

# hongkongfp.com

An independent, nonprofit news site that covers Hong Kong and developments in mainland China that relate to Hong Kong.



This website adheres to all nine of NewsGuard's standards of credibility and transparency.

**Score:** 100/100

## Ownership and Financing

HongKongFP.com is owned by Hong Kong Free Press Limited, a nonprofit. The site was co-founded by journalists Tom Grundy and Evan Fowler in 2015.

The site states on its About page that “we have no investors, no shareholders, no tycoons, no mainland owners or umbrella company behind us. Our independence means we are fully resistant to censorship and self-censorship.”

The site reported that in 2020, 92 percent of its revenue came from donations, 4 percent from advertising and content sales, and 4 percent from events.

- ✓ Does not repeatedly publish false content (22 points)
- ✓ Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
- ✓ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
- ✓ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
- ✓ Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
- ✓ Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
- ✓ Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
- ✓ Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
- ✓ The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

## Content

HongKongFP.com says that its mission is “to be the most independent and credible English-language news source in Greater China. We seek to amplify the voices of the voiceless, not the powerful. And our platform will act as a monitor should Hong Kong’s core values and freedoms be threatened.” The site goes on to say that it was created “amid rising concerns over declining press freedom in Hong Kong.”

The site covers news in Hong Kong and developments elsewhere affecting the city, particularly in mainland China. The site divides content into sections including Business; Law & Crime; LGBTQ & Gender; and Press Freedom & Censorship. The Sinobeat section includes subsections including Xinjiang Crackdown, South China Sea Dispute, and Taiwan. The Buzz section focuses on cultural news and events, while the Lens section contains photojournalism from Hong Kong and elsewhere.

Stories have included inspections of overcrowding at hospitals, the rise of the Progressive Lawyers Group to monitor the rule of law, controversy over a local playground, and analysis of how the U.S. posture toward Hong Kong could change amid diminishing freedoms.

*Criteria are listed in order of importance.*

[More information.](#)

The 2019 annual report stated, “HKFP found itself on the forefront of the most significant unrest in decades, often live-streaming the action in real-time. We invested in safety training and gear, adapted our workflow and deployment, and employed a freelance photographer – May James – to capture over 2,600 shots from the frontlines.”

Its 2019 annual report also stated, “Aside from our leading coverage of the Umbrella Movement jailings, we published translated statements from the convicted activists in full. We covered the draconian national anthem law, sexism at the local press club, and published 23 pieces on the fight for LGBT+ equality. HKFP also live-blogged the annual budget and gave overnight, marathon coverage of the unprecedented 2019 District Council elections.”

## Credibility

Hong Kong Free Press typically cites credible sources, including political and business leaders, academic studies, and primary documents such as government reports. Headlines accurately reflect content.

The HKFP Code of Ethics page includes a commitment to correct errors “quickly and transparently,” and states that for some errors, the site will issue “an apology and, if appropriate, an explanation.” The site regularly publishes corrections, typically in the form of a note at the bottom of the article.

The site has a dedicated Opinion section, and opinion articles are labelled as such above the headline. In its Code of Ethics, the site states that in covering news, the site aspires “to not reflect our own viewpoint.” The code also states that “We should not give false equivalence to both sides of an issue when one is demonstrably false, such as climate change denial.”

The site’s Opinion section primarily airs views that are pro-democracy and critical of the Chinese Communist Party. However, NewsGuard’s review found that opinionated language is consistently absent from the site’s news reporting — which is why NewsGuard has determined that the site handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

In early 2020, Hong Kong Free Press was a finalist for a Free Expression Award, handed out by Index on Censorship, an anti-censorship group.

In 2021, Hong Kong Free Press was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize by three members of the Norwegian parliament from the Liberal Party.

## Transparency

HongKongFP.com states on its About Hong Kong Free Press page that “We are a non-profit, limited by guarantee company.” The site lists its advertisers and provides a detailed breakdown of revenue streams in its Transparency Reports, which are posted on the site. The 2020 report stated that the site had 872 monthly donors that year, for whom the average donation was \$198 in Hong Kong currency, equivalent to approximately \$25 in U.S. currency. The site disclosed a total of HK\$6.5 million in revenue in 2019.

