

HONG KONG FREE PRESS

Annual Report



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This year's Annual Report is dedicated to the late [Suzanne Pepper](#) – highly respected academic and HKFP columnist.



Dear readers and supporters,

The HKFP newsroom pressed on in 2022, expanding to a team of eight and investing heavily in video and photography. We covered the [Covid-19](#) pandemic, court wranglings, the ongoing [security law crackdown](#) and the inauguration of [John Lee](#) during the city's 25th Handover anniversary.

The year also saw many [sound the death knell](#) for [press freedom](#), with the demise of several more news outlets, journalists behind bars, and the city nosediving in global free expression rankings.

With 1,000 journalists out of work, the pessimism is understandable - though, at the same time, there remains some space for local news reporting. With our [impartial stance](#), [transparent funding](#), and [balanced coverage](#) guided by an [Ethics Code](#) and [Corrections Policy](#), our dedicated team have sought to seize the remaining space and are continuing to weather the storm. And with the [closure of Citizen News](#) and [Factwire](#) last year, it has become all the more important to persist with our on-the-ground reporting, to ask tough questions, and to safeguard and maintain our archive as the first draft of history.

As Lee took the leadership reins in 2022, he claimed press freedom was already "in our pocket" as he urged the media to tell "good Hong Kong stories." But as much as we love the city, it is not our job - nor is it within the journalistic tradition - to tell fluffy PR stories on behalf of the authorities. We will continue to do our duty and cover the good, bad and ugly sides of local life, whilst ensuring staff safety, protecting sources, and trying our best to navigate unclear legal realities.

In 2023, Hong Kong is reopening as the pandemic subsides. Our team will be monitoring the city's recovery and seeing whether the government will allow the return of mass protests during key anniversaries. The trial of the 47 democrats will finally begin, and we will also be watching several events relating to press freedom: the [Stand News](#) and [Apple Daily trials](#), as well as the legislation of the [Article 23 security law](#), ["fake news" law](#) and [crowdfunding regulation](#). Aside from further investing in video and photography, we will also be launching a podcast this year.

With another no doubt bumpy year ahead, I present our Annual Report, as we round-up our best coverage, achievements, and our accounts from the past 12 months. Our work is only possible thanks to regular contributions from our monthly Patrons. Hopefully, with your kind readership and support, there will be many Annual Reports to come!



Tom Grundy,
Editor-In-Chief & Founder,
Hong Kong Free Press.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Grundy".



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Our Mission & Impact

Founded in 2015, **Hong Kong Free Press** is an impartial, non-profit, award-winning English-language newspaper. Run by journalists, backed by readers and completely independent, HKFP is governed by a public code of ethics.

15 million
Pageviews in 2022

460+
Writers since 2015

HK\$4.1m
Raised in 2022 [predicted]

112 million
Total pageviews since 2015

24,000
Stories published

946
Monthly HKFP donors

#2 on social media among all local English-language news outlets.



422,977 Twitter followers
- up 10% in 2022.



135,754 Instagram fans
- up 22% in 2022.



372,325 Facebook followers
- up 7% in 2022.



2,605 Telegram followers
- up 1% in 2022.



23,173 YouTube subscribers
- up 15% in 2022.



2,028 LinkedIn fans
- up 20% in 2022.



11,810 newsletter subscribers
- up 3% in 2022.



642 Mastodon fans
- new for 2022.

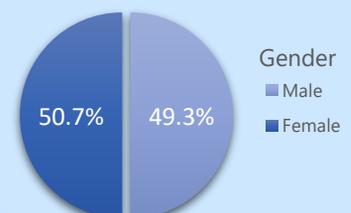
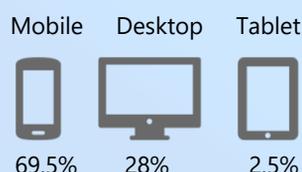
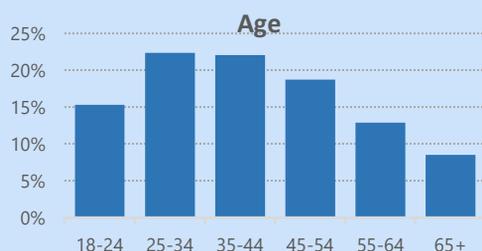


Google Analytics



Other 2022 statistics:

- **84%** of HKFP readers use English as a first language.
- **22%** are aged between 25-34; **22%** are aged 35-44.
- **43%** are Hong Kong-based, **16%** are US-based.



Original features: The beginning of the year was dominated by surging Covid-19 infections as the Omicron variant escaped strict border controls and sent Hong Kong's coronavirus death rate [soaring to become the highest in the world](#). We documented the [collapse of the health care system](#), as [frontline doctors slammed the zero-Covid policy](#) for putting politics before public health.

We also covered the many ways the outbreak exposed social injustice: from [domestic workers who were left to sleep on the streets](#) after contracting the virus, to those [forced to isolate in substandard housing](#), where infections spread among family members, and [refugees who had little to eat](#) as panic buying cleared supermarket shelves.



Strict Covid rules contributed to a mass exodus from the city, exacerbated by shrinking freedoms since the implementation of the national security law. HKFP spoke to Hongkongers [who had decided to leave the city for the second time](#), and to someone hoping to [find new homes for once-cherished items that had been forsaken](#).

We also spent time with people who have opted to stay in the city. Some [turned to New Age practices and therapies](#) to make sense of an uncertain world, while [others returned to the land to cultivate a sense of identity](#). Meanwhile, across the city, independent bookstores thrived – [offering readers a welcome space for freedom of thought](#).

After being postponed because of the pandemic, former top police officer and security chief John Lee was selected by a small circle of proven “patriotic” elites to become the city's next leader in May, after running uncontested. We examined [the voting process](#), recently overhauled by Beijing, and [Lee himself - in his own words](#).



As Victoria Park remained empty on the anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown, we looked into [how Hongkongers were silenced after three decades of vigils](#), and how some [remained committed to the commemoration](#) amid a heavy police presence.

