



Human
Solvency
Prize

Human Solvency – Historical Research Prize

It is organised by the "F. Datini" Prato International Institute of Economic History Foundation, based on an idea by Paolo Evangelisti and Angela Orlandi. It aims to enhance the research of scholars who focus their studies on the issue of economic solvency viewed in all its implications, including those of the languages, theological, philosophical and legal lexicons that have structured key concepts and phenomena such as poverty, the common good, public debt, taxation, and monetary institutions. The idea is to favour a long-term approach, avoiding chronological partitions that risk the fragmentation of the depth and knowledge of historical phenomena resulting from complex dynamics that matured between the medieval age and the threshold of contemporaneity. The Prize logo, also with the explicit citation of the Lullian *ars combinatoria*, reflects, synthesises and conveys the project and its underlying cultural premises.

In particular, it points in the plural to the interaction between economies, poverty and theologies.

The term "economies" refers to diversified structures, factual forms and patterns of thinking over a long period of time. The concept of "poverty" in the plural is intended to emphasise not only the historically covered semantic range, but also the fact that, in the period indicated, poverty has scales and units of measurement that define different and variously compounded, measurable, denounceable equalities and inequalities. As for "theologies" (theologies tout court and economic theologies), the plural refers directly to the three main monotheisms at work in medieval Europe and their different legacies developed and settled in the centuries following the crucial 15th and 16th centuries. This opens up the prize to the neighbouring and bordering worlds of Western Europe.

The prize will be awarded every two years, with the winner receiving € 10,000 (before tax, if applicable), in recognition of the commitment of the researcher who has completed the work of excavation and historical framing by presenting innovative methodological and epistemological approaches based on solid sources and data. The judging Committee also undertakes to facilitate the online and/or print publication of the winning work if it is unpublished.

Only completed research may be submitted to the Commission, the final version of which must be written in one of the official languages of the "F. Datini" Foundation (Italian, French, English, Spanish, German; if the language is different from English, the research must be accompanied by an extensive abstract in English) or already published by the date indicated in the call for proposals. Only published or unpublished research having the characteristics of a monograph will be taken into consideration.

The financial structure supporting the initiative has set itself a minimum objective of ten years, based on already established private sponsorships and economic enterprises that share the aims of the prize in their own entrepreneurial actions: to contribute to strengthening cultural, social and economic awareness around the issue of the use of economic resources and particularly financial resources within a framework of compatibility that looks at the ecology of the system, therefore at the humanity of the subjects and the living environment both involved in the circuit that feeds private credit, taxation and public debt. Within this framework is also the invitation to explore the role played by means of exchange/money in their institutional significance and in their most diverse meanings. (see logo).

It is specifically research and historical criticism on these topics that can open up more robust avenues of understanding, showing fruitful interconnections and interweavings. It is enough to think, by way of example, of the decisive role for reflection on human economic action, market dynamics and credit played by the interweaving of two historical phenomena characterising the last three centuries of the medieval age. We are referring here to the rediscovery/reinterpretation of Aristotelian thought and the great season of development of the Mendicant Orders that gave rise to a true Franciscan School of economics. A piece of the history of economic thought and analysis that nurtured not only the Second Scholasticism but also the burgeoning of economic thought in 15th-century Italian humanism and the first affirmation of public banks, as also demonstrated by the historiographical fine-tuning proposed by the latest *Treccani* supplement to economic thought.

In their reverberations of the modern age, these well-structured and established economic lexicons, productive of institutions and concrete experiments, the result of an intense discourse with the other monotheistic cultures in Europe of the time, starting with the Jewish one, connect with the texts of Konrad Summenharth (1455 – 1511) or Johannes Althusius (1563 – 1638), with the thought of the Scottish moralists, with the first great season of French and English political economy, but also with the civil economy proposed by Antonio Genovesi (1713 – 1769). This is a wide-ranging perspective that, in terms of legal history and legal languages, has also been intensively explored by Italian scholars of the calibre of Giovanni Tarello (1934 – 1987) or Paolo Grossi (1933 – 2022).

It is within this framework that the great, even older body of textual material, that of Greek and Latin patristics, of monastic norms, reveals itself in all its depth and richness, providing lexicons, taxonomies, and therefore interpretative and managerial frameworks that await further exploration.

Prize Jury

The Board of Directors of the Datini Foundation appoints the Prize Selection Committee.

