

PRESS RELEASE

FONDAZIONE INTESA SANPAOLO ONLUS: SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDY OF HUMANITIES AWARDED

- **7.3 million euro donated for the right to higher education, 375 thousand euro confirmed for 2021**
- **In the twelve years of its existence, the non-profit Foundation has donated almost 24 million euro for employees in difficulty, the right to higher education, and solidarity projects including canteens and homeless shelters**

Milan, 4 December 2020 - This morning, at a unique virtual ceremony, the Fondazione Intesa Sanpaolo Onlus presented **five scholarships for PhD students in the field of humanities**, amounting to a total of 375,000 euro. Fifty-seven projects were presented for this fourth edition, by 31 Italian universities. The universities of Bari, Florence, Genoa, Milan and Ca' Foscari Venice all received awards.

In the twelve years of its existence, the Fondazione Intesa Sanpaolo Onlus has donated over 7.3 million euro to support the right to higher education. Almost 2,600 students have benefitted from taking part in more than 90 initiatives offered in over 40 Italian public universities. The Foundation has also confirmed the donation of 375,000 euro for next academic year, supporting the fifth edition of the initiative.

The scholarships are designed to fund three-year research programmes aimed at developing, promoting and spreading knowledge about Italian cultural heritage, with particular attention to topics currently of great interest, such as inclusion, communication and languages.

The Chairman of the Fondazione Intesa Sanpaolo Onlus, **Claudio Angelo Graziano**, stated: "*We are convinced that investing in higher education for young deserving students is equivalent to investing in the future of our country, offering a gesture of confidence and contributing to the relaunch after the recent difficult months. Specifically, by supporting PhD research students in the field of humanities, the Foundation wishes to focus attention on the wealth of our culture which, apart from being a huge legacy, is also huge opportunity for the professional growth and development of our young people*".

The Fondazione Intesa Sanpaolo Onlus, a non-profit foundation set up in 2008, is one of the pillars of the integrated welfare system set up by the Intesa Sanpaolo Group. It works to reduce economic and social disadvantage encountered by employees, with university and post-graduate scholarships for deserving young people, and with support for organisations and projects which help people in need.

During 2020, the Foundation approved projects related to institutional activity to the sum of almost 2.6 million euro: this included almost 300 thousand euro for employees, retirees and their families in disadvantaged/vulnerable situations, around 800 thousand euro in university and post-graduate scholarships for deserving students, and over 1.5 million euro for solidarity projects and initiatives for the needy (including canteens and refuges for the poverty-stricken).

Intesa Sanpaolo

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Below, in alphabetical order, are the universities, supervisors, and projects of winning entries:

University of Bari – Dr. Sabrina Guaragno – *“The obscure side of the world wide web, between authentic communication and consumer manipulation. Phenomenological analysis of mass-media communication distortion by institutions and private entities.”* The project sets out to describe in detail the media context of post-modern humanity, a human race living through a particularly complicated moment in history from social and collective points of view, and from the perspective of "control" over the technological means that are made available to us. Mankind is witnessing a process of distortion and difficulty of interpretation of stances taken, as well as a reduction of opportunities for debate and synthesis. This is enabled by a mechanism that fosters some narratives to the disadvantage of others without providing a true cultural perspective of the way that the Internet is used and, especially, without guidelines on the use of the most powerful tool around: the Web.

University of Florence – Dr. Francesca Spinelli – *“From Dante to us. The lexicon of his Comedy and its continuity in today's Italian language, from literary intertextuality to common use. Philological and historical-exegetic research, and statistical analysis.”* Seven centuries after the death of the Poet, the legacy of his Comedy still has a huge impact on the Italian language, emerging in various ways: from the resurgence of literary writing styles, to the many Dante-influenced words and expressions that we use today (like 'bolgia' for bedlam or 'pagare il fio' for pay the penalty). This is added to the impact that the "Dante function" (De Mauro) has made on the very structure of our vocabulary and its statistical arrangement. The project sets out to tackle these aspects, exploring Dante's lexical choices both in terms of the classical and medieval traditions (wherein they are rooted), and their continuity and reworked versions over the centuries up to the present time.

University of Genoa - Dr. Giulia Staggini - *“Language teaching for university students with special needs (learning disabilities, L2 speakers): methodologies and technological support.”* Thanks to legislation which increasingly favours inclusion policies, the last twenty years have seen growing numbers of individuals with special needs entering higher education, and these students need to be supported in their studies. Particularly, the study of foreign languages presents problems for these students and their teachers. Thus, the PhD programme in Digital Humanities intends to begin a research study on the tools and methodologies that may be useful in facilitating learning and teaching of foreign languages at university.

University of Milan – Dr. Clara Belotti – *“The great Milan in European Enlightenment: the correspondence of Antonio Greppi at the beginning of our historical and cultural modernity”* - The Greppi correspondence consists of 401 folders containing 80,000 letters, sent to Greppi between 1737 and 1799 by collaborators, store-owners, politicians and intellectuals. The folders reveal the human, entrepreneurial and intellectual greatness of Greppi, within the context of a financial, business and political network that reached from Cadiz to Hamburg, from Amsterdam to Vienna, but was centred upon Milan - from this perspective, this was a city that emerged as a real capital in the Age of Enlightenment. However, the loss of the indices of the correspondents involved has left this enormous documentary heritage difficult to use.

University Ca' Foscari Venice – Dr. Edoardo Zorzan – *“Narrating the epidemic. Words, rhetoric and texts, from the Medieval Ages to modern times”*. The current health crisis is having significant effects on communication - at an institutional level, in newspaper reporting, in literary reportage, and in tales shared in posts on forums and social media. The impact of an epidemic on forms of communication (including literary forms) is certainly nothing new: it can be seen in different ways throughout Italian and European history, from as early as the Black Plague of 1347-48 onwards. We can see the constant insistence on a technical language that quickly became widespread; the co-existence of scientific descriptions with narratives where the emotive element prevailed; broad reflection on the impact on moral behaviour in communities affected by the disaster. These are all elements that allow the definition of a "grammar" in the narrative of the epidemic with linguistic, rhetorical, style-text features, and easily recognisable themes.

About Intesa Sanpaolo

Intesa Sanpaolo is one of the most solid and profitable banks in Europe, providing wealth management, consumer banking, corporate and investment banking, asset management and insurance. As the market leader in Italy, Intesa Sanpaolo serves nearly 12 million customers through digital and traditional channels. The Group's international subsidiary banks provide for an additional 7.2 million customers in Central Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Intesa Sanpaolo is recognized as one of the most sustainable banks in the world.

The Group believes that value creation should be interpreted broadly, supporting social purpose and driving the real economy. As part of its commitment to sustainable growth, Intesa Sanpaolo has created a €5 billion financing facility dedicated to the circular economy. The Group's large-scale project for economic inclusion and poverty alleviation includes a Fund for Impact to provide €1.2 billion in loans to those parts of society that find access to credit difficult. Intesa Sanpaolo is deeply committed to cultural initiatives that it promotes on its own and together with partners in Italy and abroad, including permanent and temporary exhibits of the vast artistic patrimony at the Gallerie d'Italia, the Group's three museums located in Milan, Naples, Vicenza and soon also in Turin.

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