

# newsletter

Issue #16 | November 2018

## FOCUS

### ■ Academic Freedom

What is at stake when scientific institutions are threatened by external infringements? How can we develop a stronger institutional framework for the autonomy and freedom of researchers? In this newsletter issue, ALLEA focuses on these questions paying special attention to the recent events in Hungary. In his editorial, ALLEA President Antonio Loprieno praises the mutual support and cooperation shown by European academies in the defence of academic freedom and the continued obligation to "stand up together for a free, well-resourced and international pursuit of science".

>> *Editorial on [page 2](#)*

>> *Update report on the Hungarian Academy of Sciences negotiations on [page 3](#)*

>> *Interview with Andrea Pető, CEU Professor and the 2018 All European Academies Madame de Staël Prize laureate, on the state of academic freedom in Hungary on [page 5](#)*

## CONFERENCE SERIES

### ■ Europe on Test: Narratives of Union and Disunion

Hosted by selected academies in various European cities, the [Europe on Test](#) project seeks to examine the discourses that have held Europeans together and the ones that have divided them. As part of this ALLEA initiative, the conference "Germany and Europe – Views from Within and Without" took place at the [Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities](#). A Nordic perspective on European narratives was under discussion in Helsinki at the following conference organised by the [Council of Finnish Academies](#).

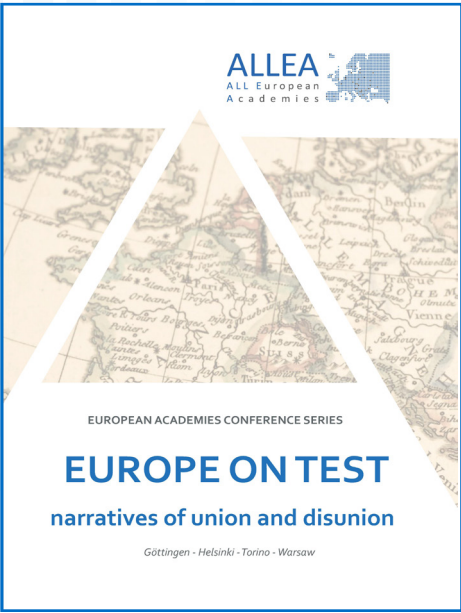
Read more on [page 10](#).

ALLEA  
ALL European  
Academies



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## Dear Readers,

As we are nearing the end of the year, it is my pleasure to introduce you to the present edition of the ALLEA newsletter in your hands or on your screen. I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our ALLEA Member Academies, with many of whom I have been in personal contact in the past couple of months and which have made my and my colleagues in the ALLEA Board's start to our tenure stimulating and promising.

Recent months have certainly not been quiet times for anyone involved with the academic community. Somewhere between infringements on academic freedom, Brexit, and Plan S, most if not all scientists in Europe are experiencing or anticipating severe upheaval in their daily lives, be it at work or even in private. I say not without pride that I witness an incredible sense of community among my peers across Europe. To me it is as much an obligation as it is an honour to stand up for a free, well-resourced and international pursuit of science. This newsletter will inform you about ALLEA's activities on those issues and many more.

In light of unfortunate recent events, our focus in this newsletter is on the topic of academic freedom. A topic whose defence I consider to be at the core of ALLEA, even though I would wholeheartedly prefer it if there was no need for it to be brought up in the first place. Earlier in the summer we learnt about distressing developments in Hungary, where our Member Academy, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, was confronted with a proposed amendment of the state budget, threatening the financial and scientific independence of the academy. At the time, we wrote an open letter in support of the academy, and I was elated to see that many of our Member Academies have either forwarded this letter to their national authorities or have issued similar letters of their own. As the negotiations between the Hungarian Academy and their government are still ongoing, you can read an update of the situation on [page 3](#). Regrettably, this was not the only blow to academic freedom in Hungary over the summer. In August, the Hungarian government made their plans known to defund certain research subjects taught at Hungarian universities and to revoke their accreditation, without previously consulting the affected stakeholders. ALLEA again issued a statement, widely supported by our academies. However, the government did not deviate from its decision. On [page 5](#) you can read an interview with Professor Andrea Pető, a Professor of Gender Studies at the Central European University and the recipient of the 2018 Madame de Staël Prize, where she gives us an inside scoop on the current situation of Hungarian scientists.

Lately, Brexit has had a firm grasp on our news cycles, with an agreement made between the EU and UK negotiators. Yet uncertainty remains over whether it will make it through all approving bodies. ALLEA has repeatedly called on the negotiators to ensure that the free enterprise of science across national borders remains as unaffected as possible by Brexit. A summary of our activities can be found on [page 6](#).



Within SAPEA, the three working groups on "Nano- and Microplastics", "Making Sense of Science", and "Transforming the Future of Ageing" are busy at work to present the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors with their reports in early 2019. I am very glad to see these projects taking shape, and particularly how diligently the members of the working groups are looking to provide truly well-rounded, interdisciplinary reports on these topics. Some more information on SAPEA can be found on [page 14](#).

As ALLEA is committed to engaging the academies in providing advice to European authorities on the design of EU research funding programmes, the open science agenda, as well as on shaping the ethical and legal frameworks governing science and research in Europe, I am pleased to inform you that I recently had the opportunity to discuss these and other strategic issues with the European Commission's new Director General for Research and Innovation Jean-Eric Paquet.

Continued collaboration to make the voices of the academies heard will remain at the top of our agenda for the upcoming year. Together with our members and partners, we are continuing our activities at the interface of science, policy and society. Recent examples of successful outcomes of such activities include a report published jointly with FEAM and KNAW on health inequalities, an interdisciplinary conference held together with the Royal Society on the topic of data governance, as well as further editions in ALLEA's conference series on "Europe on Test" hosted by our Member Academies in Göttingen and Helsinki, with more conferences on the horizon in Torino and Warsaw.

Finally, this newsletter will also provide further information on our 2019 General Assembly and the preparation for our quarter century anniversary in Bern hosted by the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences on 8-10 May 2019.

I wish you an enjoyable read!