It is formed by the following Commissioners and is coordinated by the Secretary General of the Paolo Evangelisti Prize (University of Lleida):

Erik Aerts (University of Leuven), Guido Alfani (University of Milan), Philippe Bernardi (University of Paris), Bruno Callegher (University of Trieste), Hilario Casado Alonso (University of Valladolid), Markus A. Denzel (University of Leipzig), Maria Diez Yañez (University Complutense, Madrid), Miriam Davide (University of Trieste), Maria Teresa Dolso (University of Padua), Paolo Evangelisti (University of Lleida), Luca Fantacci (University “La Statale”, Milan), Riccardo Finozzi (Bank of Italy), Antoni Furió (University of Valencia), Roberto Lambertini (University of Macerata), Clement Lenoble (CNRS-CIHAM Lyon-Avignon), Maryanne Kowaleski (University of Fordham, New York), Angela Orlandi (University of Florence), Maria Clara Rossi (University of Verona), Petra Schulte (University of Trier), Alessandro Silvestri (University of Salerno), Naresh Singh (University of Ottawa), Lorenzo Tanzini (University of Cagliari), Giacomo Todeschini (independent researcher).

The panel of judges remains in office for at least four years and is reappointed by the Board of Directors of the “F. Datini” Foundation on the recommendation of the Secretary General of the Prize, the President of the Scientific Committee and the Scientific Director of the “F. Datini” Foundation.

Publication of the first call for applications: 1 November 2023 with a closing date of 15 March 2024.

On the date of publication of the first call, the opening date for the second call will be announced as 26 June 2024 with a deadline on 3 February 2026 and so on.

The presentation of the prize will be held in public, through the tools traditionally used by the Foundation and with a press conference to which the supporters and sponsors of the initiative will also be invited.

The announcement of the prize must stipulate the deadlines within which the jury shall examine the research work/texts submitted and decide on the awarding of the prize, which may not be adopted by a majority of less than 2/3 of its members. The Committee, in the same manner, may make a special mention of a second piece of research submitted that merits attention for its high scientific quality.

Regulation

Art. 1 On 1 November 2023, with a call issued and published by the Francesco Datini International Institute of Economic History Foundation, the biennial *Human Solvency – Historical Research Prize* was established. The first call for entries will expire on 15 March 2024 (last date for submissions). The prize will be solemnly awarded on 12 May in the Main Hall of the Prato City Council, during the inauguration of the Foundation's 55th Study Week.

The second biennial call will be published by 26 June 2024 with a deadline of 3 February 2026 (12 noon CET).

Art. 2 The prize aims to enhance the historical research of scholars who focus their studies on the issue of economic solvency viewed in all its implications, including those of the languages, theological, philosophical and legal lexicons that have structured key concepts and phenomena such as poverty, the common good, public debt, taxation, and monetary institutions. The intention is to promote a long-term approach by evaluating historical research and analysis that developed between the medieval age and the threshold of contemporaneity (11th – 18th centuries).

In the specific section of the Foundation's website, there are further insights into the research topics covered by the award.

Art. 3 The amount of the prize is equal to 10,000 euros (before tax, if applicable) awarded in a single payment at the time of the public award ceremony.

Art. 4 **The works, written, sent and submitted are examined by the Selection Committee. Only research that has been completed, drafted in its final version or already published in the timeframe indicated in the publication of the call may be submitted, provided that it is monograph in nature.**

Art. 5. The Prize Selection Committee is made up of its members and is coordinated by the Secretary General who is an integral part of it. It is appointed in the first instance by the Board of Directors of the Datini Foundation. It remains in office for at least four years and is renewed in agreement with the Secretary General of the Prize, the President of the Foundation's Scientific Committee and the Scientific Director of the Foundation “F. Datini”.

Art. 6 The Committee's assessment, on the basis of which the prize is awarded, is unquestionable. It shall be adopted by a vote of no less than a qualified majority of 2/3 of the members of the Committee. If adopted unanimously, the resolution has public prominence and is made public at the time of the awarding of the prize.

Art. 7 In the unquestionable opinion of the Committee, the special mention may be approved for a second piece of research deemed worthy of attention. The resolution is adopted with the same procedures referred to in art. 6. The work in question does not receive any monetary prize.

Art.8 The public announcement of the award, curated by the Datini Foundation, explicitly mentions and includes the logos of both the sponsoring subjects and the co-financing sponsors of the award. The entry of new supporters of the prize (patrons and co-funders) is always possible subject to the assent/acceptance of the Secretary of the prize, of the President of the Scientific Committee and the Scientific Director of the Foundation “F. Datini”.