Date: 30 September 2014

Country: China, Guangzhou

Sun Yat-Sen University based in the capital of the most economically prosperous Chinese province, Guangdong, and the Media Diversity Institute (MDI) are to develop a joint Inclusive Journalism and Social Harmony Programme aimed at encouraging a culture and forum among the region’s media actors, journalism educators and civil society organizations, that will build awareness and capacity for greater social and cultural inclusion through responsible reporting on the region’s diversity.

The partnership agreement was made during a two day visit by a MDI representative to the flourishing university, known for owning the world's fastest supercomputer Tianhe-2, worth almost half a million US dollars, as well as having the largest affiliated hospital system in China. Its School of Communication and Design is also the first university in China to establish a Civil Communication Research Center.
MDI to partner with Chinese University

The joint programme will be implemented by the University's Public Communication Institute (PCI) and MDI. The PCI team, mostly academic staff of the University's School of Communication and Design, is committed to promoting quality journalism, fairer communication, and a healthier public sphere. The joint programme will be in tune with PCI's three focuses - civil society, media criticism and media & social justice.

"MDI is the right partner for us, since we too, are concerned with the representation of women and disadvantaged social groups, such as minorities and migrant labourers in the media, as well as the working conditions of women journalists in the media industry", said the School's Dean, Dr Zhang Zhian.

Dr Zhang, the youngest Dean in China (and his team members of about the same age) insists gender awareness among the public, journalists, and policy makers could be achieved only if men and women work on the issue together.

"MDI is very pleased and honored to be working with such committed, professional and young members of Sun Yat-Sen University," says Milica Pesic, MDI Executive Director. "We share the same view that only responsible journalism – fair, accurate, balanced, sensitive and inclusive – can contribute to the harmony of society. It is a global need - as much in the West where tabloids are 'massacring' immigrants, Roma, or Muslims - as in China where the social stigma towards some marginalized groups, such as single women regularly referred to by the media as 'leftover women', is an attitude massively shared by the media, state-owned or commercial," said Pesic.

The programme will consist of study tours, workshops for academics, curricula development, seminars for journalists and NGOs, as well as scholarships for Chinese students to do Diversity and the Media Course, a joint MDI/University of Westminster MA.

MDI's strategic partner for work in China, UNESCO Beijing, has welcomed the new partnership and already expressed its willingness to contribute to the programme, in particular to the parts related to Media and Information Literacy, one of UNESCO's flagship initiatives.

Milica Pesic also met Sun Yat-Sen University journalism and communication students, introduced the MDI Inclusive Journalism programme, and discussed with them the challenges and success stories of the media in the countries where MDI has been operating over the last 15 years.

For more information see contact us section.