

Call for nominations for awards by the University Society Paderborn for outstanding master's theses submitted in the academic year 2025/ 2026

(period from 1 October 2025 to 30 September 2026)

Guidelines (dated 03.03.2026)

Conditions for participation

At Paderborn University's request, the University Society honours students who have completed an outstanding master's thesis in their field, have passed all examinations and received their degree certificate in the period from 1 October 2025 to 30 September 2026. The level of the nominees' work must clearly exceed the level of comparable papers and have a grade of 1,0. A further assessment criterion is, that the content of the master's thesis can be explained and communicated well to non-scientists and/or to scientists from other subject areas.

Documents to be submitted

The award is aimed at students from all faculties who have written an outstanding master's thesis. Eligibility for an award is by nomination only. Nominations may be submitted by the reviewers of the works in question. The following proposal documents must be submitted digitally (2 PDF files: 1. Final thesis, 2. other documents):

- Copy of the submitted and assessed master's thesis
- Abstract of a **maximum of 3,000 characters** (including spaces) stating a concise, generally understandable title of the master's thesis
- Letter of recommendation for the award from the supervising junior professor or professor
- Two examiner's reports on the master's thesis by the supervising or examining junior professors or professors, which enable a judgement to be made on the prize-worthiness of the thesis
- Copy of the degree certificate (incl. transcript of records)
- Copy of the nominee's university entrance qualification (school-leaving certificate)
- Tabular CV with references to special circumstances during the Master's programme (e.g. family, financial or personal) and details of first publications, if available. For the subsequent processing of the award, it is also necessary to include your home address and a valid email address in your CV.
- Declaration of consent to data processing (original signed by the nominee)

Information on the abstract

The abstract should be written in German and present the contents of the master's thesis in a generally understandable and well-explained way for non-scientists and/or scientists from other subject areas. An interesting and, above all, concise title should be chosen; this does not have to be the same as the header of the master's thesis, if it is not suitable for this purpose. If AI was used to create the abstract, this must be stated.

Award Money

Each award is accompanied by a sum of **1,000 euros**; per faculty, one award for an outstanding master's thesis can be presented. By accepting the money associated with the award, the honouree does not enter into any obligations.

Deadline for nominations

The deadline for nominations is 15 September each year. There is no right to consideration. Nominations must be submitted to the Dean's Office of the respective faculty by 15 September of each year (see below for contact details). **Nominations received after the deadline and documents that do not meet the formal requirements cannot be considered.**

Degree certificates issued by 30 September of each year can be submitted at a later date. The nomination of female academics is particularly welcomed, as women have been significantly underrepresented in recent years.

Selection and awards procedure

The selection procedure is a two-stage process. After a selection has been made within the faculties and a concrete nomination for the award has been put forward, a second step involves the quality assurance of the selection process by the Commission for Research and Early-Career Researchers (FK). After having freely evaluated the faculties' nominations, The University Executive Board decides on the presentation of awards for outstanding theses on the basis of recommendations from the Commission for Research and Early-Career Researchers (FK) and with the involvement of the Equal Opportunities Officer.

Contact details / Where to submit proposal documents

Proposal documents may be submitted to the faculties' dean's offices until 15 September 2026. Please contact the relevant staff members in the respective dean's offices for further information.