It also explained, “In 2019, HKFP went through a legal examination to be recognised as the equivalent of a US charity. Hong Kong law does not allow media outlets to register as tax-exempt charities, thus HKFP is a limited by guarantee company - a non-profit, answerable to readers not shareholders. As of January, 2020, we are now certified by NGO Source. Whilst this does not mean we are tax-exempt, it can be of some assurance to donors and grant-making bodies that we meet the same standards of a US public charity in terms of our structure, accountability and governance.”

Although HongKongFP.com does not identify individual donors, because the site says that it is largely sustained through small donations, NewsGuard has determined that it adequately discloses ownership and financing.

The Annual Report page identifies the site’s editorial leaders, along with their biographical information. Articles name the writer and also include biographical information.

Advertising and sponsored content are distinguished from editorial content.

## History

Hong Kong Free Press was founded in June 2015 and described itself as Hong Kong’s “first crowdfunded media outlet.” Editor Tom Grundy told The Guardian in

May 2015: “Our aim was to raise HK\$150,000 [\$19,000 in U.S. currency] in one month in order to start operations. We raised that in two days.”

*Editor’s Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on Jan. 17, 2022. It was previously updated on Jan. 22, 2021.*

**Written by:** Bron Maher

**Edited by:** Eric Efron, Jim Warren

**Send feedback to NewsGuard:** [Click Here](#)

## Sources

### Ownership and Financing

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/about/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/hong-kong-free-press-transparency-report-2018/>  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/20/hong-kong-to-get-new-crowdfunded-independent-newspaper>  
<http://www.southside.hk/five-minutes-tom-grundy-co-founder-hkfp/>  
<https://uk.linkedin.com/in/evan-fowler-06413b168>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/HKFP-Annual-Report-2020.pdf>

### Content

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/hkfp-venture/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/hkfp-lens/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/hkfp-buzz/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/taiwan-news/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/south-china-sea-dispute/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/chinas-xinjiang-crackdown/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/hong-kong-zhuhai-macao-bridge/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/the-umbrella-movement-hong-kong/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/press-freedom-censorship/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/category/topics/business/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/category/topics/law-crime/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/category/topics/lgbtq-gender/>

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/no-regrets-umbrella-movement-co-founder-chan-kin-man-released-11-months-prison-peaceful-protest/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/us-summons-chinese-ambassador-dangerous-ridiculous-coronavirus-conspiracy-theory/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/12/us-lawmakers-seek-ban-imports-xinjiang-china-forced-labour/>

Republished from AFP

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/us-summons-chinese-ambassador-dangerous-ridiculous-coronavirus-conspiracy-theory/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/hong-kong-political-rivals-woo-voters-free-face-masks/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2019/01/12/i-felt-helpless-patients-waiting-longer-hong-kongs-overburdened-public-hospitals/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2019/03/24/decline-fall-progressive-lawyers-group-plans-new-barometer-measure-hong-kongs-rule-law/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2019/01/19/explainer-us-treats-hong-kong-separate-territory-trade-purposes-long/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2019/01/27/playground-three-storeys-still-open-space-conflict-rages-lockhart-road-playground/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Annual-Report-2019.pdf>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/01/22/install-cctv-in-hong-kong-classrooms-to-monitor-teachers-urges-pro-beijing-lawmaker/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/01/22/in-pictures-residents-in-hong-kongs-yau-ma-tei-stoic-amid-reports-of-impending-lockdown/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/01/22/hong-kong-police-drop-protest-charges-against-district-councillors-and-assistants-citing-lack-of-evidence/>

## Credibility

### Typical sources

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/12/us-lawmakers-seek-ban-imports-xinjiang-china-forced-labour/> (AFP)  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/us-summons-chinese-ambassador-dangerous-ridiculous-coronavirus-conspiracy-theory/> (AFP)

