**EXPOSURE** LABS

## stories for a better future **2021 Annual Report**





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- II. Our Team & Culture



Dear Congressman Tiberi, The science is clear. We need to act on climate change. your constituent. Robert Tax

DEAR SOUTH CAROLINA, Protect the coral in the Ucean, Keep the cosystem in Mution!

UNSTOPPABLE

sundance

#### the socia dilemma

**Exposure Labs** is a film and impact production company based in Boulder, Colorado, with team members nationwide. Through a unique model where content production and social advocacy are tightly entwined, we share and support stories that uncover systems in need of change, visualize what's at stake, and incite empathy, action and accountability. We function as a disrupter, dot-connector and bridgebuilder, exposing extractive and divisive power structures while also shining light on the people and pathways leading us forward.

Since 2009, together with our partners we've mainstreamed major societal issues and contributed to systems-level changes. With our climate work, we've led grassroots campaigns demanding clean energy legislation and challenging skeptical politicians, mobilized voters, created a resource library for advocacy groups to use film as an organizing tool, and repeatedly convened storytellers to plan how their projects can advance the movement. From Chasing Ice and Chasing Coral to Uniontown and Water Warriors, we've shared and supported stories that take people on adventures and help them believe in truth and in each other again. With The Social Dilemma, we unveiled Big Social's exploitative business model, which has hindered humanity's ability to address climate change and many other existential threats. Our subsequent impact campaign has resourced the next generation to create and demand better technology, briefed policymakers around major tech current events and congressional hearings, and spotlighted movement coalitions, petitions and events to fast track a global conversation on humane tech reform.

2021 was a year of immense growth, learning and impact for Exposure Labs. We executed the first year of The Social Dilemma's impact campaign, added capacity to the humane tech and climate movements through deepening our support of external storytellers, grew our team, kicked off development on new film projects, and laid an equitable and inclusive foundation for our company.

#### the right story, for the right audience and at the right time, can change the world.

#### Thank you for being part of our journey!



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# our team and culture

## team

Exposure Labs is based in Boulder, Colorado, the ancestral homeland of the Ute, Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples. We operate as a fully remote office, with our 16 team members spread across Colorado, California, Illinois, D.C., Hawaii, and Michigan.

We have intentionally fostered an integrated team that bridges production and impact, and we bring an eclectic mix of expertise including film production and distribution, political campaigning, grassroots advocacy and movement-building, journalism, communications, and arts and festival administration. Combined, we have more than 150 years of experience at the intersection of storytelling and impact.



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We believe equity is fundamental for achieving sustainability, and we reflect these values in all aspects of our work and lives to create a lasting world for all people and the planet. While ensuring we do the work to continually combat systemic oppression, we also take time to care for the wellbeing of ourselves, each other and our partners.

stake in our work.

We are team players who navigate our work with empathy, humility, and kindness. We seek to understand diverse perspectives and embrace the myriad ways we process and collaborate. We nurture trust in each other to bring our shared vision to life and practice the platinum rule: treat others how they want to be treated.

We are curious, always aspire to learn and grow, and treat mistakes as opportunities to deepen our understanding and self-awareness. When faced with a problem, we take the time to find tangible solutions and a path forward, knowing we may not have all the answers, and seek guidance from colleagues when necessary.

People come first. Period. We support each other and take care of ourselves. When trying to change the world, there will always be more to do, and it's easy to lose track of all the progress along the way. We remember to step back, celebrate our victories, and enjoy the journey together.



#### We work to foster a safe, trusting space for transparent

**communication** and practice both giving and receiving direct, honest, and constructive feedback-especially when it might be difficult to share. We prioritize accountability to ourselves, our team, partners, and those with the highest



## vision

We envision a world where transformative stories can help heal our relationship with the planet and with each other, and create an equitable and sustainable future for all.

## mission

#### Stories for a better future.

We believe that stories are the most powerful catalyst to build empathy, shape culture, foster social justice movements, and shift systems. From inception to impact, we develop and share stories to address big societal challenges, and to inspire hope and action for collective solutions.

## values

#### Equity and Sustainability

We believe a regenerative world must be fair and just for all people and the planet, and that the path forward requires an intersectional approach to address systemic and institutional injustices.

