

Environmental Research Prize of Fribourg University 2026

Leaflet on the call for tenders

The Environmental Research Prize of Fribourg University aims to promote disciplinary and interdisciplinary research in the field of environmental sciences and sustainability. The prize is awarded to young researchers whose innovative and outstanding scientific work contributes significantly to a better understanding of environmental problems and their solution.

The prize money can be used for study trips, visits to congresses, printing of publications or further research. However, no budgeting or accounting is required. The prize amount can be divided among several people.

Environmental Research Prize 2026

The Environmental Research Prize of the University of Freiburg is awarded for the tenth time.

Application deadline is **June 30, 2026**, all required documents must be submitted electronically at <https://www.unifr.ch/form/environment/view.php?id=68795> . All candidates receive a confirmation of receipt of their candidacy. The prizewinner will receive the decision of the prize commission at the beginning of October 2026 at the latest. The prize will be awarded at the Dies Academicus of the University of Freiburg on November 16, 2026.

Responsibilities and procedures

The prize commission for the Environmental Research Prize of the University of Freiburg is responsible for all the participants. In particular, it determines the modalities for the submission and assessment of the works and assesses the submitted works. It may call in external experts for the assessment and evaluation of the work. The Commission's decision is final and incontestable. By registering, participants acknowledge the conditions of the competition.

Application

The application documents include:

- the application form (online at: <https://www.unifr.ch/form/environment/view.php?id=68795>)
- a lay summary (problems and solutions presented in a generally understandable way, 1 page, max. 3500 characters, including spaces);
- the curriculum vitae of the main author with list of publications and declaration of consent of the co-authors;
- a motivation letter (max. half a page)
- the research work as PDF document. If the file is too large for the application form, please attach a PDF with this information to the application form and send a link to download the research paper by e-mail at environment@unifr.ch.

In order to apply to the Environmental Research Prize, the main author must work or must have been working at the University of Freiburg or be or have been registered as a student. Contributions based on cooperation between the University and other private or public research institutions are also welcome.

Qualification theses (habilitation, doctorate, master thesis, publication) can be submitted up to two years after their submission. The thesis can be written in German, French or English.

Composition of the Prize Commission

President of the Prize Commission: Prof. Ivo Wallimann-Helmer (Director of the University of Fribourg Environmental Sciences and Humanities Institute (UniFR_ESH Institute)).

Members are Dr. Dominic Roser (Rectorate representative), Prof. Cathryn Magno (member of the UniFR_ESH Institute Council), Prof. Sven Bacher (member of the UniFR_ESH Institute Council) and Hansruedi Völkle (Pro Natura representative, sponsor)

Advisory members are Farida Khali (Department of Communication and Marketing) and Matthias Held (Research Promotion Service).

Previous prize winners:

2024: **Sophie Bucher** for her master thesis entitled « The Virtue Ethics of Shrub Encroachment on Cultural Landscapes. Extensive Subalpine Grasslands in the Valais, Switzerland as a Case Study of Good Environmental Stewardship »

2022: **Lara Volery** for her doctoral thesis « Impacts of alien species »

2020: **Anna Geiser** for her master thesis entitled "Changing agriculture – Southland farmers' struggles to reconcile neoliberal production demands with increasing environmental regulation".

2018: **Basil Oberholzer** for his doctoral thesis "Monetary Policy and Crude Oil: the Impacts of the Financial System on Economic Stability and Environment".

2016: **Naomi Vouillamoz** for her doctoral thesis "Microseismic characterization of Fribourg area (Switzerland) by Nanoseismic Monitoring".

2014: **Raphaël Mahaim** for his doctoral thesis entitled "Le principe de durabilité et l'aménagement du territoire - Le mitage du territoire à l'épreuve du droit: utilisation mesurée du sol, urbanisation et dimensionnement des zones à bâtir".

2012: **Sandra Daguet** for her doctoral thesis "Environmental Taxes: Institutions, Implementation and the Use of Revenues".

2010: **Anna Lewis** for her master thesis "Global Learning at Secondary Level I. Conception and evaluation of a teaching concept on 'sustainable tourism'" and Odile Bruggisser for her dissertation "The conservation of spiders in agro-ecosystems: a diversity of approaches".

2008: **Martine Poffet** for her dissertation "Thermal runaway of the dried sewage sludge in the storage tanks: from molecular origins to technical measures of smouldering fire prevention".

2006: **Thomas Spiegelberger** for his dissertation "Land use, soil nutrient availability and conservation of biodiversity on mountain grassland".

Secretariat:

Astrid Kaiser

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