

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424		
* 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	* 2. Type of Application: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): <input type="text"/> * Other (Specify): <input type="text"/>
* 3. Date Received: <input type="text" value="05/16/2022"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text"/>	
5a. Federal Entity Identifier: <input type="text"/>	5b. Federal Award Identifier: <input type="text"/>	
<b>State Use Only:</b>		
6. Date Received by State: <input type="text"/>	7. State Application Identifier: <input type="text" value="Illinois"/>	
<b>8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:</b>		
* a. Legal Name: <input type="text" value="Lewis University"/>		
* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text" value="(b)(6)"/>	* c. UEI: <input type="text" value="EHUHEAQXWAU5"/>	
<b>d. Address:</b>		
* Street1: <input type="text" value="One University Parkway"/>	Street2: <input type="text"/>	
* City: <input type="text" value="Romeoville"/>	County/Parish: <input type="text"/>	
* State: <input type="text" value="IL: Illinois"/>	Province: <input type="text"/>	
* Country: <input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>	* Zip / Postal Code: <input type="text" value="604462200"/>	
<b>e. Organizational Unit:</b>		
Department Name: <input type="text"/>	Division Name: <input type="text"/>	
<b>f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:</b>		
Prefix: <input type="text"/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Vesna"/>	
Middle Name: <input type="text"/>	* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Markovic"/>	
Suffix: <input type="text" value="Ph.D."/>	Title: <input type="text"/>	
Organizational Affiliation: <input type="text"/>		
* Telephone Number: <input type="text" value="(b)(6)"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text"/>	
* Email: <input type="text" value="(b)(6)"/>		

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

**\* 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

O: Private Institution of Higher Education

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

\* Other (specify):

**\* 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

Department of Homeland Security - FEMA

**11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:**

97.132

CFDA Title:

Financial Assistance for Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention

**\* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

DHS-22-TTP-132-00-01

\* Title:

Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP)

**13. Competition Identification Number:**

Title:

**14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):**

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

**\* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

How2INFORM: Combating Misinformation Through Media Literacy

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

**16. Congressional Districts Of:**

\* a. Applicant

\* b. Program/Project

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

**17. Proposed Project:**

\* a. Start Date:

\* b. End Date:

**18. Estimated Funding (\$):**

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="147,707.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="147,707.00"/>

**\* 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

- a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on
- b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

**\* 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**

Yes  No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

**21. \*By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications\*\* and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances\*\* and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

\*\* I AGREE

\*\* The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

**Authorized Representative:**

Prefix:  \* First Name:   
Middle Name:   
\* Last Name:   
Suffix:

\* Title:

\* Telephone Number:  Fax Number:

\* Email:

\* Signature of Authorized Representative:  \* Date Signed:

Applicant: Lewis University

Applicant's Location: One University Parkway, Unit 1048  
Romeoville, IL 60446

Location of Activities: Throughout the State of Illinois and online

Application Track: Promising Practices Track

Project Type: Media Literacy and Online Critical Thinking Initiatives

ND Grants EMW#: EMW-2022-GR-APP-00064

Funds Requested: \$147,707

Project Title: How2INFORM (H2i): Combating Misinformation Through Media Literacy

Project Abstract: Kids spend 6-9 hours online each day where harmful content persists. Adolescents are more likely to share information if it connects with their interests, whether the information is true or not. Increasing media literacy and online critical thinking skills can help children identify and avoid false narratives related to recruitment and mobilization to violence. In 2021, IL HB0234 passed, requiring all public high school curriculum to offer at least one unit of media literacy training in the 2022-23 school year.

H2i at Lewis University proposes to:

1. Develop a How2INFORM (H2i) Educators Toolkit to support media literacy training in classrooms.
2. Provide training for educators by traveling to locations throughout the state of Illinois and online, via h2i.info, and online modules available for professional development hours.
3. Maintain and improve upon h2i.info, including regular re-evaluation of materials and resources, which currently consists of videos, websites, publications, and podcasts helpful in combating misinformation.