#### Integrity

We do what we believe is the right thing, even when it's not easy. We don't shy away from hard questions or systemic challenges, and maintain the open-mindedness needed to challenge our own beliefs. We seek out perspectives that differ from our own, approach the world with curiosity, and embrace the inherent nuance that comes with big ideas.

#### Creativity

We embrace big ideas, imagination, and creative thinking in all of our work, seeking out new and innovative ways to tell stories, uplift social movements, and connect with communities and audiences around the world.

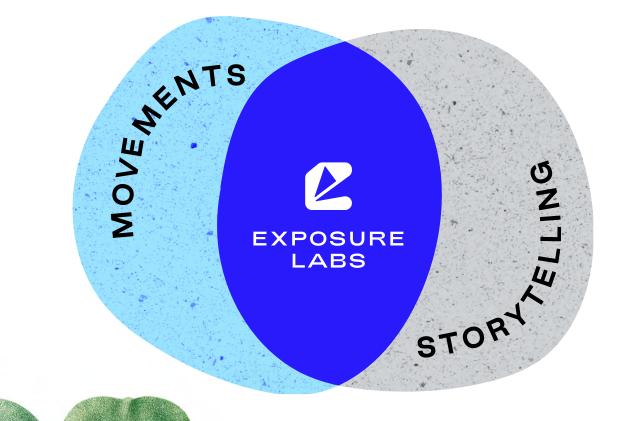
#### Inclusion

We lead with love and compassion to build social bridges that unite us, focusing on what we have in common over what sets us apart. We recognize that just like in nature, diversity brings strength and resilience, and we seek an inclusive future where ALL people are involved in the decisions that affect them.

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## our role

We operate at the intersection of storytelling and movements to create the greatest impact.



#### Using storytelling to support the climate and humane tech movements

We work deeply with our organizing partners to identify movements' needs at different stages - which tend to vary and evolve with the issue area and time horizon - along their multi-faceted, years-long paths toward systemic change.

#### Shifting the Narrative

We collaborate with movement leaders, issue experts and other storytellers to identify problems, coalesce storytelling with effective messaging strategies, and produce new stories to bring the right story to the right audiences at the right time.

#### A Sharing Resources

We resource organizers and communities most impacted in deploying storytelling in the field through impact campaigns and other field-building work to build public pressure and support solutions.

#### XX Weaving & Convening

We support partner campaigns, calls to action, events and coalitions to strengthen the base, alliances and collaboration across the movement.

A more just, equitable and regenerative future.

#### The Humane Tech Movement

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area

As early as the 1980s, tech pioneers began sounding the alarm on runaway technologies that don't have humanity's best interests in mind. The movement snowballed in the 2010s. Books like Cathy O'Neil's Weapons of Math Destruction (2016), Safiya Noble's Algorithms of Oppression (2018), Shoshana Zuboff's Surveillance Capitalism (2019) and Ruha Benjamin's Race After Technology (2019) infiltrated academia, and films like The Great Hack (2019), The Social Dilemma (2020) and Coded Bias (2020) woke millions of people up to the problem.

Facebook

While the humane tech movement has made significant headway – gaining demand from the general public and traction among lawmakers – it is still young. Many people still don't have a strong grasp on the problem, or even what to call it, let alone how to solve it. Our organizing partners tell us that they need more stories to expand on different facets of the issue and connect the dots from exploitative algorithms to real-world harms, a need we're trying to meet as part of our narrative-shifting work with short-form content and supporting other humane tech storytellers. Organizers are also looking for tools for how to use storytelling in their work and resources to continue educating students, policymakers and the general public. Our partners have done essential work uniting the disparate groups working on this issue into powerful coalitions that are getting results, but there is more work to be done. We help serve as connectors and conveners uniting advocates, the public, and policymakers around problem framing and cohesive calls to action, because we're more powerful together.

#### The Climate Movement

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The climate movement, which began in the 1990s, arose out of the environmental movement in the 1960s and the environmental justice movement in the 1980s. Films have long played a pivotal role in the movement's growth. Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006) was a critical and commercial success and has been credited for raising international public awareness of global warming. Our documentary following *National Geographic* photographer James Balog's quest to document melting glaciers, *Chasing Ice* (2012), also garnered mainstream interest and hundreds of community screenings from the White House to the United Nations.

