The SOPA Awards

WHY YOU SHOULD ENTER

The Society of Publishers in Asia
SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence

THE SOCIETY OF PUBLISHERS IN ASIA
EST. 1982

Each year since 1999,

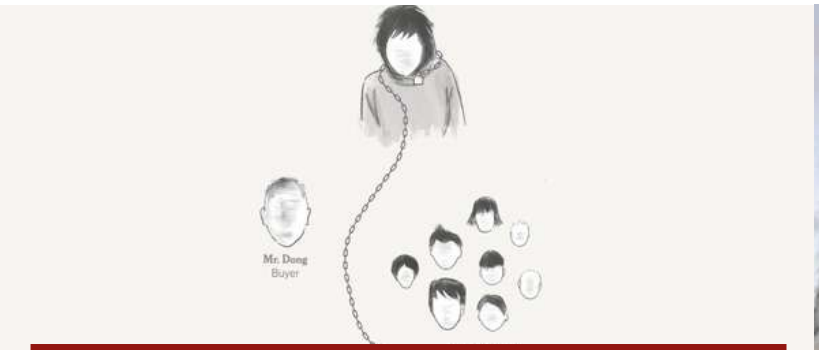
The Society of Publishers in Asia has recognized great journalism in the Asia-Pacific region

by bestowing awards in a range of categories from photography to reporting on women's issues to covering the environment.

Winners have come from publications big and small, long-established and newly founded, international and regional, and in English, Chinese, and Bahasa Indonesia.

Widely recognized as the Pulitzer Prizes of Asia, the SOPA Awards set a high benchmark for journalism in the region—and celebrate those who produce it, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances. The annual awards also foster freedom of expression in the Asia Pacific by publicly rewarding those who practice it.

SOPA 2026 Awards | Winners Spotlight



CHINA'S MALAISE AND ITS PEOPLE'S ENDURANCE, The New York Times

SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism



HONG KONG FIRE, Reuters

Excellence in Photography (Global Group)



RAKHINE IN CRISIS: BEGGING TO SURVIVE AMID STARVATION, Frontier Myanmar

Excellence in Human Rights Reporting, (Regional Group)



長篇現場：跨國代孕的代價，在她們身上/ SURROGATE MOTHERS: THE BODIES THAT PAID THE PRICE Initium Media

Excellence in Feature Writing, (Chinese Group)



Click the above image to see SOPA 2025 Awards Highlight

BY THE NUMBERS

The total number of annual entries has consistently exceeded 700 in recent years, despite shrinking editorial budgets and increasing media suppression.

Chinese-language submissions have remained strong, accounting for 40% of total entries. Launched in 2023, the Bahasa Indonesia category has since attracted impactful entries that shape national discourse in politics, business, and social or cultural issues.

The SOPA Awards is administered by a five-member Awards Administration Panel, led by veteran journalist Chris Yeung. Each member brings deep editorial and organizational expertise across English, Chinese, and Bahasa media. They oversee and manage all aspects of the submission and judging process, where each year, entries are meticulously reviewed, assessed and scored by over 100 esteemed judges comprising journalists, editors, and industry experts from around the globe. Together they ensure the Awards embody the highest standards of independence, transparency, and fairness.

SHARE THE SPOTLIGHT

SOPA's distinguished reputation in media circles has drawn a roster of prestigious speakers from politics and the press to the annual awards presentations. Among them in recent years: Ma Ying-jeou, former president of Taiwan; Chris Patten, Hong Kong's last colonial governor; Christiane Amanpour, CNN's chief international anchor and multi-award winner; and Maria Ressa, chief executive of Philippine social news network Rappler and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Joseph Kahn, two-time Pulitzer winner and executive editor of The New York Times, Mishal Husain, award-winning journalist and Editor at Large for Bloomberg Weekend, and Karen Hao, award-winning journalist and bestselling author of *Empire of AI*.

The annual cocktail and gala dinner has provided a networking opportunity to mix with other media movers and shakers, spot trends, swap ideas and raise profiles.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR MY BRAND

Winning a SOPA Award offers publishers more than just prestige — it creates a powerful cycle of commercial success. Beyond the recognition, it grants invaluable bragging rights across categories like investigative reporting, business coverage, and opinion writing. It also opens a promotional window, with opportunities to showcase editorial excellence through press releases and social media buzz once the winners are revealed.

The SOPA seal of approval, endorsed by industry peers, boosts a publication's credibility, reassuring both advertisers and subscribers while attracting new audiences. With more readers willing to pay for "award-winning" journalism, publishers can reinvest in their newsrooms, driving growth and expanding their readership even further.



"Calling ourselves 'award-winning' gives a positive effect to our brand and reputation and undoubtedly motivates our colleagues to brush up on their skills and stories to win. By competing, we can position where we are. If we get the prize, that means our colleagues and our publication are doing great. If not, we take notice that we need to make more efforts to catch up with our competitors.

— Shigesaburo Okumura,
Former Editor in Chief, Nikkei Asia

SOPA does the quality control of our content. That's very important for a young publication like Frontier. It supports not only editorial but also commercial success. Winning SOPA Awards carries a lot of weight when we point things out to both government and private sectors which are the areas that need to be improved.

— Sonny Swe,
Chief Executive Officer, Frontier Myanmar

We would like to see how our stories are rated outside of our local market. Winning the award is a broader recognition of our product quality and innovation and a broader recognition of Chinese news professionals.

— Yin-chuen Wu,
Chairman of Taiwan's CommonWealth Magazine









WHAT'S IN IT FOR MY NEWSROOM

For journalists, being recognized as one of the three finalists in a SOPA category — or winning an Award for Excellence or an Honorable Mention — serves as a powerful, public validation of their work.

This recognition also brings a halo effect. Winning a prize instills pride across the newsroom, boosting morale and fostering a shared sense of accomplishment in being part of an "award-winning" team. It inspires journalists to pursue even the most challenging stories with renewed determination.

SOPA recognition reminds journalists that their work is part of something bigger, reinforcing their role in shaping the broader narrative.

> *It's always a tremendous boost to staff and freelance journalists to be among the finalists. Winning a SOPA Award can enhance a career and a resume, with many recipients going on to be chosen for media fellowships or grants for further reporting. A SOPA Award is a real credit to any media organization.*
>
> **— Belinda Goldsmith,**
> **Former Editor-in-Chief,**
> **Thomson Reuters Foundation, London**

















THE TAKEAWAY

The SOPA Awards have long recognized the region's most outstanding journalists and publishers while upholding and defending press freedom across Asia.

Each year, over 100 Awards for Excellence and Honorable Mentions are up for grabs. Both digital and print publications are invited to compete as either Global or Regional/Local entries, in English or Chinese, across various categories. And there is a special category for Bahasa Indonesia: **sopawards.com/awards/award-categories/**

Brands are often judged by the company they keep, and the SOPA Awards consistently attract hundreds of entries from leading media organizations across the Asia Pacific and around the world. Don't miss this opportunity to elevate your reputation for quality journalism that engages influential readers and appeals to a wider network of advertisers.

The SOPA Awards

To get started, visit **sopawards.com**
and check out our submission **Rules and FAQ**.

Please contact **mail@sopasia.com** or
sopawards@sopasia.com
with any entry-related questions.

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