



**Carsten Brosda**, Minister of Culture in the City State of Hamburg, receives twelve data journalists from Eastern Europe for an in-depth discussion on the changing media landscape.

← Interlink Academy's first course in Nepal on mobile journalism for community journalists was successfully concluded in November.

## Message from the Director



Werner Eggert

2018 has been an exciting year for all of us here at the Interlink Academy and 2019 is bound to be even more spectacular. In our annual newsletter, we report in-depth on our various activities, and we have asked participants and local partners to join us and share their impressions. The upcoming year will be very special for us for three different reasons. Firstly, we are going to organize courses on three different continents simultaneously: our trainers are going to travel to Georgia, Ghana, Malaysia, Nepal, Ukraine, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The focus is on investigative and data journalism, but they are also going to cover media literacy and video journalism. Secondly, we are co-organizers of the 11<sup>th</sup> Global Investigative Journalism Conference (GIJC 2019) in September. I am very proud that the GIJC 2019 is taking place in Hamburg. We expect more than 1,200 participants and many of our alumni have already indicated that they are going to register for the conference. I am looking forward to many joyful reunions. Thirdly, the Interlink Academy will celebrate its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019. We have doubled our activities almost every year and have become a sustainable and high quality international journalism school. A very heartfelt thank you to all our partners, sponsors, and team members: it is your support and enthusiasm that has made the Interlink Academy what it is today.

I wish you all a happy festive season and a great new year 2019!

Werner Eggert (Director)

### Content

- 2 German Science Journalism for Russian Reporters
- 4 Mobile Reporting in Nepal
- 6 Mobile Reporting in Zimbabwe
- 8 Master Class in Data Journalism
- 10 Data and Technology: the INJECT Project
- 12 Data Journalist Giannina Segnini in Myanmar
- 12 Defenders' Days in Stockholm
- 13 Summer Schools in Ukraine
- 16 Digital Journalism for the Caucasus
- 18 Train the Trainer Course in Sumy
- 20 News from our Alumni
- 22 Interlink Co-Organizes GIJC 2019





After all the phases of the training, the participants received their certificates at the Hamburg Media School.

## German Science Journalism for Russian Reporters

The importance of science and technology today is probably greater than ever before. At the same time, scientific disciplines have become more differentiated and research objects are becoming increasingly complex. Science journalists face the challenge of keeping pace with this rapid progress. This program helped Russian science reporters with techniques and insights to reflect on and improve their professional skills.

The course kicked off at the end of September. The participants from Saint Petersburg, Moscow, and Krasnodar came together and got a first glance at what was waiting ahead for them. Interlink's executive director **Werner Eggert** and principal trainer **Ada von der Decken** prepared the twelve participants for the e-learning phase.

During the two months of e-learning, the participants familiarized themselves with the German media system. The dual broadcasting system, the German press landscape, and the current crisis of trust in the German media were among the topics that were covered.

It felt like meeting old friends when the participants reunited in Hamburg. The six-day attendance phase was packed with media trainings and enlightening excursions to science editorial offices, such as [GEO](#), [SPIEGEL ONLINE](#), or [NDR](#).

A highlight in Hamburg was the visit at [DESY](#): a tour at the research centre that operates particle accelerators deeply impressed the science reporters. Everybody was grateful for getting to know more about DESY's cooperation with well-known Russian institutions.

"This course showed me that I am on the right track with my work in Krasnodar. I feel encouraged and inspired to carry on with it and to try new forms of science journalism."

— Lada Rodchanina, participant from Krasnodar

The trainings were held at the [Hamburg Media School](#): **Steffen Grimberg** (former ARD spokesperson) gave some insights into the world of public broadcasting and journalistic standards in Germany. Interlink trainer **Silvia Stöber** focused on fact-checking in science journalism.

One day of the training was spent covering sensor journalism. Freelance science journalist **Jakob Vicari**, award-winner and pioneer in the innovative field of sensor journalism, shared his knowledge and helped develop the participants' own sensor projects. ■







**Thomas Zoufal**, [DESY](#) Press Officer, introduces the group to the fascinating field of particle accelerators.



**Dirk Burmester** from the [Ministry of Culture and Media](#) explains Hamburg's dedication to media companies.



**Klaus Bachmann** at [GEO](#) shares his experience of how to turn science into a story.



DIY at Interlink: the participants build their own fine particle sensors.



The classroom sessions in Hamburg took place at the [Hamburg Media School](#).



Welcome Dinner: breaking the ice over a meal in a Turkish restaurant. ■





Kai Rüsberg with Nasana Bajracharya, Sujata Karki, Nabin Silwal, Lil Prakash Chand, Deepak Pariyar, Arun Budhathoki, Shiksha Risal, Deep Jvoti Shrestha, Yashoda Raibhandari, Liladhar Koirala, Barsha Shah, Krishna Adhikari, and partners.

## Mobile Reporting for Community Journalists in Nepal

Nepal – known to many as the “Roof of the World” thanks to its majestic peaks, clear mountain air, and breath-taking landscapes. The mountains might not be as high around the capital city in Kathmandu Valley and the air not as clear, but the high spirits and clear minds of the twelve participants of “Mobile Reporting for Community Journalists in Nepal” more than made up for it. The blended learning course started in August with eight days of face-to-face teaching, followed by six weeks of e-learning, and a final week-long attendance phase early in November. The participants began each day with unbroken enthusiasm and always concluded classes with a round of applause.

The first two days were dedicated to image composition and portraiture in smartphone photography. Over the following six days, the group learned two video production techniques. First, they covered a classic approach to shooting and cutting according to the five-shot principle, which simplifies the production process, followed by the fundamentally different one-shot principle, which facilitates the quick creation of short news reports without the need for post-production. Throughout their training, they delighted the trainers with their creative approaches and wealth of ideas.

