Call for Applications
"Human Solvency Historical Research Prize"

3rd Edition 2026-2028

created in collaboration with:

with the contribution of:

The Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini" hereby announces the: "Human Solvency Historical Research Prize" – 3rd Edition 2026-2028

The Prize is organized by the *Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini"* (Prato), based on an idea by Paolo Evangelisti and Angela Orlandi. It aims to enhance the research of scholars who focus their investigations on the issue of economic solvency considered in all its implications, including those of the languages, as well as the 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 foster a long-term approach, avoiding chronological partitions that risk fragmenting the depth and knowability of historical phenomena resulting from complex dynamics matured between the medieval

age and the threshold of contemporaneity (11th–18th centuries). The Prize logo, also through the explicit citation of the Lullian *ars combinatoria*, reflects, synthesizes, 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 the *longue durée*. The concept of "poverty" in the plural is intended to emphasize 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, and 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. All this allows for an opening of the prize to the neighboring and bordering worlds of Western Europe.

The awarding of the biennial prize, with the conferment of 8,000 euros (gross of taxes, if due) to the winner, stands as a recognition of the commitment of the scholar who has completed that work of excavation and historical framing by proposing innovative methodological and epistemological approaches grounded on solid sources and data.

The judging Jury also undertakes to facilitate the online and/or print publication of the winning work if it is unpublished. Starting from the 2026-2028 edition, all contestants whose research is deemed eligible to compete for the prize are required to participate in a seminar of study and scientific discussion to be held in the semester following the awarding of the prize itself.

Only completed research, prepared in its final version in one of the official languages of the "F. Datini" Foundation (Italian, French, English, Spanish, German; if the language is other than English, the research must be accompanied by an exhaustive abstract in English) or already published by the date indicated in the call for proposals, may be submitted to the Jury. 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 a ten-year lifespan, based on already established private sponsorships and economic enterprises that share the aims of the prize in their very 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 precisely research and historical criticism on these topics that can open up more robust horizons of understanding, showing fruitful interconnections and interweavings. It is enough to think, by way of mere example, of the decisive role for reflection on human economic action, market dynamics, and credit played by the interweaving of two historical phenomena characterizing 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 dialectic 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 (*economia civile*) 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 caliber 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.

Call for Applications

1. The prize aims to enhance the historical research of scholars who focus their investigations on the question of economic solvency considered in all its implications, starting from those of the languages, the theological, philosophical and legal lexicons that have structured concepts key such as poverty, common good, public debt, taxation, monetary institution. The intention is to promote a long-term approach by evaluating research and analysis of historical phenomena that developed between the 11th and 18th centuries. Further details regarding the research themes covered by the Prize are available in the dedicated section of the website of the Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini" .

2. Publications and manuscripts, **which must exclusively take the form of monographs**, may be written in one of the official languages of the "F. Datini" International Institute of Economic History Foundation (Italian, French, English, Spanish or German). If the language of the publication or manuscript submitted is not English, please also provide a **full abstract in English**. Submissions must be received by 12 noon on 1 February 2028 (Italian time, CET). Unpublished manuscripts must be submitted in PDF format, whereas published works must be submitted in both hard copy and PDF format. Submissions must be accompanied by the author's curriculum vitae, an abstract and any other academic qualifications that the candidate considers relevant to include. Please send PDF copies to the following email address: datini@istitutodatini.it. Hard copies should be posted to the Foundation at the following address: Via Ser Lapo Mazzei 37, 59100 Prato (Italy). In the event of a delay in the delivery of the hard copy, the date of posting will be taken as the date of delivery.

3. The prize amounts to €8,000.00 (before tax, if applicable) and will be awarded in a single payment at the time of the public award ceremony.