Though the climate movement has been active for decades now, much of its work still lives in the framing and narrative-shifting stage. The movement is evolving – gaining new stakeholders and grappling with its history of white supremacy and its own extractive practices – and needs new stories that impart a deeper, more honest and intersectional analysis of the problem to mobilize audiences with issue fatigue. Our Climate program Climate Story Lab, developed in partnership with our friends at Doc Society, exists for exactly that reason: we convene climate storytellers working to disrupt dominant narratives and tell a more accurate, holistic story of the climate crisis to support the movement. We've also witnessed a surprising gap between climate advocacy and climate storytelling, so we work to merge these two worlds with resources and connections as part of our Film in the Field program. Finally, much of the work we do focuses on decentering ourselves to play a facilitating, convening and movement-building role for myriad partners.



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- ORIGINAL PRODUCTIONS
- CLIMATE
- TECH REFORM

## our work

### ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### In 2021, we...

- Hired a managing director, the fantastic Shirley Alfaro
- Finalized Exposure Labs' mission, vision, values and culture statements
- Joined the Netflix Sustainability Advisory Group of Experts
- Conducted a full-staff survey and third-party salary and bias audit
- Developed and implemented a transparent Compensation Philosophy
- Updated our team member benefits, policies, and handbook
- Streamlined our financial infrastructure, budgeting and reporting
- Hosted a virtual annual retreat



#### In 2022, we're planning to...

- Grow our team to add capacity to our communications, development, operations, and short-form content work
- Build a team structure to even more deeply integrate our production and impact teams
- Finalize our Exposure Labs theory of change and update our Climate and Tech theories of change
- Outline our 5-year vision for the organization
- Develop an overarching Exposure Labs development and communications strategy and accompanying systems
- Increase our flu organization
- Establish more policies and opportunities to create a team culture of celebration, mutual learning, belonging, and self- and other- care
- Complete a senior leadership management training held by AORTA, conduct all-team feedback training and practice, and formalize our staff performance review processes
- Set up a 401(k) retirement plan for all staff

Increase our fluency and impact as an anti-oppression

#### **Our JEDI Journey**

#### **Our charge**

As storytellers, bridge builders and cultural workers, Exposure Labs has an opportunity to act as a leader in dismantling and repairing the impacts of bias, inequity, and oppression in the film industry. We are advancing our values and supporting broader action on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) by transforming:

- Our people Building an inclusive workplace where everyone feels a sense of connection and belonging. Developing operational procedures and a culture of practice that embraces inclusion, celebrates diverse ways of knowing, values everyone's contributions, and empowers staff to grow and participate as agents of change.
- Our productions Prioritizing equity and inclusion throughout our production processes and employing non-extractive, collaborative storytelling practices. Selecting stories that have the power to expose and dismantle systems of oppression, integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion across the production processes, both behind and in front of the camera. Consulting with, amplifying, and celebrating the diverse voices and experiences of changemakers who are shaping future solutions and shifting systems.
- Our programs Reimagining our films, campaigns and programs as opportunities to advance restorative solutions and widen the conversation. Designing programs and impact campaigns that are inclusive and accessible at every level and advance the work of organizations committed to transformational change. Building our programs with the intention and mindset to disrupt unjust power structures and help ensure other storytellers and cultural workers have the resources, access and capacity to do the work that is needed.
- Our partners and peers Supporting an industry–wide transformation with allies, new voices and those in positions of power. Listening and learning from allies who are leading this work, prioritizing partners who share our JEDI commitment, building relationships that are focused on deep trust and reciprocity, holding those in positions of power accountable, and sharing our learnings in order to cultivate a broader culture and practice of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

**READ OUR JEDI WORKBOOK** b.link/ELABSJEDI

#### 1-on-1s

#### **Overview**

In the spirit of collaboration, community, and mutual learning, our team reserves time each week for no-cost conversations with current and aspiring filmmakers and impact producers. The program was designed to democratize access to industry professionals and expertise by eliminating a gatekeeper: anyone can sign up and speak to someone on our team based on their interests and needs.