Then, as the city marked 25 years since its Handover from Britain in July with a visit from China's Xi Jinping, we delved into what the milestone meant for Hong Kong. We tracked how [protests on the July 1 anniversary - traditionally a day for Hongkongers to take their diverse demands to the streets - fell silent](#). We also used data to explore [how the city had transformed](#), and spoke with [migrant worker activists for whom little had changed](#) - they continue to fight for the same rights today as before 1997.



The Best of HKFP 2022

Our reporting on workers' rights issues included how migrant domestic workers arriving in the city [fell victim to complex and continuously evolving Covid-19 rules](#), whilst [advocates pushed for fair treatment from employers](#). Exploitation remains rife for domestic workers in Hong Kong – we investigated the hurdles many face, including [an unforgiving screening process to grant legal recognition](#).



Through our reporting on underrepresented communities, we spent time with [two passionate "voguers" as they prepared for a ball](#), and spoke to [trans teenagers deemed too young to receive gender-affirming treatments at Hong Kong public hospitals](#). We examined the city's [conservative approach to beauty with model and singer Lezlie Chan](#), and heard the experiences of [a trio of ethnic minority queer teenagers](#). We also caught up with the [asexual community](#), who are seeking a voice in the LGBT+ community.

We also listened as [ethnic minority groups shared their stories and struggles on an audio-guided tour of Hong Kong](#), and were there for the [reopening of the recently renovated Khalsa Diwan temple](#), a focal point for the city's Sikhs.

In a year that saw the [July become Hong Kong's hottest month ever](#), we looked at environmental issues such as how aggressive, government-backed development helped hasten [the disappearance of the Chinese white dolphin population](#). City officials were absent from the UN climate conference COP27 in Egypt, but [a delegation of young Hongkongers was present to sound the alarm](#).

Government-backed development projects also led to the demise of some decades-old companies. We spoke to the owners of the city's last sawmill, [which was forced to close to make way for the Northern Metropolis](#), and an ice factory, [whose site was earmarked for a public housing project](#).



There were those trying to breathe new life into long-standing businesses, though. Administrators of social media accounts committed to conserving historical shops [shared their journeys from online preservation to community activation](#).

Three years on from the pro-democracy protests that wracked the city in 2019, a number of those who participated in the demonstrations remain in custody. We documented [the groups that exist to offer them, and their families, material and practical support](#), and listened as [former protesters reflected on their life behind bars, and after prison](#).

When widespread protests erupted in mainland China over strict zero-Covid policies, with some crowds calling for greater freedoms, we delved into what had caused them and [why blank sheets of A4 paper came to symbolise the short-lived movement](#). We were also out in full force [covering the solidarity rallies in Hong Kong's central business district](#) and [at university campuses across the city](#).

Our features this year also spanned the Taiwan Strait, with reporting on [the plight of migrant workers on the island](#), how people in Taipei were [prepping for the unthinkable amid threats of invasion by Beijing](#), and an [exhibition exploring the afterlife of East and Southeast Asia that captured Taiwanese imaginations](#).



Explanatory reporting: We continued our [monthly explainers](#) on the impact of the national security law on the city, and explored [how official attitudes to Covid-19 evolved during the deadly fifth wave](#) as part of our “shifting narratives” series.

Our [timeline documenting the decline of press freedom in the city](#) unfortunately saw regular updates. But all is not lost, as our explainer on the small Chinese-language outlets that persevere showed.

We wrote explainers on political developments, including [ill-fated bills that were resurrected](#) in the absence of any opposition, [how voter demographics changed since Beijing's electoral overhaul](#), and [John Lee's first 100 days in office](#). And we also sought to clarify complex legal issues with an informative look at [Hong Kong's sedition law, a colonial relic revived after half a century](#), as well as the important features of court reporting such as [the limits placed on what can be written or broadcast](#).

Hong Kong's byzantine Covid-19 rules gave us plenty of fodder for guides and explainers. We spelled out [entry requirements](#), [Vaccine Pass rules](#), and [the restrictions that remain in place](#).

We also fully embraced data reporting as part of our expansion, digging into the numbers to understand [how to measure Hong Kong's mass exodus](#), [what happened to the 2019 protesters](#), and [1,000 days of Covid in the city](#).



In 2022 our newsroom made new investments in court reporting, data journalism and video. During the year, we produced **36 fully-fledged features**, **17 interviews**, **120 opinion pieces**, as well as **45 special stories** on the 25th anniversary of the Handover. In all, HKFP has published over **1,723 stories on the national security law**, and over **1,905 on Covid-19**.

The Best of HKFP 2022

Interviews: In 2022, we spent time with [the League of Social Democrats](#), one of the last remaining pro-democracy groups active in the city, who spoke about their commitment to speaking out against the government. We also interviewed [American lawyer Samuel Bickett](#), who was deported from the city after spending time in jail for assaulting a police officer - a charge he believed was politically motivated.



We spoke to [the founder of an independent publisher, Raymond Yeung](#), in the days before he was jailed for nine-months over an illegal assembly. Yeung, formerly a teacher who was partially blinded by a police projectile during a protest in 2019, turned to publishing.

At the other end of the political spectrum, we sat down with [government advisor Ronny Tong](#), who asserted that the outlook for the city - and for a more democratic form of governance - looked promising.

We met a number of artists learning to navigate curbs to creativity under the current political climate, including [font designer Roy Chan](#), [illustrator Maoshan Connie](#), and [Teresa Chan](#), who works with the unusual medium of fallen leaves.

And we joined [ex-head of the Hong Kong Observatory Lam Chiu-ying](#) - an advocate of living without air-conditioning - as he visited residents of subdivided flats during the summer.



Scoops: Using satellite imagery, we exposed how construction of a temporary bridge connecting Hong Kong to mainland China began [days before emergency laws were invoked to allow it to be built](#).

We also revealed that a rule requiring government employees to swear allegiance to Hong Kong had been [expanded to foreigners teaching English at some local schools](#). Declining to do so would put their jobs at risk.

