverse backgrounds to explore strategies for protecting these communities from the harmful effects of misinformation campaigns. By shedding light on these critical issues, this conversation aims to empower communities and foster collaborative efforts towards a more informed and resilient society.

Panelists:

- Ellen Gustafson, We the Veterans
- Tara Setmayer, Senior Advisor, The Lincoln Project
- Rachel Kleinfeld, Carnegie Endowment
- Moderator: Mike Brand, McCain Institute

2:15 – 2:30 PM BREAK

2:30 – 3:15 PM Panel 4: Beyond the Headlines: Restoring Local News for a Stronger Democracy

Synopsis:

Local journalism has long been a pillar of American democracy. However, newsrooms across the country have shuttered leaving many communities without local news outlets. Recently, there has been a movement to help revive local media, but is it too little too late? Many Americans have already changed their habits and tune into national news media and social media to get their news. This panel will convene local journalists and media experts to discuss how to rebuild America's local media outlets to strengthen American democracy.

Panelists:

- Dianna Nanez, Arizona Luminaria
- Kim Kleman, Report for America
- Michelle Ciulla Lipkin, National Association for Media Literacy Education
- Moderator: Kristy Roschke, Cronkite School, ASU

3:15 – 3:30 PM Closing Remarks

- Paul Fagan, Democracy Programs Director, McCain Institute
- Kristy Roschke, Cronkite School, ASU