

ACCADEMIA NAZIONALE DEI LINCEI

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Rome, Italy

The Accademia dei Lincei was founded in Rome on 17 August 1603 by Prince Federico Cesi and three other young scholars: Count Anastasio De Filiis, Johannes Eck and Francesco Stelluti. Historical sources report that the arms and the name «Lyncei» arose from their love of science and the desire to see into the secrets of nature with a perception as acute as that of the lynx. Their dedication to the study of natural sciences and their approach to science based on the new experimental methods made the Accademia dei Lincei the first scientific academy in the world. One of the first illustrious members was Galileo Galilei, whose most important scientific works were published by the Academy during the first part of the XVII century.

After various phases of its history, the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei is today the Italian national academy. It is a non-governmental, independent body within the sphere of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, regulated by a Statute and By-laws established by its members. Its autonomy is recognized by an *ad hoc* state law.

In accordance with its Statute, the aim of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei is to «promote, coordinate, integrate and spread scientific knowledge in its highest expression, in the unity and universality of culture». As a learned society, the role of the Lincei Academy is principally one of promotion and endorsement of scientific initiatives; it is not usually directly involved in applied research. However, the Centro Linceo Interdisciplinare «Beniamino Segre», instituted in 1977 as an offshoot of the Academy, often carries out research projects, in the various fields of science and in the humanities as well, on a joint basis between its members and scientists from other institutions.

The Academy organizes national and international congresses, conferences, meetings and seminars. It promotes research activities, awards scientific prizes and study grants, publishes several periodicals, among which Notes and Memoirs of its meetings and its conference proceedings.

An important part of the Academy is the Library, with its rich collection of antique and contemporary works.

The Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei provides scientific and science policy advice, upon request or on its own initiative, to the Italian Government. It is the institutional adviser of the President of the Italian Republic regarding scientific matters. The Academy deals with science policy and the scientific aspects of public policy at the national and international level of advice. The advisory activity of the Academy is carried out free of charge as it is among its institutional functions. It is perceived as the expression of an independent high level point of view.

Cooperation agreements are maintained with foreign academies and international scientific institutions. The Lincei Academy represents Italy in the most important international academic organizations.

The Academy is divided into two Classes: «Physical, Mathematical and Natural Sciences» and «Moral, Historical and Philological Sciences» (Humanities). Each of the two Classes comprises 90 national members, 90 corresponding members and 90 foreign members. There is a by-law that allows a maximum of 105 national members for each Class under certain circumstances.

Members are elected on the basis of their scientific merits by the national members.

The Class of Sciences is subdivided into 5 categories: Mathematics and Mechanics; Astronomy, Geodesy and Geophysics; Physics and Chemistry; Geology, Palaeontology and Mineralogy; Biological Sciences. The Class of Humanities is subdivided into 7 categories: Philology and Linguistics; Archaeology; Criticism of Art and Poetry; History and Historic and Anthropic Geography; Philosophical Sciences; Juridical Sciences; Political and Social Sciences.

Only the national members participate in the Assembly of the two Classes and in the Assemblies of each Class and have the right to vote and elect new members. Corresponding and foreign members can participate in non-voting meetings of the Classes (*Adunanze*).

Lincei members do not receive any remuneration; they are reimbursed for travel and accommodation when they attend academic meetings.

Organs of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei are the following:

- the President and the Vice President
- the Academic Administrator and the Assistant Academic Administrator
- the Academic Secretaries (one for each of the two Classes) and the Assistant Academic

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- the President's Council
- the General Assembly of the two Classes
- the Assembly of each Class in its competent fields
- the College of Auditors

The President represents the Academy; the President and the Vice President are the Presidents of their respective Classes. They are elected by the national members in the General Assembly for a three year period and can be immediately re-elected only once.

The President's Council is the deliberating organ of the Academy. The resolutions of the Council are applied by the Academic Administrator.

The administrative structure of the Academy is divided into four units: Secretariat, Administration and Personnel Office, Accounting Office, Library. There are about 35 permanent members of staff plus a certain number of external collaborators.

The budget of the Academy comes in part from a state contribution, in part from income deriving from the Foundations controlled by the Academy. It also receives private financing from various sources to support its cultural initiatives (organization of congresses and workshops, promotion of scientific activities, international relations) or with the particular aim of instituting scientific awards and study grants.