With kind regards,

Antonio Loprieno  
President of ALLEA

## ■ Negotiations on the restructuring of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences continue

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences is currently subject to a reorganisation within the Hungarian science system, which has the potential to severely threaten and undermine its institutional autonomy

ALLEA President Antonio Loprieno published an [open letter](#) (read below). Many ALLEA Member Academies have issued similar statements in support, calling on the Hungarian government to guarantee the integrity of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Over the course of the summer and continuing in the latter half of 2018, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences remains in intense discussion with the Hungarian Ministry for Innovation and Technology to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution, which would ensure the academy continues to control its research agenda and regains control over its finances.

### Scientific Presidential Committee

Most recently, a Scientific Presidential Committee of the Research Network was set up, containing members nominated in equal numbers both

by the president of the academy and the minister for innovation and technology. The Committee is tasked with drafting the terms, conditions, methods as well as the schedule of a screening process, which will evaluate the research performance of the academy. The academy maintains that no decision on the future structure of the academy shall be passed before the conclusion of this screening process, as the results of the process mark the starting point for any further negotiations.

The academy also insists on the application of international professional standards in the conduct of the screening, including the use of independent experts from Hungary and abroad. The current roadmap foresees that the screening process be completed by spring 2019. Simultaneously, the academy has



Facade of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest. Credit: MTA

developed a revised strategic plan, anticipating the academy's role in response to the reformed Hungarian innovation system as foreseen in the government's preliminary proposal and has convened an extraordinary General Assembly to be held on 6 December.

## ■ ALLEA Open Letter to Hungarian Government

In response to two proposed laws introduced for voting by the Hungarian Parliament and which threaten the scientific autonomy and financial independence of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, ALLEA President Antonio Loprieno sent an open letter to the responsible Hungarian Minister for Innovation and Technology, Mr László Palkovics.

Professor Loprieno was also interviewed by the research magazine [Times Higher Education](#) on the European

academies perspective on the challenges to academic freedom across Europe. "In response to threats from populist governments, some academics had taken a defensive approach, hoping that the wave of hostility eventually 'passes by', said Professor Loprieno. Instead, though, the community as a whole needed to stand up for itself, he warned."

[Read more](#)



Ref: Proposed amendment of the Law on the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Law on the 2019 state budget of Hungary

22 June 2018

Dear Minister Palkovics,

We have recently learned of the proposed amendment of the Law on the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Law on the 2019 state budget of Hungary and its implications on the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which is a long-standing member of our European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities - ALLEA. We, in principle and in line with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences' Resolution of 15 June 2018, welcome any efforts by the Hungarian government to improve the Hungarian science system. As pointed out in this statement, glaring oversights in the design and consultation phase of this law, threaten the scientific autonomy and the quality of scientific output of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. We believe that if the autonomy and capacity of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences are diminished, the reputation of Hungary and Hungarian science abroad would be unnecessarily tarnished.

ALLEA currently brings together 58 academies in more than 40 countries from within the Council of Europe region. ALLEA's member academies are communities of leaders of scholarly inquiry in their respective countries and across all fields of natural as well as social sciences. Independent from political, commercial and ideological interest, ALLEA's policy work seeks to contribute to improving the framework conditions under which science and scholarship can thrive.

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[www.allea.org](http://www.allea.org)



PROFESSIONAL JOBS SUMMITS RA

The move would mark defeat for the... despite 18 months of struggle – involving academics across the world – against government legislation widely seen as targeted for its liberal stance.

The institution is backed by George Soros, a funder of pro-transparency projects in the region has become a bogeyman for Hungary's increasingly authoritarian government. A Hungarian government spokesman called the CEU's latest announcement "another wily a Soros-style political ploy".

Antonio Loprieno, president of All European Academies (Allea), which represents dozens of academies across the continent, told *Times Higher Education* that the CEU's forced move



## ■ Central European University to set up a new campus in Vienna

The Central European University (CEU) announced on 25 October that incoming students for its accredited masters and doctoral programs will study at a new campus in Vienna beginning in the academic year 2019-20. The university authorised the move as of 1 December 2018 because the Hungarian government has not concluded an agreement allowing CEU to operate freely in Hungary as a U.S. institution chartered in New York State.

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences is not the only institution affected by infringements on academic freedom. Following an unresolved impasse between the Central European University and the Hungarian government as a result of the so called Lex CEU, requiring foreign universities operating in Hungary to also have a campus in their country of origin, the CEU has decided to open a new campus in Vienna and move an increasing number of its courses and research activities to the Austrian capital. The move is inevitable unless the Hungarian Government agrees to endorse the prepared intergovernmental agreement between Hungary and the State of New York by 1 December that would recognize CEU's efforts to run courses in the US.

**#Istand  
withCEU**  
**#aCEUval  
vagyok**

## ■ ALLEA statement on the inappropriate political infringement on academic curricula in Hungary

ALLEA published a statement in August on the inappropriate political infringement on academic curricula in Hungary. "ALLEA is alarmed by the Hungarian government's recent, recurring and unfounded intervention in the curricula of private and public universities, severely compromising academic freedom and autonomy that are key features of modern science and higher education, and regrettably following a pattern witnessed before", the statement reads.

ALLEA STATEMENT  
21 AUGUST 2018

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### ALLEA Statement on the inappropriate political infringement on academic curricula in Hungary

ALLEA, the European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities, is alarmed by the Hungarian government's recent, recurring and unfounded intervention in the curricula of private and public universities, severely compromising academic freedom and autonomy that are key features of modern science and higher education, and regrettably following a pattern witnessed before.

As on previous occasions, through the ban of certain research subjects from academic curricula, the Hungarian government once again infringes on internationally applied and accepted principles of academic freedom, scientific excellence and the self-governance of scientific institutions. Disregarding such fundamental principles undermines the traditionally excellent and internationally renowned Hungarian science base, and threatens its leading and pioneering role in the region. By its very actions, the Hungarian government politicises scientific research and jeopardises Hungary's strong European and international partnerships in science.

## ■ Science Academy (Turkey) publishes fourth annual report on academic freedom

The Science Academy (Turkey), has published their fourth annual report on academic freedom. The report highlights developments within the Turkish science system where the freedom and autonomy of scientific bodies are not complied with. You can read the full report [here](#).



