International Federation for Theatre Research

IFTR Invites Entries for the 2017 New Scholars' Prize and Helsinki Prize

Please note

1. This year's submission deadline is **30 September 2026.**
2. Submitting an entry for either competition does not constitute conference enrolment. Applicants wanting to attend the conference should also send abstracts to the organisers as outlined in the conference call for papers.
3. Prizewinning essays will be published by *TRI* in their original form.

IFTR offers two prizes that are intended to facilitate participation in the IFTR conference in Nafplio (Greece) in 2027:

New Scholars' Prize
The New Scholars' Prize is awarded to the best submitted essay, judged on originality, coherence, and rigour. Any (post-)graduate (i.e. MA or PhD) student, post-doctoral researcher whose PhD has been awarded less than three years ago, or a researcher without a PhD who has been in an academic post for less than three years is eligible to apply.

Helsinki Prize
The Helsinki Prize was founded by the student Congress Team of the 2006 IFTR/FIRT World Congress in Helsinki. It is offered annually to a promising new scholar—any (post-)graduate (i.e. MA or PhD) student, post-doctoral researcher whose PhD has been awarded less than three years ago, or a researcher without a PhD who has been in an academic post for less than three years—provided that their country of origin **and** of first degree-level studies **and** current place of study or work is in Africa, Asia, or Latin America. The prize is awarded on the basis of the merit of the essay and strives to promote the exchange and networking of new scholars in developing regions, and to encourage research in the field of theatre in their countries. Applications for the Helsinki Prize will also be reviewed for the New Scholars' Prize.

Prize winners will receive gratis conference registration for the Nafplion conference 28 June-2 July 2027, a €50 subsistence/accommodation rate per day for a maximum of six nights, and an economy air fare (it must go from and return to the same location, i.e. you cannot fly out from one city and return to another). Winners make their own travel and accommodation arrangements and will be reimbursed (via bank transfer) upon submission of receipts to the IFTR Treasurer after the conference. For the flight we will require three quotations before covering the cost of the agreed fare. Please note that you must take out comprehensive insurance in case there needs to be a cancellation.

Eligibility

Any eligible scholar who submitted an entry in previous years is welcome to apply again with a new essay, with the exception of winners and honourable mentions of either the New Scholars Prize or the Helsinki Prize, who are not eligible to reapply for either prize.

Essays that have been submitted to a journal for consideration, or that have benefited from any other formal academic peer review feedback system are not eligible.

Competition Rules

- There is no set theme for these competitions – an essay submitted need not respond to the conference theme. Applicants are encouraged to submit work drawing on their current research.
- Essays must be written in English.
- Essays must be submitted in MS Word files less than 1MB.
- Essays up to 3,500 words (inclusive of endnotes, footnotes, and bibliography/works cited) are accepted. Any essay longer than 3,850 words (a 10% margin over the 3,500 target) will not be considered for the competition.
- Remove your name and any other identifying information (e.g. self-citations in footnotes) from your document.
- Also compose a 250-350 word abstract. This will be uploaded separately from your essay.
- Essays are blind reviewed (i.e. judges will not know your identity).
- Essays must be in conformance with *Theatre Research International*'s standards for AI usage, as stipulated in the publisher's guidelines, and IFTR's policy on the use of generative AI for the New Scholars and Helsinki Prizes which states that acceptable uses of Generative AI are limited to language improvement and interactive online searches. For further information, please see the detailed guidelines at the end of this document.

How to Submit

Open **this Google form** and respond to the prompts. If you are not eligible for the Helsinki Prize, ignore the questions in Part B. You will upload your essay and abstract at the end of the form.

Submission Deadline

30 September 2026 (late submissions cannot be considered).

Competition Results

Results of the competitions will be announced by 26 October 2026.

Questions

newscholars@ifr.org

Guidelines for the use of Generative AI:

- Generative AI should not be listed as an author when submitting work to IFTR. Scholars are responsible for checking that any AI tools used do not require such acknowledgements. If an author is intending to use an AI tool, they should ensure that the tool is appropriate and robust for their proposed use, and that the terms applicable to such tool provide sufficient safeguards and protections, for example around intellectual property rights, confidentiality and security.

- Generative AI or Large Language Models (LLMs) may be used to aid with translation across languages, support grammar and spelling, and provide information on the readability of the text.
- Where AI is used as an aid for translation, it should be to support or supplement the author's working knowledge of both languages. For example, an author might use AI to identify an appropriate synonym for a term, or to check comprehension of a term, using their own knowledge of the language as a guide. It is not acceptable to include passages of text translated by AI without any due checks, as this may be inaccurate. Translations generated through machine learning should be refined and reworked. Published translations should always be used where available, or when an author offers their own translation and references it as such they should consider also providing the original for comparison.
- Authors may also use AI to help with phrasing of ideas and arguments, provided that any text generated is rigorously checked and reworked as necessary.
- Generative AI and LLMs may be used to assist in literature searches, and to identify useful artistic and critical sources.
- Generative AI should not be used to write paragraphs of text, to provide analyses of dramatic texts, performances, or to summarise critical and theoretical materials if those are going to be included for publication.
- Authors must clearly acknowledge any use of Generative AI through a statement that includes: the full name of the tool used (with version number), how it was used, and the reason for use.
- **Authors' AI Checklist**
    - ✓ Did I rigorously revise any text that was edited or translated or rephrased by Generative AI?
    - ✓ Did I critically evaluate and validate any information I received through Generative AI?
    - ✓ Have I taken care to protect my own personal data and intellectual property and that of others?