4. Eligibility requirements and criteria for works:
   - Eligibility for the selection process is subject to the candidate having no more than ten years of academic experience, calculated from the date on which their PhD was awarded.
   - Only completed research works, presented in their final version or already published within the timeframe specified in this call, may be submitted for assessment by the Selection Committee, provided that they take the form of a scholarly monograph. For this edition, works published or completed between 4 February 2026 (the day after the deadline for the 2024–2026 call) and the submission deadline of 1 February 2028, are eligible.
   - Starting from the 2026–2028 edition, a seminar to facilitate scholarly exchange and discussion will be organised; this will be held in the six-month period following the award of the prize (please see point 11 of the call).

5. The members of the Prize Jury are:
Guido Alfani (University of Milan), Francesco Ammannati (University of Florence), 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 (Complutense University of Madrid), Miriam Davide (University of Trieste), Maria Teresa Dolso (University of Padua), Paolo Evangelisti (University of Barcelona), Luca Fantacci (University of Milan "La Statale"), Riccardo Finozzi (Bank of Italy), Antoni Furió (University of Valencia), Roberto Lambertini (University of Macerata), Clement Lenoble (CNRS-CIHAM Lyon–Avignon), Maryanne Kowaleski (Fordham University, New York), Angela Orlandi (University of Florence), Maria Clara Rossi (University of Verona), Maurizio Sangalli (University for Foreigners of Siena - Sangalli Institute), Petra Schulte (University of Trier), Alessandro Silvestri (University of Salerno), Michele Spadaccini (University of Pavia), Lorenzo Tanzini (University of Cagliari), Giacomo Todeschini (independent researcher).
The Jury is coordinated by the General Secretary of the Prize, Paolo Evangelisti (University of Barcelona).

6. The Jury will examine the research works/manuscripts submitted and will decide by 21 April 2028 which research project will be awarded the prize, sending formal notification to the winner by 24 April 2028. The decision to award the prize must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Jury, taking into account both the votes cast in real time by those present (at a face-to-face or online meeting) and any valid votes cast remotely via an official email sent to the Secretariat by the start of the deliberation meeting. In the event of a run-off, the "second choice" cast by absent jurors via email will be counted, provided that it relates to one of the two candidates who have reached the run-off; otherwise, the vote will be counted as an "abstention".

7. At the Committee's discretion, and following a decision adopted by the same voting procedures requiring a two-thirds qualified majority of its members, a special mention may be awarded to one or two other research projects deemed worthy of attention due to their outstanding academic quality. The work or works in question will not receive a cash prize.

8. The Committee's decision is final; it may decide not to award the prize if none of the works meets the required academic standards or if the vote does not secure the required majority.

9. The Committee may also take into consideration publications that have not been submitted directly by candidates, but which have been recommended to the Committee by distinguished scholars.

10. Award Ceremony. The prize will be formally presented on 14 May 2028 in the Main Hall of Prato Municipal Council, during the opening ceremony of the 59th Week of Studies organised by the "F. Datini" Foundation.

11. **Seminar to facilitate scholarly exchange and discussion**. From the 2026–2028 edition onwards, all entrants whose research has been deemed eligible for consideration for the award will be invited to take part in a seminar for academic exchange and discussion, to be held in Rome in the six-month period following the award ceremony. The date of the seminar and its thematic focus will be defined by the Committee and officially communicated to each eligible participant electronically and via publication on the Foundation's website immediately after the award ceremony. To this end, grants are available, funded by the Sangalli Institute for Religious History and Cultures in Florence, to facilitate the participation of candidates who are not affiliated with a university or other institution. The amount and disbursement of these grants are managed by the award Jury or by members delegated by the Jury, in consultation with the funding sponsor. Depending on the quality of the discussion during the seminar, a decision may be made to publish the proceedings, subject to a rigorous *peer review* process.

Further Information

For detailed historiographical and thematic insights, please visit the official web page: [https://www.istitutodatini.it/human-solvency/home_e.htm]

Contacts

For inquiries or clarifications regarding this Call for Applications, please contact the administrative office of the *Fondazione Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini"* (Prato):

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Prato, 26 giugno 2026

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