### The Science Academy Report on ACADEMIC FREEDOMS: 2017-18

#### Introduction

Published for the fourth time this year, the aim of the Report on Academic Freedoms prepared by the Science Academy is to draw attention to the developments in the universities and research institutions in the country, especially highlighting the practices that do not comply with the freedom of science and the autonomy of higher education institutions. The Academy also hopes to contribute to the formation of a collective memory on the issue. Sadly, the 2017-18 Report has been yet another register highlighting adverse events. The European Commission's 2018 Report on 'Turkey' summarizes the present situation in a concise manner. Under the heading "Judiciary and fundamental rights" (Chapter 23), the report states the following findings on freedom of speech:

INTERVIEW WITH ANDREA PETŐ

## “Anti-intellectualism is not a symptom but a *modus operandi* of new illiberal regimes”

Andrea Pető, Professor at the Central European University and recipient of the 2018 All European Academies Madame de Staël Prize for Cultural Values, reflects on the political infringements on academic freedom and autonomy in Hungary in an interview with ALLEA.



**ALLEA:** Political infringements on academic freedom and autonomy have now affected various leading scientific institutions in Hungary including your own. Could you give us insights as to how the Hungarian academic community is handling this situation?

**Andrea Pető:** Some countries serve as “laboratories” of new questionable higher education policies and these practices might spill over to other countries as a dangerous precedent. Such precedents can be instrumentalised to support public discourse in favour of populist forces. The non-resistance to such developments has had two consequences. Firstly, the harmful political academic infringements, such as the legislation that curtails the freedom to operate for certain universities like the CEU, came into effect. Secondly, such actions set a precedent that discourages further protests. The first political infringement in Hungary was the appointment of Chancellors to control universities through finances. There were no protests. The community also failed to address their working conditions. This should be a public concern, not only because researchers might fear the negative effects on university rankings, but also because science is a human right. In the spring of 2017, a series of protests against Lex CEU occurred in Budapest and other Hungarian cities. The largest demonstration for years brought 80,000 people to the streets of Budapest. However, the traditional repertoire of protest (demonstrations, postings on social media, signing petitions) was not enough. On 16 November 2017, an active strike was organised at ELTE, CEU and Corvinus University in Budapest. Classes were held but as a form of protest lecturers

were talking about the gender dimension of their subject. The idea of bringing the debate of gender issues into the academic world is another important action to change the misperception of an academic community living in an ivory tower.

**A:** Looking back, what do you consider the academic community could have done to prevent undue political influences?

**A.P.:** **Joan Scott** (Institute for Advanced Study, New Jersey) in her talk at CEU pointed out that there are two dangers to intellectual work today. The first is the neoliberalisation of academia in cases when the financial logic is applied; the other one is the Leviathan or ‘state capture’ when the state directly controls the content, institutions and personnel of higher education based on political loyalty, neglecting professional standards in the evaluation of work of researchers, even in the cases of STEM or in Life Sciences, which are research areas with access to research funding and fit into the ideological frame. Academics should stop believing that if they are performing well (e.g. writing peer reviewed publications in high impact factor journals, obtaining research funding and teaching their courses), they can avoid political conflicts. It would have helped if there was more reflection on what the impact of our scientific work is and how we can explain our work to the interested public.

**A:** Now that the accreditation and funding for Gender Studies programmes has been revoked in Hungary, how will this action affect current research projects, academic personnel and students in Hungary?

**A.P.:** The government decree was approved without explanation and revoked the license of a two-year study

programme in gender studies without consulting the affected professional institutions in Hungary. The gender studies programmes (both the one-year and two-year master and doctoral programmes) have US accreditation. As long as CEU can operate in Hungary or in Austria, the leadership has committed to continue offering these programmes, which are widely popular.

**A:** As a recipient of the *All European Academies Madame de Staël Prize for Cultural Values*, you were honoured for your academic contributions to understanding European values. Based on your experience, how serious would you consider the spread of these anti-intellectual political movements for the future of Europe?

**A.P.:** Anti-intellectualism is not a symptom but a *modus operandi* of these new illiberal regimes. Their opposition to the democratisation of knowledge production and dissemination is a constitutive part of how these regimes operate. Anti-intellectualism delegitimises what a fact is, what an expert is, what a scientific publication is. Anti-intellectualism stems from two sources: one is neoliberalism, which supports consumption and simple messages, the other one is illiberalism, which believes that it is possible to have total control of what people think. There has been a transformation of the educational system into a commercialised activity, along with the introduction of political and ideological loyalty by illiberal states. These two factors have led to the polarisation of intellectual life and growing hierarchies. These are major challenges and we need to address how to transform the inherently elitist science into a public good and how to fight for science as a human right.

## BOARD MEETING IN BERLIN

## ■ New ALLEA Vice Presidents elected

The first meeting of the newly elected ALLEA Board took place in Berlin on 6 September 2018. On this occasion, the Board elected three new Vice Presidents: Professor Hubert Bocken (Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts), Professor Graham Caie (Royal Society of Edinburgh) and Professor Krista Varantola (Council of Finnish Academies).

The event was hosted by the [Union of German Academies of Sciences and Humanities](#), and the German National Academy of Sciences - [Leopoldina](#).



Professor Thomas Holstein, Foreign Secretary of the Union and President of the [Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities](#), and Professor Jörg Hacker, President of the Leopoldina, welcomed the new ALLEA Board and shared their vision towards the internationalisation of their academies' activities.

Read full report [here](#)

<< ALLEA President Antonio Loprieno greets Union Foreign Secretary Thomas Holstein (picture on the left) and Leopoldina President Jörg Hacker (picture on the right).

## BREXIT

## ■ ALLEA stands up for science in the ongoing Brexit negotiations

In letters sent to the UK government and to the European Commission, ALLEA President Antonio Loprieno called for due consideration of the specific needs of the scientific community affected on both sides of the Channel.

As the conclusion of the Brexit negotiations caused serious upheaval, many Europeans, including among the scientific community, remain doubtful of the likelihood of the deal to pass. Since the beginning of the negotiations, ALLEA and its British members, have made it very clear that any agreement between the EU and the UK on their future relationship must duly take into account the specific needs of the scientific community. These include, most importantly, the continued freedom of movement for researchers in either direction as well as the continued participation of British institutions in European research framework programmes.