Figure 1: H2i Logo

These activities will support the TVTP Grant Program's *Objective 2* by creating an educational platform increasing media literacy and online critical thinking initiatives for educators, concerned adults, and students. Free tools and resources will be provided equitably to communities within the state to help combat online misinformation.

## 1. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### *1.1 Target population and number of people to use the service*

Online platforms provide countless modes of interaction for people, including the youngest members of society. Internet growth has greatly increased one's exposure to information, facilitating great accessibility to, and reach of, harmful content that poses tremendous risk to youth.<sup>1</sup> More time online increases the risk of exposure to false or misleading information,<sup>2</sup> including hateful propaganda and terrorist communications. Kids aged 8-12, or "tweens," spend about six hours online daily; teens average closer to nine.<sup>3</sup> Notably, there are cultural and socioeconomic divides in screen media consumption: teens from higher-income households spend less than six hours online each day, while those from lower-income homes spend more than eight on average.<sup>4</sup>

Tech companies neglect to address problematic online rhetoric, such as when Facebook allowed the Proud Boys, a Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) designated extremist "Hate Group" supportive of white nationalist ideologies,<sup>5</sup> to conduct recruitment and run new member vetting pages even after they'd led a violent protest in Portland.<sup>6</sup> Social media profitability is driven by engagement. As a result, companies are less incentivized to moderate content, so hate groups and those intent on spreading mis-, dis-, or mal-information online face few deterrents. Most white nationalists and neo-Nazis now operate online; livestreaming has become the preferred tool to organize, fundraise, and spread propaganda.<sup>7</sup> In the recent Buffalo mass shooting, a self-identified "populist, fascist, white supremacist, anti-Semite, and racist" shooter detailed the anti-immigrant conspiracy theory of "white genocide" in his 180-page manifesto which was posted online in concurrence with a Twitch livestream of the attack on the Tops grocery store, located in a primarily Black/African-American neighborhood; shooter Peyton Grendon, age 18, attributed the Christchurch terrorist, responsible for killing 51 in two New Zealand mosques in 2019, as the "greatest influence on his radicalization."<sup>8</sup>

Online magazines, rap videos, and other means are being used by Pro-Islamic terrorists to rebrand Jihadist terrorism as more sympathetic and appealing, creating an online subculture referred to as the phenomenon of "jihadi cool" where adolescents, particularly isolated/alienated youth, are more prone to engage.<sup>9</sup> Political jamming is another successful and disruptive online activity combining satire and modified photos, logos, videos, memes, etc., garnering an extensive

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<sup>1</sup> Hollewell, G.F., and Longpré, N. "Radicalization in the Social Media Era: Understanding the Relationship between Self-Radicalization and the Internet." *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, vol. 66, no. 8 (June 2021). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X211028771>. Accessed May 10, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> CP3. "Media Literacy & Critical Thinking Online: Tools and Resources." *dhs.gov*. Accessed May 9, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Fox, Maggie and Edwards, Erika. "Teens Spend 'Astounding' Nine Hours a Day in Front of Screens: Researchers." *wvea.org*, 12 Dec 2021, Accessed May 9, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center. "Proud Boys." *splcenter.org*. Accessed May 13, 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Hankes, Keegan. "Move Slow and Break Everything." SPLC Center. Accessed May 15 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center. "Southern Poverty Law Center Releases Annual Year in Hate & Extremism Report: When Hate Goes Mainstream." 9 March 2022, *splcenter.org*. Accessed May 13, 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Johnson, Bridge. "DHS Secretary Mayorkas Promises 'Every Available Resource' After Buffalo Attack to 'Combat Violent Extremism as One'." 16 May 2022, *hstoday.us*. Accessed May 16, 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Huey, Laura. "This is Not Your Mother's Terrorism: Social Media, Online Radicalization, and the Practice of Political Jamming." *Journal of Terrorism Research*, vol. 6, issue 2 (May 2015): DOI:[10.15664/jtr.1159](https://doi.org/10.15664/jtr.1159). Accessed May 1, 2022.

