

# PANEL DISCUSSION

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE MEDIA: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The media plays a fundamental role in promoting human rights and exposing human rights violations. However, the media can also undermine human rights by failing to report the views of minorities, serving as a platform for racist views, and reinforcing stereotypes.

On the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this panel discussion will explore the role of the media in upholding the principles proclaimed in that document. We will also pay tribute to the work of Eleanor Roosevelt, who as chairperson of the UN Commission on Human Rights was the driving force behind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The panel will be moderated by Michael Freund, Webster Vienna department head, media communications, and editor at *Der Standard*, and it will be composed of the following human rights and media experts who share the common objective of promoting human rights through different platforms:

**Sonja Fercher:** Spokesperson for ZARA (Zivil courage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit), an antiracism and pro-equality NGO, which, during the last Austrian federal elections, implemented the “Clean Politics” campaign in order to protect human rights.

**Anthony Löwstedt:** Webster Vienna research faculty member in media communications. He has also taught at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and at the Bir Zeit University in the West Bank and was former senior consultant for the United Nations Development Programme in Jerusalem.

**Marianne Schulze:** International Human Rights Consultant with wide experience working on human rights projects such as evaluating the human rights compliance of police conduct in Vienna, dealing with restitution issues in Belgrade, and working on UN resolutions on the rights of disabled persons.

**Barbara Trionfi:** Communications Manager and Press Freedom Adviser, IPI (International Press Institute). This Vienna-based international NGO promotes and defends media freedom globally and rejects statutory media regulatory systems, which prevent media from fulfilling their role as watchdogs.

**Note:** This event is co-sponsored by the American Embassy & the American Women’s Association (AWA)

**Wednesday, December 10, 6 p.m.**  
**Amerika Haus, Friedrich-Schmidt-Platz 2, 1010 Vienna**  
**Please register by December 8 to**  
**[straszniczky@webster.ac.at](mailto:straszniczky@webster.ac.at)**