And we investigated the introduction of a registration system to access titles in the University of Hong Kong's Special Collections. Though the update to archival processes met international norms, [what was included in the protected selection did not](#).

HKFP's award-winning journalism:

- **2016 Human rights Press Award:** Merit for Medhavi Arora for reporting on sexual harassment.
- **2019 Human Rights Press Award:** David Missal for video on rights lawyer Lin Qilei.
- **2020 SOPA Award:** Honourable Mention for Kris Cheng for explanatory reporting on the protests.
- **2020 SOPA Award:** Finalist for May James for protest photography.
- **2021 SOPA Award:** Honourable Mention for Steve Vines for opinion writing on the protests.
- **2021 Nobel Peace Prize nomination:** For safeguarding press freedom.



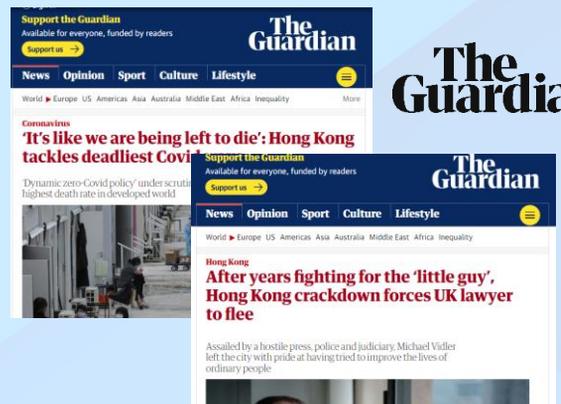
HKFP secures Google grant: HKFP won backing from [Google's News Equity Fund](#) in recognition of its original reporting on the city's underrepresented communities. The sum of HK\$105,615 was largely earmarked for new multimedia gear and marketing for a fundraising campaign. HKFP was among 450 newsrooms across 52 countries and territories that received backing to "further empower a diverse news ecosystem."



Video: HKFP finally made a foray into video in 2022 as we hired our first multimedia journalist. We produced a video explainer on [Hong Kong's new era of film censorship](#) and a data-based [visual explainer on the security law](#). We launched the HKFP drone to assess the [state of local beaches](#), and [met some activists](#) trying to clear up the trash. Among the local news events our videographer covered were the [Tiananmen anniversary police crackdown](#), the ["blank placard" demos](#) against Covid rules, and local tributes to the late [ex-Chinese leader Jiang Zemin](#). Aside from video

interviews with the [ex-Observatory chief](#), government official [Ronny Tong](#) and the [League of Social Democrats](#), we produced mini-documentaries on [Hong Kong's first queer graduation](#), on the ex-reporters [launching a bookshop](#), childhood [memories of a dairy farm](#), the city's ["voqing" scene](#) and a [plus-sized model](#).

The Guardian affiliation: 2022 saw HKFP partner with British broadsheet the Guardian, giving a global boost to our on-the-ground reporting. As part of the affiliation, we chronicled [the worst moments of the Omicron outbreak](#), when the healthcare system was at breaking point, and [how Hong Kong's Covid crisis enabled Beijing to expand its influence](#). We also spoke to [human rights lawyer Michael Vidler](#), who left the city in April after more than three decades citing concerns about the national security law.



The Guardian

2022 expansion: HKFP expanded to a team of eight in 2022, and hired our first photographer. We invested heavily in new gear and finally created a photo archive.

Football team: Fall River Marksmen Football Club in Massachusetts continued its 'reverse sponsorship' deal with HKFP, emblazoning our logo on their new kit and raising over HK\$10,000 in jersey sales for our newsroom.



New income stream: HKFP signed up with ProQuest to resyndicate its news articles.

NewsGuard

An Ethics Code, fact-checking procedures and a corrections policy govern HKFP's impartial, 100% independent reporting. In 2022, we again scored full marks in **NewsGuard's credibility assessment**, meeting all 9 criteria.

- ✓ No false content.
- ✓ Avoids deceptive headlines.
- ✓ Clearly labels advertising.
- ✓ Differentiates news & opinion.
- ✓ Discloses ownership & financing.
- ✓ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors.
- ✓ Gathers/presents information responsibly.
- ✓ Provides the names, bios, contacts of writers.
- ✓ Reveals who's in charge; declares any conflicts.



Wide impact: HKFP's reporting has been cited by numerous int'l outlets.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL The New York Times QUARTZ The Telegraph The Washington Post
BBC Daily Mail BUSINESS INSIDER BuzzFeed STRAITS TIMES
 INDEPENDENT Bloomberg REUTERS ALJAZEERA VICE theguardian Vox

No paywall: We will always ensure our news remains accessible & free of charge.

<p>HKFP Apps:</p>	<p>Social media & distribution:</p>	<p>Syndication:</p>
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Hong Kong's 2023 media landscape:

Independent English-language daily news:



Chinese-language daily news (digital):



English-language traditional daily news (digital/print):



Other small digital outfits include: Channel C, HK Court News, Hong Kong Feature, ReNews.



Chinese-language traditional news (print):



Outlets closed in 2021-22:



The 2023 HKFP core team:

Hong Kong Free Press is structured as a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee, with no shareholders. HKFP does not answer to any business tycoon, mainland Chinese conglomerate or media mogul. We are run by journalists, and are answerable only to ourselves and our readers.



Editor-in-Chief Tom Grundy is a British multimedia journalist based in Hong Kong since 2005. He has a BA in Communications & New Media from Leeds University and an MA in Journalism from the University of Hong Kong. He has contributed to BBC World TV/radio, Quartz, Al-Jazeera, DW-TV and others.



Associate Editor Mercedes Hutton is a British journalist who has lived in Hong Kong since 2012. She has a BA in English and Film from the University of Sussex and is interested in social and environmental issues. She previously worked at the South China Morning Post and has written for the BBC.



