



When we can't trust our eyes anymore....



Twitter / AI generated images

...we need reliable and independent institutions for the credibility of images and texts.

Artificial intelligence is blurring the lines between truth and lies, making the spread of disinformation a piece of cake.

Images are of crucial importance in this context.

That's why we are establishing a corporation for non-profit journalism, the

laif foundation for independent photojournalism.

Photojournalism and media literacy for an informed civil society and a strong democracy: not-for-profit, credible, critical, independent and impactful.



What drives us

The mass media are facing a serious loss of public trust, and commercial journalism is barely able to fulfill its informative and monitoring tasks.

The financial pressure in the private media business creates conditions for journalists under which high-quality work is becoming more and more difficult.

Purely profit-oriented social media companies increasingly dominate news flows - largely without comprehensible ethical or editorial standards.

There is a growing danger that journalism, including photojournalism, will become purely mainstream-driven. Only what can (still) be sold is being published.

This creates gaps in the formation of public opinion, and our democracy is gradually losing its independent watchdog.

Now more than ever, a reliable news media is essential - as an authority for credibility and guidance that verifies information, classifies topics and stories constructively and points out connecting factors.

Complementary independent and transparent journalistic offerings that serve the common good are therefore becoming increasingly important.



We focus on three key impact areas

Promoting media literacy

Our central goal is to equip society as a whole with greater media literacy, because the ability to gather information and evaluate news is becoming increasingly important in democracy. Through photography as a medium, we engage people by providing inspiring educational activities, thus awakening an interest in critical media reflection.

Safeguarding and fostering photojournalism

As a complement to traditional media, we establish exciting and innovative publishing formats for photojournalistic projects that deal in a differentiated and constructive way with globally relevant future topics such as education & health, climate change, diversity, poverty, social change, demographics, resource scarcity, technical innovations or Europe.

Providing a quality seal for the provenance and credibility of images.

In collaboration with the Content Authenticity Initiative (CAI), we are promoting a standard for the traceable authenticity chain of image media. Based on a voluntary commitment by creators, we will create a seal for the credibility of photos - a cornerstone of freedom of the press and diversity of opinion.

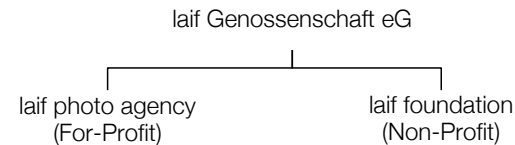


There are many of us... and more to come

To date, more than 320 photographers and citizens have altruistically demonstrated their support for photojournalism and the strengthening of our democracy by founding the laif cooperative.

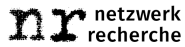
Through an unprecedented crowdfunding campaign, we managed to separate the internationally renowned laif photo agency from a stock-listed corporation, thus keeping it independent and autonomous.

laif represents over 400 photographers worldwide, including numerous World Press Photo and Pulitzer Prize winners. The agency has been one of the leading institutions for photojournalism and documentary photography since 1980. It represents 40 international partners in the German-speaking countries – e.g. the New York Times and Société du Figaro.



By launching the laif foundation, we are taking the next step in our transformation and pioneering new ways of acting and generating revenue models in photojournalism.

This will extend the awareness of the "laif" brand to a broad public and create completely new opportunities for publishing and education projects. Thus, we can greatly increase the impact of our journalistic work and make a more substantial contribution to informing society and strengthening our democracy.



Projects 2024-2026

- Establishment of a Berlin office in Publix, the worldwide unique project of the Schöpflin Foundation to strengthen independent media and free, critical discourse - a laboratory for innovation in journalism.
- Conception, implementation and publication of photographic and multimedia projects on socially relevant topics such as: Climate Change & Environment, Technical Innovations, Equality & Diversity, Education & Health or Demography & Social Change.
- Development of a European community and publication platform centered around photojournalism and documentary photography.
- Project days, workshops and tutorials on the topic of media literacy at schools and for teacher training.
- Contests for visual projects within the framework of school and community initiatives in cooperation with social media platforms such as Tiktok, Youtube, and Instagram.
- Joint events, exhibitions and print projects with non-profit institutions such as Reporters Without Borders and the German Center for Political Education.
- Initiate guidelines and a quality seal for the provenance and authenticity of images - based on a voluntary commitment by authors to a set of content standards.
- Processing of photo archives and estates of photographers that are significant in terms of contemporary and cultural history.



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For new directions in the business of photojournalism, take a look at our [website](#) or subscribe to our monthly [newsletter](#).

Photo credits in order of appearance:

[Daniel Etter/laif](#); [Al/Le Figaro](#); [Kai Löffelbein/laif](#); [Bradley Secker/laif](#); [David Klammer/laif](#);

[AFF Architekten, Rendering © Studio Grauwald](#); [Eliot Blondet](#)

AI-generated image "Obama and Merkel on the beach": Julian van Dieken (photographer and media designer). He gives AI workshops and created the fictional AI image series "Obama and Merkel on the beach" to demonstrate the risks and opportunities of AI-generated content.