#### **Fast facts**

- Established in August 2020 and expanded in June 2021
- Served 100+ individuals and teams in 2021
- 13 team members currently participate

#### Learnings

- We need each other: We've had conversations with recent graduates, from each other.
- out space for new connections, perspectives and ideas.
- participants that this program is a rare offering in an industry with

• Current offerings: Creative Feedback; Film Financing & Distribution; Impact Strategy (General, Climate and Tech); Impact Campaign Communications

career transitioners, seasoned professionals and everyone in between. It's clear that conversation, feedback and support are helpful at every stage of both film projects and people's careers, and we all have something to learn

Being in the same "room" sparks opportunity: Though the program is specifically designed for one-off conversations, several of these initial calls have turned into meaningful partnerships. Magic happens when you carve

Our industry needs more open doors: We've heard repeatedly from notoriously high barriers to entry. Filmmakers and impact producers are hungry for resources and equitable ways in, especially around film financing and distribution. We hope our commitment to supporting our peers and sharing our learnings helps shift the way others in the field operate.





#### **Feature & Series Development**

Our storytelling centers impact from the start. Previous productions include the Sundance-premiering and Emmywinning documentaries *Chasing Ice* (2012), *Chasing Coral* (2017) and *The Social Dilemma* (2020), which became Netflix's 6th-most watched movie of the year. Our films have reached and resonated with hundreds of millions of people worldwide, helping to shift public consciousness and conversations around climate change and exploitative technology. We currently have several new projects in the early stages of development that tackle systemic challenges, approach diverse perspectives with curiosity, align with the needs of a larger movement, and help audiences see the world in a new way.

#### **Short-Form Content**

Exposure Labs has historically focused on long-form filmmaking. But with our production expertise, intricate advocacy org networks and mass mobilized audience, we are ideally positioned to create an engine of short-form content that can reach new audiences, rapidly respond to current events and our partners' needs, and propel the humane tech and climate movements forward. In 2021, we laid the groundwork for a dedicated shortform production arm: we conducted landscape analyses and partner conversations, developed concepts, and recruited a new team member to lead this work. We plan to begin production in early 2022, starting with our Tech Reform program. Our focus will be producing original stories that center the perspectives of people most impacted, spotlight voices and issues that have previously been overlooked, and sustain public pressure. Ultimately, these frequent-cadence, web-based videos made in close alignment with our partners will strengthen grassroots movement building and serve our mission to use storytelling to change the world.

#### CLIMATE

#### **Overview**

Since the release of our 2020 Climate Report, our Climate work continues to build on our impact and serve the climate movement by leveraging the power of storytelling to reach new and existing audiences and drive meaningful action. Over the course of 2021, our work continued to adapt to the ongoing implications of COVID-19, support long-term impact through relationship and movement building, and center a meaningful commitment to equity and justice in all that we do.

#### **Theory of Change**

The climate crisis is accelerating at an unprecedented rate, perpetuated by systems of oppression and extraction. We believe that the transformational power of storytelling is one of the greatest tools we have to accelerate climate action at scale. Our work serves as a pathway for climate storytellers, organizers, and the broader storytelling ecosystem; moving away from centering ourselves to disrupting unjust power structures and ensuring that both organizers and storytellers have the resources, access, and capacity to do the work.

We build bridges, foster collaboration, and seek to be a trusted hub and thought partner for climate storytellers and organizers, recognizing our privilege and power, bringing innovation and opportunity to the overall ecosystem, and ensuring that we are contributing to an equitable, intersectional, and multidisciplinary approach to addressing the climate crisis through the power of storytelling.

#### **Our Program**

#### Shifting the Narrative

#### **Climate Story Lab**

In April 2021, we hosted a Climate Story Lab US–South with regional stakeholders New Orleans Film Society and the Southeast Climate and Energy Network. We accepted 7 storytelling projects from the South to workshop during the Lab and brought in local organizers, scientists, community leaders, funders and more to explore different themes, including intersectionality, power, impact, and equitable funding models. The Climate Story Lab US–South case study video and report can be found at ExposureLabs.com/CSL–south, including more information about each of the incredible projects. In 2022, we are aligning with Doc Society and other global planning teams to engage in long–term strategic planning around this work.

#### Short-form content

In 2022, our team will begin scoping short-form content opportunities with partners across the climate movement.



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#### Sharing Resources

#### Film in the Field

In September 2020, we launched Film in the Field as a pilot program in partnership with the Southeast Climate & Energy Network (SCEN). Building off of learnings from our impact work with Chasing Ice and Chasing Coral and consolidating feedback and interest across the field, Film in the Field was created to test a scalable, equitable model that supports the use of climate storytelling to mobilize new and existing audiences, drive climate action, and create lasting change. Since the launch, we have granted 7 grassroots organizations funding and resources to use film as a tool for their organizing.