Reporter Kelly Ho has an interest in local politics, education and sports. She formerly worked at South China Morning Post Young Post, where she specialised in reporting on issues related to Hong Kong youth. She has a bachelor's degree in Journalism from the University of Hong Kong, with a second major in Politics and Public Administration.



Reporter Candice Chau previously worked as a researcher at a local think tank. She has a BSocSc in Politics and International Relations from the University of Manchester and an MSc in International Political Economy from London School of Economics.



Reporter Hillary Leung has an interest in social issues and politics. Previously, she reported on Asia broadly - including on Hong Kong's 2019 protests - for TIME Magazine and covered local news at Coconuts Hong Kong.



Multimedia Reporter Lea Mok previously contributed to StandNews, The Initium, MingPao and others. She holds a bachelor's degree in Journalism from the Chinese University of Hong Kong.



Reporter Peter Lee was previously a freelance journalist at Initium, covering political and court news. He holds a Global Communication bachelor degree from CUHK.



Photojournalist Kyle Lam is a Hong Kong Baptist University graduate who has worked as an award-winning photojournalist and reporter since 2013. His work has been published by HK01, the EPA, Bloomberg and Ming Pao.



Guest Editor Tim Hamlett has been a guest editor since 2015 and writes a regular column. He came to Hong Kong in 1980 to work for the Hong Kong Standard and has contributed to, or worked for, most of Hong Kong's English-language media outlets.

Hong Kong Free Press would be impossible without the support and assistance of our countless tech, editorial, accounting, freelance staff and volunteers, as well as Newspack and The Hive.

Transparency Report

As Hong Kong's **most transparent** news outlet, and as a non-profit company, HKFP is **externally audited** annually. Our 2022 expansion saw **rising costs**, though our **support base shrank** by around 10%, potentially related to the population exodus and waning interest in Hong Kong news.

Rising costs in 2022:

 **26% rise**

AFP news wire service (For China coverage, photos).

 **60% rise**

Web-hosting & support via Newspack Wordpress VIP.

 **84% rise**

Mandatory AXA employee & office insurance.

 **108% rise**

AXA staff medical insurance.

 **17% rise**

Rent for larger, secure office at The Hive.

 **60% rise**

Stripe credit card fees for processing payments.

**News wire and hosting costs rose as HKFP was removed from legacy/courtesy payment tiers. Other expenses rose due to our staff expansion, with the team doubling in size since our 2020 relaunch.*

 **84% rise**

Payroll costs.

 **70% rise**

Pension (MPF) costs.



HKFP Patrons in 2022: HKFP relies on a membership model. Small amounts of income from a large pool of Patrons help support our team, sustain our operations, and guarantee our newsroom's independence and longevity. Our monthly income as of January 2023:

HK\$183,350

Monthly income from Patrons after fees

 **10% decline**

946

No. of monthly Patrons

 **10% decline**

HK\$193

Average monthly contribution

 **0.5% decline**

- The number of HKFP Patrons declined by about 10% in 2022 to 946, after rising by a fifth the year before. Income from Patrons also declined by around 10% to HK\$183,350.
- In addition to the above, we receive at least HK\$10,000 per month from offline donors who contribute via cheque, transfer/FPS or by coin donation via CoinDragon.
- Patrons are given priority and/or free entry to HKFP events, merch and our Annual Report, and help keep the site free-to-access for those who cannot afford to contribute.



10% fall in HKFP Patrons



Direct support
...the best way of ensuring our press freedom & independence.

■ Direct contributions
■ Ad/content sales

HKFP is predicted to make a loss of up to HK\$500K in 2023. Though we are able to reinvest our previous surplus, we will need to work on a return to sustainability and halt the fall in HKFP Patrons.

Transparency Report

Our finalised, audited income during 2021, and our predicted income for 2022:

Income	2022*	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Direct contributions	HK\$3,886,984	HK\$4,497,890	HK\$6,357,972	HK\$6,056,859	HK\$2,463,408	HK\$1,769,760	HK\$1,063,125
Ads & content sales	HK\$194,862	HK\$143,695	HK\$110,247	HK\$271,066	HK\$136,084	HK\$328,759	HK\$92,276
Events	HK\$0	HK\$0	HK\$0	HK\$263,361	HK\$24,390	HK\$0	HK\$8,352
Bank interest, insurance claim	HK\$0	HK\$3,932	HK\$10	HK\$226	HK\$21	HK\$1	HK\$12
Gov't Covid subsidy	HK\$41,600	HK\$0	HK\$216,000	HK\$0	HK\$0	HK\$0	HK\$0
Total:	HK\$4,121,445	HK\$4,645,517	HK\$6,697,010	HK\$6,591,512	HK\$2,623,903	HK\$2,098,520	HK\$1,163,765

*2022 predicted, not yet audited.

Current revenue streams:

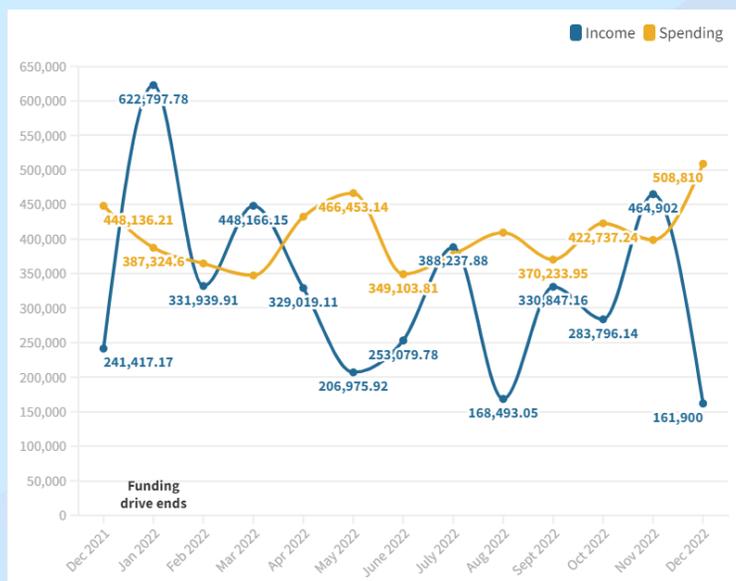
Reader contributions: includes one-off & monthly Patron contributions by cheque/transfer, cash, PayPal & card, as well as merch sales profit & shopping referral links.

