

THE PRESTIGIOUS NEURON PRIZE FOR PROMISING SCIENTISTS WAS AWARDED TO OTA PAVLÍČEK FROM THE INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY OF THE CZECH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

The Neuron Foundation yesterday honored excellent scientists who are enhancing the prestige of Czech science both in the Czech Republic and internationally. During an awards ceremony on January 19, 2025, at the National Museum, eight scientific personalities received the Neuron Prize for outstanding scientific achievements. The laureate of the Neuron Prize for Promising Scientists in the field of social sciences was philosopher and historian Ota Pavlíček from the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

For him, science is "the possibility to push the boundaries of knowledge: to see and understand something that no one else has seen or understood, or to find meaning in information that previously made no sense." He regards winning the prize as a tremendous honor for his work so far and as encouragement for further research into European intellectual history and the history of philosophy. He expressed gratitude not only to the Neuron Foundation but also to the leadership of his parent institute at the Academy of Sciences and all colleagues who support his work, including close collaborators from home and abroad.

Roots of Science in the Light of Basic Research

[Mgr. Ota Pavlíček, Ph.D., Th.D.](#) seeks answers in his research to questions about the roots of the Western scientific tradition and what we know about the scientific elites of the Middle Ages and their influence in European history. He studies the dissemination of these scientific insights in an international context, with particular interest in Prague University and its connections to other universities in Central and Western Europe, especially in Vienna, Paris, and Leipzig, as well as in Italy. His findings are reflected in professional articles and publications, and he holds several significant grants and organizes renowned international scientific conferences. He develops digital applications that facilitate access to scientific knowledge for other researchers.

At the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences, he leads his own research group, [TRIPTIC-EU](#). In 2020, he obtained the prestigious ERC Starting Grant entitled [Academia](#), becoming the first holder of this grant in the field of humanities historical sciences fully based at a Czech institution. He is also the deputy head of the Department of Ancient and Medieval Thought. Thanks to his results, he has received several accolades, including the Otto Wichterle Prize for exceptionally promising scientific workers from the Czech Academy of Sciences (2016) and the European Commission's Seal of Excellence (2023). He has also worked at numerous other academic institutions across Europe. He earned his doctorate from the Sorbonne in Paris and Charles University in Prague.

He is currently preparing several volumes summarizing the results of the ERC project, particularly a book titled "The Greatest Debate" on the Prague quodlibet debate of 1409 and a volume on the Vienna quodlibet of 1429. He leads the foreign editorial series "Intellectual Practice and Thought at Late Medieval and Early Modern Universities" for the prestigious Belgian publisher Brepols. Recently, he prepared the volume "Studying the Arts in Late Medieval Bohemia" (Brepols, 2021) for publication. He is the author of numerous scientific studies and edited several books, including "A Companion to Jan Hus" (Brill, 2015, co-authored with František Šmahel) and "Jerome of Prague: A Medieval Intellectual, Martyr of the Czech Reformation, and National Hero" (Filosofia, 2018), as well as a collection of studies on the thought of Jan Hus and his teachers (Filosofický časopis, 2015).



Foto: Neuron Foundation

Ota Pavlíček [video profile](#)

[Neuron Prize Laureates 2024](#)

About the Prize

The Neuron Prize laureates are selected by an independent scientific council composed of leading Czech scientists in collaboration with experts from around the world. Annually, it awards prizes in the fields of biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics, medicine, social sciences, and computer science.

The prizes are awarded in four categories:

Neuron Prize for significant Czech scientists who work both domestically and abroad, significantly contributing to the advancement of science, enhancing the reputation of the Czech Republic, and serving as inspiration for other members of the scientific community.

Neuron Prize for promising scientists for their achievements to date and as encouragement for further work.

Neuron Prize for fostering a love of science for educators and science popularizers who inspire younger generations and support their journey into scientific knowledge. This prize has been awarded since 2024.

Neuron Prize for linking science and business for scientists and economists who have achieved exceptional scientific transfer, moving their discovery or invention from basic research to commercial application.

Awards in the first three categories are associated with a financial reward of 500,000 CZK.