

# interlink.academy

International Dialog and Journalism

Newsletter December 2016

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Thumbs up: our Russian Fellows visit the Facebook office in Hamburg

## Message from the Director



Werner Eggert

Our alumna Yuliana Romanyshyn represents what we are striving for here at the Interlink Academy in Hamburg: cutting edge digital journalism, press freedom worldwide, and cross-border dialog.

Yuliana is a high-potential journalist from Ukraine who participated in our course “Digital Journalism for Eastern Europe” in 2015, during which she visited Germany’s leading news portal *SPIEGEL ONLINE*. A year later, Yuliana used this contact and successfully applied for an internship there.

For eight weeks, she studied the work of leading data journalists and created and published her own data journalism project. During a panel discussion, she shared her insights into the embattled Ukrainian media industry with the German public. (small picture)

Yuliana’s example demonstrates that the benefits of our training programs go far beyond the original learning experience: we build international networks, we encourage journalists to fight for a free media, and we support our alumni in the pursuit of their careers whenever we can.

The Interlink Academy has been in operation for two years now and it is high time to thank all the organizers, partners, and trainers for their endless efforts as well as our sponsors: amongst others, the German Foreign Office, the ZEIT Stiftung, the European Commission, the Medienstiftung Hamburg-Schleswig Holstein, and the City of Hamburg.

I wish you a happy festive season and a successful New Year 2017!



During her internship at *SPIEGEL ONLINE* in Fall 2016, Interlink Alumna Yuliana Romanyshyn gave a public lecture on the situation of the media in Ukraine.

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Shooting, editing, publishing: Fellows Alina Sirenko from Ukraine (l.) and Pavel Merzlikin from Russia working on their videos

## Digital Skill Drill for Eastern Europe

They came all the way from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine to delve deep into the world of digital journalism. At the start of the blended learning course in May, a group of fourteen promising journalists from Eastern Europe – eight women and six men – gathered in Hamburg to learn about digitization in journalism.

Our Fellows learned about the risks and opportunities of digitization, how to organize, visualize and protect data and how to do investigative research. In between lectures, they went outside and got practical. Not only did they improve their technical skills and know-how about media ethics, they also made valuable contacts and expanded their network.

Besides lectures, practical group work, and stimulating discussions, our Fellows visited innovative working newsrooms. They toured large media houses like *DIE ZEIT* and *SPIEGEL ONLINE* but also the hyperlocal newspaper *Eimsbütteler Nachrichten*. Even beyond the content of the program, there was much to learn and talk about, as the participants' backgrounds couldn't have been more diverse, ranging from the Russian TV journalist Daria Fedorova, who works for the national channel *TVC* in Moscow, to the investigative journalist Yan Auseyushkin from Ukraine, who covers the Russian occupation of the Crimea for the information center *QuirimInfo*.

Back home, our Fellows continued to deepen their knowledge in e-learning sessions and webinars on data-driven journalism and journalistic research in the social media with international speakers Giannina Segnini and Henk van Ess (read more on page 10). "The responses from the lecturers and speakers were especially valuable," said Interlink participant Daria Fedorova, who particularly liked the benefits of the e-learning settings. "We were able to see other participants' work, comment on it and receive comments ourselves."

The Interlink Academy developed and organized the program "Digital Journalism for Eastern Europe" with financial assistance from the German Foreign Ministry.



Our group in the magazine of the German Association of Journalists



Lecturer Manfred Redelfs sharing some research tricks during a seminar

Other partners of the program are: Netzwerk Recherche Germany, the Independent Journalism Center in Moldova, the Georgia Association of Regional Broadcasters, the Azerbaijan Journalists' Network, Hetq, the Investigative Journalists Network in Armenia, the Bumaga Media Group/Paperpaper in St. Petersburg, and the Union of Young Independent Journalists in Ukraine.

## Learning, Practicing, Networking

Digitization presents new challenges for journalists and publishers. How does one work with it and use these opportunities without ignoring the risks? Our Fellows practised their craft during intensive lectures and group work and also exchanged experiences and new ideas with their German colleagues.



