



SOPA 2018 Journalism Awards see Highest Number of Entries in 20 Years

Over 850 award entries; gala dinner tickets now on sale; keynote speaker President of Rappler Maria Ressa

Hong Kong, April 11, 2018 – The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA), a Hong Kong-based, not-for-profit organization today announced that it has received more than 850 entries in English and Chinese for the SOPA 2018 Awards for Editorial Excellence, up 13% from 2017 and the highest number since the launch of the awards in 1999.

SOPA, which celebrates the 20th anniversary of the awards this year, also announced that the keynote speaker at the SOPA Awards Gala Dinner will be Maria Ressa, former bureau chief in Manila and Jakarta with CNN, and now founding member and President of Rappler, a Philippines-based social news network that connects factual reporting with public opinion to foster conversation and drive social change.

The SOPA Awards are recognized as a world-class benchmark for best practices in journalism in Asia Pacific. That includes journalistic innovation across international, regional and local media platforms in the region. Rappler is a good example of such innovation.

Three finalists from each of the 17 categories will be announced in May 2018, with the winners (Excellence and Honorable mentions) to be named at the SOPA Awards Gala Dinner, which will take place on June 13 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Individual tickets for the dinner are now available at <http://www.sopawards.com>. For corporate tables of 12 seats, bookings should be made through the SOPA Secretariat (contact information below).

“I am delighted to see another significant rise in the number of entries this year. The record number reflects the value the media attaches to the winning of a SOPA award and the recognition this brings. We are proud to be celebrating the 20th anniversary of the awards,” said Cliff Buddle, Editor, Special Projects at the South China Morning Post, who is replacing Ms. S.K. Witcher, former News Editor for the International Edition of The New York Times, as Chair of the SOPA Editorial Committee since Ms. Witcher is relocating to Australia.

For the [SOPA 2018 Awards](#) media will compete in 17 categories (full list below). These include the SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism, which replaces the Journalist of the Year award, to honor outstanding work by both individuals and teams that represents an exemplary contribution to public service in the region.

The judging panel, appointed by the Journalism & Media Studies Centre of the University of Hong Kong, which is the Awards Administrator for the 8th consecutive year, comprises more than 100 media professionals from some of the region’s most influential



publications, along with academics from a number of Asia's leading journalism schools. The panel is led by Jeffrey Timmermans, Associate Professor, Journalism & Media Studies Centre, the University of Hong Kong.

The SOPA 2018 Awards for Editorial Excellence are supported by Google and Facebook. FleishmanHillard, Media OutReach and High Technology Printing Group Limited provide SOPA with support respectively on public relations, newswire and printing services.

Irene Jay Liu, APAC Lead of Google News Lab, said: "Journalism is the cornerstone of a well-informed society, and Google is honoured to once again celebrate rigorous reporting and innovative storytelling across Asia through our support of the SOPA Awards."

George Chen, Facebook's Head of Public Policy of Hong Kong and Taiwan, said: "As a platform that brings the world closer together, Facebook wants people to be informed, and to have meaningful interactions and conversations. We believe news literacy is critical to keeping people informed and helping them make sound decisions about the content they see online. We're glad to work with publishers and industry partners like SOPA to build a healthy news ecosystem and support quality journalism across the region."

2018 Award Categories

1. Excellence in Reporting on Women's Issues
2. Excellence in Journalistic Innovation
3. Excellence in Video Reporting
4. Excellence in Human Rights Reporting
5. Excellence in Feature Writing
6. Excellence in Magazine Design
7. Excellence in Arts & Culture Reporting
8. Excellence in Explanatory Reporting
9. Excellence in Business Reporting
10. Excellence in Information Graphics
11. Excellence in Reporting Breaking News
12. Excellence in Opinion Writing
13. Excellence in Reporting on the Environment
14. Excellence in Photography
15. The Scoop Award
16. Excellence in Investigative Reporting
17. SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism

About SOPA

The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) 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. SOPA is a not-for-profit organization based in Hong Kong and representing international, regional and local

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media companies across Asia. The Society of Publishers in Asia is also host to the prestigious annual SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence, which serve as the world-class benchmark for quality journalism in the region. www.sopasia.com; [SOPA LinkedIn](#).

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