CALL FOR PAPERS

**INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE PRIZE 2022**

The Stuttgart-based Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations (FRFG) and the London-based Intergenerational Foundation (IF) jointly award the biennial Intergenerational Justice Prize, endowed with EUR 10,000 (ten thousand euros) in total prize-money. The prize was initiated and is funded by the Apfelbaum Foundation.

**I. AIM OF THE COMPETITION**

Through the prize, the FRFG and IF seek to promote discussion about intergenerational justice in society, and, by providing a scholarly basis to the debate, establish new perspectives for decision-makers. The invitation to enter the competition is extended especially to young academics from all disciplines, but not exclusively.

**II. Topic Abstract**

For the 2022 prize, the FRFG and IF call for papers on the following topic:

**Existential and Unknown Risks for Future Generations**

Existential risks are defined to be all potential events that could destroy humanity or deprive it of its potential. Humanity does not have to go extinct for this, as this would already be the case if humanity suffered an irreversible collapse of its civilization, or if it could no longer freely control its own fate.

A distinction must be made between two types of existential risk. The first type are natural risks. These include, for example, deadly, highly transmissible viruses and the pandemics that are triggered by them, the impact of an asteroid or comet, the eruption of several large volcanoes or a supervolcano, gamma-ray flashes or supernovae. The second type of existential risk is anthropogenic, i.e. man-made. A nuclear war, an out of control artificial intelligence (AI), the use of biological or chemical weapons, or a completely escalating climate change all fall under this category. The anthropogenic risks are estimated to be more dangerous than the natural ones for the next hundred years, which is due to the fact that the mentioned technological developments have multiplied the immense destructive potential of human activity. The modern human has existed for several hundred thousand years, but has only had the means to destroy himself for 76 years. The invention of nuclear bombs marks a turning point for the present and the future, and the question remains whether humanity can handle so much power at this point in time. The rapid development in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) must also be observed carefully, as it will be increasingly important for society on the one hand, but at the same time we have to exchange ideas about its limits and possible dangers.

What makes dealing with existential and unknown risks particularly difficult is that so far we only had limited experience with them. „Low probability, high impact“-events overwhelm many of us and the lack of experience with existential risks makes us feel that such risks will never occur or at least not occur during our lifespan. But that is where the problem lies. The earth will remain habitable for life for another billion years, which also means that trillions of people could be born. This means that humanity is still at its very beginning and most individuals have yet to be born. Our proactive action must therefore give these future people the chance to realise the vast potential of humanity. Today's generation has become a geological factor, as the name of the newest geological age, the Anthropocene, expresses. Our generation therefore is called upon to be more careful than any previous generation.

Existential and unknown risks are a complex topic about which too little political and philosophical discussions have been held so far. In this Call for Papers we ask for contributions that consider and analyse the topic from different perspectives.

**III. Scope**

The Intergenerational Justice Prize 2022 aims to illuminate and analyse the significance of existential and unknown risks for future generations. Entries to the competition could approach the topic through a broad range of questions, for instance:

* In the context of existential risks, “unknown unknowns” are understood to be all those risk factors that we do not yet know about today, but which we must assume to exist or to come into existance. But how can you prepare for something that you do not know yet?
* A major problem when working on AI is our ignorance of how to successfully transfer our humanstic values onto it. An artificial superintelligence could thus pursue its own goals and ignore the values ​​and desires of humanity. What framework conditions can science or the state create, so that a super-AI does not become independent?
* Existential risks may paradoxically also arise from the general availability of knowledge through the Internet. How should we deal with publicly available knowledge if it could be misused by misguided individuals? Should we think about limiting information about sensitive research advances and data, for example in biotechnology?
* Various psychological mechanisms make it difficult to deal with existential risks. From the *bystander effect*, which can paralyse us in our actions because we hope that others will take the initiative, to the *scope neglect*, which allows us to feel deep grief for the death of one person, but not proportionally for a million. How could this be counteracted?
* The global funding for the research and prevention of existential risks has not reached the level that would be appropriate for the matter. What incentives for politicians and financiers can be created to encourage them to step up their investments?
* The protection against existential risks is sometimes referred to as an “intergenerational global public good” because it not only affects all of humanity, but particularly benefits future generations, who in turn are always represented by a fictitious average individual. Can a group or organisation claim to represent all of humanity in its diversity? To what extent does this kind of thinking obscure power structures and intra-generational injustices?
* Political decisions are rather based on the consequences for the present than on their consequences in a hundred years. This problem of preference for the present is countered by the ethical approach of *long-termism*, which focuses on the long-term effects of our current actions for future generations. How can we learn to think and act more in the long term? Is there ultimately a need for a global organisation with executive power or more of an advisory role? What could international co-operation look like?

