



## **Annual Scholarship Prize**

### **Guidelines and Procedures**

#### **Background**

Promoting research in environmental law is one of the core objectives of the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law. As one of its main tasks, the Academy's Research Committee must explore appropriate means to encourage and support research by its members and to further promote research activities to the benefit of the members, member institutions, the Academy itself and, ultimately, for the benefit of expanding and sharing knowledge of this ever-expanding and developing legal discipline.

The Academy is internationally respected as an institution of expertise, which represents members from diverse backgrounds and parts of the world. The Academy recognizes that its members and member institutions are actively involved in advancing knowledge of environmental law through research on a broad range of environmental law issues from different country perspectives. Moreover, the Academy's members and member institutions frequently produce outstanding publications, organize conferences and undertake other scholarly activities that benefit the broader environmental law community and are not necessarily country specific. These scholarly activities further promote the aims of the Academy.

## **Scope**

The Academy's Governing Board agreed at its meeting in April 2008 in Ottawa to introduce an annual scholarship prizes competition to recognize outstanding publications and other scholarly achievements by individuals in its member institutions. The prizes would be based on achievements in the field of environmental law, with separate prize categories for junior and senior academics.

A junior academic is defined as a person with less than 10 years academic experience since the date of their completion of their first law degree. A senior academic therefore is a person with more than 10 years academic experience since the completion of their first law degree. 'Academic experience' includes graduate-level research, post-doctoral positions and traditional academic appointments as lecturers, professors and similar positions. It is preferable to distinguish the junior and senior categories by aggregate experience rather than age, as the latter is often not an accurate indicator of individuals' relative seniority.

The prizes would be awarded on the basis of 'scholarship', defined primarily to include published research such as academic books (edited and authored), policy reports, book chapters and journal articles. The scholarship could be published in any language. The prizes would also recognize other scholarly-related activities, such as editing an environmental law journal, organizing a major academic conference, obtaining significant research grants, building collaborative research networks and other kinds of innovations that advance research in environmental law.

Each prize would be based on the scholarly achievements of nominated individuals in the immediately preceding five years. A period longer than one year is necessary for evaluation purposes, because scholarly prowess is rarely demonstrated just by a discrete set of achievements within a single year. The aim of the prizes competition is to recognize sustained performance over several years, rather than one-off achievements.

The scholarly activities in question must relate to 'environmental law'. Because this is a term of wide and diverse meanings, it would not be productive to attempt to define it precisely here. Rather, the prizes panel in its discretion would be responsible to decide which research and activities are relevant to environmental law on a case-by-case basis.

Only scholars within the IUCN Academy's member law schools would be eligible to participate in the prizes competition. The purpose of this initiative is to recognize and affirm the scholarly achievements within the Academy, rather than to applaud the work of scholars outside of the Academy system who have no interest or commitment to its activities.

In consideration of the foregoing, specific procedures and guidelines have been developed by the Academy's Research Committee to aid the Academy's Secretariat to administratively deal with nominations. These procedures and guidelines serve to provide criteria to be applied when the Executive Committee considers the recognition of outstanding scholarly publications of members of the Academy.

At a minimum, the prize should consist of:

- A commemorative certificate.
- Acknowledgement on Academy website and its publications.

Subject to the raising of funding, the following additional benefits could be included in an award:

- Research scholarship at one of the member institutions.
- Attendance of the next IUCN Conference as an invited speaker at the conference.

## Procedure and guidelines

1. Once a year, approximately eight months prior to the yearly conference, the Academy's Secretariat circulates an invitation for nomination of outstanding scholarly achievements by individuals in Academy member institutions.
2. The nominations must be made by two academics, at least one (but desirably both) of whom must be from an institution not affiliated with the nominee.
3. The nominations should comprise letters outlining and explaining the scholarly significance of the nominee's research activities. The nominations should include each nominee's CV and include copies of representative works and other supporting documents, e.g. available book reviews.
4. An individual could be renominated each year. However, former prize winners within the previous five years would be ineligible for renomination.
5. The nominations would be reviewed by a special five-person "prizes subcommittee" of Research Committee, whose membership will be determined annually. It will comprise two members of the Research Committee, one member of the Academy's Governing Board (who is not a member of the Research Committee), as well as two independent expert reviewers. The expert reviewers will be appointed by the Academy's Secretariat, on the advice of the Research Committee. Each member of the panel must be at arms-length from the nomination process (ie, they cannot be a nominee or nominator for a scholarship prize).

6. In making decisions, the prizes panel may consult if necessary with further outside experts for additional advice, and may contact publishers for copies of any nominee's published research.
7. The evaluation is based on the nominee's previous five years of scholarship, as at the closing date in the call for nominations.
8. The criteria for evaluation of the nomination are as follows:
  - Innovative ideas and originality of the scholarship.
  - Relevance and topicality of the scholarly contributions to the broader environmental lawyer community.
  - Relevance of the scholarship to an international audience, as against merely one jurisdiction or region.
  - Enhancement of research collaboration among scholars and other persons in different institutions and regions.
9. The prizes panel must rank the evaluations on their overall merit, and determine a single prize winner for each category. In the event of no consensus of views among the panel members, it may make a decision by a majority vote.
10. The prizes panel announces the winners at the annual IUCN Colloquium immediately following the evaluation of nominations, as well as makes announcements on the IUCN Academy's website and by a letter of congratulation to the nominee and his or her institution.
11. The awards are made on merit and the prizes panel may in a given year decide not to award any prizes.