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/no-regrets-umbrella-movement-co-founder-chan-kin-man-released-11-months-prison-peaceful-protest/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/17/coronavirus-found-stool-patients-renews-public-hygiene-concerns-lead-new-detection-method-study/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/17/coronavirus-hong-kong-migrant-domestic-workers-vulnerable-outbreak-ngo/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/17/coronavirus-hong-kong-school-closures-extended-cathay-adds-flights-students-returning-uk-us/>

#### Corrections

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/hkfp-code-ethics/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/11/editorial-hkfp-launches-new-code-ethics-part-2020-relaunch/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/hkfp-corrections-policy/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/12/10/hong-kong-police-defuse-two-homemade-bombs-containing-10kg-explosives-found-wan-chai-school/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/09/hong-kong-police-protesters-stand-off-tseung-kwan-o-memorial-deceased-student/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/02/10/hong-kong-man-close-contact-coronavirus-patient-complains-confusing-3-day-long-quarantine-admission/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/01/31/coronavirus-product-chinas-food-safety-healthcare-politics/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/01/pictures-tear-gas-pepper-spray-clashes-mong-kok-police-officer-pulls-gun-protesters/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/06/10/duty-bound-hong-kong-leader-carrie-lam-defends-extradition-bill-despite-million-strong-protest/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/06/09/just-no-china-extradition-tens-thousands-hong-kong-protest-controversial-new-law/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/02/12/hong-kong-residents-councillors-petition-plans-kennedy-town-coronavirus-clinic/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/02/28/hong-kong-police-arrest-pro-democracy-newspaper-tycoon-jimmy-lai-labour-party-vice-chair-lee-cheuk-yan/>

January 2022 correction:

<https://hongkongfp.com/2022/01/10/3-months-jail-for-member-of-now-defunct-hong-kong-activist-accused-of-elbowing-police-officer/>

Opinion labelled

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/17/hero-coronavirus-crisis-china-according-state-propaganda/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/coronavirus-ignore-propaganda-regimes-kinds-failed-epidemic-test/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/15/law-onto-hong-kong-police-officers-giving-force-bad-name/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/14/hong-kong-protesters-human-rights-defenders-not-rioters/>

Pro-democracy/CCP-critical

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/14/hong-kong-protesters-human-rights-defenders-not-rioters/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/08/make-no-mistake-xi-jinpings-coronavirus/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/02/16/anything-can-persuade-carrie-lam-stand-hongkongers/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/01/22/maintain-middle-ground-divided-hong-kong/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/12/21/cambridge-university-recognise-hong-kong-leader-carrie-lam-not-jolly-good-fellow/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/12/09/rats-abandon-carrie-lams-ship-time-shoot-admiral-encourage-others/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/comment-analysis/page/4/>

Award/shortlist

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/02/25/hong-kong-free-press-shortlisted-index-censorships-2020-freedom-expression-award/>  
<https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2020/02/indexawards20-journalism-shortlist/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2021/01/29/norwegian-politicians-nominate-hong-kong-free-press-for-nobel-peace-prize/>

Transparency

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/contact-us/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/about/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/hong-kong-free-press-annual-report-2020/>

Bylines

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/15/law-onto-hong-kong-police-officers-giving-force-bad-name/>



<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/coronavirus-ignore-propaganda-regimes-kinds-failed-epidemic-test/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/no-regrets-umbrella-movement-co-founder-chan-kin-man-released-11-months-prison-peaceful-protest/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/coronavirus-hong-kong-send-charter-flights-pick-stranded-residents-hubei-china/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/coronavirus-hong-kong-expands-quarantine-policy-arrivals-uk-us-ireland-egypt-imported-cases-detected/>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/lawmaker-hails-1-million-strong-petition-urging-national-security-law-signatories-not-hong-kong-based/>

#### SponCon

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2020/03/16/understand-asias-place-world-cityus-postgrad-programmes/>  
<https://hongkongfp.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/HKFP-Annual-Report-2020.pdf>

---

#### History

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/20/hong-kong-to-get-new-crowdfunded-independent-newspaper>  
<https://www.hongkongfp.com/about/>