

ALLEA, the Federation of All European Academies, was founded in 1994 and currently brings together over 50 Academies in more than 40 countries from the Council of Europe region. Member Academies operate as learned societies, think tanks and research performing organisations. They are self-governing communities of leaders of scholarly enquiry across all fields of the natural sciences, the social sciences and the humanities.

Independent from political, commercial and ideological interests, ALLEA's policy work seeks to contribute to improving the framework conditions under which science and scholarship can excel. Jointly with its Member Academies, ALLEA is in a position to address the full range of structural and policy issues facing Europe in science, research and innovation. In doing so, it is guided by a common understanding of Europe bound together by historical, social and political factors as well as for scientific and economic reasons.

Stiftung Mercator is a private foundation which fosters science and the humanities, education and international understanding. It specifically initiates, develops and funds projects and partner organisations in the thematic fields to which it is committed: it wants to strengthen Europe, improve integration through equal educational opportunities for everyone, drive forward the energy transition as a trigger for global climate change mitigation and firmly anchor cultural education in schools. Stiftung Mercator feels a strong sense of loyalty to the Ruhr region, the home of the founding family and the foundation's headquarters.



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Cover image courtesy of the Library of Congress

A black and white portrait of Madame de Staël, a French philosopher, writer, and diplomat. She is shown from the chest up, wearing a white headscarf and a white dress. Her hair is styled in curls. Below the portrait is her signature in cursive script.

All European Academies Madame de Staël Prize for Cultural Values

The All European Academies Madame de Staël Prize for Cultural Values

is awarded to eminent scholars whose work represents a significant contribution to the cultural and intellectual values of Europe and to the idea of European integration, thereby promoting and strengthening an understanding of Europe as multifaceted, intellectual, open and vibrant. The prize also seeks to underline the importance of non-technological scholarly work and research for European advancement.

Europe is remarkable in that its definition and geographic boundaries have varied over the centuries, yet there has always been a kind of constant understanding of European culture as rooted in an inherent openness supported by a dynamic and vigorous intellectualism. In a time when the cultural diversity of Europe seems to be increasingly threatened by scepticism, extremism and instability, this prize serves to remind us of this deep-rooted and revered characteristic of Europe.

The prize forms part of a larger set of ALLEA activities aiming not only to promote the intellectual and cultural richness of Europe, but also to support and acknowledge scholarly contributions that benefit these most valuable of Europe's assets. In 2014, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso handed over the inaugural prize to Professor Luisa Passerini, who was honoured for her research on forms of European identity.

A sense of belonging to Europe, to a community of values, of culture and interests, is essential to forge this common destiny ... each of us can make a difference in Europe and contribute to driving positive change. This is what ALLEA is doing through its wide range of activities.

- José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission (2009-2014)



ALLEA President Günter Stock, 2014 Laureate Luisa Passerini, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso; Photo by Philippe Veldeman

CRITERIA

Laureates are well known for their scholarly excellence in the fields of history, political science, social science, religion, law or any other field in the humanities. A laureate's work may also be of interdisciplinary nature and must represent a major contribution to the research on Europe in these respective areas.

At the same time, the laureate's work should also be of remarkable significance for the existing and emerging values of Europe which help to tackle current and future challenges such as inequality, political instability, religious diversity, demographic change, or migration, and not least scepticism towards European integration and unity.

ENDOWMENT

Kindly co-sponsored by the Stiftung Mercator, the All European Academies Madame de Staël Prize for Cultural Values is endowed with 25,000 euros.

NOMINATIONS AND JURY

Nominations are submitted by ALLEA Member Academies. On the basis of the proposals received, a Jury composed of eminent Member Academy representatives and past laureates selects and nominates the laureate after a careful evaluation of the nominees' merits. The Jury seeks external peer assessment where applicable and is responsible for the selection of an appropriate laudator. All Jury members are renowned scientists and scholars in a broad range of fields relevant to the scope of the prize. The Jury is chaired by the ALLEA President.

Madame de Staël-Holstein

(1766-1817), née Anne Louise Germaine Necker, created her own vibrant network of great European thinkers and championed the rise of the independent-minded female intellectual. Her salon promoted progressive and pragmatic political and intellectual discussions.



Her critical and fictional works were highly influential in the era of European Romanticism. In 1814, the French memoir writer Madame de Chastenay summed up her life in a single epigramme. There were, she wrote, three great powers struggling against Napoleon for the soul of Europe: "England, Russia, and Madame de Staël."

It is in the nature of cultural values not to be fixed, but enrichable and updatable through exchanges between different cultures, as the history of Europe shows.

- Luisa Passerini, 2014 Laureate