ALLEA has underlined these positions in letters sent to the UK government as well as to the European Commission. The ALLEA President underlined that scientific collaboration across borders and disciplines is to the benefit of all and stifling this cooperation has detrimental impacts for the speed of scientific progress, including on the most pressing issues facing our societies today. In their respective responses, the UK government and the European Commission have expressed their commitments to ensuring scientific cooperation beyond Brexit. For the time being, UK individuals and entities shall remain fully able to participate in

Horizon 2020, though details on how such cooperation would look like in the new framework programme Horizon Europe have not yet been published. With the lack of a clear pathway to the future relationship between the UK and the EU, the scientific community remains uneasy about the progress. To that effect, a letter signed by 29 Nobel laureates and 6 Fields' medallists, was sent on 19 October to UK Prime Minister Theresa May and the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker to recall the commitments made by the respective governments to enable scientific cooperation beyond the scheduled departure date.



## ■ Estonian Academy conference delves into the advisory role of academies

The Estonian Academy of Sciences held a joint celebration for its 80th anniversary and the centenary of the Republic of Estonia with the conference “Advisory Role of Academies in the Information-Rich Society”, which took place on 22-23 October at the premises of the Estonian Academy in Tallinn.

The conference provided a platform for academicians, scientists, policy-makers and educators to discuss the changing roles of academies at a time when the sociopolitical European landscape is taking new turns. The [Estonian Academy of Sciences](#) invited attendees to further elaborate on the options, challenges and mechanisms of advice on scientific matters in a contemporary society that is oversaturated by information. An important aspect that the conference also sought to ponder was how excellent science can be converted into useful policy advice.

### Independent advisers

The event opened with remarks from Mr Eiki Nestor, Member of Parliament of Estonia, and Professor Tarmo Soomere, President of the Estonian Academy of Sciences. The scientific perspective was presented, among others, by ALLEA President Professor Antonio Loprieno, who delivered a talk on the roles of academies in taking into account their less institutionally biased



*Participants at the Estonian Academy of Sciences conference “Advisory Role of Academies in the Information-Rich Society”. Credit: Reti Kõkk*

stance compared to universities, which are increasingly concerned with their own scientific visibility. Other high-level speakers introduced the perspectives from research universities, policy advisers, policy-makers, and also the perspective of scientific academies from outside the European context, with an invited speaker from the Academy of Sciences

of Nicaragua.

Speaking on the relevance of this event, Professor Loprieno emphasised that “it is vital, in the present moment of European science history, that academies reflect on their role and become involved more intensively in stressing the role of science in society.” A full programme of the conference can be accessed [here](#).

## ■ The National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia celebrated its 75th anniversary

The National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia (NAS RA) celebrated its 75th Anniversary with a two-day celebration in the Armenian capital of Yerevan.

Founded on 10 November 1943, the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia promotes and carries out fundamental and applied research in a wide variety of scientific fields, and it further coordinates research throughout Armenia with more than 35 scientific institutions and 3700 researchers, including 87 academicians.

The NAS RA has been a full member of the ALLEA network for the past five years. As such, ALLEA was represented at the NAS RA celebrations by its Vice President, Professor Graham Caie. The celebratory activities also had the presence of the Prime Minister of Armenia, Nikol Pashinyan, the President of Armenia, Armen



*ALLEA Vice President Graham Caie delivers a speech at the anniversary of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia. Credit: NAS RA*

Sarkissian, and NAS RA’s President, Professor Radik Martirosyan.

In his congratulatory speech, Professor Caie emphasised that throughout its history, the NAS RA has “set an example of resilience and

endurance, and we all stand to learn from its history and its academic achievements. ALLEA is honoured to have the Armenian Academy as one of its distinguished and highly regarded Academies.” [Read more](#)

## ■ ALLEA-Royal Society conference: Living a good life in a data-enabled Europe

The pan-European ALLEA-Royal Society conference "Flourishing in a data-enabled society" explored the conundrums of data governance during a two-day event held in Buckinghamshire (UK) on 1-2 November 2018.

Experts explored major opportunities and challenges that come with new uses of data, and discussed the potential trade-offs that stem from such use across various sectors: in society, from academics to governments, from civil society actors to tech industry. In a set of keynotes, panel discussions and breakout sessions experts from ALLEA Member Academies representing a variety of academic backgrounds and stakeholders from a multitude of sectors convened for an interactive and multidisciplinary conference at Chicheley Hall, the Royal Society's residential conference centre.



The conference marked the beginning of an interdisciplinary debate across Europe that is timely, relevant and applicable to the digital era; outcomes of the conference will be released

in a discussion paper. This initiative is the result of a Royal Society-led proposal first presented in the context of ALLEA's 2017 General Assembly in Budapest. Read the full report [here](#).

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD CATLOW

## ■ "My vision of a data-enabled Europe is that it improves the quality of life of its citizens"

Professor Richard Catlow, Royal Society Foreign Secretary and Vice-President, talked with ALLEA about the motivation behind the conference "Flourishing in a data-enabled society" and shared his vision of what academics and scientists can do to promote new uses of data for human benefit.

**ALLEA:** Tell us about the incentives of setting up this initiative.

**Richard Catlow:** In September 2017, I summarised the work of the Royal Society and British Academy on "Data management use: Governance in the 21st Century" at the General Assembly of ALLEA in Budapest. There was high interest in this topic, with many members from academies around Europe recognising it was timely to consider the impact of data and digital technologies on society. So together with then ALLEA President Günter Stock we decided to launch a joint Royal Society-ALLEA project to explore a vision for the use of data for human benefit in Europe. This is what led to the pan-European conference on Flourishing in a data-enabled society held on 1-2 November 2018 at Chicheley Hall, UK. The Royal Society was pleased to be hosting a conference that brings together leading thinkers on this topic from across Europe, which is one of our key roles in continuing to input into fora to shape the European scientific endeavour.