In 2022, we plan to:

- Release our Film in the Field Impact Report & Case Study Video to showcase our approach, impact, and learnings from 2020 to early 2022.
- Partner with SCEN to launch our Film in the Field Request for Proposal Phase 2. With feedback and learning incorporated from Phase 1, we will be resourcing an additional cohort of SCEN grantees to use storytelling as an organizing tool.
- Expand our Film in the Field Library to support more storytellers and organizers as an ongoing offering for the climate movement.
- Partner with SCEN on the NOAA/Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments (RISA) Program to host workshops paired with NOAA/ RISA teams and communities in Florida, Georgia and Alabama to inform scientists directly on the impacts of climate change in their communities. Films from our library will be screened as part of the events, and local videographers will capture the workshops and learnings.

**VISIT THE FILM IN THE FIELD LIBRARY** ExposureLabs.com/Film-in-the-Field



#### **Film in the Field Grantees**

Events organized by Film in the Field grantees took place over the course of 2021 and into 2022, including:

- **ReThink Energy Florida**, a youth-led organization, brought together 2
- Sustaining Way & South Carolina Interfaith Power & Light organized 2 community-led solutions.
- Warriors.
- along with a conversation with the Director, Judith Helfand.
- Care About Climate launched their project with a screening of Water

Georgia Interfaith Power & Light will host a series of events in Spring 2022.

[We] asked in our post [event] survey what events/volunteering/ podcasts our participants have found since the event, and nearly every response had some sort of environmentally-focused answer such as being trained to be a water monitor or listening to How To Save a Planet. Whether they were already an activist or not, I believe this event encouraged people to start making change and doing everything they can to further educate themselves and help heal this planet. - Jordan Hansel, ReThink Energy Florida

People's Justice Council brought together Alabamian community members, faith leaders, and community organizers for a screening of Uniontown.

SPOTLIGH.

screenings of Chasing Ice for intergenerational audiences in Florida.

screenings of The Human Element to frame local climate impacts and

Kentucky Interfaith Power & Light created a 2-part series: "Facing Winter: Exploring the Human Impact on Nature," with screenings of Chasing Ice, Chasing Coral, and The Human Element; and "Engaging Spring: We Got This!" with screenings of Current Revolution, Uniontown, and Water

Greater-Birmingham Alliance to Stop Pollution (GASP) hosted 2 screenings of Cooked: Survival by Zip Code to audiences in Birmingham, Alabama,

Warriors and panel discussion in the Kendeda Building at Georgia Tech.

#### CLIMATE

#### Chasing Ice and Chasing Coral

While we continue to respond to significant interest in both Chasing Ice and Chasing Coral through inbox management and supporting screenings around the globe, our social media platforms have evolved to serve as megaphones for active campaigns in the climate arena, with a focus on amplifying voices of frontline and marginalized communities and organizers. We have also updated ChasingCoral.com and Chasinglce. com to house more up-to-date resources and calls to action for our audience, making the films more accessible. In 2022, we will be launching a Chasing Coral Community Grant program, where we identify and support groups that could most benefit from additional capacity and resources. We will also be exploring several opportunities for the Chasing Ice 10-year anniversary.

#### **Weaving & Convening**

In honor of our values, our team has invested time and resources into movementbuilding opportunities to build capacity for organizers and inform our role and relevance across the field. Closing out 2021, we participated in some exciting opportunities, including: an inter-generational conversation on the climate crisis hosted by Young Entertainment Activists; Good Pitch Local Detroit; Netroots Nation '21; the Southeast **Climate & Energy Network Member** Convening; the Conference of Youth 16 preceding COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland; and the New Orleans Film Festival. In 2022, we're prioritizing participating in movement moments led by our partners, while also seeking new opportunities for our team and work to learn, support, and grow.

#### "IF THERE WAS EVER A FILM THAT NEEDED TO BE ON THE BIG SCREEN, THIS IS IT!" - David Courier, Subdarde Senior Programmer

"THE MOST IMPORTANT FILM OF THE YEAR." - Chris Columbus, Director and Producer

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SUNDANCE

#### Case Study: Leveraging Local Partnerships for Long-Term, Large-Scale Impact

Over the past decade, on-the-ground outreach has been key to our approach to using storytelling for change – from our partnership with Conservation Voters of South Carolina (CVSC) to advance solar legislation with a statewide tour of climate films, to our collaborations with local breweries to host screenings and conversations around *Chasing Coral*.