Hamburg City Hall: participants eagerly awaiting a background discussion with State Secretary Wolfgang Schmidt



What is right – and what is wrong? A heated discussion in the seminar room



Getting hyperlocal: meeting with the newspaper colleagues of *Eimsbütteler Nachrichten*



What will be the next subject? In conversation with Gero von Randow, editor at the newspaper *DIE ZEIT*



Behind-the-scenes insights: a guided tour with Christina Elmer, data and science editor at *SPIEGEL ONLINE*



Let's have some fun: after the hard work of lectures, there's networking and chocolate during a break

Let's get professional!  
Young bloggers and  
citizen journalists at the  
Summer School in  
Zaporizhzhya, Ukraine

## Citizen Journalism at its Best



“Bloggers and citizen journalists are very important in Ukraine,” said Matthias Conrad from the German embassy in Kiev, addressing the participants of this year’s first summer school in July in Zaporizhzhya, southwest of Kiev. He spoke about the relevance of community media in the context of press freedom and mainstream media at a morning talk at the Faculty of Journalism at the Zaporizhzhya National University. “Although great progress has been made on freedom of press and of expression, the mainstream media is still controlled by people interested in their agenda being seen in a good light,” observed Conrad. “In this regard,” he stressed, “community media can act as a counterweight.”

With this in mind, Interlink introduced its “Summer School for Citizen Journalists in Ukraine” program, which provides independent young bloggers and community journalists from Zaporizhzhya, the Oblast district, and beyond with all the skills needed for being effective in their work. From nearly 100 applicants, 24 participants were selected and given the opportunity to learn more about storytelling, digital security, research, photography, fact checking, video production, and infographics. They spent a couple of eventful days filled with lectures, practical work, and networking – visiting a local television station, going on a photography field trip to the island Khortytsia, and producing their own first videos. They were very ambitious in making the most of it, report Interlink’s local trainers Kyrylo Iesin and Artem Babak, who had both completed Interlink courses in Germany in the past – before going on to work as trainers and teaching others.

During interactive webinars, the group exchanged ideas on ethical standards with Interlink’s guest speakers: local blogger Maxim Scherbina and press freedom activist Roman Kabachiy, Deputy Director of the Institute for Mass Information in Kiev. Behind the scenes, Interlink’s seminar assistant Kateryna Maiboroda worked her magic, making sure that everyone was doing fine and had a great time – not only during lunches. Together they explored the mighty Dnipro river via boat, passing through the lock in a giant dam and later sang songs at the University hostel with local guitar artists. The result was a lovely song that the participants had composed themselves and dedicated to their trainers.

The Summer School is sponsored by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and organized in cooperation with our local partners, the Zaporizhzhya-based non-governmental organization “Union of Young Independent Journalists” and the Zaporizhzhya National University (with thanks to translator Alesia Golovko).



A talk with Matthias Conrad from the German embassy in Kiev. Next to him, top right: Dr. Volodymyr Manakin, Dean of the Journalism Department in Zaporizhzhya

## Writing, Shooting, and Singing in Zaporizhzhya

How does one take better pictures? Our Ukrainian participants in this year's Summer School learned how to produce better stories, videos, and infographics for the web – and were creative well beyond that.



Fellow Mariya Reznikova working on her photography skills during a field trip to the island Khortytsia



Nervous faces during the class screening of the participants' first video productions



Let us sing together! Participant Alesya Sharygina (center) brought her guitar for some musical relief



A quick warm-up after lunch to get the energy flowing, organized by trainer Nadiia Babynska



The Interlink team: Nataliya Vygoskaya (l.) with our trainers Artem Babak, Nadiia Babynska, and Kyrlyo Iesin



Congratulations: Fellow Yelizaveta Mukhina receives her certificate from Director Werner Eggert

## News from Our Alumni

### Tamara Karelidze

(2013 Fellow from Georgia)

In addition to her work at the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters, Tamara is now a lecturer at the Caucasus International University in Tbilisi. In September, she started a new course on Social Media. “The tools and information I learned as a Fellow continue to be really helpful in my teaching,” Tamara says.