*There is a tremendous breadth of knowledge and expertise, across all sciences and humanities, that can help shed light on questions about the use of data and digital technologies."*



**A.: How can academies best help shape the debate around the controversial topic of data use?**

**R.C.:** If we consider the memberships of ALLEA's network of academies across Europe, there is a tremendous breadth of knowledge and expertise, across all sciences and humanities, that can help shed light on questions about the use of data and digital technologies. Academies can convene leading experts and have a critical role in gathering evidence and informing public debates. All stakeholders need to be engaged. For example, as part of the Royal Society's work on machine learning, we commissioned a public dialogue which gave us a better understanding of what the UK public thinks about these technologies.

**A.: What is your vision of a data-enabled Europe?**

**R.C.:** Overall my vision of a data enabled Europe is that it improves the quality of life of its citizens, including a thriving research community across academia and industry. Technology should serve all of society and not just certain groups, and be trusted as it supports people and communities in their life, their work and their learning, while maintaining human autonomy. Ethical and responsible technology should meet as best as possible the needs of individuals and society. And we need governance and strategies that ensure a fair distribution of benefits and risks.

Read the full interview [here](#)



## WORKSHOP REPORT

## ■ ALLEA, FEAM and KNAW publish symposium report on health inequalities

ALLEA, the Federation of European Academies of Medicine (FEAM) and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), jointly published on 12 November the report “Health Inequalities: an interdisciplinary exploration of socioeconomic position, health and causality.” The publication summarises the main findings of a symposium organised by the KNAW in Amsterdam.

The [report](#) is part of a project under the tripartite partnership of ALLEA, [FEAM](#) and [KNAW](#), which strives to explore the topic of health inequalities using the evidence base and knowledge provided by a range of disciplines such as public health, genetics, economics, demographic studies and other social sciences. The initiative seeks to identify and comprehend how different life factors can affect our health and wellbeing, and assess the impact they may have on our socioeconomic position (and vice versa). It pays special attention to investigating causal effects of socioeconomic position and health, since different disciplines often use different sets of methods and come to different conclusions.



To align the different approaches, an interdisciplinary symposium was organised in Amsterdam on 24 May 2018 to convene scholars,

experts and interested stakeholders. Participants and speakers addressed the socioeconomic disparities and introduced the breadth of various takes on the topic followed by a vibrant panel discussion. The discussants explored the evidence and perspectives on the issues raised in the project [discussion paper](#).

This report summarises the discussions and scientific findings of the symposium and delivers a concise picture of the current situation. It also reviews the current state of the art in place within the relevant disciplines with multiple references to important studies and research papers that have shaped the discourse around health inequalities. [Read more](#)

## WORKSHOP

## ■ Future strategies for science communications in Europe

The one-day workshop “Communicating Science in a Complex World” brought together science communicators, researchers, and representatives from industry, the European Commission and the European Parliament to discuss the challenges of communications in controversial areas such as genome editing at the European level.

Making science part of the public conversation is the aim of multiple actors, but a lack of strategies and coordination weakens the impact of science communications and hampers the exploitation of untapped potential.

These and other key challenges were discussed at the one-day workshop “Communicating Science in a Complex World”, which took place on 17 October in Brussels. The workshop brought together researchers, science communicators, industry stakeholders and policy-makers in order to reflect on how to make science communication more effective at the European level. This event was organised by the German organisation [Wissenschaft im Dialog](#), in collaboration with ALLEA, the Swedish organisation [Vetenskap & Allmänhet](#), the [European Science Events Association \(Eusea\)](#), and supported by Bayer.

### The case of genome editing

The first impulse talk was presented by Professor Pere Puigdomènech, member of the ALLEA Board, who introduced his work on genome editing and presented the challenges he faced regarding communications in this field. The second impulse talk was presented by LSE Professor George Gaskell, whose talk addressed the public’s perceptions about gene editing technology and concerns about the different potential applications that this technology could have.

An interactive evening panel discussion brought together representatives from different fields, including Jim Dratwa, Head of the European Group of Ethics Office at the European Commission; Tiemo Wölken, Member of the European Parliament; Professor Gloria Origgi, researcher at CNRS Paris and member of the ALLEA Working



*Jim Dratwa, (European Commission); Gloria Origgi (CNRS Paris and ALLEA Working Group Truth, Trust and Expertise); Tiemo Wölken (European Parliament); and Christophe Kampa, (Bayer).*

Group Truth, Trust and Expertise, and Christophe Kampa, from Bayer Digital & Innovation Communication. The panelists highlighted the necessity to increase the transparency and integrity of the scientific system and called for more efforts to explain the uncertainty of science to the public. [Read more](#)

## ■ Germany and Europe under discussion at the Göttingen Academy

The conference of the series "Europe on Test: Narratives of Union and Disunion" was held on 20 October 2018 at the [Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities](#), under the theme "Germany and Europe – Views from Within and Without".

Historians and political scientists discussed the present and future relations of Germany in Europe from a historical perspective, focusing especially on its relations with the UK and France. The academic panels were accompanied by a speech from Stephan Weil, Prime Minister of Lower Saxony, on the possibilities of creating "unity in diversity" in times of mass migration. Professor Andreas Gardt, President of the hosting academy, opened the conference and welcomed the participants to the discussion. ALLEA President Professor Antonio Loprieno

*ALLEA's conference series "Europe on Test" is inspired by the British Academy initiative "European Union and Disunion: Reflections on European Identity" [Read more](#)*

introduced the topic of the conference series emphasising the role of Academies as a prominent example of the long history of establishing a cosmopolitan European society. He further stressed that the vision of a common European identity based on democratic values and ideals of openness is under scrutiny by apparently "irreconcilable divisions" among the people of Europe.

The conference also featured a talk on the various sets of values that divide citizens in Europe, and a panel on the historical trajectories of European integration after the Second World War. In the political science panel, speakers discussed the future of the EU and the impact Brexit will have on it.

Speaking on the importance of the conference series and on the relevance of exchanging ideas about the transformations undergoing the



*ALLEA President Antonio Loprieno welcomes participants at the symposium. Credit: Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities.*

European continent, Professor Antonio Loprieno said: "We are experiencing today a simultaneous convergence and divergence of European societies."