When our active campaigns for Chasing Ice and Chasing Coral drew to a close, our team set out to learn from and deepen our local partnerships model to support sustained impact for the many other films grappling with climate change. In Spring 2020, we hosted dozens of listening sessions with climate advocacy groups and storytellers to learn how we might evolve our Climate program to redistribute our reach back into grassroots organizing. One of those conversations - with the Southeast Climate & Energy Network (SCEN), the largest regional collaborative of clean energy and climate justice organizations in the U.S. - blossomed into a meaningful and impactful partnership that continues today. Over the past two years, we've built a relationship with SCEN based on mutual trust, respect, experimentation, and wellbeing to use storytelling to build capacity and shift power in the South, the U.S. region that is least resourced and most impacted by climate change. We're deeply grateful for our partnership and excited for what's ahead in 2022, including launching Phase 2 of our Request for Proposal and collaborating to explore how a sequel of Chasing Ice might be used to advance climate justice.

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BY JEFF ORLOWSKI



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## FIN'SHED

## **TECH REFORM**

#### **Overview**

Big Social is built around a business model that is fundamentally at odds with the interests of humanity. Since its release in September 2020, The Social Dilemma has given the public a shared understanding and new vocabulary for these threats, reaching 38 million households in its first month alone. Our subsequent impact campaign has educated the public and policymakers and empowered youth to catalyze sustained public pressure to reform Big Social's business model. While the tech reform movement was accelerated with The Social Dilemma's release and impact campaign, the film has just scratched the surface on connecting the dots from real world harms to this new existential threat.

#### **Theory of Change**

Beginning in 2022 and beyond, we're shifting focus from the film to the movement at large, using our storytelling skills to continue creating a shared cohesive narrative around the issue and building capacity for grassroots humane tech organizations. We plan to do this by creating, sharing, and providing support to new, intersectional stories that spotlight the diverse scope of leaders powering the movement; centering those most impacted by exploitative technology; and taking a collaborative approach to solutions.

#### **Our Program**

#### Shifting the Narrative

#### Long-form productions

- 2020 Impact Report.
- behaviors. **> Read more on page 40**

#### Short-form content

public understanding and demand for change.

#### Seed grants for other storytellers

and sustain public pressure on Big Social's business model.

Investigate Facebook Rally to Investigate Facebook

• Read about The Social Dilemma's impact four months after its release in our

#### We also embarked on a 10-month collaboration with USC's Norman

Lear Center to study The Social Dilemma's impact on audience views and

• In 2022, we're developing a series of short videos made in collaboration with partners featuring tech insiders, survivors and revolutionaries to increase

 In addition to producing our own long- and short-form projects, beginning in 2022 we'll be investing in other storytellers to support the humane movement

### Case Study: Impact Storyteller Award with LookUp.Live

- The film and your team have played a central role in LookUp's ability to discover, empower, and amplify youth from all over the world who share our vision of a healthier, more equitable, and humane digital world. Susan Reynolds, co-founder, LookUp
  - The summit: The Social Dilemma inspired LookUp's teen leadership council to launch the first-ever Youth-4-Youth iSummit in Fall 2020, an international gathering of youth dedicated to creating a more ethical and inclusive digital future. We co-hosted this summit in both in Fall 2020 and 2021.
- The grant:
  - Following the first summit, we co-launched "The Social Dilemma Grant," which challenged and resourced two Gen Z teams to realign technology with the public good. Our team awarded \$2,500 each and sustained mentorship to the following teams:
  - On Our Terms a multimedia campaign educating youth about data rights and what it really means when you accept the terms and conditions of popular social media platforms.
    - ASMBL a non-profit social media platform designed to connect activists with the causes they care about, centralizing all the tools needed "to organize for a more just future."
  - For our second annual grant in 2022, we're narrowing its scope to exclusively support youth storytellers with the *The Social Dilemma* Impact Storyteller Award.