Ads & content sales: includes ad income from display ads; Apple News & Facebook ads, Google/YouTube ads, directly purchased rate card ads & content sales [from media outlets, institutions and syndication partners LexisNexis, ProQuest, Dow Jones Factiva & Nordot.]

Surplus carried forward:

2015 total surplus:	HK\$91,654
2016 total deficit:	-HK\$45,569
2017 total surplus:	HK\$445,796
2018 total surplus:	HK\$574,042
2019 total surplus:	HK\$3,698,358
2020 total surplus:	HK\$3,245,356
2021 total surplus:	HK\$783,164
2022 predicted deficit:	-HK\$777,330

HKFP income and spending 2022 - in HK\$:



Direct contributions:



Ads & content sales:



- **Surplus recycled:** As a non-profit, with no shareholders or investors, any surplus is *recycled* back into the company for use in the following year. As of 2021, HKFP is also retaining a HK\$1.5m legal defence fund in light of new challenges to press freedom.
- **Efficiency:** HKFP is run as efficiently and prudently as possible, in order to *maximise* the impact of our donors' generosity. We make savings by partnering with other media outlets, using free software/tools and making full use of teamwork and automation to save on costs.

Advertising partners since 2015:



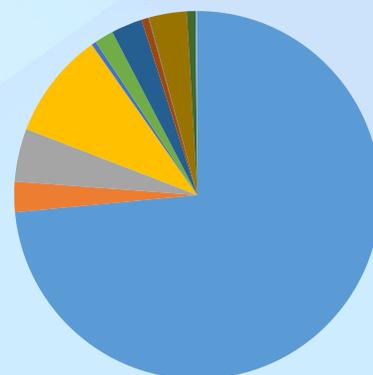
Transparency Report

Finalised expenditure for our latest audited year, 2021, & our predicted 2022 spending:

Expenditure	2022*	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Full-time staff payroll	HK\$3,602,258	HK\$1,952,853	HK\$1,599m	HK\$1,606m	HK\$1,499m	HK\$1,340m	HK\$1,035m
Mandatory Provident Fund (pensions)	HK\$130,661	HK\$76,662	HK\$72,221	HK\$68,123	HK\$69,234	HK\$66,180	HK\$50,942
Web & software, newswire, commission	HK\$228,462	HK\$138,532	HK\$132,269	HK\$164,256	HK\$129,543	HK\$58,693	HK\$33,083
Office, sundry, recruitment/training, telecom	HK\$460,375	HK\$273,244	HK\$109,289	HK\$164,256	HK\$110,414	HK\$57,565	HK\$25,801
Meals/drinks for volunteers/staff/sources	HK\$20,280	HK\$25,178	HK\$18,324	HK\$29,686	HK\$14,028	HK\$17,106	HK\$25,531
Legal, professional, registration, audit	HK\$82,143	HK\$37,365	HK\$96,505	HK\$12,340	HK\$7,385	HK\$45,231	HK\$10,845
Travel & insurance	HK\$134,722	HK\$67,513	HK\$72,391	HK\$50,615	HK\$78,067	HK\$8,169	HK\$8,267
Stationery, merch, postage, printing	HK\$30,518	HK\$207,392	HK\$208,544	HK\$42,311	HK\$11,827	HK\$686	HK\$17,124
Bank charges, penalties & exchange losses	HK\$2,940	HK\$4,232	HK\$13,752	HK\$4,240	HK\$1,705	HK\$1,170	HK\$2,218
Freelancer payments & gear	HK\$162,852	HK\$936,072	HK\$595,693	HK\$289,387	HK\$64,400	HK\$34,090	HK\$0
Tax	TBC	HK\$59,518	HK\$408,496	HK\$509,211	HK\$29,816	HK\$13,343	HK\$0
Advertising	HK\$37,527	HK\$78,745	HK\$6,914	HK\$36,597	HK\$34,371	HK\$10,261	HK\$0
Membership, research/polls, repairs & other	HK\$7,901	HK\$5,060	HK\$118,800	-	-	-	-
Total:	HK\$4,900,639	HK\$3,744m	HK\$3,044m	HK\$2,894m*	HK\$2,044m	HK\$1,654m	HK\$1,204m

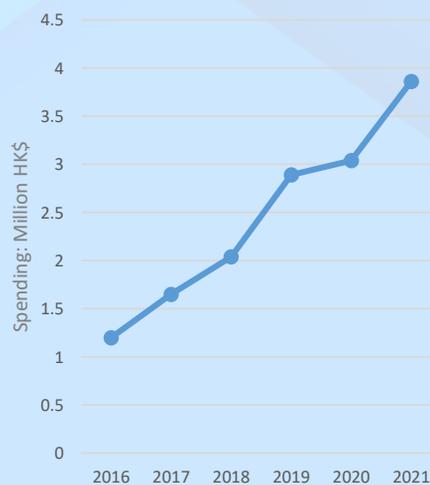
*2022 predicted, not yet audited.

2022 expenditure:



- Full-time staff payroll
- Mandatory Provident Fund (pensions)
- Web & software, newswire, commission
- Office, sundry, recruitment/training, telecom
- Meals/drinks for volunteers/staff/sources
- Legal, professional, registration, audit
- Travel & insurance
- Stationery, merch, postage, printing
- Bank charges, penalties & exchange losses
- Freelancer payments & gear
- Tax
- Advertising
- Membership, research/polls, repairs & other

Expenditure:



Staffing:

During 2022, we expanded, employing 8-9 full-time staff members. In all, we spent 73.5% of our income on paying our hard-working news team.