Competition entrants are emphatically encouraged to pursue their own research questions.

The submissions should be innovative and sensitive to practical application. The FRFG and the IF attach particular importance to the fact that the participants try to present complex connections in easily understandable language. All methodological approaches are equally welcome.

**IV. Prizes**

The Intergenerational Justice Prize is endowed with EUR 10,000. The prize money will be distributed proportionally among the best submissions, which can be more or less than the top three submissions. Winning submissions will be considered for publication by the editorial team of the *Intergenerational Justice Review* (IGJR; www.igjr.org) for the summer issue 2022.

**VI. Submission Requirements**

**Closing Date:** 31 May 2022, 23:59 (GMT+1)

**Eligibility:**

* Researchers from all fields, especially young researchers (students, graduates, post-docs). There is no age limit. Collaborative submissions are also welcome.

**Required documents:**

* Complete submission (either in .doc or .docx format), including abstract (800 characters, italicised), in 2 versions: 1) with full contact details and 2) without any personal information
* Entry form (= signed declaration of authorship)
* Short CV of the author or authors

**Formal requirements:**

Entries:

* Can be submitted in either English or German
* Should be 5,000 to 8,000 words in length (excluding figures, tables and bibliography)
* References should be formatted in accordance with the IGJR standards (see author guidelines under www.igjr.org)
* Must cite or quote work and/or words of others appropriately and represent truthful work without fabrication, fraud, or plagiarism
* Must not have been previously published, nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere, and must not infringe any copyrights
* Must be submitted electronically before the deadline date and time to:

apl. Prof. Dr. Dr. Jörg Tremmel at kontakt@srzg.de (for submissions in German)

Liz Emerson at info@if.org.uk (for submissions in English)

**VI. EVALUATION PROCESS**

The decisions about the awarding of the prize will be based on the recommendations of a panel of independent expert jurors. The jury will base its decision on double-blind reviews in a multi-step process. Excellent entries will be considered for publication by the editorial team of the Intergenerational Justice Review (IGJR; [www.igjr.com](http://www.igjr.com)) for the summer edition of 2022. Therefore, publication rights to the submissions must not yet have been assigned elsewhere. Payment of the prize money will be made after the IGJR editors have accepted a final version (page proofs approved by the authors) for publication. Every entrant, regardless of whether they win a prize, will be entitled to receive the jury's anonymised feedback on their submission.

**Submission of a paper implies that:**

* The participants agree to the publication of their manuscript in the *Intergenerational Justice Review* (IGJR) should the IGJR editors decide to publish it. In the case of publication, the usual copyright regulations of open access peer-review journals apply.
* The paper will not be submitted for publication elsewhere while under consideration for the prize.

**VII. Contact**

Intergenerational Foundation

Liz Emerson at Info@if.org.uk; www.if.org.uk

**VIII. Literature and Websites**

* Bostrom, Nick / Cirkovic, Milan M. (hg.) (2011): *Global Catastrophic Risks*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
* Krznaric, Roman (2020): *The Good Ancestor: How to Think Long Term in a Short-Term World*. London: Allen.
* Moynihan, Thomas (2020): *X-Risk. How Humanity Discovered Its Own Extinction*. Falmouth: Urbanomic.
* Ord, Toby (2020): *The Precipice. Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
* Schubert, Stefan / Caviola, Lucius / Faber, Nadira S. (2019): The psychology of existential risk: Moral judgments about human extinction. In: Scientific Reports, 9 (1), S. 1-8.
* Steinmüller, Karlheinz / Gerhold, Lars (2021): Existentielle Gefahren für die Menschheit als Gegenstand für die Zukunftsforschung. In: Zeitschrift für Zukunftsforschung, 1 (1).
* Torres, Phil (2019): Existential risks: a philosophical analysis. In: Inquiry, S. 1-26. DOI: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0020174X.2019.1658626
* Vinding, Magnus (2020): Suffering-Focused Ethics - Defense and Implications. Copenhagen: Ratio Ethica. https://magnusvinding.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/suffering-focused-ethics.pdf
* https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk (Future of Humanity Institute)
* https://www.cser.ac.uk (Centre for the Study of Existential Risk)
* https://futureoflife.org (The Future of Life Institut)
* https://gcrinstitute.org (Global Catastrophic Risk Institute)
* https://existence.org (Berkeley Existential Risk Initiative)
* https://centerforreducingsuffering.org/
* https://longtermrisk.org/