During the e-learning phase, the participants solidified their skills and deepened their knowledge by training in their home environments while still receiving support from the instructors. This blended learning approach guarantees the transfer of newly learned material into the daily work process. At the beginning of November, everyone came together in Kathmandu once more to polish the final projects and conclude the course.

The course was taught by German trainers in cooperation with local trainers from our partner [CMR-Nepal](#). In early 2019, the local trainers are going to independently teach another iteration of “Mobile Reporting for Community Journalists in Nepal”. ➤



Participants working on a practical exercise during the attendance phase



Interlink’s trainer **Kai Rüsberg** listening to participants

**BMZ**  Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development

**ENGAGEMENT  
GLOBAL**  
Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen







One participant is producing a video with other students.



Trainer **Kai Rüsberg** explains the art of shooting footage.



Trainer and students discuss photo compositions.



Trainer **Joachim Vögele** gives participants feedback.



The participants had the task to interview each other.



Trainer **Joachim** supports the participants.



Interlink trainers **Kai** (left) and **Joachim** introduce a new topic.

Deep Jyoti Shrestha via Twitter →

**Deep Jyoti Shrestha**  
@MeDeepJyoti

Follow

I usually don't participate in many trainings and workshops coz I think its waste of time but if it sounds useful and interesting, it won't be the waste of time even a second and I must say it was really one of the best skill based workshop I have ever got chance to participate.



**Media (CMR Nepal)** @CMRNepol

First batch of 3-month mobile journalism training concluded; thank you participants, trainers & @InterlinkAca. Second batch will receive training in January - March, 2019.

2:47 PM - 3 Nov 2018





After going through all the phases of the training, the participants received their certificates for the mobile journalism course.

## Mobile Reporting for Community Journalists in Zimbabwe



Trainer **Clayton Moyo** reports on the course “Mobile Reporting for Community Journalists in Zimbabwe”. He is a broadcast media trainer based in **Bulawayo**, Zimbabwe. Clayton Moyo teaches journalism at the **National University of Science and Technology**, the country’s second largest university.

← Trainer **Clayton Moyo** welcomes participants to the final attendance phase.

### Mobile Reporting for Community Journalists in Zimbabwe 2018

Are you interested in learning skills to report your mobile phone? Do you want to take and share photos and videos on your mobile phone?

The course will be in three phases:

- PHASE 1: ONE WEEK INTENSIVE TRAINING
- PHASE 2: SIX WEEKS OF E-LEARNING
- PHASE 3: 4 DAYS OF INTENSIVE TRAINING

The first phase starts January 15, 2018.

interlink.academy  
www.interlink.academy

CITE

The Center for Innovation and Technology in partnership with Interlink Academy (CITE) is offering a 3 months training in mobile reporting.

**If Interested**

Contact: Mr. Chikobani Moyo  
Phone: 091 400 2011  
Email: chikobani@interlink.academy  
091 400 2011

This course is open to anyone who lives in Bulawayo and surrounding areas, but mostly journalists, citizen journalists and anyone who has passion for citizen journalism and is willing to complete the 3 phases.

Transport costs and lunch will be covered

“After participating in last year’s training as a local co-facilitator, I am now leading this workshop as a trainer. I have been teaching journalism at university, but a blended learning course is really a different experience.

Over a six-week period I engage with the participants on a day-to-day basis, moderating the work they do. I provide support when they are enquiring about assignments and encourage them to meet the deadlines. For them, the challenge is to blend learning practice with their daily routines and fit it into their usual workflow. The e-learning phase is bracketed by several days of face-to-face teaching in the beginning and at the end of the course. This has proven to be a very effective blend of instructor-facilitated training and independent learning, as participants get to practice outside of class in their familiar environment and receive individual feedback.

The participants have diverse backgrounds: people who have been involved in professional media work and wish to enhance and diversify their skills, others who have been producing content in their communities for the projects they are involved in, and beginners.

It has also been a learning experience for me. Our mentors at **Interlink Academy** emphasize the importance of timely responses to participants, keeping me on my toes and awake through several nights.

I was a bit skeptical at first, knowing the challenges of access to the internet here in Zimbabwe, but the participants’ commitment has really sustained the momentum and their enthusiasm is clearly noticeable.

When the participants tell me how their photography and video skills have improved, it gives me hope that the acquired skills will make a difference. Especially video production is not without challenges: it takes time and practice for concepts to be grasped. It is only when one is up for the challenge that they begin to see improvement in what they do. As a trainer, your patience is what drives everyone towards better results. It is important to find the appropriate approach when evaluating individual work results in order to motivate the participants. It is one of the many things that I’m taking from this training into my regular work and it has become my general approach and outlook.” ■





Trainer **Clayton Moyo** takes the participants through the basics of setting up a mobile recording.



Participants working in pairs share ideas on editing their mobile videos.



Participants share a hearty laugh after a long day of brainstorming and video shooting exercises.



Participant **Sibongumusa Dube** editing the five shot video exercise.

**Nqobile Bhebhe** is a freelance online journalist with [Farmers Review Africa](#). The course was his first online learning experience. "Learning away from the trainers helps me to be self-reliant and to work at my own pace. It gives me confidence in my own skills." In the beginning, fitting the assignments into his daily routine was a challenge. "But my family supports me one hundred percent and employers appreciate that you're not away from work for the training." He likes being taught by local trainers: "They are young and up-to-date with the current developments in online media and they know the local conditions very well. With their training, I can bring my self-taught skills to a professional level." ■



Participants work on their video projects as trainer **Clayton Moyo** (standing) assists them.





