

Three new winners claim UNHCR Award for Best Research on Statelessness in 2015

Tilburg University and UNHCR have honoured three student researchers from universities in the USA, Norway and Netherlands for the Best Research on Statelessness in 2015.

The award for best doctoral thesis went to Kristy Belton of the University of Connecticut (United States) who explored the consequences of statelessness through the cases of the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic. The expert jury, composed of nine senior academics from different universities around the world, considered Belton's research to be very relevant and timely, but also of broad interest because it explores how citizenship can create 'others' and borders between people, reflecting on the meaning of membership and the value of nationality. The thesis, entitled *Precarious Belonging: Stateless people in a 'Postnational' world*, introduces the notion of statelessness as a form of 'psychological displacement', offering an innovative way to conceptualize the problem and its impact.

In the category of graduate research, the prize was awarded to Marie Brokstad Lund-Johansen for her thesis entitled *Fighting for Citizenship in Kuwait*, written as part of her Master's degree in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Oslo (Norway). This thesis discusses the causes and characteristics of mobilization in Kuwait's long-standing stateless community, known as the Bidoon. The jury noted that this thesis carves out a part of the story of the Bidoon that has not been told before – what triggered their activism for citizenship. According to the jury, this research may have implications for other citizenship-related protest movements.

Veronica Perozo Alberti received the undergraduate award for her Bachelor's thesis, *An Instrument of Exclusion: How migration law affects statelessness*, submitted in completion of her degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences at Tilburg University (the Netherlands). The thesis looks at the relationship between migration law and statelessness, exploring some key aspects of migration law (right to enter a country, right to leave, refugee status) and then analyzing them vis-à-vis the subject of statelessness.

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Today, 10 million people around the world are denied a nationality. Often, they are not allowed to go to school, see a doctor, get a job, open a bank account, buy a house or even get married. In November 2014, UNCHR launched the global [#IBELONG](#) Campaign to End Statelessness in 10 Years. Part of this effort is to improve qualitative and quantitative data on statelessness, which is why the Research Award for excellence in the field of statelessness was established in 2013 by UNHCR and Tilburg University.

The UNHCR Awards for Best Research on Statelessness

Universities anywhere in the world can nominate students for the UNHCR Award for Best Research on Statelessness, which has separate prize categories for undergraduate, graduate and doctoral research. An international expert jury, made up of leading academics in the field of citizenship, statelessness and human rights, determines the winners. This year a total of 12 nominations were submitted by 10 different universities across six countries.

Note for editors



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