### Li Li

(2014 Fellow from China)

Li returned to Hamburg in early December 2016 to research global ocean governance and marine policies and dropped by our office to say hello. He works as International News Correspondent for the newspaper *Ta Kung Pao* in Beijing. He will return in July 2017 to cover the G20 summit in Hamburg.

### Zaka Guluyev

(2013 Fellow from Azerbaijan)

Zaka has become a trainer and project manager for the Azerbaijan Journalists' Network (AJN) in Baku. He realized several projects for young journalists in the region, teaching them about multi-media skills, blogging, video production, and social media. He designed and organized a project for students majoring in Journalism at the Universities in Baku. [www.mediaman.az](http://www.mediaman.az)

### Maria Gulina

(2016 Fellow from Belarus)

With the skills gained as Fellow earlier this year, Maria successfully organized a training project for young local photographers in Belarus. She continues to work as a freelance journalist and photographer in Minsk – and she writes for Urban Forester, a well-known public campaign to raise awareness for environmental issues.

## Media Systems in Germany

How do German publishing houses navigate in today's world? What are the challenges in the German media sphere? Fourteen Russian journalists from St. Petersburg searched for answers – during lectures in Hamburg and meetings with German colleagues from magazines, innovative media start-ups, and state authorities. Two participants share their experiences:



Group discussion at *DIE ZEIT*

**Mikhail:** “As I spoke some ‘deutsch’ and had been to Germany before, it was no easy task to surprise me during this study trip – but Interlink Academy's program definitely exceeded my expectations. I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of the lectures on the German journalistic landscape and current trends on the media market. They provided us with interesting insights into the profound transformation processes German media is currently experiencing, especially due to digitization, the fast-moving expansion of the Internet, and the growing influence of social networks.

These are without a doubt the major challenges journalists from all over the world face at the moment and Russia is no exception in this respect. Nonetheless, it was extremely interesting for me to learn how Germany is coping with these problems, for it has the reputation of being a leader in European media. I enjoyed the rare chance to experience the atmosphere of editorial offices, to speak with Western colleagues (particularly with Martin Klingst, senior political correspondent of *DIE ZEIT*, and Janko Tietz, Managing Editor of *SPIEGEL ONLINE*), and to discuss with them the current political tensions between Russia and the EU.

Our conversation partners did not remain silent on the problem of the so-called “lying press” (*Lügenpresse*), a catchphrase for the German population's fast-growing distrust towards their media. I did not expect that coverage of the refugee crisis and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine would be criticized to such a high degree. After lectures and background conversations with our German colleagues, I came to the conclusion that, despite major differences between Russian and German media systems, our countries have a lot in common. In both states there is a media mainstream – in Russia it is rather conservative and increasingly nationalistic, in Germany left-liberal. And there are marginal niches for ideological dissidents – liberals in Russia, conservatives and extreme leftists in Germany. I believe it's one of our most challenging missions for the coming decade to promote friendly dialog between the different ideological groups in our countries, to prevent further polarization of our respective societies.”

Mikhail Tyurkin, 32, journalist and freelance columnist for the news agency “Rosbalt”, lecturer at the Institute “High School of Journalism and Mass Communications” of St. Petersburg State University

**Yousra Omar**

(2013 Fellow from Egypt)

Besides working as a freelance journalist, Yousra has won an award for her first Arabic translation in the field of Political Science. In cooperation with the National Center for Translation in Cairo, she translated the French book "The Principle of Democracy; a Study about the New Forms of Political Issues," published by the publishing house "La Découverte".

**Yaping Wang**

(2013 Fellow from China)

Yaping published his first book about internet security on mobile phones and encryption tools for Chinese citizens. Still based in Shanghai, Yaping continues to produce his popular podcast, which is heard weekly by over one hundred thousand people in China.

<https://www.amazon.cn/图书>

[/dp/B01M4GDCSK/](https://www.amazon.cn/图书/dp/B01M4GDCSK/)

**Oleg Shynkarenko**

(2011 Fellow from Ukraine)

Journalist and author Oleg published his second novel "First Ukrainian Robots" in Ukraine. It is an attempt to transplant Western cyber-punk into Ukrainian soil, Oleg says. His first work, the dystopian multimedia novel "Kaharlyk," was recently published in the UK. Additionally, Oleg writes articles for the Ukrainian *Helsinki Human Rights Union* in Kiev.

