

Competition Regulations: Flemish Sociology Thesis Award

Starting from the 2025-2026 academic year, the Flemish Sociology Thesis Award will be presented. English-language submissions are also welcome. The master's thesis must have been written for graduation from the master's programme in sociology at a Flemish university.

The Flemish Sociology Thesis Award is awarded to an exceptional Master's thesis that contributes to the discipline of sociology. The Master's thesis demonstrates originality or is innovative in its chosen approach and/or theoretical framework.

Who can participate?

Any student who completed the Master's programme in Sociology at one of the Flemish universities (KU Leuven, University of Antwerp, Ghent University, Vrije Universiteit Brussel) in the academic year preceding the Day of Sociology is eligible. Candidates must have graduated in that academic year and passed all course components, including the Master's thesis. The Master's thesis may be written in Dutch or English.

Participation and procedure

The submission consists of the following documents:

- an abstract of the Master's thesis (maximum 500 words);
- the result obtained for the thesis, stating the supervisor(s) involved
- a letter of recommendation from the supervisor, explaining why the thesis is eligible for this award (maximum 200 words);
- a digital version of the complete Master's thesis, written in Dutch or English.

These documents must be submitted by the student [via the online portal](#) no later than **30 March 2026, 23:59 CET**.

Assessment criteria

The selected entries will be assessed based on:

1. **Scientific quality**, with attention to theoretical underpinning, methodological quality and analytical depth.
2. **Innovativeness and sociological relevance**, in particular the originality of the research concept and its contribution to sociological theory formation and/or empirical research. Both theoretical and empirical master's theses are eligible.
3. **Style and academic communication**, including clarity of structure, readability and correct scientific language use.

The jury

- The jury is composed of representatives from all Flemish sociology programmes. Each programme appoints one jury member. This jury member has a PhD and is willing and available to assess Master's theses. Both emeritus professors and postdoctoral researchers are eligible (in addition to ZAP, of course).

- The jury decides on the admissibility of the master's theses and makes an initial selection based on the selection criteria.
- If the jury decides that none of the entries meet the required academic standard, it reserves the right not to award the prize.

Winner

- The winner is chosen unanimously by all jury members. If no consensus can be reached, the candidate who receives the majority of votes wins. In the event of a tie, the jury chairperson has the casting vote.
- The winner will be announced during the Day of Sociology. The winner will be notified in good time so that they can make the necessary arrangements to attend. The winner undertakes to attend the official award ceremony.

Award

The winner will receive a cash prize of €1,000 and free admission to that year's edition of the Day of Sociology. The cash prize will be paid into the winner's account after the winner has been announced and after the award ceremony on the Day of Sociology. If the winning thesis is written by multiple students, the cash prize will be divided equally between them.

Use of information

The use of information obtained from companies or organisations with whom the student has collaborated for the writing of this thesis is regulated by the general agreements made between the relevant university department and the collaborating companies or organisations. In the absence of such an agreement governing the use and publication of this information, the student or team of students is responsible for ensuring that an agreement is in place allowing information obtained in a lawful manner to be used in the thesis and that the thesis or, where applicable, the abstract may be made public.

Competition rules

These rules are available on the website of the [Day of Sociology 2026](#).

Anyone who enters the competition is deemed to have read the rules and to agree to all the provisions of the rules. Each candidate also agrees to our privacy statement.