International Balzan Foundation

Press release - 12 November 2026

2026 Balzan Awards Ceremony to be held in Rome

In the presence of the President of the Italian Republic
Each of the prizes is for 750,000 Swiss francs (810,000 euros, 910,000 USD, 680,000 GBP).

On Thursday 19 November 2026, at 5:00 p.m. (UTC+1) in Rome at the Quirinal Palace, the **2026 Balzan Prizes** will be presented to:

Elena Esposito for The Social Science of Digital Technology,
Rasmus Nielsen and Ziheng Yang for Molecular Evolution: Decoding Patterns of Genomic Change,
David Nirenberg for Jewish Studies,
Geoffrey Coates and Marc Hillmyer for Biodegradable Polymers from Renewable Sources,
Emergency Response Rooms for Humanity, Peace and Fraternity among Peoples.

The Ceremony will take place in the presence of the President of the Italian Republic **Sergio Mattarella**. The Presidents of the Balzan Foundation - Prize, **Maria Cristina Messa**, and of the Balzan Foundation - Fund, **Gisèle Girgis-Musy**, will deliver the official speeches. In accordance with the ceremony's usual formalities, each Prizewinner, introduced by **Marta Cartabia**, Chair of the General Prize Committee, will give a speech of acceptance and thanks.

According to the established tradition reflecting the Italo-Swiss nature of the International Balzan Foundation, the Awards Ceremony is held in alternate years in Rome, in the presence of the President of the Italian Republic, and in Bern, in the presence of the President or a Representative of the Federal Council of the Swiss Confederation.

The fields of the four **annual Balzan Prizes** vary each year and can be related either to a specific or an interdisciplinary field. They go beyond traditional subjects both in the humanities and in the sciences so as to give priority to innovative research. Each of the prizes is for 750,000 Swiss francs (810,000 euros, 9100,000 USD, 680,000 GBP). Half of the amount received by the Prizewinners must be destined to research work involving young researchers.

The **Prize for Humanity, Peace, and Fraternity among Peoples** is a special prize awarded by the General Prize Committee, assisted by a preparatory commission, at varying intervals of not less than three years. The award honours individuals or institutions that have achieved distinction for outstanding humanitarian work. The amount of this prize is also 750,000 Swiss francs.

The ceremony will be preceded, on Thursday, **November 19, at 12:00** p.m., by the **presentation of Emergency Response Rooms**, to be held at the Swiss Institute in Rome; it will be followed, on Friday, **November 20, starting at 9:30 a.m.**, by the **2026 Balzan Prizewinners Interdisciplinary Forum** at the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (Palazzo Corsini).

You can follow the ERRs presentation via Zoom at this link:
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84143982286?pwd=gjDb641HDSmE0EEpPqovWis6i4N3I9.1
The FORUM will be streamed live on www.balzan.org.

The International Balzan Foundation was established in 1957 to support culture, science, and the most meritorious humanitarian initiatives promoting peace and fraternity among peoples. At the request of the Foundation, nominations are submitted by academic and cultural institutions around the world. The winners of the Balzan Prizes allocate half of the prize money to research projects carried out by young scientists and scholars. The Balzan International Foundation operates through two institutional offices, one in Milan and one in Zurich. The Balzan - Prize Foundation in Milan, through its General Prize Committee composed of internationally renowned members from all over Europe, chooses the subjects for the awards and selects the candidates. The Balzan - Fund Foundation, based in Zurich, administers the estate left by Eugenio Balzan.

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