## First Master Class in Data Journalism in Hamburg

“That was intense!” The participants of the Master Class in Data Journalism in Hamburg were exhausted but still smiling. Five days of working with spreadsheets, scraping data from websites, analyzing and visualizing data, and – most significantly – getting to know and work with data journalists from all over Central and Eastern Europe. The best part: after the attendance phase in Hamburg in April, the course continued with an e-learning and project phase where the participants worked on cross-border projects from their home countries.

“The Interlink Academy often focusses on training journalistic skills on a beginner or mid-level”, says **Werner Eggert**, Interlink’s managing director, “but we saw that there was a lack of advanced trainings for data journalists in Europe, so we decided to try this new format.” It worked: [Interlink](#) received a ton of fantastic applications and selected a group of eight women and five men, young journalists who already had some experience with data. Six participants from Eastern European countries were invited to come to Hamburg, as well as seven journalists from Germany.

To not only learn together but learn from each other – that was the main focus of the workshop sponsored by the [City of Hamburg’s Media office](#), [Augstein Foundation](#) and [Zeit Foundation](#). Interlink’s trainer **Claus Hesselning** – a data journalist working for German public broadcasting – was amazed by the speed of learning: “We definitely had a steep learning curve



here, but all the participants worked really hard and we managed to get a lot of things done in such a short time. I am very impressed by the whole group.”

During the attendance phase, which took place at [Hamburg Media School’s \(HMS\)](#) Finkenau campus, the group learned about Excel tools and other tricks for data journalists. The participants used the programming language **Python** to scrape websites like the Ukrainian Parliament’s and learned how to use Python libraries like Pandas to structure and analyze the data. On top of that, they figured out how to tackle large geo datasets with the software **QGIS**.

As part of the program, the group visited the data journalists at [Spiegel Online](#). **Christina Elmer** and **Patrick Stotz** welcomed the participants at the new state-of-the-art editorial building at Ericusspitze. They gave a fascinating presentation on their recently published interactive data story on commuting and answered the group’s many questions. They provided an inside look into their work and explained that they have to balance work on bigger ➤





► and smaller projects. “Our job as a data team is not only to build data stories for the website or our print publication”, said Christina Elmer, one of the most renowned data journalists in Germany. “A lot of times we support the ‘normal’ colleagues who increasingly come across datasets in their investigative work.”

The [Office for Media of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg](#) had invited the participants of the Data Journalism Master Class to City Hall for an hour-long discussion with Senator of Culture **Carsten Brosda**. In addition to the changing media landscape in Europe, the discussion also focussed on the topic of “open data”. The participants were particularly interested in how the Hamburg Transparency Act and the Transparency Data Portal came about and what experiences politicians and administration had made with it. Brosda explained that those measures increased the trust of citizens towards the public administration.



After the farewell dinner had been celebrated and the participants had returned home, the second phase of the project started. During the e-learning phase, the participants did weekly quizzes and assignments to consolidate their knowledge of the tools and topics covered during the attendance phase.

Additionally, they also worked on two data-driven research projects: one about the international trade of new and second-hand clothing, and the other about the international fruits trade. The participants had to find databases to search for their data, and then analyze and visualize the data.

Some of the participants immediately used their freshly-gained knowledge to work on their own projects. **Anton Dzeviatau** from Belarus scraped and analyzed the lyrics from previous Eurovision Song Contests to create a visualization for his company’s website. **Daniel Marcus** from [Dekoder.org](#) scraped all articles covering general and background information from Dekoder’s website and analyzed them with Python, creating a visualization of the logical links between them not unlike a universe in which the texts create star clusters according to their relation. Users can now explore the links between those clusters via the interactive application on the website.



Interlink’s data journalism trainer **Claus Hesseling** is impressed: “You always hope that the things we try out during the workshop are useful and of practical value for the participants, but I’ve never seen participants using their newly learned skills for their own publications so quickly and in such an impressive way. Whoever has experience working with code knows that it is sometimes frustrating because simply a comma in a slightly wrong place can already stop your code from working. But here you have journalists who create great data-driven stories with Excel, Python, or QGIS in a short period of time.” ■





## Interlink Helps Build AI-Powered Journalism Tool

After 18 months of development, the creative journalism tool **INJECT** hits the market.

**Neil Maiden** is normally a reserved guy, but that day he was beaming. After two long days in Brussels, the Professor for Digital Creativity at City University London and project leader of the INJECT project was genuinely happy. "That was fantastic. In my 20+ years in EU-funded projects, I never had such a positive project review", he said. As the INJECT team was gathering outside of one of the grey concrete EU administration buildings in Brussels, the sun came out – as if to emphasize how successful the team had been that day.

Reviews by EU administrators are usually a tough process. Every couple of months, all EU-funded projects



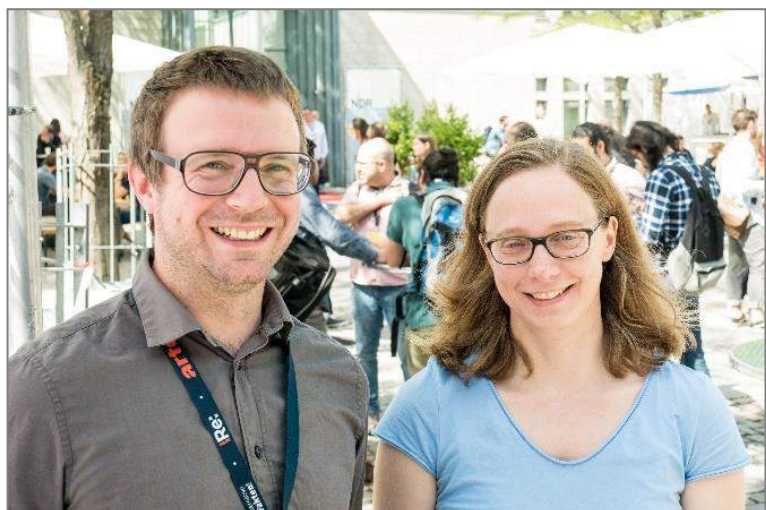
Neil Maiden was present via Skype



have to be thoroughly assessed and the atmosphere is always tense. But the three reviewers (the EU project officer, a Spanish journalism scholar, and a Belgian entrepreneur) were happy with what they found in **INJECT**: a project that was running smoothly and even ahead of schedule. **Interlink Academy** was part of the international consortium right from the start.

