The Social Science of Digital Technology

In the 21st century, successive generations of digital technology – from the internet to artificial intelligence – have penetrated populations across the world and brought change to our social, economic and political lives. These technologies shape individual, collective and organisational behaviour, mediate social and economic interactions and relationships and transform social and informational networks. They impact upon nearly every human endeavour, from how we find love to how we make war. They allow new forms of state design, while challenging institutions tasked with maintaining social, economic and political order and cohesion. This Prize will recognize the achievements of those that have faced the challenge of understanding the continually changing relationship between society and technology over a sustained period.

Jewish Studies

Seven years after the awarding of Islamic Studies in 2019, a 2026 Balzan Prize in the humanities will be awarded for outstanding scientific achievements in Jewish Studies. This discipline encompasses any effort to produce scientific knowledge relating to Jews and Judaism throughout history: religious, cultural, social or political history, literature, doctrine... "Jewish Studies" is also an interdisciplinary academic field, including anthropology, archaeology, law, area studies, literary studies, history, art history and musicology, linguistics, philology of the Old Testament, religious studies, and sociology.

Biodegradable Polymers from Renewable Sources

The Balzan Prize in Biodegradable Polymers from Renewable Sources is intended to honor pioneering research that creates sustainable, high-performance materials from renewable resources. The Prize especially recognizes advances that enable scalable and cost-effective development of biodegradable polymers. By addressing global challenges such as plastic pollution, microplastic contamination, and fossil fuel dependence, the Prize will highlight innovations with potential for transformative impacts across industrial applications in - for instance - packaging, textile or biomedical technologies.

Molecular evolution: Decoding patterns of genomic change

Evolution leaves genetic fingerprints in the genomes of biological populations by changing heritable traits over successive generations. Research in molecular evolution leverages these fingerprints to describe and explain how natural selection and genetic drift shapes genomes over evolutionary history. This prize will recognize groundbreaking research in the field of molecular evolution ranging from the development of computational, statistical and mathematical methods to empirical approaches such as experimental evolution or field studies.