[Read more](#)

## ■ A Nordic perspective on Europe

On 14 November 2018, the [Council of Finnish Academies](#) invited speakers from Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Great Britain to take a Nordic perspective on questions of identity, nationalism, migration and populism as part of the ALLEA series "Europe on Test".

In their opening addresses, host Jan Sundberg and Krista Varantola, ALLEA Vice President and former chancellor of the Council of Finnish Academies, stressed the need for reflections on European identities in times of multiple crises and growing populist right wing movements in Europe and beyond.

In a first session, historical trajectories of the Nordic countries in relation to Europe were examined. Speakers pointed out the differences among Nordic countries in terms of membership in the European Union, the Eurozone, NATO, and also in terms of their political and administrative systems. Professor Varantola illustrated this diversity by describing Nordic countries as "a family that disagrees in words but sticks together when they feel their values or actions



*ALLEA Vice President, Professor Krista Varantola welcomes the audience of the "Europe on Test" symposium at the House of the Estates in Helsinki.*

are questioned or threatened."

In the second and third panel discussions, changing narratives induced by the recent global economic crisis, disputes over migration, as well as by the spread of populist movements were analysed. Speakers

argued that populism and neo-nationalisms are built on the premise that such conflicts can be managed by pursuing a policy of isolationism. Speakers warned about this powerful but naïve narrative and called for a deconstruction of such arguments.

In the concluding reflections, speakers proposed Nordic European values such as openness and institutional trustworthiness should be emphasised to counteract such detrimental narratives. The Nordic welfare state, consensual politics and industrial relations, as well as a security community in international affairs could help to shape future narratives.

Read the full report of the conference [here](#). A video of the sessions can be watched [here](#).

INTERVIEW WITH BARONESS O'NEILL OF BENGARVE

## "We see a great deal of mud thrown at most forms of expertise in the public discourse all the time"

Baroness O'Neill of Bengarve, past President of the British Academy and fellow of the Royal Society, and co-chair of the ALLEA Working Group Truth, Trust and Expertise, reflects on the contradictions of public opinion and actual behaviour vis-a-vis the alleged loss of trust in science and experts.



### Do we witness a loss of trust in science and expertise today?

I personally have been working on trust and trustworthiness for about 15 years. It has become a much hotter topic because of the widespread perception that people are claiming not to trust experts and not to trust science. However, I am quite sure most members of the public don't claim any such thing: people who have a tooth problem still want an expert dentist rather than a car mechanic. People do not generally reject expertise of all sorts, but they tend to snipe at certain sorts of expertise.

### What sorts of expertise do people tend to mistrust?

You hear some people say that they do not trust scientists and technology, but the same people certainly pay large amounts of money to have the latest tech devices. Some people claim not to trust doctors, yet as soon as they get sick, they want to be treated by the best specialists available. People also claim not to trust bankers, but they most likely have a bank account. There is a great difference between what people say and what people are doing. There is not much evidence that people do not trust other individuals with appropriate expertise for different tasks, but they claim to mistrust, and they often have a suspicious or hostile attitude

to certain scientists and researchers. In addition, if we look at the polls, people claim not to trust all sorts of people, the least trustworthy being politicians, and the most trustworthy being nurses.

### Why is there such a mismatch between people's stated opinions and their actions?

Words are cheap. It is very easy to claim to mistrust certain forms of expertise, even if you actually rely on that form of expertise. Why has it become fashionable to claim not to trust experts? That is a fascinating question. I suspect it is that we see a great deal of mud thrown at most forms of expertise in the public discourse all the time. We see a great deal of sensationalist media coverage of the 'bad apples', the questionable cases that sell well, and then we say: 'Oh, well, you can't trust them!'. People will often say that the schools nowadays cannot be trusted anymore, but at the next turn will say that their children's specific school is a rather good one. There are these free-floating attitudes which often vary with the ways people act and how they lead their lives.

### How important is an interdisciplinary approach when addressing questions on 'how to do trustworthy science'?

I think an interdisciplinary approach to questions about the way we do science is absolutely essential. First of all, you

cannot actually divide scientific research down and say we should handle physics this way, chemistry that way and social sciences in that other way. All disciplines are greatly interconnected, so we need a common framework. In fact, we already do have a common framework in place – although it might probably be the wrong framework – when it comes to modes of accountability and the forms of regulation that have been imposed on the research community during the last 20 or 30 years. My suspicion is that such a top down, one size fits all approach of regulation has rather led to a loss of trust rather than its reestablishment.

### What questions should we start asking ourselves regarding such regulatory systems?

One of the questions that we need to ask is whether the regulatory systems and the forms of accountability that we have been establishing – at great cost – for the conduct of science, universities, university teaching, publishing, and so on, are indeed effective. They are certainly laborious, and they use up a great deal of research time, but laborious does not necessarily equate to effective. Some of the systems of accountability that we have put in place sometimes make it harder for scientists to do their primary tasks. These questions need to be reopened and addressed.

## ■ ALLEA Workshop "Trust in Science & Changing Landscapes of Communication" held in Amsterdam

The workshop was organised by the ALLEA Working Group Truth, Trust and Expertise and hosted by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) on 31 August 2018

The ALLEA workshop "Trust in Science and Changing Landscapes of Communication", chaired by former KNAW President Professor José van Dijk, sought to shed light on the ways in which public trust in scientific institutions, evidence and advice is being challenged by new social and technological transformations. The main aim of the workshop was to refine

the understanding of how changing landscapes of communication have altered the way in which scientists communicate empirical and theoretical findings, and the way the public perceives and engages with research and academia.

Trust in science seems to remain relatively high, but it is being undermined by an increasing loss

of trust in, and trustworthiness of, traditional media, accompanied by a growing importance of social media platforms.

A discussion paper summarising the outcomes of this workshop will be published in the upcoming months and debated at a conference organised by ALLEA and Re-Imagine Europa (see page 15). [Read more](#)



## ■ Towards sustainable and fair Open Access publishing? Deliberations from academy experts

At their latest meeting, ALLEA's Permanent Working Group Science and Ethics convened to discuss contributions to the important and ongoing debates around Open Access publishing in Europe following the publication of [Plan S](#) among other pertinent issues concerning research ethics and integrity.