<https://espresso.economist.com/043c2ec6c6390dd0ac5519190a57c88c>

**Suren Stepanyan**

(2016 Fellow from Armenia)

Suren works for the Mediamax Media Agency in Yerevan. After completing the "Digital Journalism for Eastern Europe" program this year in Spring, he shot a series of documentaries to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence of Armenia, which were broadcast on Armenia's public-service TV channel.

## Insights into German Journalism

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the German media system? Our Russian group discussed this with colleagues from a range of media, from the public service broadcaster *NDR* to *SPIEGEL ONLINE*, *DIE ZEIT* and innovative businesses like *Facebook* and *pocketstory*. The participants also spoke to politicians: State Councilor Dr. Carsten Brosda from *Amt Medien/Hamburg City Hall* shared his knowledge on media regulations in Germany.



Our participants from St. Petersburg



With Thorsten Hoege, founder of the start-up *pocketstory*

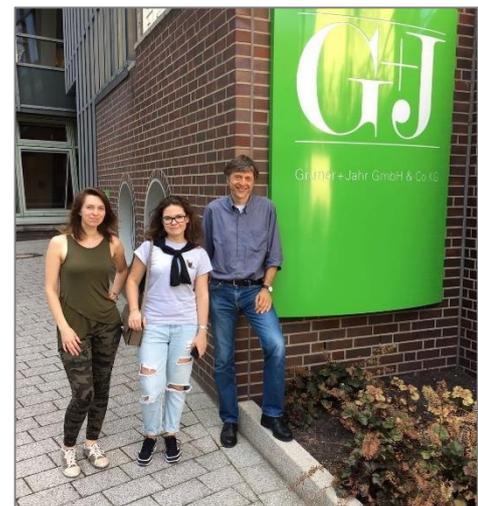


Visiting the public broadcaster *NDR*



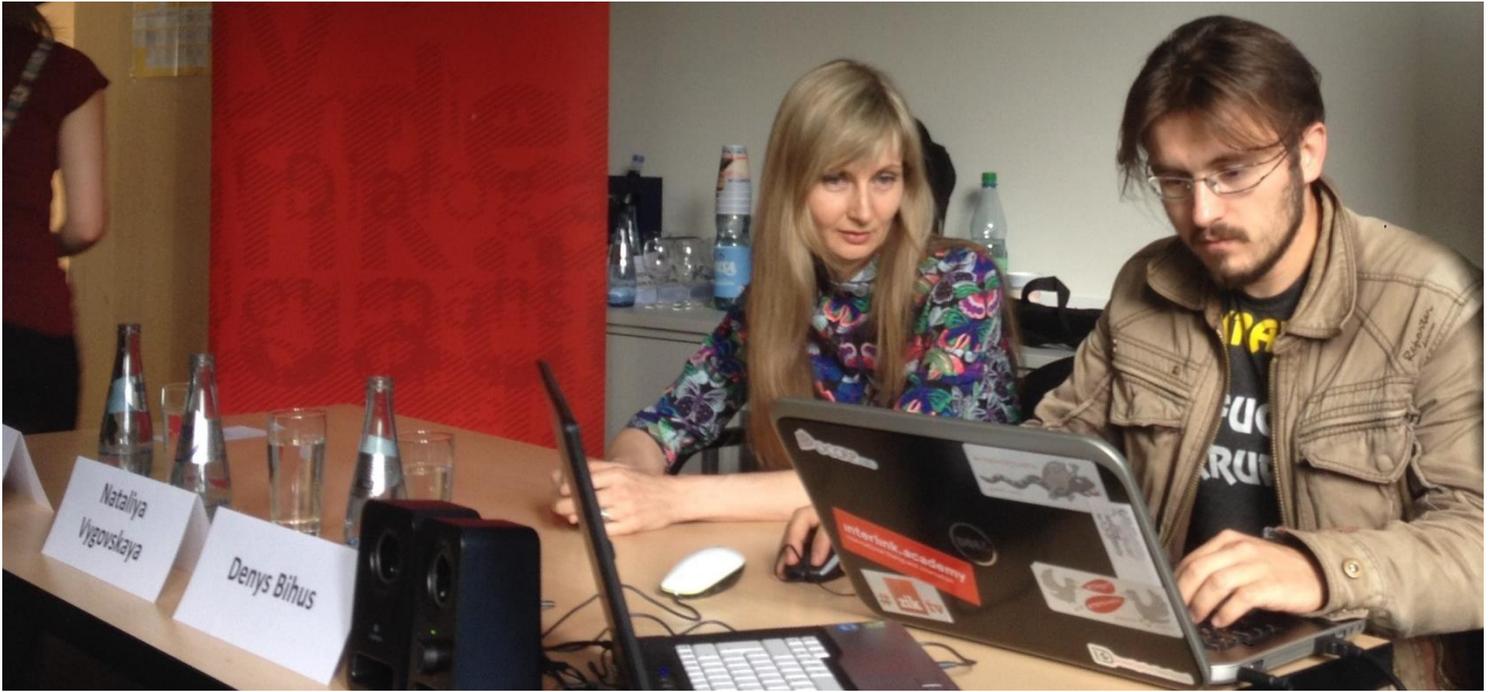
Visiting *SPIEGEL ONLINE*

**Tamara:** "In addition to our program, the Interlink Academy team organized private meetings with three science journalists for me and my colleague Tatiana Kondratenko. We met Klaus Bachmann from *GEO Magazine* and Christiane Löll, who works as a freelance journalist for *GEO health* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Holger Dambeck, from *SPIEGEL ONLINE*, the most open and "Russified" of them, told us how science and health news appear on their website. He even began to speak in Russian before reverting to English."



Tamara (I.) at Gruner + Jahr with journalist Klaus Bachmann

Tamara Besedina, 23, science journalist with a degree in Chemical Science, currently working for the ITMO University in St. Petersburg



Interlink's Ukrainian speakers Denys Bihus and Nataliya Vygovskaya at the Netzwerk Recherche conference 2016

## Investigative Research Under Pressure

They all convened on the premises of the public service broadcaster NDR in Hamburg-Lokstedt. Gathered where usually the staff organizes and produces their television program, nearly a thousand visitors met on that day to take part in Netzwerk Recherche's annual conference. There were only a few seats left, when our two speakers, TV journalist Denys Bihus and free media expert Nataliya Vygovskaya, asked the organizers to shut the door, so that they could start their presentation on investigative journalism and media freedom in Ukraine.