**INJECT** provides tools, resources, and techniques for journalists to support their creative process in their daily work. Journalists are creative people, but they and their publishers feel the economic pressure like never before. At the same time, they feel that high quality journalism is critical right now in preserving democracy, transparency, and good governance. **INJECT's** aim is to transfer new digital technologies to newsrooms and journalists to increase their competitiveness. ►

Claus Hesseling and Silvia Stöber at their Netzwerk Recherche annual conference workshop "Pop the Filter Bubble"







► **INJECT's** goal is to super-power journalism. The **INJECT** tools can help journalists to research and write faster and better. The creativity tools help find new angles for stories. The context and connection tools help journalists and readers explore the deeper background of stories.

Rewind to January 2017 in London: at the first meeting of the consortium, journalists from Norway and the Netherlands, journalism scholars from the UK and France, software developers from Greece, and members of journalism organizations from France and Germany first discussed how to build a digital tool to support creative ideas in journalism. Since then, the **INJECT** tool was developed and re-iterated fast. The development team around **Kos Zachos** and **Dimitris Apostolou** in Athens, Greece, uses modern text-mining concepts and other algorithms to build a “creativity DNA” into the product. “What **INJECT** is doing is adapting digital search to mimic how experienced journalists work creatively, to discover new angles on stories”, project leader **Neil Maiden** says.

Now, almost two years later, **INJECT** is a fully working product that actually does what its creators intended for it to do. During a demonstration with reporters and editors at **Westdeutscher Rundfunk's (WDR)** daily news program “**Aktuelle Stunde**” in July of this year, the participants of the workshop were impressed. “We as journalists know that we live in a filter bubble. We read the same newspapers, listen to the same radio stations, and generally speaking come from a similar background in terms of education etc.”, one participant said. “Plus, during a busy news day, you rarely have the time to think of new ideas and angles for a topic – especially in a crowded and noisy newsroom.”

**INJECT** helps them to get new perspectives and insights that might spark new ideas for stories or story angles. “It was good! We do have a lot of traffic jams in our part of Germany – so this is a topic our viewers are interested in”, one reporter said, “but it is hard to come up with new angles for this story. But I just typed the word into **INJECT** and instantly got four to five new ideas on how we could tackle this issue.”

**Claus Hesseling**, who works in the **INJECT** consortium on behalf of Interlink says: “The tool was also tested in three regional newspapers in Norway and there, too, was seen as something that could improve the quality of journalism. Sometimes you find new stories, sometimes you find great protagonists that live just around the corner from you.” He points out that **INJECT** is still in its development phase: “We still need the input of journalists who are using **INJECT** on a daily basis to tailor the tool to their needs even more.”

During this last year, **INJECT** team members were demonstrating **INJECT** all over Europe. In June, **Interlink** trainers **Silvia Stöber**, **Claus Hesseling**, and **Neil Maiden** presented the tool in Hamburg at the renowned “**Netzwerk Recherche Jahreskonferenz**” – the annual conference of investigative journalists in Germany. So many people were interested in the project that the doors had to be closed, otherwise the room would have been too full.

Even though the 1.1 million Euros funding from the European Commission ended in June, the development of **INJECT** will continue. For now, City University London has granted the project some extra funding. “They clearly see that we have a product of value here”, **Neil Maiden** says.



## Data Journalist Giannina Segnini in Myanmar



World-renowned data journalist Giannina Segnini taught Myanmarese journalists how to access information about the government and private companies in the Southeast Asian country.

**Giannina** is Professor for Data Journalism at Columbia University in New York City and has been a regular trainer at the Interlink Academy for many years. The workshop she taught at the [Myanmar Journalism Institute](#) was her first in Myanmar. The participants came from major private media outlets in Yangon.

Press freedom in Myanmar has increasingly come under pressure. Critical journalists are arrested and sent to prison for deeds which other countries would regard as being of minor significance. The case of two Reuters reporters who were sent to jail for seven years caused global protests in August. ■

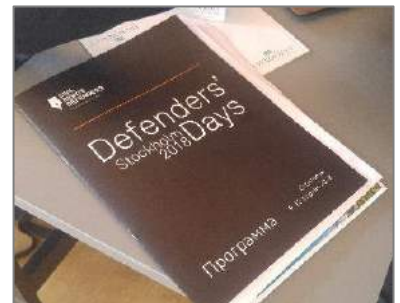
## Defenders' Days in Stockholm

**Information is power – and so is misinformation.**

It is getting ever more important for journalist to detect false information and debunk fake news and the same is true for human rights activists.

Interlink Academy's trainer **Claus Hesselning** headed to Stockholm in April to conduct two one-day workshops on fact-checking for the [Defenders' Days Conference](#). The conference was organized by the NGO [Civil Rights Defenders \(CRD\)](#). The organization supports local human rights defenders around the world by providing them with training and funding as well as security and emergency support for human rights defenders at risk.

To protect the participants, the conference took place at a remote conference center one hour east of the Stockholm city center. For the same reason, taking photos of participants was not permitted. The two workshops were in English and Russian, since many of the participants were from the former Soviet Union.



During the workshops, which were visited by 30 people each, **Claus** talked with the civil rights activists about fake news and misinformation in their home countries. It became clear that in almost all countries there were cases where false information was spread knowingly, in one way or another. False information can easily lead to violence and conflicts between or inside communities.