#### Maddie's Story

When 19-year-old Maddie Freeman watched The Social Dilemma, she'd already lost 5 friends to suicide and rallied her high school district to better understand and address teen mental health. When she saw the film, things clicked. She thought, "Oh my god, this is a big part of what I've been experiencing and why so many of my friends have died." Maddie registered to host a community screening on TheSocialDilemma.com and shared her next advocacy idea: A "No Social Media November" challenge, where students would pledge to stay off social media for the month. With the help of our screening and public education resources, she successfully piloted the challenge with her high school and then applied to The Social Dilemma Grant competition with LookUp to scale her campaign. Over the next year, our team mentored Maddie on how to talk about the link between social media and teen mental health, share her story, and grow her impact. When we shared Maddie's experience with U.S. Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) ahead of an Energy and Commerce Committee hearing with Mark Zuckerberg, Sundar Pichai and Jack Dorsey last March, Rodgers was so moved by the story that she included it in her opening remarks on how we need to change Big Social's business model to protect kids, saying, "Your platforms are my biggest fear as a parent."

In just the past year, Maddie's story and activism – along with those of countless other young people stepping up to create and demand better technology – has helped shift the narrative around teens and social media, spur design changes like Facebook pausing its plans for Instagram for Kids, and support coalitions working to create an age-appropriate design code in the U.S. "It helped me feel like I was doing something for all those people who died in my life," Maddie said in an interview for our first Changemaker Spotlight blog on TheSocialDilemma.com. To date, 10 of Maddie's peers have taken their lives. But she's not stopping, and our team will continue to support her important work.

LOOK IP



SOCIAL INNOVATOR & SUICIDE AWARENESS ADVOCATE

#### **Sharing Resources**

#### Public education

- We released 9 short supplemental clips and worked with Netflix to release the full film for a limited time on YouTube, where it garnered 1.5 million views in just two months.
- We launched our Changemaker Spotlights blog, which highlights leaders and activists doing important work in the field, and the Social Media **Reboot**, a behavior change campaign that has helped 26,000 people take back control of their relationship with technology.
- We supported 5,000+ community screenings around the film in 130+ countries, including providing resources and joining events.

#### Youth empowerment

- Responding to a flood of interest from educators, who represent 50% of community screening requests, we edited and released a 40-minute educational cut of the film and accompanying Gen Z Action Guide and Educator Resources page.
- To highlight Big Social's impact on youth mental health, we partnered with MTV News for Mental Health Awareness Month to release a set of multimedia explainers, spurring 200+ communitydriven screenings.

#### Political will-building

- Our policy team reached **200+ politicians** across the aisle with film screenings and briefings and facilitated 30+ introductions to issue area experts. Our conversations and expert connections with the DC Office of the Attorney General helped inform an algorithmic bias bill they introduced, the first comprehensive bill of this type in the nation.
- In 2022, we'll be onboarding a policy consultant to refine our political engagement strategy and finalizing a lookbook of 30+ experts to streamline policymaker introductions.

E INCENTIVE BIG SOCIAL'S PERFECT STORM INE-LEARNING Facebook Delays Instagram App for Users 13 and Younger The social media giant said it still wanted to build a child-f

including the schools they they can purchase, whether they ge

nd the jobs they are hired for.

**Ban Surveillance Advertising** 

#### Tools for advocacy organizations to use film for change

#### XX Weaving & Convening

- We joined **10+ partner coalitions** or letters, including:
  - Accountable Tech's Ban Surveillance Advertising campaign, where our website served as their highest signature driver. In January 2022, Members of Congress introduced legislation that would ban this toxic business model.
  - The Designed with Kids in Mind Campaign, which aims to create an age-appropriate design code in the U.S. that will help build an online world that respects children's rights.
  - A coalition of advocates on a campaign to "Cancel Instagram for Kids," which resulted in Facebook's decision to pause their plans.
- We also co-hosted more than a dozen events with our partners, including:
  - Workshops at Unfinished Live, an event that brought together renowned activists and thought leaders in the tech reform movement to explore how a decentralized web could contribute to a more fair and just digital world.
  - A Rally to Investigate Facebook on Capitol Hill with a coalition of partners calling for Congress to investigate Facebook featuring two congresspeople active in the tech accountability space.
  - Bipartisan screenings of the film and conversations with the Canadian Parliament, Democratic Caucus, and 40 state Attorneys Generals.
- In 2022, we'll continue hosting and supporting partner events as well as serving on a Climate Disinformation Coalition, the Ban Surveillance Advertising Coalition, and the Designed with Kids in Mind Coalition.
  - In 2022, we'll be launching a pilot initiative to support humane tech creators, storytellers, and organizers through shared learnings, impact and storytelling consulting, a tech-focused resource and content library, power-building events, and funding.