Expertly and generously hosted by the [Royal Irish Academy](#), the meeting took place on 19 September at the academy's premises in Dublin.

The expert group discussed the ethical implications of the Plan S, which was released on 4 September by a group of national research funding organisations, the so-called "[cOAlition S](#)" and endorsed by the European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Carlos Moedas, and the European Research Council. The proposal aims to make scientific publications funded by the coalition and through the EU's

Framework Programmes available immediately in Open Access from 2020 onwards. ALLEA is working on an initial response to the proposal.

In addition, the group discussed additional topics, which could become the focus of their inquiry in the future. Among them are the regular update of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and the dissemination of the currently available translated versions (read below). Future topics may also include the ethics of research evaluation or ethical challenges in public-private research partnerships.



Members of the ALLEA Permanent Working Group on Science and Ethics. Credit: Royal Academy of Ireland



## ■ What is Plan S?

At its core, Plan S is made up of one target and 10 principles. The target:

*"After 1 January 2020 scientific publications on the results from research funded by public grants provided by national and European research councils and funding bodies,*

*must be published in compliant Open Access Journals or on compliant Open Access Platforms."*

You can read the 10 accompanying principles and further information on the implementation guidelines about Plan S [here](#).

## ■ New set of translations of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

This month, ALLEA has released four new translations of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. The new available versions are in Italian, Portuguese, Slovak and Slovenian. In the upcoming months, ALLEA will continue to publish translations of the Code in all official languages of the European Union as well as selected further languages from around the globe. You can access all available translations [here](#).



## ■ ALLEA calls for stronger inclusion of SSH into the next EU framework programme

The **ALLEA Working Group Horizon Europe** has submitted amendments to the European Commission's proposal for the next framework programme for research and innovation **Horizon Europe** and will present its position at the Austrian EU Council Presidency Conference in Vienna.

Following their last meeting in Stockholm on 4 June 2018, the Working Group presented amendments to the European Commission's proposal for Horizon Europe and submitted them to relevant stakeholders in the ongoing negotiations, including members of the European Parliament's relevant committees, European research ministries and representatives in the Council of the European Union. The Working Group generally welcomes the broad thrust of the European

Commission's proposals and the fundamental principles on which they have been developed – research excellence and openness to the world. The Working Group encourages the negotiation of an enhanced budget for Horizon Europe and welcomes the suggestions made by the European Parliament and several European research associations to do so. On 29 November, Working Group member Kerstin Sahlin (**Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and**

**Antiquities**) will present a paper on the importance of SSH Research in Horizon Europe at the Austrian EU Council Presidency Conference in Vienna on "Impact of Social Sciences and Humanities for a European Research Agenda".

The paper provides a revision of Horizon Europe and presents ideas on how SSH research could be better integrated by focusing on concrete suggestions for collaborative research and innovation.

### ALLEA's priorities regarding Horizon Europe

- Reinforcing the value of research excellence and particularly that excellence should be the sole criterion of Horizon Europe.
- Supporting the Commission's commitment to strengthening the European Research Area.
- Making clear the importance of frontier research such as in the European Research Council.
- Requiring a broader definition of innovation that includes social and cultural innovation.
- Recognising the value and importance of the humanities and

social sciences (SSH), including through continued annual SSH Monitoring Reports that have up to now illustrated the lack of progress that the Commission has made in integrating SSH in Horizon 2020.

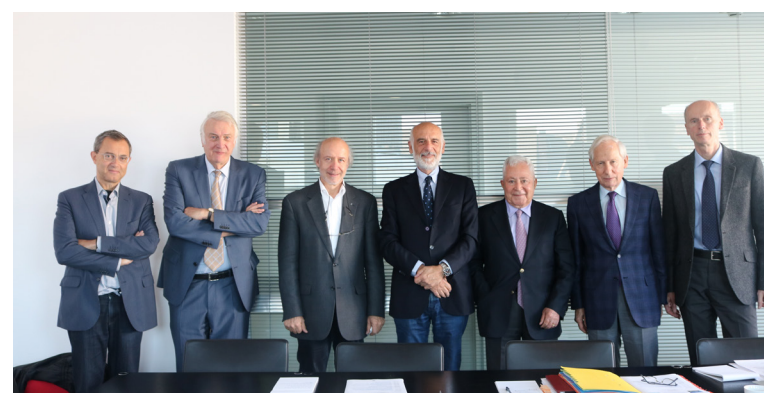
- Expanding and opening up the draft Clusters in Pillar 2 to enable greater multi-disciplinary and cross-sector engagement with the proposed issues. The Clusters suggested by the working group are: Wellbeing and Demographic Change; Inclusive and Creative Society; Digital Society, Ethics and Work; Sustainable and

Mobile Societies; Environmental Futures; Secure Societies; Heritage and Dignity.

- Providing further clarity and inclusivity to the definition of associated countries so that Horizon Europe supports the idea of an integrated European Research Area that is open to global research collaboration.
- Providing information on the content, running and oversight of the proposed Missions and Partnerships in Horizon Europe.

## ■ Artificial Intelligence and Plan S: what is at stake for Intellectual Property Rights?

The **ALLEA Permanent Working Group on Intellectual Property Rights** met in Munich on 22 October to discuss the implications of artificial intelligence technology and the new plan for open access (Plan S) for the protection of patents and copyrights in the research and innovation sectors. Experts from the **European Patent Office** and industry presented their views on the current patenting strategies, which are evolving in light of a new digital landscape characterised by volatility, uncertainty and complexity. In this context, new legal and administrative mechanisms and concepts might require adjustments. Participants also addressed "**Plan S**", a policy proposal presented by a coalition of European national funders and endorsed by the European Commission and the European Research Council to make research funded by public grants to be open access by 2020 (see page 12). The Group is working jointly with other ALLEA working groups to present a joint response to assess the impact of open access in terms of licences and patenting.



*Members of the ALLEA Permanent Working Group on Intellectual Property Rights at their meeting in Munich at the Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition.*

## SAPEA contributes to ongoing debate around Micro- and Nanoplastics pollution

The past couple of years have seen an increased interest in the environmental impact of plastics pollution. Augmented by highly visible campaigns in mass media and by environmental organisations, policy-makers in Europe have started to look into legislating the use of plastics, such as the recent ban for single-use plastics by the European Parliament.