Since the workshop had a strong focus on practical application, the participants learned about ways and tools to debunk false information on the internet. These included techniques like reverse image search, metadata checks, finding out location data, and learning more about the accounts that spread fake information.

"This was very useful – things I can use on a daily basis", one participant from Serbia said after the workshop. "It is sad, but there is a lot of false information targeting us civil rights activists. More people should know how to find out if information they find on the internet is correct or misinformation." ■





Poltava



Chernivtsi



Zaporizhzhya



Sumy

## Summer Schools for Bloggers and Citizen Journalists in the Regions of Ukraine 2018

This year's Summer Schools in Ukraine brought together 96 young aspiring journalists. The independent bloggers and community journalists were taught how to produce better stories, videos, and infographics for the web. Other topics included digital security, research, and fact-checking. The four Summer Schools in Poltava, Chernivtsi, Zaporizhzhya, and Sumy were centered around practical work and networking activities. On the following pages, members of the organizational team and participants from this and last year share their experiences and impressions.



**Oleksandr Mohulko**,  
assisting in  
organizing the  
summer schools

**Mariia Duka and  
Anastasiia Lyshnikova**,  
participants of the  
Zaporizhzhya Summer  
School 2018



### Open Horizons for Young People

"Today, looking back at the time I spent with Interlink Academy, I can admit that I am a very lucky person because I have had an opportunity to live twice the experience that everybody else can have only once. How did I do it? Here is the answer:

Last year I learned about the call for applications for the Summer School for Bloggers. This school helped me master journalism skills and become media-savvy enough to survive in today's oversaturated information world. We were taught crucial skills, like photography and video making, writing etc. The school dramatically changed me and my world view.

This year I was offered to join the school to help with the organizational aspects. Needless to say that after last year's experience I jumped at the opportunity. I can confirm that Interlink Academy improved the schools in all aspects and made it an even more enriching and memorable event. Accommodation and meals were improved, lectures became more interactive and the lessons were followed by a variety of activities.

I appreciate the efforts of the Interlink Academy and Germany and ask that you continue this project as you open the horizons for so many young people and become the springboard for our progress."

### A Real Blogging "Adventure"

"Have you ever been interested in being an active citizen, taking part in events, being perceptive and responsible, and helping society? We have! Joining Interlink Academy's Summer School for Young Bloggers and Citizen Journalists for ten days was the best decision of our summer.

Every morning began with an exciting game that energized us for the whole day. We did productive work thanks to a positive attitude and passion. Every day got more and more exciting and mind-opening as we plunged into fact-checking, digital security, photo and video editing, interviewing, writing requests to public institutions etc. The support, skills, and knowledge of our experienced trainers helped us achieve proficiency in all these different subjects in just the blink of an eye. It would not have been possible without them.

We spent our last days working on media projects, sleeping only little if at all, to meet the deadline. Now we realize that we went on a real blogging "adventure".

Not only did the school give us important and invaluable knowledge and skills but also new friends and fond memories. We are thankful to the German Foreign Office, Interlink Academy, and the local organizers for the opportunity to participate. You made our summer holidays enriching, remarkable, and extraordinary!"





**Karina Khachataryan and Valentyna Nemesh,** participants of the summer school in 2017

## Is it Possible to Repeat Something Unique?

“Last year, we participated in the Summer School for Bloggers and Citizen Journalists. A journalistic piece cannot suffice in describing the whole range of emotions that we felt, all the impressions that have stayed with us.

The summer school was a real growing experience, not only in professional terms. It would seem that just ten days is a drop in the ocean, but this drop was enough for a treasure trove of new ideas, a sea of plans.

We have not only gained knowledge but friends and role-models in Ukrainian media, like our trainers. We are not yet full-blown citizen journalists – building professional competence takes time and effort. Nonetheless, we have become active and engaged citizens.

Traditionally, the school ends with the presentation of the group’s social journalism projects. Our project was on the protection of LGBT communities. We knew what our topic was going to be right away. There are a few people among our acquaintances with non-traditional orientations and journalistic research shows that one in three Ukrainians supports the prohibition of “homosexual propaganda”. Our idea was to show people how those who identify as LGBT feel in Sumy.

Honestly, we did not set out to play on emotions, we simply told two stories: of Lika, who identifies as lesbian, and of Andrew, who identifies as gay. (The name has been changed to protect his identity.) The story of Lika was portrayed through the lens of her enthusiasm. She plays music for people, who, like her mother, don’t even try to understand her. Filming with Andrew felt like being a secret agent, complete with a change of name and voice.

Thanks to the coaches for teaching us how to work with infographics. We were able to show that, in fact, 42 % of the Ukrainian population categorically do not support the LGBT movement. ➤

➤ Our project was awarded as the best one in the group. We regard this not simply as a recognition of our personal skill but as an impetus to continue our work and develop the project further.

It wasn’t all in vain, as more than 100,000 hits of our video on YouTube show:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=l40LEs6fV1s&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l40LEs6fV1s&t=1s)”



**Oleksandra Golovko,** national coordinator of the project

## Developing Networks Between People and Regions

“This was the third summer that I spent with Interlink Academy and the Summer Schools for Bloggers and Citizen Journalists. The project itself has been growing and developing as well as my role in it. I joined it accidentally as an interpreter in 2016, in 2017 I coordinated one school in Zaporizhzhya, and in 2018 I had already become national coordinator.

On the one hand, this project kept me quite busy, but on the other hand, it has filled my life with interesting events, meetings, and people. Now I am by far more aware that running the project is both challenging and mesmerizing, as you learn a lot and develop together with the participants. New people, especially from a younger generation, keep me and my mind fit and introduce me to a variety of opportunities.

