

Mekong Partnership For the Environment

Mekong Matters Story Fund – Communities, development and the environment (Sept 2016)

SUMMARY

Mekong Matters Story Fund supports journalists to report on the regional social and environmental costs and benefits of development projects in the Mekong region. These may include renewable energy, dams, mines, industrial development, land use and forestry concessions, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) or other related issues. MPE will provide up to US\$3,000 to cover costs for story development and may co-publish the story on its own outlets, with editorial control and attribution to the journalist and their media organisation.

WHAT KIND OF STORIES CAN THIS GRANT SUPPORT?

Communities, development and the environment: Public participation in the Mekong region

Communities are often left out of planning for development projects such as dams, mines, SEZ, power plants. This exclusion often harms the environment and residents affected by the project. Stories should examine the role of public participation in regional development projects. What's working? What's not? What opportunities are there for change? Stories may focus on policy issues, particular development sites, or good/bad examples of public participation across the Mekong region.

Applicants may include plans to visit development projects and communities. But we will prioritise applicants that plan to attend some of the public consultation meetings on the [Regional Guidelines on Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessment \(EIA\)](#). Citizens, NGOs, business and governments from across the region will be gathering to give input into how to strengthen community and civil society input in evaluating development projects. [More info](#).

- October 5 - Hanoi, Viet Nam
- October 7 - Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam
- October 12 - Vientiane, Lao PDR
- October 14 - Yangon, Myanmar
- October 19 - Bangkok, Thailand
- October 28 - Phnom Penh, Cambodia

WHAT IS MEKONG PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (MPE)?

The MPE project is led by [Pact](#), along with partners including [Internews](#) and its [Earth Journalism Network](#). We support practices that facilitate socially and environmentally responsible development decision-making in the Mekong region. We also support and facilitate the [Mekong Matters Journalism Network](#) and work with partners in Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

WHAT EXPENSES MAY BE COVERED?

MPE can cover expenses incurred in developing the story such as: regional or domestic travel, interpreter fees, database access, and translations of the story to/from English or other relevant languages. Fixed costs such as office costs or equipment are not covered.

WHO MAY APPLY?

Applicants must be working as a journalist or studying in a journalism program. Applicants should be based in a Mekong country and/or demonstrate that the impact of the story on their audience will positively influence development in the Mekong region. Applicants must be citizens of Mekong countries, except under exceptional circumstances, such as mentoring local journalists. [Mekong Matters Journalism Network](#) members are encouraged to apply (contact ahunt@internews.org to join or for info).

APPLICATIONS AND APPROVAL

Apply by Sept 18, 2016. MPE will make a decision within 30 days, or earlier if you propose covering the January 19

event in Cambodia. An agreement with MPE will require the journalists' media outlet to commit to publish the story, if it meets their journalistic standards. MPE may also publish the story on their outlets. The agreement will be fixed price with payments made based on milestones. If requested, Internews may provide story mentoring. Applications and queries can be sent with subject line **"MPE Story Fund-applicant name"** to MPEAPS@pactworld.org,



Application: Mekong Matters Story Fund

Journalist applicant's name:	
Citizenship:	
Address:	
Phone / Email:	
Job title:	
Media Organisation/s:	
Expected start date:	
Expected completion date:	
Summary of story idea (less than 100 words):	
Total amount requested (US\$):	

STORY PROPOSAL:

- A. **OUTLINE:** Please outline the story idea, including the background and importance of the story, what impact the story might have on development in the Mekong region, and how the story or angle is unique and interesting.
- B. **PLAN:** Describe how the research and reporting will be done, and any travel involved. What types of sources will be interviewed or consulted?
- C. **DISSEMINATION:** Where do you plan to publish or distribute the story? In what formats (print, web, video etc.)? What is the circulation/audience size for each? Which languages will you produce the story in? (Translation costs may be included in your budget)
- D. **RISKS:** Describe any security, administrative, deadline delay, or other risks that the story might include for the journalist, the sources, or for MPE. How will these risks be managed?

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

- E. **BUDGET:** Provide an itemized budget that estimates expenses being requested from MPE, and how the funds will be used. Budget will be reviewed for allowability and reasonableness. (Example below. Agreements will be fixed price based on a final approved budget with payments made based on milestones, such as completion of draft story)

Expense	US\$	Description / calculation
EXAMPLE Flight: Bangkok – Hanoi – Bangkok	600	To visit sites and interview sources
EXAMPLE Hotel in Hanoi	450	6N X \$75
EXAMPLE Hire interpreter in Vietnam	300	6DX \$50, to research and interview sources
EXAMPLE Translation of final article to English	200	8 pages X \$25
TOTAL US\$	1550	

- F. If you have not worked with Mekong Matters before, please attach (or insert details below):

- **STORY SAMPLES:** Web links or files of 2-3 of original stories you produced. Stories in English are preferred, but other languages may be submitted with a summary in English.
- **EXPERIENCE:** Your resume, CV or details of your work experience and education.
- **REFERENCES:** Names, job titles and contacts of two references familiar with your work