



THE 2026 ELMAR ALTVATER PRIZE



In memory of the scholarly work and political engagement of critical political economist Elmar Altvater, this call for submissions to the competitive award named after him seeks to recognize outstanding work in the theoretically-informed and ecologically-inclusive critiques of political economy.

Professor Altvater was among the few academics in Germany who based his analysis of economic and political development on a critical reading of Marxian approaches to the cycles of growth, recession and crisis in modern capitalism.

Since the early 1970s until his death on the 1st of May 2018, his academic and political work also addressed the market rationality that enabled the destruction of nature, human labour, and all sorts of non-human life. In particular, he dissected the intersection between the material economy of matter and energy from fossil fuels in contemporary capitalism. He was engaged in many political initiatives which could steer new development in democratic, progressive and emancipatory directions. See: <http://www.elmaraltvater.net/>

The prize aims to encourage young scholars to continue the tradition of critical thought about the degradation and destruction of nature as the 'price of progress' which Professor Altvater represented so outstandingly.

The prize is open to graduating thesis at the PhD level, with an awarded of 2,000€.

The work should be related to the field of an economically-expanded critique of politic economy and deal with, for example, one of the following topics:

- The growing disorder of the mode of global capital accumulation
- Oligarchic globalization
- Theoretical approaches to an ecologically expanded critique of political economy
- Analysis of the material economics of matter and energy – at global and regional level
- The linkages between inter-regional competition and deregulated capital markets, economic and social insecurity and the privatization of public goods
- Ecological, social and economic consequences of large-scale extraction projects
- Grassroot initiatives against human rights violation in the Global South
- Political alternatives that are social, socializing and socialist

Applications are strongly encouraged from theses that adopt approaches that are inter-disciplinary, and that integrate economics with approaches from social and political sciences, and also from natural sciences, anthropology, geography, and history.

We will consider submissions that have been accepted by an institution of higher education since 2023 in English or if in Spanish, Italian, German or Portuguese accompanied with a short article-length summary in English (3000 to 6000 words).



Deadline

Applications are only accepted in electronic forms, to be sent before or at the very latest on **June 30, 2026** to the following address: scherrer@uni-kassel.de

Application Requirements

Please attach the following:

- Covering letter
- 500-word abstract demonstrating a link to the scholarly work of Elmar Altvater
- The work itself
- For theses written in Spanish, Italian, German or Portuguese: a summary in English (3000 to 6000 words)
- CV
- Academic references provided as part of the graduation process (assessment by supervisors, examiners)

The award ceremony is planned for the Global Labour University conference in December 2026.

Contact and further information

Prof. Dr. Christoph Scherrer (scherrer@uni-kassel.de).

Members of the Jury

- Greg Albo, York University, Toronto
- Enrique Dussel Peters, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
- Ana Garcia, Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro
- Frank Hoffer, GLU Online Academy
- Birgit Mahnkopf, Berlin School of Economics and Law
- Archana Prasad, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India
- Vishwas Satgar, University of the Witwatersrand
- Christoph Scherrer, Universität Kassel