Hong Kong Press Freedom in 2022

January 2022

- Independent Hong Kong media outlet Citizen News [announced that they decided to halt operations](#). They said the decision [was to ensure staff safety and was prompted by the authorities' crackdown](#) on fellow independent newsroom Stand News.
- Chief Executive Carrie Lam said the closure of Stand News and Citizen News in under a week [were unrelated to the national security law and press freedom](#).
- Hong Kong's Registry of Trade Unions [asked the Hong Kong Journalists Association to provide answers](#) how certain events they held were relevant to their objectives.
- Members of *Jumbo*, a student publication at Hong Kong Baptist University [collectively resigned citing interference from the university](#) after receiving complaints.

February 2022

- Hong Kong's Consumer Council decided to host the Consumer Rights Reporting Awards independently for the first time since the event launched in 2001, [ditching two press groups it had partnered with for more than 20 years](#).
- A statement signed by 21 western nations [condemned Hong Kong's press freedom crackdown](#) and the arrests of journalists at the now-defunct independent media outlet Stand News.
- US-funded news outlet Radio Free Asia announced [the suspension of some Cantonese programmes and commentaries](#), citing concerns about press freedom in Hong Kong and the "red lines" of the national security law.
- The International Federation of Journalists wrote in its latest report that [Hong Kong is turning into a "city of fear" where "open discussion is stifled"](#) and the national security legislation "effectively acts as a tripwire for all journalists."
- The transfer of the Stand News sedition case to Hong Kong's District Court [was adjourned to April](#).

March 2022

- NowTV [apologised after their reporter asked authorities how mainland Chinese medics treating local Covid-19 patients will be held accountable](#) in the event of a medical mishap.

April 2022

- A poll by the Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute found that [Hongkongers' satisfaction with press freedom and media outlets in the city dropped to a record low](#).
- Hong Kong veteran journalist Allan Au [was arrested by national security police for allegedly conspiring to publish seditious materials](#), and was released on bail after spending over 17 hours in police custody.
- The Stand News sedition case was moved to the District Court, as the parent company of the news outlet [remains unrepresented in court](#).
- Hong Kong's sole chief executive candidate John Lee said that press freedom exists in the city, so there is [no need to ask him to "defend" it](#).
- Hong Kong's Foreign Correspondents' Club [cancelled this year's Human Rights Press Awards](#), citing "significant areas of uncertainty" under the law.
- The Foreign Correspondents' Club decision to scrap the Human Rights Press Awards [was related to local outlet Stand News winning a number of titles](#), HKFP was told.
- Pro-democracy cartoonist Ah To has [announced his departure from Hong Kong](#), saying he would face "great mental stress" if he were to continue producing political cartoons in the city.
- Hong Kong journalists [collectively won the The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan's Freedom of the Press Asia award](#).
- The Hong Kong Journalists Association [postponed its annual Kam Yiu-yu Press Freedom Award earlier in the year](#), HKFP was told.
- Keith Richburg, the president of the Foreign Correspondents' Club, [apologised to the judges of the annual Human Rights Press Awards](#) after the club announced it was cancelling this year's awards.

May 2022

- Reporters Without Borders said Hong Kong authorities wielded a draconian new security law to silence critical news outlets and jail journalists [in its latest report](#) as the city plummeted down an international press freedom chart.

Hong Kong Press Freedom in 2022

- Hong Kong's sole leadership candidate John Lee [compared press freedom to identity cards](#), and said that "Hong Kong already has press freedom."
- Arizona State University's journalism school [will host the Human Rights Press Awards from next year](#), after [Hong Kong's Foreign Correspondents' Club axed the event](#) citing legal "red lines."
- The ex-acting chief editor of the now-defunct Stand News told a Hong Kong court that [he intended to plead not guilty](#) to sedition charges, as the case was adjourned until late June.
- Ronson Chan, chairperson of the Hong Kong Journalists Association, said [he would leave the city for six months to join the Reuters Institute's fellowship programme](#) at Oxford University starting in early October.
- Hong Kong national security police demanded that, Passion Times, an online news outlet which had ties with a defunct opposition group [to remove "sensitive" content](#).
- The "sensitive" content which Passion Times was ordered to delete on national security grounds [were pictures of a suggested new "national flag" for Hong Kong](#), [according](#) to local media.
- A Hong Kong citizen journalist [was sentenced to one month in jail](#) for behaving in a disorderly manner in a public place on National Security Education Day in 2021.
- The president of Hong Kong's Foreign Correspondents' Club [said that the club still has a "role to play"](#) following its decision to cancel this year's Human Right Press Awards, citing legal risks.
- Hong Kong's Foreign Correspondents' Club [overwhelmingly polled in favour of a motion relating to press freedom](#). More than half of the board members abstained from the vote.
- Fewer Hongkongers expressed trust in public broadcaster RTHK, [a study by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism found](#).
- Hong Kong effectively [barred several independent newspapers, international media outlets and news wires from attending the inauguration of incoming leader John Lee](#), as well as from covering other July 1 events celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Handover.
- The court [set the date for the sedition trial against defunct independent outlet Stand News](#), which will begin on October 31 and is scheduled to last for 20 days.
- Hong Kong Journalists Association [held its annual general meeting](#) in which members approved changes to the union's constitution to make dissolution easier.
- Hong Kong's last British governor Chris Patten accused Beijing of ["vengefully" targeting city's freedoms](#).
- The largest press group in Hong Kong expressed "utmost regret" after journalists from at least seven local and international media organisations [were denied access to cover events celebrating the 25th anniversary of the city's return to Chinese rule](#).

June 2022

- Hong Kong investigative news wire Factwire announced [it was disbanding with immediate effect](#).
- Photographer Steven Knipp withdrew a photo donated to Hong Kong's Foreign Correspondents' Club, [saying the club had failed to stand up for press freedom](#).
- Chief Executive Carrie Lam said during her final press briefing that the platform had [allowed her to address public concerns and media enquiries in a timely manner](#).

