

The EES best diploma work / master theses award

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1 The EES best diploma work / master theses award

The EES best diploma work / master theses award is awarded bi-annually.¹ The competition is intended for applicants who have completed a diploma work / master theses on evaluations at any of the European higher education institutions.

A jury will select the award winners based on the following eligibility ([list 1](#)) and evaluation criteria ([list 2](#)).

If you want to apply, submit your application before the **10th of December 2023** per e-mail to the EES Secretariat. The application must contain the following information and documents:

- Name of the diploma thesis;
- Name of the author;
- Names of the supervisor(s) and the opponent(s)/ external examiners;
- Name of the university, research institute, or a higher education institution where was the diploma thesis supervised;
- The student submits the diploma thesis in the language of origin (pdf);
- An abstract of the work between 800 and 1,100 words in English. We recommend the following structure of the abstract:
 - a) Background of the work,
 - b) Question(s) to be answered,
 - c) Data and methods,
 - d) Results,
 - e) Relevance of the work for the evaluation community.

Award

The first place: two-year membership in the EES and free EES conference attendance (the winner will be informed immediately after the decision to be able to arrange her/his travel)

The second place: two-year membership in the EES

The third place: one-year membership in the EES

The jury reserves the right not to award a prize if none of the submitted diploma theses meets the eligibility criteria or achieves a very low score in evaluation criteria.

1.1 Eligibility criteria (list 1)

- The diploma thesis must relate to evaluations.
- The diploma thesis must be supervised at a university, research institute, or a higher education institution in Europe.²
- Any diploma thesis that has already taken part in the competition will not be eligible for a future award.

¹ We understand bachelor work, diploma work, and master thesis under the term diploma work which we use throughout the text.

² Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, , Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, Ukraine, Vatican

- The author can apply with the diploma thesis in the competition no later than three years after the diploma thesis's defense.

1.2 Evaluation criteria (list 2)

The evaluation is primarily aimed at meeting the following criteria:

- The theme of the diploma work should relate clearly to evaluations.
- The theme should be relevant to current and anticipated themes of the evaluation community in Europe (including findings and conclusions).
- The methods used should be appropriate, adequate, and well-used.
- The diploma thesis should be based on existing or innovative theory, or clearly practically oriented. Does theoretical background support the evaluation conclusions? Are the lessons learned presented?
- The text of the diploma thesis should be readable.
- The text of the diploma thesis should be well-organized and structured.

2 Procedures and responsibilities

2.1 Composition of the jury

The jury is composed of four members appointed by the EES Board. The members of the jury have a term of office of three years. A repeated mandate is possible. The EES Board appoints one of its members to chair the jury. Two members are members of the EES. NESE delegates the fourth member (she/he should also be a member of EES). All the members of the jury must declare that they do not have any conflict of interests. If a jury member knows the applicant, then he/she needs to make this transparent to all jury members.

2.2 Appraisal process

The appraisal process consists of six steps:

- 1) The jury checks that all formal requirements have been met.
- 2) The jury contacts a national evaluation society (or societies, if there are more than one) with an invitation to propose two reviewers to read and appraise the full version of the diploma thesis. These two reviewers should preferably be from a national evaluation society of the particular country. Thus, at least two reviewers will read the whole diploma thesis in the students' mother language. They will apply the criteria as the jury does (see chapter 3.3). Both reviewers must declare that they do not have any conflict of interest. Through this channel, the EES comes into contact with local evaluation communities and local universities.
- 3) If the jury finds no local evaluation community volunteers to read the diploma thesis, the jury asks evaluation communities from other countries to volunteer in peer-reviewing.
- 4) Each application will be read and appraised by all jury members applying the criteria in chapter 3.3.
- 5) The jury meets and makes a decision collectively based on individual reviews.
- 6) The jury informs the applicants and then publishes the winners' names in the EES's usual communication channels.

2.3 Notices to the evaluation criteria

The evaluation is primarily aimed at meeting the following criteria:

How does the theme of the diploma thesis relate to evaluations? (0-2)	
0	There is no relation to evaluations at all. For example, the term evaluation is used to investigate the relationship between two variables in natural science.
1	Relation to evaluations is weak but present.
2	The diploma work relates to evaluations.
3	Strong relation to evaluations.
The relevance of the theme to current and anticipated themes of the evaluation community in Europe	
0	The theme does not concern any of the themes discussed previously or currently by the international or national evaluation communities. Moreover, the theme is not a prospective theme for future discussion about evaluations.
1	The theme reacts to previous discussions held within the international or national evaluation communities, but the discussion has not continued.
2	The theme relates to recent (about five to ten years ago) but completed discussion within the international or national evaluation communities.
3	The theme relates to recent (about two years ago) but completed discussion within the international or national evaluation communities.
4	The theme relates either to themes currently investigated by the international or national evaluation communities.
Are the methods appropriate? Are the methods adequate? Are they used appropriately?	
0	Description of methods and data used is missing in the thesis.
1	Four issues relating to data and methods appear (unclear description of methods, unclear description of data, the inappropriateness of the method, incorrect use of the methods). However, a description is present in the thesis.
2	Two or three issues relating to data and methods appear (unclear description of methods, unclear description of data, the inappropriateness of the method, incorrect use of the methods).
3	Good application of methods, some minor issues still prevail.
4	The methods and data are clearly described, they are appropriate to the solved problem, they are appropriately used.

Is the diploma thesis based on an existing theory or clearly practically oriented? Does up-to-date theoretical background support the evaluation conclusions? Are the lessons learned presented?	
0	The thesis has no theoretical underpinning
1	The thesis has a weak theoretical underpinning (e.g., it is based on outdated or partial literature).
2	The thesis has a robust theoretical or practical underpinning but it is disconnected from the analysis.
3	The thesis has a robust theoretical or practical underpinning but some minor issues still prevail.
4	The thesis has a robust theoretical or practical underpinning which informs the analysis.
Is the text of the diploma thesis readable? Is the text of the diploma thesis well-organized and structured?	
0	The readability, structure and organization of the diploma work are weak. It is difficult to follow the idea described.
1	The readability, structure and organization of the diploma work does not allow to clearly follow the idea.
2	The readability, structure and organization of the diploma work enable to follow the idea with minor problems.
3	The structure and organization of the diploma work enable a clear understanding of how the idea is developed.

There is a range of points that can be awarded to the diploma thesis in each criterion. If the value of any of the above criteria is zero, the diploma thesis is then excluded from the competition.

2.4 Timing

The chosen timing provides sufficient time for the individual phases of the appraisal process. It also allows the winners to organize their participation in the bi-annual EES conference. The exact dates will be adjusted according to the calendar to avoid deadlines during weekends.

Application deadline	10 th December 2023
Check of formal requirements	17 th December 2023
Invitation of two national reviewers	31 st December 2023
Diploma thesis sent to peer-reviewers	14 th January 2024
Peer-reviews delivered	14 th February 2024
Meeting of the jury	28 th February 2024
Announcement of the winners	3 rd March 2024