**SAPEA**, on the request of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, is currently working on an Evidence Review Report which will look into the health and environmental aspects of micro- and nanoplastics pollution and its related socio-economic implications. To ensure that aspects of the social sciences and humanities are fully included in the report, ALLEA hosted a workshop in Berlin on social and behavioural sciences perspectives and policy implications on 5 October. ALLEA President Antonio Loprieno welcomed the participants of the workshop.



ALLEA President welcomes the participants at the SAPEA workshop on micro- and nanoplastics pollution. Credit: Toby Wardman/SAPEA

### New Reports

In addition to the works on microplastics, SAPEA is currently producing two further Evidence Review Reports which will be published in mid-2019. The report on Transforming the Future of Ageing will take a holistic European perspective to investigate which policies at the

European level could support EU Member States in achieving inclusive, fair and sustainable systems of health and social care and promote the uptake of innovation for ageing societies. Furthermore, the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors has requested SAPEA to produce a report on Making Sense of Science under conditions of complexity and uncertainty, with the intention to support policy-makers confronted with scientific reports relevant to their work.

*New SAPEA reports on ageing and making sense of science planned for summer 2019*

## Presenting science advice to a wider audience

During ALLEA's 2018 General Assembly, SAPEA held a symposium on Shaping European Science Advice: Insights and Experiences. The symposium aimed to bring together practitioners and recipients of science advice to elaborate mutually beneficial best practices. A report on the event is now available [here](#).

During July, the scientific community descended on Toulouse to celebrate this year's Euroscience Open Forum (ESOF), where SAPEA was present with two sessions. Based on the SAPEA report on **Carbon Capture and Uptake (CCU)**, the first session invited scientists and business representatives to discuss how businesses may address climate change using CCU technologies. The second session, entitled Citizens and Science Advice, aimed at finding new avenues to build a connection between science and advice and the needs of citizens. [Read more](#)



Participants at the SAPEA session of ESOF celebrated in July in Toulouse (France). Credit: SAPEA



## NEW PLATFORM

## ■ AGATE: A digital gateway for research in the Social Sciences and the Humanities

The **Union of the German Academies** has put forth the **AGATE** digital platform, which provides access to, and increases visibility and findability of the academies' research in the fields of SSH. Currently, all projects funded in the German Academies' Programme between 1979 and today can be found in AGATE's database, but the long-term goal is to expand the geographical focus of AGATE to include project contributions from other European countries and academies. You can access the AGATE platform [here](#).

If you or your academy would like to join the AGATE project, you may contact the team at [contact@agate.academy](mailto:contact@agate.academy).

## NEW PLATFORM

## ■ Cultural Literacy in Europe: Call for papers and conference announcement

Between 9-11 May 2019 the initiative **Cultural Literacy in Europe** will be hosting its third biennial conference at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa in Lisbon.

The conference will address modes of conviviality that cultures may have resisted, promoted or facilitated down the ages. It will reflect upon the role and effects of cultural literacy in different media, in the shaping of today's politics, global economy and more.

Researchers are invited to submit a proposal for a 20-minute paper (or for a panel of three 20-minute papers) on any area of the conference topic. More information on content and format can be found [here](#).

## BALZAN PRIZE

## ■ 2018 Prize winners announced

The four winners of the 2018 Balzan Prize were announced last September in a ceremony in Milan. The winners include Marilyn Strathern (UK) for Social Anthropology, Jürgen Osterhammel (Germany) for Global History, Detlef Lohse (Germany/The Netherlands) for Fluid Dynamics, and Eva Kondorosi (Hungary) for Chemical Ecology. The International **Balzan Prize Foundation's** aim is to promote culture, the sciences and the most meritorious initiatives in the cause of humanity, peace and fraternity among peoples.

## ALLEA 25th ANNIVERSARY

## ■ 2019 General Assembly "Science and Society in Present-Day Europe"



Next year will mark the 25th anniversary of ALLEA, and we will celebrate the occasion with our Member Academies at the 2019 General Assembly, which will be hosted by the **Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences** in Bern on 8-10 May 2019.

ALLEA Member Academies will look at past achievements with a contemporary perspective, in order to prepare for a better future. As in previous years, the event will include the annual meeting of European academies, the award ceremony of the **All European Academies Madame de Staël Prize for Cultural Values**, and the scientific symposium, on this occasion under the theme **"Science and Society in Present-Day Europe"**.

## ALLEA-RIE CONFERENCE

## ■ Democracy in a Digital Society: Trust, Evidence and Public Discourse in a Changing Media Environment

ALLEA and **Re-Imagine Europa** (RIE) will organise the conference "Democracy in a Digital Society – Trust, Evidence and Public Discourse in a Changing Media Environment" at the **Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities** on 24 January 2019. The forum will address the most pressing questions regarding the impact of digital transformations on democratic institutions in Europe and beyond. Leading experts from academia, politics, industry, civil society organisations and media will discuss concrete proposals of what a European model for a digital society could look like and what values should guide this process. The discussions will build on the work developed by the **ALLEA Working Group Truth, Trust and Expertise** and act as the starting point for Re-Imagine Europa's initiative on "Democracy in a Digital Society".

## BREAKTHROUGH PRIZE

## ■ Nominations sought for the 2020 "Oscars of Science"

For the third time ALLEA is cooperating with the **Breakthrough Prize** to engage the European scientific community in the nomination process for the largest science prize worldwide, commonly dubbed "Oscars of Science". The prize honours top scientists in the Life Sciences, Fundamental Physics and Mathematics, each prize is endowed with \$3 million. In addition, early-career researchers in the fields of Physics and Mathematics are awarded New Horizons Prizes, each worth \$100,000. The 2019 Special Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics was awarded to **Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell**, past President of ALLEA's Member Academy Royal Society of Edinburgh, for her life-time achievements. Nominations for the 2020 edition can be made between 1 December 2018 and 1 April 2019 via [ALLEA's website](#) which also provides all relevant information on the criteria, scope and objectives of the prize.

# ALLEA

ALL European  
Academies



## MEMBER ACADEMIES

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