Denys, one of the top investigative journalists in Ukraine, talked about one of his famous investigations into Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko, his close friends, and his connection to the black business with black coal. In Kiev, Denys produces and presents the TV magazine *Nashi Groshi* (Our Money) and is famous for his powerful stories on corruption within the Ukrainian administration. His broadcasts led to the resignation of several leading politicians and public servants in Kiev. The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists honored Denys' participation in the YanukovichLeaks project with a Certificate of Excellence in 2015.

After Denys' presentation, the free media activist and lecturer Nataliya Vygovskaya talked about the state of media freedom in the Zaporizhzhya region in southeast Ukraine. As founder and head of the Union of Young and Independent Journalists in Zaporizhzhya and regional representative of the independent Ukrainian press freedom organisation Institute for Mass Information, she has a good overview of the political and media situation and their working conditions in the region. In addition, Nataliya participated in various OSCE studies on media freedom in Ukraine. Before embarking on her academic career, she served as editor-in-chief at a weekly newspaper in Zaporizhzhya.

After an intensely attentive hour and much applause, the audience asked its questions: how do other Ukrainian colleagues deal with investigative research on corruption in politics and businesses? What are the opportunities and threats? One visitor talked about his upcoming research trip to Ukraine and asked for advice. Denys would later meet with him in Kiev.

Netzwerk Recherche is an association of journalists committed to freedom of information, investigative journalism, and the spread of research techniques. The panel discussion was presented by Interlink Academy, moderated by the Academy's Managing Director Werner Eggert, and supported by the German section of Reporters without Borders.

