

Scottish Refugee Council Press Release



21st June 2006

Scottish Journalists Set the Standard on Reporting Asylum

Refugee Week Scottish Media Awards, 23rd June 2006, Lang's Hotel, 2 Port Dundas Place, Glasgow, 19:00 til late

A group of organisations working to challenge inaccurate reporting on asylum issues are celebrating journalistic excellence this Friday, with the inauguration of a major new award.

The Refugee Week Scottish Media Awards, sponsored by the Asylum Positive Images Network, are among the highlights of this year's Refugee Week programme in Scotland. They aim to recognise journalism which contributes to a greater public understanding of refugee issues.

A panel of six asylum seekers and refugees assessed more than 20 entries, including news reports, features and documentaries. From these, they selected winning entries from broadcasting and print media. The panel chose the entries which they felt contributed most to challenging stereotypes and which helped explain the reasons why people seek refuge in Scotland.

The winners, whose names will be announced at the event, will receive a cash prize and a beautiful, specially designed trophy. Because of the high standard of the entries, there will also be a prize for the runners up.

Scottish Refugee Council Chief Executive Sally Daghlian said:

"It is a pleasure to acknowledge the high standard of reporting on asylum issues that exists in Scottish journalism. Most people will never knowingly meet a refugee. Their perceptions of who refugees are and why they flee to Scotland come mainly from the media. Recent research has shown that Scottish journalists are setting the standard on honest and accurate reporting on asylum issues. This contributes to the sympathetic attitude that exists in Scotland towards people seeking refuge."

Louise Carlin, Oxfam Scotland's UK Poverty Programme Manager, added:

"Journalists have a crucial role to play in ensuring that the public have a balanced and accurate understanding about asylum. This award aims to acknowledge the work of journalists who have made a significant contribution to meeting that objective".

Broadcaster Janice Forsyth, will be presenting the awards. She said:

"This is long overdue. The awards are a wonderful recognition and celebration of the work journalists all over Scotland are doing to counter the inaccuracies and falsehoods about asylum that have poisoned public discourse on this issue in the UK".

*For further information, please contact Andrew Dougal, Press & Communications Officer,
Scottish Refugee Council, 0141-223-7927, mobile 07734-030763 or email
Andrew.dougal@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk*

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Notes

1. Agenda

18:45 Guests Arrive

19:10 Simon Hodgson, Scottish Refugee Council Head of Policy and Communications
Manager ,opens the awards and introduces the host – Janice Forsyth

19:15 Janice Forsyth opens the awards

19:20 Runner up in print category announced

19:25 Winner of print category announced

19:30 Janice introduces the broadcast category

19:35 Broadcast category runner up announced

19:40 Winner of broadcast category announced

19:45 Close of awards and thanks

20:00 Reception until 21.00