



Socare Award

Caribbean Research as Pioneering Work

The Caribbean is frequently described as a "laboratory of modernity" – but this slogan, which has become a (hackneyed) topos, only partially does it justice. Instead, the region was and is a highly diverse space that is difficult to define. The Caribbean contains many political, social, cultural, linguistic and ecological processes and challenges that have preoccupied our societies since the beginning of modernity. These include, first and foremost, diverse transculturation processes in society, art and culture, including the emergence and further development of creolised languages and cultures as well as syncretic religions. In view of climate change, structural weakness and migration with an extreme diversification of political models and interests, the region is currently facing acute challenges that are also becoming increasingly urgent for the Americas and for Europe. In condensed form, they raise fundamental questions that demand both political decisions and scientific answers. Only a transdisciplinary approach can facilitate insights into the region's complex and multifactorial social, political, ecological and cultural contexts. Unfortunately, studies that transcend disciplinary boundaries to address the current and historical cultures, languages and societies of the Caribbean and its diasporas are still rare. Cross-language, cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural Caribbean studies in the German-speaking world do not receive the attention they deserve, neither in universities nor in wider society. This is due to their transversality and the associated fragmentation, but also to the current crisis in the humanities and social sciences, as well as the often exoticising and reductionist perception of the Caribbean in Europe. At the same time, transdisciplinary Caribbean research has great potential for sophisticated and effective theory and model building, which can give innovative impulses for foundational research in the humanities and social sciences.

The [Society for Caribbean Research Socare e.V.](#) has worked for over thirty years on bringing together researchers and interested private individuals, institutions and artists with a connection to the Caribbean. In addition, it wants to raise the profile of research and cultural production about and from the Caribbean. As such, we are particularly concerned to honour pioneering academic works, especially doctoral dissertations. Due to the underdeveloped or fragmented institutionalisation of Caribbean research in the German-speaking academic landscape, these dissertations do not receive adequate attention, although their innovative potential makes an important contribution to academic progress. Moreover, due to a lack of resources, works on the Caribbean are rarely made available to a global audience in international publishing houses, so that they cannot enter into a dialogue with researchers in the Caribbean countries and their diasporas. We hope that the announcement of a Europe-wide academic prize and the prize money associated with it will lead to a broader national and international engagement with dissertations in Caribbean studies in the cultural sciences, humanities and social sciences.

The Socare Award in Detail

Since 2019, Socare e.V. has offered a biannual prize for dissertations in the field of Caribbean studies in the social sciences, humanities or cultural studies. The aim is to promote early-career researchers, primarily from German-speaking universities. In particular, innovative as well as inter- and transdisciplinary research approaches are to be honoured and thus presented to a wider academic and general public. Entries may be in German, English, Spanish or French.

Application requirements are a strong Caribbean focus of the work, and a viva completed within the last 24 months before 1 October of the application year. Both personal and external applications are possible. Membership of Socare e.V. is not a prerequisite for participation. The closing date for applications is 1 October of each odd-numbered year.

Documents should be submitted in electronic form (PDF format) with the application. Please send the following to award@caribbeanresearch.net: Dissertation, tabular resume, summary of the dissertation, two dissertation reviews.

The review procedure has two stages. Recognised experts in the respective subject areas will evaluate the entries, followed by the final selection of the award-winning work by the Executive Board. The Board will make its decision based on the expert opinions. The evaluation will be carried out by two experts who will be appointed from among the Socare e.V. advisory board and the honorary members, if possible. The evaluation is in two parts, a concise, freely worded text and a standardised template. The association reserves the right to suspend the award for substantial reasons.

The Socare Award comes with a prize money of 1000 Euros and one year's free membership in Socare e.V.

The Socare Award and the winning entry will be presented at the following Socare e.V. Conference.

Applications and queries should be sent to:

award@caribbeanresearch.net