

Concept Note: SOGIE and Intersex Media Fellowship in Thailand

March – August 2016

Overview

Too often Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people are represented inaccurately, stereotypically and negatively without a clear understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression (SOGIE) and intersex status and are still underrepresented in the media according to BLIA Thailand country report in phase 1.

The misrepresentation and negative portrayal of SOGIE and intersex issues in the media continue to perpetuate and legitimize the prevalent prejudices, stigma and discrimination against LGBTI individuals in Thailand. LGBTI persons are assaulted by biased representations and hate speech on a regular basis which can have a profound effect on their psychological and emotional wellbeing affecting their ability to integrate and belong resulting in increased social exclusion, marginalization and self-stigmatization.

“Agenda setting” theory that media can shape public opinions and perceptions as well as influence on public discourse of how and what to think about a specific issue proves media play a vital role in increasing stigma, prejudices and discrimination against LGBTI persons in society by negatively portraying and demonizing LGBTI people’s lives without deeper understanding of SOGIE and intersex issues. However, media can be a powerful tool in reducing stigma and discrimination and significant contributor to creating a society without prejudices and biases toward LGBTI persons if it is used in a positive visibility and engagement with neutral representation of SOGIE and intersex issues.

One of the key objectives of the Being LGBTI in Asia Phase II (BLIA II) is to reduce stigma and discrimination and harmful practices against LGBTI people. Addressing media coverage of LGBTI persons and issues as well as to strengthen the capacity of media players to engage and advocate on SOGIE and intersex issues are pivotal to achieve this aim. Therefore, SOGIE and Intersex Media Fellowship, which provides a training to journalists on SOGIE and intersex issues to cover more and report positively of LGBTI population is very needed to succeed this objective.

Objectives of Media Fellowship

- Strengthen the role of media in promoting and protecting the rights of LGBTI people and promote accurate and positive portrayals of LGBTI populations
- Improve knowledge on SOGIE and Intersex issues among journalists and media outlets
- Improve and increase coverage of SOGIE and Intersex issues in national and regional media so that it can build favorable public opinion, foster social inclusion, increase a deeper understanding and awareness of SOGIE and Intersex issues and reduce stigma and discrimination.
- Create a network of informed journalists and media contacts committed to journalistic ethics, human rights and social justice as well as an enabling environment for discussion of SOGIE and Intersex issues nationally and locally across media platforms
- Encourage creative engagement with media outlets and provide support for media allies

Areas to be covered

- Human rights of LGBTI populations in Thailand
- Prejudice, stigma and discrimination faced by LGBTI people
- Intersectionality and livelihood opportunities, challenges and barriers including (education, employment, health, family, etc.)
- Religious and cultural beliefs, social views, norms and values towards LGBTI people

Number of Fellowships

Five fellowships will be granted to applicants from print media, broadcast media (radio and television) and online media both Thai and English media outlets in Thailand.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

- Minimum two years of working experience as a full time journalist with national newspapers, online newspapers, radio, television or regular freelancer or writer in blogs
- Preference will be given to journalists who have experiences and knowledge on health, sexual orientation and gender identities, intersex and human rights issues or with a strong interest and passion to write about LGBTI people
- Applicants have to submit a Curriculum Vitae (CV) with a motivation letter written in either Thai or English expressing the reasons why they are interested in the fellowship and their passion to neutralize the representation and reporting of LGBTI people in the media
- Applicants must have enough influence to publish reports/features/documentaries in their respective media outlets by providing a letter of recommendation

Important:

- Recommendation letter must be obtained from your editors, supervisors if you are working as a full time journalist, freelancers must get it from media outlets stating that you are regular contributors and bloggers must provide a proof of their well-established blog

Announcement of Media Fellowship

The fellowship will be publicly announced and opened to receive applications at the end of the Media Roundtable Discussion on 30 November 2015. UNDP will publicize the fellowship on its website, share it on Being LGBTI in Asia's social media page (Facebook and Twitter) and disseminate information through Isra Institute and to NGO partners working on LGBTI issues.

Application Deadline and Submission Materials

Applications must include all supporting documents namely (1) a detailed CV; (2) a motivation letter and; (3) a letter of recommendation from editors. These must be sent via e-mail to Khun Supanee Pongruengphant (Jay), National Project Officer on Governance, Human Rights and LGBT of UNDP Thailand at Tel: 02-304 9100 Ext. 1746 and/or E-mail: supanee.pongruengphant@undp.org by **5pm on 5 February 2016**. Failure to submit all supporting documents as specified in the announcement will result in an incomplete application. Applicants who submit incomplete applications will NOT be considered for this fellowship.

Selection Process

The host organization will review and shortlist applications. UNDP will work with host organization to jointly select successful media fellows from the shortlisted applications during the third and fourth week of January.

Orientation of Selected Media Fellows

The host organization will organize an orientation and training to help media fellows have a better understanding of SOGIE and intersex issues, how to find LGBTI related stories with intersectionality point of view, and how to report accurately with proper language usage and positively with ethics without prejudices and biases.

Tasks of Media Fellows

Each media fellow shall perform the following activities:

- Attend an orientation and a series of trainings provided by host organizations
- Study background materials provided by host organizations to learn about SOGIE and Intersex issues
- Conduct field work/case study/research/interview for producing articles/reports/features
- Produce and submit six LGBTI related/supportive stories either in Thai or English, which will be published on appropriate media channel, one for each month
- Engage at least 12 hours with host organizations per month to peer review reports/features/documentaries produced before they are published
- Participate in the regional media roundtable discussion (DATE TBC)

Stipends

- Fellows will receive a fixed amount of 42,000 Baht (Travel and Communication Cost) that will be provided in two installments of 21,000 Baht each time after completion of report publication in the third and sixth month.
- Fellows will be invited to attend the regional media roundtable discussion (DATE TBC)

Review and Monitoring

The host organizations will communicate with fellows on a regular basis to ensure progress and timely submission, help fellows to find story angles if needed, and check the language use before the articles are published.

Terms & Conditions

- Articles or contents of fellows must be focused on above mentioned area
- One-day orientation and training and the regional media roundtable discussion are mandatory
- Fellows must be responsible for publishing/webcasting/broadcasting their reports/features/documentaries in their respective media outlets to fulfill the tasks to be eligible for stipends
- Stipends will be paid through two installments on the third and sixth month upon the timely publication and submission of the reports/features to the host organization.

Deliverable and Publication

- Thirty reports/features/ documentaries on LGBTI related issues by the five fellows
- Published work will be shared on social media platforms of UNDP's BLIA social media channels (Facebook and Twitters), posted on Medium site of BLIA, disseminated on newsletter to partners and stakeholders and compiled as a publication at the end of the project.

Timeframe of media fellowship

Activity	30 Nov 2015	5 Feb 2016	2 nd – 3 rd week of Feb 2016	Mar 2016	Mar – Aug 2016	DATE TBC
Announce Fellowship						
Deadline for submitting applications						
Application selection						
Conduct orientation and training media fellows						
Recipients of fellowship produce one article/feature per month to be published						
Host organization monitors and reviews media fellows' work						
Participate in regional media dialogue						