I can honestly say that this summer allowed me to gain valuable experience as well as new knowledge and skills. Some of that new knowledge was unexpected, as I did not only get acquainted with the project implementation process, all the pitfalls and ways to avoid them, new people, and German culture, but also with different parts of Ukraine and their peculiarities. Such projects develop networks between people and regions and will consequently stimulate the development of civil society in Ukraine. Please, keep the ball rolling!”



## Participant Testimonials on Facebook

### Mariia Shelelio

"I doubted my career choice, which is why I applied for the Chernivtsi Summer School, where my doubts vanished without a trace. Every day I spent there was a step forward, all the people in my photos are going to the top and we all agreed to one rule – MUTUAL SUPPORT – which will help us achieve our dream."

### Viktoriia Honcharenko

"‘May everyone meet whom they want to meet’, said Dean of the Philology Department at Chernivtsi University.

Let’s alter this quote a bit: ‘May everyone find the topic they want to find.’

P.S. It’s not a challenge to find a topic, it’s an endless challenge to find a regional perspective on it."

### Olena Obukhovska

"We are on the train already and I can officially start feeling nostalgic.

The Summer School for Bloggers and Citizen Journalists outdid the expectations of every participant. I was going there without any enthusiasm, to run away from everyday routine, and to try my hand at something new. These nine days flew by so fast that it seems like we came to Zaporizhzhya only today."

### Olga Boyko

"The School is over, but the bright emotions and memories aren’t! These 9 days proved that I can do anything and do it well! We will definitely use this large toolkit of knowledge!"

### Irina Bohachuck

"Over? Really? Phhhh, I will definitely miss our school for Bloggers and Citizen Journalists in Poltava."

### Nestor Lipich

"‘The certificate looks cool, I won’t feel embarrassed to show it on Instagram’, I said at the Summer School for Bloggers and Citizen Journalists in Chernivtsi."



### Maria Horbunova

"How did it happen that I spontaneously filled out the application? Totally spontaneously. And just as spontaneously I found inner harmony with like-minded people. They can HEAR, LISTEN, understand, interpret, criticize, motivate, and inspire. Yeeees, and many more verbs like these.

I was going to a foreign city, to unknown people in a vague mood and without any expectations. And I came back from a city I want to come back to, not because of the Kichkas neighborhood, Khortytsia Island, or unfinished bridges. This place became the place where I got rebooted, a place of important findings and good friendships – the ones that change everything."

### Yuliia Bryk

"And now I will tell you in every detail how I spent the nine brightest days of this sunny summer:

School for Bloggers and Citizen Journalists, you will forever live in my heart. When I was about to go there, many friends asked me: "What will it give you?" Now I am ready to give you the answer! The school gave me new friends, new experiences, maaaaany positive emotions, and most importantly: useful knowledge."

### Sasha Konkol

"It is 4 days after the School for Bloggers and Journalists, but it feels like I am still there. These ten days were rich and productive: the information from the trainers was relevant, useful and rich in variety. Over a short period of time we managed to cover an immense amount of material that will definitely be of help to bloggers and journalists. The mix of theory and practice as well as the regular reflections made it so successful." ■







Trainer **Silvia Stöber** with **Anke Doletzki** from the German Embassy in Georgia and participants in Tbilisi, Georgia

## Digital Journalism for the Caucasus

### Serving the Video Hype and Countering Fake News

Together with its partners in the South Caucasus, the Interlink Academy organized a workshop on fact-checking and mobile video reporting in Tbilisi. The workshop took place at the Georgian Institute for Public Affairs. It consisted of two attendance phases and one e-learning phase.

“Fake News” are no new phenomenon in the South Caucasus, but during recent years the impact of misinformation has been increased because of its accelerated dissemination on the internet, especially via social media such as Facebook, which has become the most important online platform for political debates in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

It is important to sensitize journalists to scrutinize information before publication. Fact-checking tools can help examine information and debunk misinformation in many different formats, such as texts, pictures, or videos. Regardless, it is not enough to debunk and denounce misinformation: its impact can be reduced by countering it with higher quality journalism that is more trusted by the audience.

In addition to the widespread problem of credibility, South Caucasus states also face the problem of territorial and geopolitically loaded conflicts, which lead to withholding information and biased narratives that have been shaped for decades. Thus, the need for sensitization towards “alternative realities” joins the handling of “alternative facts”.



Trainer **Silvia Stöber** (m.) and participants in a great mood



## Our Partner in the Caucasus: Journalism Resource Center

The [Journalism Resource Center](#) (JRC) has been our partner in Georgia for many years. We have organized many workshops for journalists from all over the Southern Caucasus together. Read on for an introduction to the Tbilisi-based organization by **Nina Kheladze**, project manager at JRC.

“The **Journalism Resource Center** is a non-governmental organization that has been operating in the field since 2009. One of our main objectives is countering and fighting misinformation by providing objective pertinent information.

In the process of achieving this goal, JRC has launched several different projects:

TOK TV, the first Russian language regional TV station in Georgia: the TV channel is providing qualified content that is held to a high standard, ranging from educational to scientific and entertaining. The channel produces the weekly program “Agro News”, the talk show “European Time”, and the regional TV journal “Eyeglasses”.

The content is broadcasted in Russian and provides useful information about the EU market, the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA), and the association agreement between the EU and Georgia.

Additionally, JRC analyses the media environment in Georgia: we cover media polarization effects and educate about the nature and spread of misinformation and which methods to use against it.

JRC actively works with international organizations to create different formats dedicated to the fight against fake news and misinformation. At the moment, we are working on an edutainment TV show targeted at young people and students, but also a middle-aged audience, as the latest research shows that young people are the preferred target group for providers of fake news.

JRC is the head organization of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society National Platform in Georgia. Our team leader and the head of the organization is the independent media expert **Natia Kuprashvili**.