Volker Lilienthal Retweeted

Interlink Academy @InterlinkAca · Jul 9

Great conference! #nr16 #Interlink Thank you #reporterohnegrenzen #netzwerkrecherche

## Interlink presents Dan Gillmor's Book 'Mediactive' in Ukrainian

American author Dan Gillmor wants nothing less than for everyone around the globe to become active media users. Initiated by Interlink and partly sponsored by the German Foreign Office, a translation (by Alesia Golovko) of his solidly researched guide "Mediactive" will be available in Ukrainian in January. While Dan was writing the foreword for the Ukrainian edition, Donald Trump had just become president-elect of the United States. According to Dan, Trump's success was possible, in part, "because Trump consistently told lies that millions of his followers wanted to believe – even when all the evidence showed that they were mistaken." The author continues: "What was happening in America is also happening in many other places. Information wars are now a part of our political systems." In this light, Dan is "thrilled" to see his book translated locally in places like Ukraine. "Our future is largely up to us as users, not mere consumers. We must take control of what we know and encourage everyone who provides us with information, especially journalists, to do so with integrity."



Internet Guru Dan Gillmor



Ukrainian edition

## Our New Office in Hamburg

In Spring, we took up residence in our new Interlink office in Ottensen, one of Hamburg's trendiest neighborhoods. You'll find us just a few steps away from the Hamburg-Altona train station and next to a lovely park. Look out for the Interlink nameplate next to the door of the traditional red-bricked building in Goetheallee 6. Take the stairs or the lift up to the first floor. If you miss our door, no problem, you'll end up having a chat with our office neighbors, who all work in the media sphere.

On a given day, getting lunch in Ottensen is quite an experience. The vibrant district has always been home to people from all over the world. Because of its proximity to the port, sailors and traders populated the area in days of yore. You'll find delicious food at every turn – Asian, Portuguese, Swedish or Turkish specialties and German food as well, of course. So the choice isn't easy. Whichever street you go down, there always seems to be a feeling of creativity in the air that inspires all passers-by. Thus it is no surprise that you will find a network of innovative media start-ups and advertising agencies in the neighborhood. As the epitome of diversity, we'd be hard-pressed to find a better fit for Interlink's mission and work than Ottensen.

But see for yourself – on your next trip to Hamburg!



Just opened: Administration and Program Officer Lillian Siewert peeks out from our new office in Ottensen



Get-together in Hamburg: Interlink staffer Lillian Siewert (l.) and Alesia Golovko, translator and organizer from Ukraine



Trainer Friederike Grothe (l.) heads a seminar discussion in our conference room

## Interactive Webinars with International Experts

Renowned Costa Rican investigative journalist Giannina Segnini shared her experiences on data journalism with our Fellows from Eastern Europe. During an exclusive live video conference in May, she talked about the importance of verifying and analyzing data. Giannina was part of the team that exposed the Offshore Leaks scandal. In addition to her talk, the Dutch investigative reporter, journalism trainer, and technology expert Henk van Ess gave our Fellows an online “crash course” in social media research. Creative thinking and new search tools such as Facebook Graph Search help journalists identify sources and scoop hot topics in social media, he explained during the webinar.

*Interlink: Why is it important for you to work with young professional journalists from Eastern Europe?*

Henk: Journalism in Eastern Europe can help people get not what they would *like* to know, but what they *need* to know. It helps the audience understand what is happening and why. To the students I say: thank you. We need you badly in a world full of spin doctors and infotainment. Be an activist for the truth. Empower the public to make the best possible decisions.

*Interlink: In this context, what are the benefits of e-learning and webinars?*

Henk: It allows professional journalists to “snack” on knowledge during short sessions of an hour or more, empowering them to learn the latest content without having to travel to a classroom.



Professor and journalist Giannina Segnini teaches data journalism at Columbia University in New York City



Dutch Trainer and technology expert Henk van Ess teaches research in social media

## Investigative Research: Refugees

From April to July, Interlink contributed its e-learning expertise to a course in investigative journalistic research at the University of Tübingen, one of the top one hundred universities worldwide. After an introduction to investigative techniques, the Master students researched the situation of refugees in the university town in the southwest of Germany for several weeks.

