
Critical Update Podcast: When Seeing No Longer Means Believing, What's a Government to Do?

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In an episode for Nextgov's *Critical Update* podcast titled "When Seeing No Longer Means Believing, What's a Government to Do?" Counsel [Matthew F. Ferraro](#) discusses how agencies and lawmakers are moving to combat deepfakes and other synthetic media used as powerful tools in disinformation campaigns. Additional guests featured in the episode include Karen Howard, the Government Accountability Office's director of science and technology assessment, and Matt Turek, the acting deputy director of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency's Information Innovation Office.

"A deepfake is a portmanteau of two words: deep learning, which is a branch of artificial intelligence, and fake. Essentially, when we talk about a deepfake, we mean a piece of synthetic media—and it can be a text, an image or a video that is either manipulated or entirely created by artificial intelligence," Mr. Ferraro explains in the episode. "Deepfakes and synthetic media are like an accelerant, and all of the concerns we have about disinformation—impacting people's emotions, changing how they think, making them angrier and more frustrated with one another—would get so much worse because of synthetic media and deepfakes. And, indeed, that's basically what's happened as synthetic deepfakes have gotten better and better."

[Read more](#) about the topic, and [listen to the episode](#).