



## **The Society of Publishers in Asia 2013 Awards expands its scope with a record 653 entries and increased regional participation**

**Hong Kong, April 30, 2013** – The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) is delighted to announce that this year's SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence has attracted a record breaking number of 653 entries from across Asia.

The SOPA Awards is entering its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013 and this year, shortlisted finalists will be pre-announced in May. The SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence has been widely regarded as the most prestigious awards in the publishing industry over the past years. The ceremony acts as a platform to gather all journalism-related sectors to celebrate the remarkable achievement of the journalist and the editorial vitality throughout the year.

A total of 315 Chinese entries and 338 English entries are competing for the Awards. The judging process is currently in progress and the winners will be announced at the Gala Dinner on Thursday, June 6, 2013 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The 15th SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence covers 17 categories, from news, photography to lifestyle coverage. In 2012, various renowned international news agencies were nominated as the finalists, such as Reuters News, The Economist, The Wall Street Journal Asia, Financial Times, etc. with Mr. Daisuke Wakabayashi as the Journalist of the Year from The Wall Street Journal Asia.

"The SOPA awards entered 2013 with record participation, notably with a significant jump in entries from China and our category B regional publications. The higher numbers show the region's engagement in the awards. The many fine entries are strong evidence of a growing lively and influential free press in Asia," said Mr. Tom Leander, Chairman of the SOPA Editorial Awards Sub-committee.

Mr. Michael Forsythe, Senior Reporter of Bloomberg News Beijing and Mr. David Barboza, Shanghai Bureau Chief of The New York Times will be the evening's special guests in the panel discussion. In a remarkable year for journalism in China, these two distinguished journalists produced hard-hitting stories based on public information that shed light on the finances of China's power elite. Their stories showed how persistence, determination and local knowledge could break barriers in coverage and raise the game for all journalists working in China.

Each category will be evaluated by a panel of judges appointed by the Awards Administrators, The Journalism and Media Studies Centre (JMSC) of the Hong Kong University. Judging for the 2013 Awards will be conducted by a team of more than 100 international judges stationed across the globe including journalists, editors, columnist from leading publications, as well as notable academics from the media departments of prestigious universities. The judging panel will be led by Head of Judges, Dr. Judith



Clarke, Associate Professor of the International Journalism undergraduate concentration at Hong Kong Baptist University, also her first time being the Head of Judges.

Mr. David Smith, Chairman of SOPA, said, "It is truly encouraging to have a record breaking number of entries in the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence. The vitality of the editorial content is a common effort of all journalists across Asia. SOPA would like to express our thankfulness to those who endeavor to provide quality news to readers by insisting on press freedom and the value of human right."

The SOPA 2013 Awards for Editorial Excellence is supported by Invest Hong Kong - Gold Sponsor, and Hong Kong High Technology Limited as the Supporting Sponsor. The Asia Media Journal is the media partner for the second year in a row. Grand Hyatt Hong Kong also confirmed as the hotel partner.

Tickets for the Awards presentation dinner are now available. To reserve your seat for the SOPA 2013 Awards for Editorial Excellence at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre on June 6, 2013, please contact the SOPA Secretariat at Tel: +852 3589-9778 / mail@sopasia.com or visit <http://www.sopawards.com>.

### **About SOPA**

The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) was founded in 1982 to promote excellence in journalism and best practices across all local and regional publishing platforms in Asia Pacific. SOPA is a not for profit organization based in Hong Kong and represents international, regional and local media companies in Hong Kong and around Asia. It also hosts the prestigious annual SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence to set world-class benchmarks for journalism in Asia.

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