They posted the results of each of their research steps online and were then immediately given in-depth feedback by the lecturers. All results and feedbacks were visible and therefore the students could all learn from each other’s work. In addition, a webinar on German information laws was organized. In one of the face-to-face sessions, the mayor of Tübingen, Boris Palmer (Green Party), granted the students a group interview.

Palmer is at odds with his party when it comes to the influx of refugees. He argues from the point of view of a local politician and sees limits to the municipality’s capability to host and integrate large numbers of refugees.



Tübingen’s Mayor Boris Palmer talks to the students

## How to Become a Trainer

What does it take to successfully pass on one's gained knowledge? How does one design a lesson that will capture the audience? And how does one acquire teaching jobs? In its new "Train the Trainer" course, Interlink offers top-notch journalism trainings and professional lectures by experienced coaches from Germany and abroad.

The "Train the Trainer" course, which is taught in German, consists of two face-to-face trainings in Hamburg and a complementary e-learning phase in-between.

As a participant, you will learn all about interactive and participatory approaches and use your newly acquired skills to develop your own training modules. In addition to the course, Interlink also assists newsrooms with developing, designing, and implementing in-house training programs.

For more information about the courses and application procedures please visit our website.

<http://interlink.academy/our-programs/train-the-trainer/>



Professional assistance guaranteed: Interlink's Trainer and Media Coach Claus Hessel (top right)

Contents of the practical training:

- What is my role as a Trainer?
- How do I formulate learning goals?
- How do I design a lesson in my field of expertise?
- How do I use different forms of media correctly?
- What creates a comfortable learning environment?
- How do I deal with difficult situations?

## E-Learning for Journalists in Myanmar

The Myanmar Journalism School (MJI) in Yangon was founded in 2014 and is the first of its kind in the Southeast Asian country. One of its key features is that e-learning methods are used in all its major courses. Interlink's Managing Director Werner Eggert has provided consultation to the institution in this field ever since its establishment in 2014 and continued his work in 2016. One highlight was a "Train the Trainer" course in August, in which MJI's Training Director, four full-time trainers, and two part-time trainers participated. The course instructed local trainers in e-learning didactics and principles of teaching.



Training Director Sein Win and Werner Eggert



Trainer Zaw Htike (center) and his colleagues

Claus Hesseling,  
data journalist,  
Trainer, and  
now Interlink's  
EU-Project  
Manager



## New EU Project: Interlink Helps Build a Creativity Tool for Journalists

In its seminars and workshops, Interlink frequently highlights how journalists and media organizations can benefit from “big data,” by digging up stories buried in datasets and long spreadsheets. Big data and machine learning techniques may even help foster journalists’ creativity. Interlink is teaming up with a consortium of 14 members, including the City University of London, Sciences Po in Paris, and WAN/IFRA, to bring this idea to life. The project is called INJECT and is part of the EU Commission’s Horizon 2020 program to support the development of new technologies in Europe. INJECT will use big data to create a software that helps journalists with writing their stories by supporting them with additional facts and new ideas. Within the consortium, Interlink will focus on developing trainings and support for journalists and media organizations who might benefit from the technology.



Interlink’s participants will be the first to benefit from the results. Claus Hesseling, a data journalist who has worked as a trainer for many years, will be the project manager on Interlink’s behalf. “INJECT is a fantastic project and I am thrilled to be part of it,” says Claus. “It’s all about the transfer of technology into quality journalism.” Horizon 2020 is a program to drive innovation and economic growth within the European Union.

## Digital Security in Southern Africa

The free and independent media of Zambia and Zimbabwe are struggling and their journalists are under pressure. In Zambia, the government used tax charges against *THE POST* to shut down this most influential and independent daily newspaper. The publisher was even taken into custody and several of its reporters were beaten in broad daylight. In Zimbabwe, most media are under government control and the Mugabe regime frequently intimidates the few remaining independent news outlets. In both countries, new digital tools are being used to spy on journalists. That is why there is a tremendous need for journalists to protect their digital communication. Interlink Academy will respond to this by conducting a series of workshops on “Digital Security for Journalists” in the region. The course will cover topics like risk assessment and digital security for electronic devices, accounts and communication.



## Publishing Credits

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