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## **SOPA Announces 2026 Journalism Awards Finalists**

### **Award-winning journalist and author Karen Hao to deliver keynote address**

**HONG KONG (May 7, 2026)** — 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 of the SOPA 2026 Awards for Editorial Excellence ([full list here](#) – or go to <https://sopawards.com/the-sopa-awards/awards-finalists/>).

Entries continued to demonstrate the strength and diversity of journalism across the region, with Global, Regional/Local and Chinese media outlets submitting more than 700 entries in English and Chinese, alongside a dedicated Bahasa Indonesia category.

This year marks the 28th consecutive annual awards, which were first held in 1999. Winners will be announced on Thursday, June 18 at a celebratory Awards Presentation Gala Dinner in Hong Kong. SOPA will also announce exciting new Awards categories for the 2027 Awards season during the evening.

Karen Hao, an award-winning journalist and best-selling author of *Empire of AI*, will deliver the keynote address. Widely regarded as one of the world's leading reporters on artificial intelligence and its societal impact, Ms. Hao will explore how AI is reshaping journalism and global power structures, and examine what these technologies mean for newsrooms, editors and reporters, particularly at a time when trust, transparency and accountability are under increasing pressure.

Hong Kong journalist and media trainer Karen Koh will once again serve as master of ceremonies for the Awards Presentation Gala Dinner.

Awards will be presented across 21 categories, spanning areas such as investigative reporting, breaking news, public service journalism, technology reporting, photography and journalistic innovation. This year's finalists reflect both the depth of reporting and the evolving priorities of the media landscape across the Asia Pacific.

The number of submissions from Global and Regional/Local outlets increased year-on-year, with notable growth in participation from smaller and first-time entrants. A total of 34 small media outlets and first-time entrants from 13 countries and regions submitted 54 entries. Several of the entries made it through to the final round including **Himal Southasian**, in the regional investigative reporting category for [Pills, Perils, Profits: A Himal investigative series on Southasian pharma](#); 灼見名家 **Master-Insight.com**, in Chinese-language opinion writing, for [長和賣港口風波——做足功課 理智應對/CK Hutchison Port Deal Uproar — Research Thoroughly and Handle With](#)

[Good Sense](#); and **Davao Today**, in the regional environment reporting category for [National Greenwashing Program: From Green Dreams to Barren Realities](#).

China and its regional and global influence emerged as a dominant theme, with submissions exploring cross-strait relations, regional conflicts, economic competition, and technological rivalry. Environment challenges across the region as well as social change, digital financial crime and scams also were hot topics.

This year's awards are being administered by a newly formed SOPA Awards Administration Panel, led by veteran journalist Chris Yeung, with members including Edith Terry and Heng Yu Chien. Harry Surjadi, a science journalist specializing in environmental issues for more than 25 years, serves as Head Judge for the Bahasa Indonesia category, which honors stories that set the domestic agenda in politics, business, or social and cultural affairs.

A total of 115 volunteer judges—comprising former and current journalists and journalism academics from around the world—contributed their time and expertise to review, assess and score the entries.

“The SOPA Awards continue to reflect the vital role of journalism in helping audiences understand an increasingly complex and interconnected world,” said Rich Barbieri, International Business Editor, The New York Times and co-chair of SOPA's Editorial Committee.

## **2026 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
- 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 Journalist
- SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism

Taboola is an Associate Sponsor of the SOPA 2026 Awards. Telum Media, Create Productions and Channel News Asia are our Supporting Partners.

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## **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 all local and regional publishing platforms 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 every year since 1999.

[www.sopasia.com](http://www.sopasia.com); [www.sopawards.com](http://www.sopawards.com); [SOPA LinkedIn](#), [SOPA Facebook](#), [SOPA X](#)

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