We appreciate the cooperation with Interlink Academy and are looking forward to expanding it in the future.” ■

Below: impressions from this year’s “Digital Journalism for the Caucasus” course in Tbilisi







Raisa Stoyan, Yuliana Shaletina-Dovhach, Tetyana Mostipan, Anton Protsenko, Viktoriya Pohrebna, Svitlana Koval, Oksana Khanas, Nadiia Trush, Yurii Finkler, Taras Borosovskiy, OIha Yurkova, Oleksandra Golovko, Yuliia Bondarenko, Erik Albrecht, Lyudmyla Dudchenko, Volodymyr Sadivnychi.

## Train the Trainer Course in Sumy

TTT is meant for journalists who want to become trainers and for university lecturers who want to improve their teaching. The participants learn through interactive teaching methods optimized for adult education in two attendance phases and one e-learning module. The goal is for everyone to create their own trainings for journalists and students as well as an e-learning concept based on their journalistic and academic experience. The most recent course took place at the Department of Journalism and Philology at Sumy State University in Ukraine.

“Interlink Academy’s ‘Train the Trainer’ program is built extremely well. It is taught in stages that allow for mastering increasingly advanced material. The e-learning platform is easy to use and effective. An important factor in the program’s success is that errors are not only discussed with the coach, but with all of the participants, so everyone can contribute and learn from it. At first, developing your own training program seems unrealistic, but thanks to this approach, it becomes quite feasible even for beginners. I was reminded how important teaching methods are and have already incorporated many ideas like brainstorming, brain maps, tangram, and other interactive techniques during classes with students.

Another collective problem-solving technique I would like to try to apply is World-Café. I could not even imagine that the process of visualization of educational material could be so multifaceted, adaptable, and fascinating. I had to ➤

➤ draw a lot, but I had fun. Trainer Erik Albrecht was everything a coach should be: experienced and great at explaining. His patience, perseverance, competence, empathy, and sense of humour undoubtedly deserve to be emulated. He is a great example to us as professionals and inspires us to not give up.”

**Raisa Stoyan**, Lecturer at the Department of Journalism and Philology at Sumy State University and participant at the Interlink Academy Autumn School. ■



Resonans, Sumy State University, October–November 2018, № 7–8 (390–391)



Federal Foreign Office



## Teamwork Is Key

A significant factor in the success of Interlink's training programs is their collaborative nature. The participants profit greatly from the intensive exchange among each other. Diverse backgrounds and experiences enrich the learning experience.



**Taras Borosovskyi** und **Yuliana Shaletina-Dovhach** discuss the evaluation of educational goals in the planning of trainings.



The group shares their thoughts and ideas in an encouraging and non-judgmental environment.



Participant **Oksana Khanas** plans her own training.



During group work participants learn from and are inspired by each other. Stronger together!



Participants discuss their training ideas with each other.



**Olena Tkachenko, Andrea Kamberg, Yuliia Bondarenko, and Erik Albrecht** ■



## News from Our Alumni Around the Globe

**Ilkin Hasanov**, multimedia journalist from Azerbaijan:

“Almost a year ago I got a job offer from the BBC’s Russian service in Baku. At that time, I was living and working as freelance journalists in Tbilisi, Georgia, and wasn’t planning to go back to Baku. The HR team persisted and that changed my mind, but I applied to BBC’s Azerbaijani service instead and got my dream job: multimedia producer at BBC News Azerbaijan. I mostly produce news articles, multimedia pieces, and digital videos for BBC’s local website. I make quite a lot of infographics as well, for which I use my data journalism knowledge that I learned at Interlink trainings in Hamburg and Tbilisi. My data journalism knowledge is essential in covering the election, corruption problems, the annual governmental budget, environmental issues, and some other pivotal topics.



My country and region are full of unreported topics and news subjects. As a trained journalist, I challenge my practice and improve my skills and learn new techniques every single day.”



**Tamara Karelidze**, 2014 alumna from Georgia:

“I’ve recently graduated from the London School of Economics and Political Science with an MSc in Global Europe: Culture and Conflict and am about to start work at Accenture, a prominent consultancy.

Before that, I worked as a journalist, project manager, and project director for different NGOs in Georgia. I was a teacher at three universities and I can say that the experience and knowledge Werner and his team gave me helped me a lot in preparing university modules in digital journalism for future journalists and in sharing my experience of German best practice with them. I stayed in touch and became a coordinator for Interlink Academy in Georgia. We put together two projects for journalists from the Caucasus and helped Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani colleagues connect and train with each other. My experience with Interlink Academy was an excellent chance to experience what it is like to work with a European organization.

My time spent training in Hamburg was a crucial moment in my life. It was my primary motivation to further my education and study English. The year I spent with the team during the course gave me the self-confidence to apply for a scholarship abroad.”

**Rehab Abd Almohsen**, science journalist and 2012 alumna from Egypt:

“I had the honor of winning the World Health Organization competition for the best media coverage of issues related to Anti-Microbial Resistance, organized earlier this year by the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. The winning article was published in the Science and Development Network under the title ‘Plans to defeat drug resistance in the Nile Valley are almost ready’. The story was published in Arabic, covering plans to stop the effect of antimicrobial resistance in two of the Nile river countries (Egypt and Sudan), the steps to finalize national action plans, and the lack of data to help researchers understand the size of the problem.



One of the quotes that surprised me comes from an expert working for the WHO, who mentioned that: “Drugs were sold without prescription in 15 out of the 22 member countries of the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.” The story also tackles the antibiotic use in the animal sector. According to the WHO, animals consume approximately 80% of the total annual consumption of antibiotics. Only half of the antibiotics in the animal sector are consumed appropriately.

The competition aims at raising awareness and encourages best practices to promote the theme of the campaign: seek advice from a doctor before taking antibiotics within the human and animal health sectors.”



