

Scientists funded by Chan-Zuckerberg urge Facebook to do better

8 June 2020, by Sarah Frier, Bloomberg News



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Scientists funded by Mark Zuckerberg's philanthropy are calling on Facebook Inc. to create and enforce stricter policies on misinformation and harmful language following the social network's handling of President Donald Trump's posts suggesting violence against protesters.

Zuckerberg received a [letter](#) on Saturday signed by 143 scientists from some of the world's most prestigious research institutions, including Stanford University and Harvard University, all of whom have been funded by money from the Chan-Zuckerberg Initiative, the chief executive's philanthropic arm with his wife Priscilla Chan.

CZI's mission to "build a more inclusive, just and healthy future for everyone" doesn't align with Facebook's actions, the scientists write in the letter. "The spread of deliberate misinformation and divisive language is directly antithetical to this goal, and we are therefore deeply concerned at the stance Facebook has taken."

As country-wide protests erupted over the Minneapolis police killing of George Floyd, Twitter

Inc. put a warning label on a post by Trump that said "when the looting starts, the shooting starts." The tweet echoed a remark made in 1967 by a white Miami police chief when announcing tougher policing policies for the Florida city's African American neighborhoods.

Facebook declined to take action on the same statement by Trump, posted to Instagram and Facebook, saying it wasn't inciting violence.

Employees of the social media giant protested with a virtual walkout from their jobs, and several public resignations. Nearly three dozen former employees wrote an [open letter](#) to Zuckerberg, published in the *New York Times* this week.

In Saturday's letter, the scientists pressured Zuckerberg to act: "We urge you to consider stricter policies on misinformation and incendiary language that harms people or groups of people, especially in our current climate that is grappling with racial injustice."

The *Washington Post* earlier obtained the letter.

©2020 Bloomberg News

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

APA citation: Scientists funded by Chan-Zuckerberg urge Facebook to do better (2020, June 8) retrieved 12 May 2021 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2020-06-scientists-funded-chan-zuckerberg-urge-facebook.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.