July 2022

- Disclosing the media invite list for the July 1 leadership inauguration 'would harm Hong Kong's security,' [the government claimed](#).
- Hong Kong democracy [has taken a "quantum leap forward,"](#) officials told a United Nations rights committee, during a grilling over the national security law, declining press freedom and other developments in the wake of the 2019 demos.
- Hong Kong's leader John Lee said [journalists are "in the same boat" as him](#) and that he hopes the news sector will join him in promoting the success of One Country, Two Systems to the world.
- Veteran Hong Kong journalist [Kevin Lau's opinion column in Ming Pao was halted](#). Lau told HKFP that he was retiring.
- A United Nations rights monitor [urged Hong Kong to repeal its national security law](#), citing the "overly broad interpretation" of its provisions and the subsequent violation of free expression in the city.

Hong Kong Press Freedom in 2022

August 2022

- Reporting restrictions on proceedings regarding the transfer of criminal cases to the High Court [must be lifted if the defendant makes such a request](#), a Hong Kong court ruled in a landmark judgement.
- Hong Kong's government watchdog said [they will launch a "full investigation" into the Information Services Department's refusal to disclose the list of media outlets invited](#) to cover July 1 Handover celebrations following a complaint made by HKFP.
- Hong Kong's detained pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai [filed an application for judicial review to try to stop police searching his phones](#), which he says contain protected journalistic material.
- A group of pro-Beijing Hongkongers [urged authorities to launch a national security investigation into US-funded media outlet Radio Free Asia](#), accusing it of spreading one-sided and "poisonous" information to "imperceptibly influence" the public.
- The national security trial for Jimmy Lai, the founder of pro-democracy newspaper Apple Daily, [will proceed without a jury, local media reported](#).
- Media tycoon Jimmy Lai [was set to plead not guilty and stand trial in a national security case](#), as Hong Kong's security chief granted three companies linked to the defunct pro-democracy tabloid Apple Daily access to their frozen funds to hire legal representatives.
- Hong Kong courts should not blur the line between criminal and civil cases, the District Court heard as the prosecution and defence presented their closing statements [during the fraud trial against media tycoon Jimmy Lai](#).
- Public trust in the credibility of Hong Kong's media [fell to its lowest level in two decades](#), according to a survey by the Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Hong Kong's High Court [heard journalist Bao Choy's appeal against her conviction](#) over accessing public vehicle registration records when she researched and produced an investigative documentary about the Yuen Long mob attack in 2019.
- Hong Kong media tycoon Jimmy Lai [lost his legal bid to block a national security search warrant of his phones](#), which he says contain protected journalistic materials.

September 2022

- Ronson Chan, the chairperson of the Hong Kong Journalists Association, [was arrested while reporting on a home owners' committee meeting](#) for online outlet Channel C.
- China [lashed out at "slander" by Hong Kong's Foreign Correspondents' Club](#) after the club expressed concern over the arrest of the head of the city's largest journalist group.
- Hong Kong pro-democracy activist Andy Li and paralegal Chan Tsz-wah, who pleaded guilty more than a year ago to conspiring with media mogul Jimmy Lai, [were set to be sentenced after the Apple Daily founder stands trial in December](#) under the Beijing-enacted national security law.
- The Hong Kong police ruled that [a complaint filed by a journalist who was allegedly hit by a non-lethal projectile](#) during the 2019 protests was "unsubstantiated."
- Ronson Chan, the chairperson of the Hong Kong Journalists Association, was [officially charged with obstructing police officers while reporting](#).
- Chief Executive John Lee told "patriotic" journalists to ["deliver Hong Kong's latest developments and correct message"](#) to the world when he attended a media sector celebration ahead of China's upcoming National Day.
- Ronson Chan, the chairperson of the Hong Kong Journalists Association, [was granted bail after pleading not guilty](#) to obstructing police officers and an alternative charge of obstructing other person lawfully engaged in a public duty.
- Self-proclaimed non-pro-establishment party Path of Democracy [appealed to the government to enact a fake news law](#) as part of a broad list of suggestions for Chief Executive John Lee ahead of his policy address.
- Hong Kong media tycoon Jimmy Lai [filed an appeal against the court's decision to uphold a national security search warrant](#) on his phones, which he says contain protected journalistic materials.
- Hong Kong media tycoon Jimmy Lai's request to hire a lawyer from the UK [was opposed by the justice minister and a barristers' group](#)

Hong Kong Press Freedom in 2021

October 2022

- Hong Kong police [expressed “strong concerns” over a satirical cartoon published in Ming Pao](#) that contained what they called “misleading content,” according to local media reports.
- An international journalists’ group [urged the global community to continue its condemnation on the “media offensive” conducted by the Hong Kong government](#) in a report about the city’s press freedom published earlier.
- Hong Kong police [can search journalistic materials stored on phones belonging to media tycoon Jimmy Lai](#) seized under a national security warrant, the High Court ruled.
- Hong Kong’s High Court [allowed media tycoon Jimmy Lai to hire a barrister from the UK](#) to handle his high-profile national security trial, saying that it was “clearly in the public interest.”
- Jimmy Lai, the founder of defunct Hong Kong pro-democracy tabloid Apple Daily, [was convicted of fraud](#) after being found to have violated the terms of the lease for the newspaper’s headquarters.
- Two reporters [quit the South China Morning Post last year](#) after a senior editor axed their three-month investigation into human rights abuses in China’s Xinjiang region, according to an editor who resigned shortly after.
- The South China Morning Post [sent a warning to a former editor who resigned along with two reporters](#) after their three-part series on rights abuses in Xinjiang was axed by management last year.
- Hong Kong authorities [hit back at the US following its statement on pro-democracy media mogul Jimmy Lai’s fraud case](#), calling the remarks made “purely politically oriented” and far from the truth.
- Hong Kong journalist Bao Choy [lost an appeal against her conviction over assessing public data](#) for a documentary about a mob attack in July 2019.
- Patrick Lam, a former top editor of defunct Hong Kong outlet Stand News [was granted bail after his lawyer called on the court to terminate the Stand News sedition trial](#) over improper handling of evidence.
- The Hong Kong Journalists Association said [it was “disappointed and worried”](#) by the court’s decision to reject an appeal filed by journalist Bao Choy convicted over accessing public data for a documentary about a mob attack in July 2019.
- Hong Kong’s Department of Justice [lost an appeal against the High Court’s decision to let a UK barrister represent media tycoon Jimmy Lai](#) in his upcoming high-profile national security trial.
- A Hong Kong court’s decision to allow a senior British lawyer to represent jailed pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai [sparked a chorus of condemnation from powerful Beijing loyalist voices](#).
- Hong Kong’s taxpayer-funded broadcaster RTHK [should “cooperate seamlessly” with other government departments including the police](#), said its chief Eddie Cheung in an interview with the city’s security chief.
- A Hong Kong citizen journalist who waved the British colonial-era flag while the Chinese national anthem was being played [was jailed for three months for insulting the anthem](#) following the first conviction under a new law.
- Hong Kong’s justice minister [refused to remark on comments made by former chief executive Leung Chun-ying](#), who called a ruling from the city’s appeal court allowing a UK lawyer to represent media tycoon Jimmy Lai in an upcoming national security trial “absurd.”