## More News from Our Alumni



**Alinka Serenko**, journalist for a Chernihiv regional newspaper and 2016 alumna:

“During the Interlink course ‘Digital Journalism for Eastern Europe’, I visited large media houses like DIE ZEIT and SPIEGEL ONLINE and was highly inspired by the atmosphere there. After completing the blended learning course, I successfully applied for an internship with Deutsche Welle (DW), Germany’s public international broadcaster, which is available in 30 languages. In October 2018, I spent a month with their Ukrainian and few days with their Russian desk, where I once again plunged into the world of digital journalism: I studied the work of leading Ukrainian

and Russian journalists, created and published articles, news, and my first web-videos, learned how to prepare data for the website, Facebook, YouTube, and mobile apps, and improved my fact-checking and sound design skills. In addition, I also made valuable contacts. The multimedia skills I learned at Interlink helped me a lot, especially when it came to video and photo production.”

**Ronny Rojas**, [John S. Knight Journalism Fellow](#) at Stanford University and 2014 alumnus:

“I am currently exploring how we can create a collaborative network of investigative journalists to approach the immigration phenomenon in the United States in a more scientific and interdisciplinary way as well as to find the best ways to promote alliances between established media organizations, small newsrooms, and local reporters to expand the scope of stories around immigration. Immigration has become central to the U.S. political agenda, but the discussion it has generated has become distorted with strong ideological rhetoric that benefits politicians and powerful groups and institutions, allowing them to promote their own agendas and distract public attention from questionable laws and policies promoted in the shadows of this fierce debate.



Several news organizations undoubtedly have increased staff and resources to cover the issue, a logical conclusion as the administration of President Donald Trump has been using an ‘invasion of immigrants’ narrative as one of their primary ideological and political tactics to gain popular support. However, I strongly believe that we need to create a platform that connects investigative journalist networks – at a local level or across borders – to exclusively assess the issue of immigration in the country. This collaborative work is fundamental to examining the social and economic effects of immigration in neighborhoods and cities across the country as well as the publicly funded big businesses involved in the immigration system and the political interests that drive the national debate on this issue.

As Data Editor of Univision News in Miami, Florida, I worked on stories that no other news organizations were covering, e.g. a series of [investigations](#) on the [vulnerability](#) of immigrants before the Justice Department, and collaborated with the [International Consortium of Investigative Journalists](#) (ICIJ) and [Columbia University’s Journalism School](#).”



**Wu Ping**, 2014 alumna:

“After working in the digital media field in Shanghai for five years, I felt a bit stuck in my journalism career. Thanks to Werner’s encouragement and recommendation, I’m now studying for an MBA at Surrey University in the UK. The program focuses on digital innovation and entrepreneurship, which is very interesting to me. The program ends with either the development of a business plan or a consultancy project with a company.

I am impressed with the diversity of my classmates and the interactive teaching style. Our class is composed of 32 students and 14 nationalities from different professional backgrounds, including engineering, consultancy, finance, architecture, etc. Our professors are also from different countries and cultures and cover a wide variety of fields. Their delivery is engaging and they keep pushing us to think critically in and outside of class, which is very different from Chinese education. The typical misconception about people doing an MBA is that they do it solely for a bigger paycheck, but once you’re exposed to the best practices of sustainable operations and innovation, you will understand that it’s more about a deeper understanding of the world and becoming a better problem solver. For me, it’s about challenging myself: the skills and knowledge I gained here will help me become a better journalist, and a better leader.” ■





# 11TH GLOBAL INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM CONFERENCE

Hamburg, Germany, September 25 to 29, 2019

## Interlink Co-Organises GIJC 2019 in Hamburg

Hamburg has somehow become the center of investigative journalism in Germany, with many major media houses and freelance muckrakers having picked Germany's second biggest city as their base, and is thus a fitting choice to host the 11<sup>th</sup> [Global Investigative Journalism Conference](#) taking place September 26–29, 2019.

The Interlink Academy is one of the organizers of the conference, together with the [Global Investigative Journalism Network](#) and [Netzwerk Recherche](#). More than 1,200 participants from all over the world are expected to come together at HafenCity University and DER SPIEGEL. Journalists can apply for travel grants.

Please follow us on social media for more details. ■



Interlink's MD **Werner Eggert** (right) and **David Kaplan** from the GIJN at the International Media Conference of the East-West Center in Singapore in June

## Upcoming Activities in Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe



In 2019, Interlink Academy is going to conduct journalism trainings on three different continents simultaneously for the first time.

In the upcoming year, Interlink Academy is going to conduct trainings on investigative research and fact-checking in Ghana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Together with our local partners we respond to the increasing training needs in these areas of Africa.

Training investigative journalists is also the major focus of our upcoming courses in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Interlink Academy team is going to invite reporters from independent media to boost their skills. In Nepal, we are going to continue our mobile journalism trainings.

In Ukraine and Georgia, we are going to offer a variety of courses, ranging from media literacy to fact-checking.

Please stay tuned for more information. ■

## Publishing Credits

**Interlink Academy for International Dialog and Journalism gUG**, Achtern Styg 22, D-22549 Hamburg

**Responsible (ViSdPG):** Werner Eggert

**Editorial Staff:** Tamara Nehls (editor & layout), Dirk Uhlenbrock (editor & layout)

**Email:** [administration@interlink.academy](mailto:administration@interlink.academy)

[www.interlink.academy](http://www.interlink.academy) | [www.facebook.com/interlink.academy](https://www.facebook.com/interlink.academy) | [www.twitter.com/InterlinkAca](https://www.twitter.com/InterlinkAca)

All pictures in this newsletter are copyrighted. Unless otherwise indicated, Interlink holds the copyright.

Maps and photos are used under Creative Commons license.