#### The Social Dilemma Debate Project

#### **Overview**

Fair debate is the heart of democracy. But as The Social Dilemma revealed, social media algorithms that amplify outrage at any cost are eroding our society's ability to engage in constructive arguments. In partnership with Newsweek and The National Association for Urban Debate Leagues, we launched The Social Dilemma Debate Project, a new initiative designed to combat today's polarization, hate and gridlock with a new generation of strong debaters.

As policymakers debate ways to reform Big Social, the project invites Gen Z – the demographic most impacted by these technologies – to share their proposed policy solutions in 2-minute videos this spring. Selected videos will be shared with our network of legislators, and up to 5 debaters will be awarded a \$500 scholarship and featured on a future episode of Newsweek's podcast The Debate.

#### Rollout

We have completed Phase 1 and are already seeing promising traction for Phase 2 of the project:

- Phase 1: Live Debate & Classroom Resource Development (June 2021 - Sept 2021)
- Phase 2: Outreach & Youth Participation (Oct 2021 - February 2022)
- Phase 3: Submission Selection & Amplification (March 2022 - May 2022)

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT TheSocialDilemma.com/Debate



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/the social dilemma

debate

#### Norman Lear Center Impact Evaluation

#### Overview

Using a unique survey methodology called propensity score matching (PSM), Exposure Labs embarked on a robust independent\* study with The Norman Lear Center's Media Impact Project to understand The Social Dilemma's influence on viewers' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors and offer learnings for other social impact storytellers.

Total number of respondents: 3,881 (all based in the U.S.)

\*The film's distributor, Netflix, had no input, partnership, or oversight over the methodology or analysis.

#### **Highlights**

I transitioned from the perspective of joking about my personal FBI agent listening to my conversations too closely and showing me personalized ads to being truly afraid of how intelligent my devices and social media platforms have become against me. - Respondent

#### The study yielded many insights for the film and wider field, including:

- The Social Dilemma helped provide language and urgency to an emerging successful at this.
- Compared to non-viewers, viewers had greater support for design and
- viewers visited TheSocialDilemma.com after watching.

**READ THE FULL REPORT** b.link/tsdnlcreport

issue we all feel but may not yet fully understand: 71% of viewers thought the film was Very much to Extremely successful in creating a sense of urgency about the need for change, and 92% felt it was at least somewhat

regulatory changes and were more likely to place limits on their smartphone use, discuss social media with others, and take civic engagement actions.

• 9 out of 10 viewers took at least one campaign action after watching, such as attending events hosted by our team or partners, hosting their own screening, signing a petition, or joining a volunteer group. Nearly half of

	Revealing new, essential information about an issue I was already somewhat familiar with					
1%	8%	21%	41%	28%		
	Offer	ing a shared	vocabulary for talking a	bout these issues with other	s	
1%	7%	25%	42%	25%		
	Provi	ding me with	a clear understanding c	of what needs to change and	∕or hov	
1%	8%	27%	39%	26%		
	Helpi	ng me learn	something I didn't under	stand prior to watching the f	ilm	
3%	10%	. 23%	36%	27%		
	Introduce me to an issue I was previously unfamiliar with					
5%	11	% 23%	35%	25%		

SPOTLIGHT

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

# thank you

**THANK YOU** to our partners, funders, film subjects, audience, the film and impact community, and everyone who has invested in and supported Exposure Labs over the years. It's an incredibly exciting moment for our company, collaborators, and the industry at large. We look forward to keeping you updated and – we hope! – involved in our mission to use social impact film for a more sustainable and regenerative future for all. Onward together!

#### SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS 2020 & 2021 DONORS





SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

#### AND DEEP GRATITUDE TO THE SUNDANCE INSTITUTE FOR THEIR ONGOING



Exposure Labs is the film production and impact studio behind *Chasing Ice*, *Chasing Coral*, and *The Social Dilemma*. We believe that stories are the most powerful catalyst to build empathy, shape culture, foster social justice movements, and shift systems. From inception to impact, we develop and share stories to address big societal challenges, and to inspire hope and action for collective solutions.

Exposure Labs, LLC info@exposurelabs.com www.exposurelabs.com