November 2022

- The Trust Project, an international consortium which promotes greater accountability and transparency in the news industry, [froze its Hong Kong operations](#).
- Hong Kong’s Department of Justice [appealed against a court’s decision to let a UK barrister represent media tycoon Jimmy Lai](#) in his upcoming high-profile national security trial.
- Hong Kong’s Security Bureau [“expressed deep regret” over “a misleading and fact-twisting commentary” published by Ming Pao](#) on the government’s decision to ban cannabidiol, commonly known as CBD, from February next year.
- Hong Kong media tycoon Jimmy Lai [was set to apply to halt his high-profile national security trial](#), which was scheduled to begin in just over two weeks’ time, Lai’s legal representative said.
- Hong Kong’s Department of Justice [hoped to appeal to the Court of Final Appeal against allowing a UK barrister represent media tycoon Jimmy Lai](#) in his high-profile national security trial, scheduled to start in just two weeks’ time.

Hong Kong Press Freedom in 2021

- Hong Kong journalist Bao Choy [furthered her chance of appealing her conviction over accessing car licence information](#) for an investigative documentary about a mob attack in Yuen Long in July 2019.
 - Hong Kong's Court of Appeal [refused to grant the secretary for justice a final chance to appeal against a court decision](#) to allow a UK barrister represent media mogul Jimmy Lai in his high-profile national security trial scheduled to start on December 1.
 - Six former staff members of Hong Kong pro-democracy tabloid Apple Daily and its parent company Next Digital [pleaded guilty to a conspiracy to commit collusion charge](#) in a landmark national security case.
 - Hong Kong's Department of Justice [filed an application to the city's top court to appeal against a decision to allow a UK barrister to represent media tycoon Jimmy Lai](#) in a high-profile national security trial due to begin next week.
 - State-controlled pro-Beijing newspapers in Hong Kong [fiercely criticised the decision to let a senior British barrister represent Jimmy Lai](#) in his high-profile national security trial, quoting one pro-China figure as saying the hearing should be shifted to the mainland if necessary.
 - Pro-democracy tycoon Jimmy Lai [had no financial motive in breaching the terms of the lease for his Apple Daily newspaper headquarters](#) by operating a consultancy from the same building, a court which convicted him of fraud was told.
 - Hong Kong's top court [adjourned its decision](#) on whether to allow the Department of Justice to appeal against an earlier ruling that let media tycoon Jimmy Lai hire a UK lawyer for his national security trial.
 - Hong Kong's top court [will not allow the Department of Justice to appeal against an earlier court decision admitting a UK barrister to represent media tycoon Jimmy Lai](#) in a high-profile national security trial.
 - Beijing [will be invited to determine whether overseas counsels are allowed to take part in national security trials](#) in Hong Kong, Chief Executive John Lee said.
 - Hong Kong's secretary for justice [will seek to adjourn a national security trial involving pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai](#) – two days before it was slated to begin – while awaiting Beijing's proposed interpretation of the city's national security law.
 - Beijing's power to interpret the national security law ["can be used sparingly,"](#) the head of the Hong Kong Bar Association said.
 - The lease of the Hong Kong Foreign Correspondents' Club [was renewed for three years](#), with a newly added "standard" clause regarding national security.
- ## December 2022
- The national security trial of pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai was [adjourned on its scheduled starting date until December 13](#) as Hong Kong waits for Beijing to "clarify" whether overseas lawyers are allowed to appear in such cases.
 - Defendants charged under the national security law [could be sent to mainland China for trial](#) if they cannot find a lawyer in Hong Kong, the city's top delegate to Beijing's advisory body said.
 - US-based NGO Human Rights Watch [announced it will co-host Hong Kong's Human Rights Press Awards](#) after the city's Foreign Correspondents' Club (FCC) cancelled the event earlier this year.
 - Jimmy Lai, the founder of defunct pro-democracy tabloid Apple Daily, [was sentenced to five years and nine months in jail](#) after being convicted of fraud.
 - The jailing of pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai over fraud charges ["has nothing to do with freedom of the press or freedom of speech,"](#) the Hong Kong government said, following criticism from the US.
 - Chung Pui-kuen, a former top editor of Hong Kong news outlet Stand News facing sedition charges [was granted bail after spending almost a year in custody pending trial](#).
 - The national security trial against Apple Daily founder Jimmy Lai [was adjourned until September 25, 2023](#).
 - Proceedings against former editors of independent outlet Stand News were "unfair" and "not transparent," the defence argued, as the court [sought to rule on whether the discovery of previously undisclosed evidence was grounds to terminate the trial](#).
 - An additional six articles published by the shuttered independent media outlet Stand News [were flagged by the prosecution for potentially violating Hong Kong's colonial-era sedition law](#).

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