



SOPA Announces 2023 Journalism Awards Finalists

Celebrates 25th anniversary of prestigious annual honors

HONG KONG, May 5, 2023 --The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA), a Hong Kong-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to pursuing excellence in journalism, today announced the finalists for the SOPA 2023 Awards for Editorial Excellence (full list [here](#)). Global, Regional, and Chinese media outlets submitted more than 800 entries in English and Chinese and in a new language category of Bahasa Indonesia.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the awards, having been held every year since 1999. Winners will be announced Thursday June 15 at an in-person gala dinner in Hong Kong. Tickets available for purchase [here](#).

Awards will be given out across 21 categories, ranging from Journalistic Innovation and Human Rights Reporting to Arts & Culture and Photography, to name just a few. ProPublica, Initium Media and the TheWall Street Journal are the finalists for the award honoring outstanding contributions to Public Service Journalism with stories on Afghanistan and China respectively.

Several long-term judges commented that the submissions for the 2023 awards were even more outstanding than usual. “Reporting, story choice and organization were all top level,” said one of the 130-strong panel of volunteer judges comprised of former and current journalists and journalism academics from around the world.

A clutch of major news events, particularly in China, dominated coverage in 2022. Among them were the country’s once-in-a-decade leadership transition and Xi Jinping’s further consolidation of power; the consequences of China’s “Zero Covid” policy and its unravelling; and the intensifying tensions over Taiwan’s future.

“From the top leadership transition to the toll of its policy on COVID-19 —and its subsequent unraveling—, meticulous, courageous and profoundly important stories were being told, advancing the public knowledge and understanding of China’s Communist Party state. That’s an especially remarkable feat given the challenges of reporting on the authoritarian state,” said Head of Judges Ting Shi, a senior lecturer at The University of Hong Kong’s HKU Journalism, which has administered the SOPA Awards in English and Chinese since 2011.



Rita Widiadana, a veteran Jakarta-based journalist and director of the Consortium for Press Freedom Indonesia, was Head of Judges for the Bahasa Indonesia entries.

Human Rights issues across the region continued to feature prominently, including atrocities still unfolding in Myanmar. The proliferation of online scams in Southeast Asia and their connection to human trafficking also emerged as a major theme.

Like in previous years, Google News Initiative (GNI) supported first time entrants to the SOPA Awards. It also offered subsidies on submission fees to smaller publications for the 2023 awards.

“As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the SOPA Awards this year, we’re delighted to see the robust number of entries and their exceptional quality. It is heartening how publications — regardless of newsroom size— are pushing back against the expanding crackdown on press freedom in the region. Thank you to everyone who submitted to the awards and we look forward to honoring the finalists and winners at our gala dinner in June in Hong Kong,” said Madeleine Lim, senior executive editor at Bloomberg News and Chair of the SOPA Editorial Committee.

2023 Award Categories

- Excellence in Reporting on Women’s Issues
- Excellence in Journalistic Innovation
- Excellence in Audio Reporting
- Excellence in Video Reporting
- Excellence in Human Rights Reporting
- Excellence in Feature Writing
- Excellence in Technology Reporting
- Excellence in Magazine Design
- Excellence in Arts and Culture Reporting

NEW: Excellence in **Bahasa Indonesia News** Reporting

- Excellence in Explanatory Reporting
- Excellence in Business Reporting
- Excellence in Infographics
- Excellence in Reporting Breaking News
- Excellence in Opinion Writing
- Excellence in Reporting on the Environment
- Excellence in Photography
- The Scoop Award
- Carlos Tejada Award for Excellence in Investigative Reporting
- SOPA Award for Young Journalists
- SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism



About SOPA

The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) is a Hong Kong-based not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1982 to champion freedom of the press, promote excellence in journalism and endorse best practices for publishers operating in the Asia Pacific region.

Today, SOPA is the voice of Asia's media and publishing industry, and continues to work to uphold media standards and freedoms while celebrating and supporting professional journalism and publishing. The SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence are the annual flagship awards, serving as a regional benchmark for quality, professional journalism and have been given out for 25 consecutive years since 1999.

www.sopasia.com; www.sopawards.com; [SOPA LinkedIn](#)

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