FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SOPA 2026 Journalism Awards Open for Entries; Deadline Feb. 26

HONG KONG (December 9, 2025) — The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to championing editorial excellence and press freedom across the Asia-Pacific region, announced today that the **SOPA 2026 Awards for Editorial Excellence** are now open for entries. The deadline for submissions is **3pm Hong Kong time on Thursday, February 26, 2026**.

Now in its 28th consecutive year, the SOPA Awards – the region's most prestigious journalism accolade and widely recognized as the **Pulitzer Prizes of Asia** – celebrate outstanding journalism that upholds the principles of truth, integrity, and accountability. The 21 award categories span English, Chinese, and Bahasa Indonesia entries, offering recognition to both global and regional publications.

The SOPA 2025 Awards drew more than 700 entries across the 21 categories, and the **Regional/Local Group experienced a nearly 20% increase** in submission numbers.

The awards continue to provide smaller and independent news organizations across Asia Pacific with an important platform to showcase original reporting and writing. In 2025, **The Wire** won the top Regional/Local award in Women's Issues for *"Breaking The Nets"*, praised by judges for offering "a fascinating insight into the knock-on effects of India's patriarchal society" and how women contend with them. Other notable winners included **Mekong Eye,** which won the top regional/local award in Investigative Reporting for *"Cattle Hustle."*

Mekong Eye benefitted from a special subsidy on entry fees provided by SOPA. SOPA will continue to offer **subsidies for first-time entrants, and smaller media outlets**, defined as those with no more than 20 full-time staff, of which at least 50% are editorial. Eligible organizations can receive funding for **up to two entries**, at HK$200 (US$25) per entry. Interested publications should contact SOPA early at **mail@sopasia.com** to confirm eligibility.

The Wall Street Journal won the prestigious SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism for *"A Vicious New Scam Industry Metastasizes,"* detailing the brutal reality of the global "pig butchering" cyber fraud enterprise.

“The SOPA Awards have always stood for the highest standards in journalism and continue to serve as a vital platform for recognizing courageous and creative storytelling across Asia,” said **Rich Barbieri**, Deputy Editor, Asia Business and Economics, The New York Times, who is Co-Chair of SOPA’s Editorial Committee.

This year’s awards will be administered by a newly formed **five-member SOPA Awards Administration Panel**. Led by veteran journalist **Chris Yeung**, the Panel includes **Jeffrey Timmermans**, **Edith Terry**, **Heng Yu Chien**, and **Harry Surjadi** — each bringing deep editorial and organizational expertise across English, Chinese, and Bahasa Indonesia media. The Panel will oversee all aspects of the judging process, where each year, entries are meticulously reviewed, assessed and scored by over 100 esteemed judges comprising current and former journalists and journalism academics from around the globe. Together they will continue to ensure the Awards embody the highest standards of independence, transparency, and fairness.

Telum Media is a Supporting Partner of the SOPA 2026 Awards.

For a limited time, SOPA is offering new members a **40% discount** on **SOPA membership fees (**https://sopasia.com/membership/**)** which entitles them to a **40% discount on the entry fees (non-member price) on up to five award entries**. To sign up as a new member and receive the “New Member” discount code, please email **mail@sopasia.com** no later than **Wednesday, February 26, 2026**.

Existing SOPA members can email mail@sopasia.com to request the Member discount code no later than **February 26, 2026**.

Details on submissions, eligibility requirements, and application information can be found at **www.sopawards.com**.

2026 Award Categories

1. Excellence in Reporting on Women’s Issues
2. Excellence in Journalistic Innovation
3. Excellence in Audio Reporting
4. Excellence in Video Reporting
5. Excellence in Human Rights Reporting
6. Excellence in Feature Writing
7. Excellence in Technology Reporting
8. Excellence in Magazine Design
9. Excellence in Arts and Culture Reporting
10. Excellence in Bahasa Indonesia News Reporting
11. Excellence in Explanatory Reporting
12. Excellence in Business Reporting
13. Excellence in Infographics
14. Excellence in Reporting Breaking News
15. Excellence in Opinion Writing
16. Excellence in Reporting on the Environment

17. Excellence in Photography
18. The Scoop Award
19. Carlos Tejada Award for Excellence in Investigative Reporting
20. SOPA Award for Young Journalist
21. SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism

About SOPA
The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) is a Hong Kong-based not-for-profit organization founded in 1982 to champion press freedom, promote excellence in journalism, and endorse best practices for publishers operating in the Asia-Pacific region. SOPA is the voice of Asia's media and publishing industry and continues to uphold media standards and freedoms while celebrating professional journalism. The awards have been given out since 1999.

www.sopasia.com; www.sopawards.com; SOPA LinkedIn, SOPA Facebook, SOPA X

Media Contact:
Ms. Peggy Wong
SOPA Secretariat
Tel: +852 5182 8323 | Email: mail@sopasia.com