

PREMIO ASIMOV

SETTIMA EDIZIONE

2022

PER L'EDITORIA SCIENTIFICA



ICHEP 2022
BOLOGNA

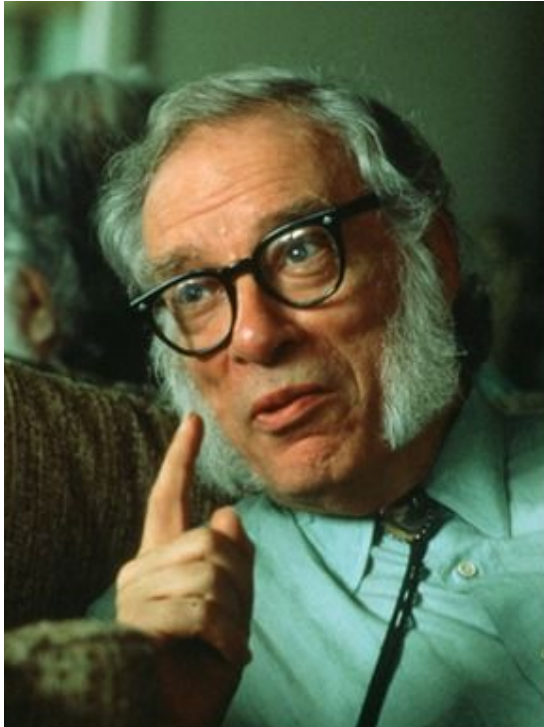
The Asimov Prize for scientific publishing

HEP researchers trigger young people toward science

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What's the Asimov Prize (and who was Isaac Asimov)?



“If knowledge can create problems,
it is not through ignorance
that we can solve them”

– *Isaac Asimov* –

Isaac Asimov (1920–1992) was a famous US writer, a scientist, an intellectual and a great promoter of culture. He showed that there is no need to create barriers between scientific and humanistic cultures.

The **Asimov Prize** was founded in **Italy** in 2016 to celebrate an immortal example of **dissemination of scientific culture**.

A prize to promote scientific culture

The **Asimov Prize** has cultural and non-profit purposes, aiming to bring the young generations closer to scientific culture, through the **critical reading of popular science books**. Organizing bodies include **INFN** (Italian Institute of Nuclear Physics), Universities, Cultural and Research institutions.

Founder and coordinator: **Prof. Francesco Vissani** (INFN).

Books are intended to be suitable for **non-expert** audiences. In order to compete for the Prize, books have to be published **in Italian** (or in translation) for the first time in the two years prior to the current edition.

A **National Committee** selects a shortlist of **five finalist books** from a large list of proposed works. The national committee includes scientists (mainly coming from the **High Energy Physics** community), professors, Ph.D. and Ph.D. students, writers, journalists and friends of culture, and **over 800 school teachers**.

The Regional Committees

The National Committee of the Asimov Prize is the union of the **Regional Committees** from all over Italy: Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Emilia-Romagna, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardy, Marche, Molise, Piedmont, Apulia, Sardinia, Sicily, Tuscany, Umbria.

Participation in the Committee is voluntary and unpaid. Each member has the right to propose a list of books for the final selection, which is announced on the official website:

<https://www.premio-asimov.it/>



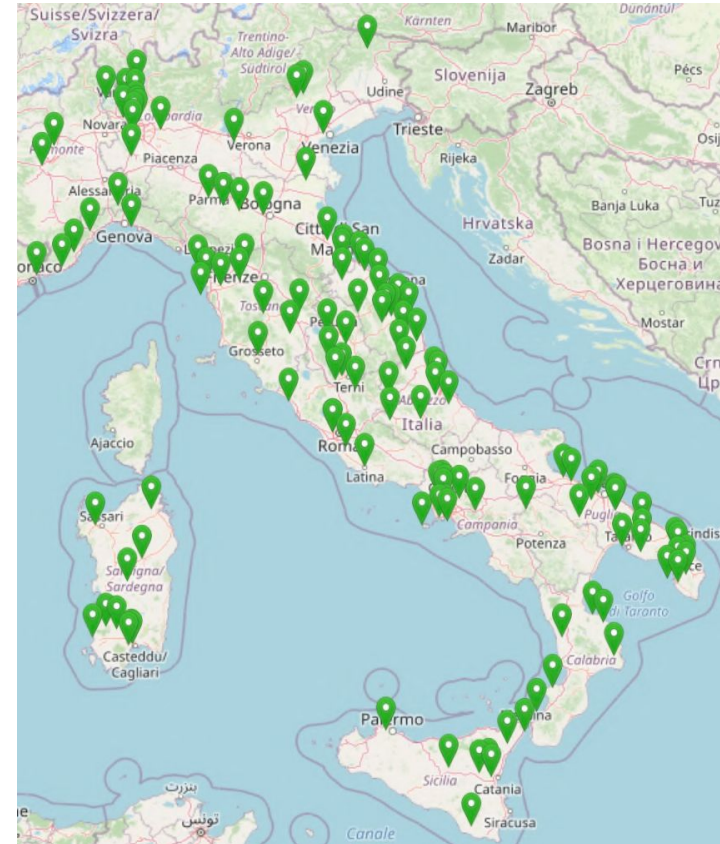
Involvement of Italian High Schools

The Regional Committees contact the **High Schools** with which they collaborate for the success of the Asimov Prize and communicate the five finalist books.

The **Jury of the Asimov Prize** is composed on a voluntary basis by students of these schools, who register on the website.

They choose, read and review the finalist books, and express a vote (from 1 to 10).

Since 2016, the number of High Schools on the national territory has constantly grown: presently **272 High Schools** participate to the Prize, forming a jury of **12,326 Students**.



Awarding of the best reviews in each Region



All the students' reviews are anonymously judged by the National Committee on the basis of their **originality** and content validity, also performing checks with an anti-plagiarism software.

The **15** best reviews at regional level are **awarded** by the Regional Committees in local ceremonies. Also the reviews with the highest mark for each High School are **mentioned**.

Final ceremony of the Asimov Prize

The Asimov Prize is awarded by the president on behalf of the National Committee and of the Jury, to the author of the finalist book that has scored **the highest overall score**, as determined by the votes of the Jurors.



The proclamation of the **author of the winning book** takes place during the final ceremony.

Editions 2020 and 2021 were held online-only, due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Asimov Prize's roll of honour

In every edition since 2016 there has been one **winner book**, (except for 2018 and 2022, with two *ex-aequo* winners).

In last edition **two women** have won the Asimov Prize 2022: Licia Troisi and Agnese Collina.

- Many scientific subjects involved: chemistry, medicine, physics, neurophysiology, mathematics, computer science, astronomy ... but also biology, geology, geography, engineering, history and philosophy of science, anthropology, and so on...

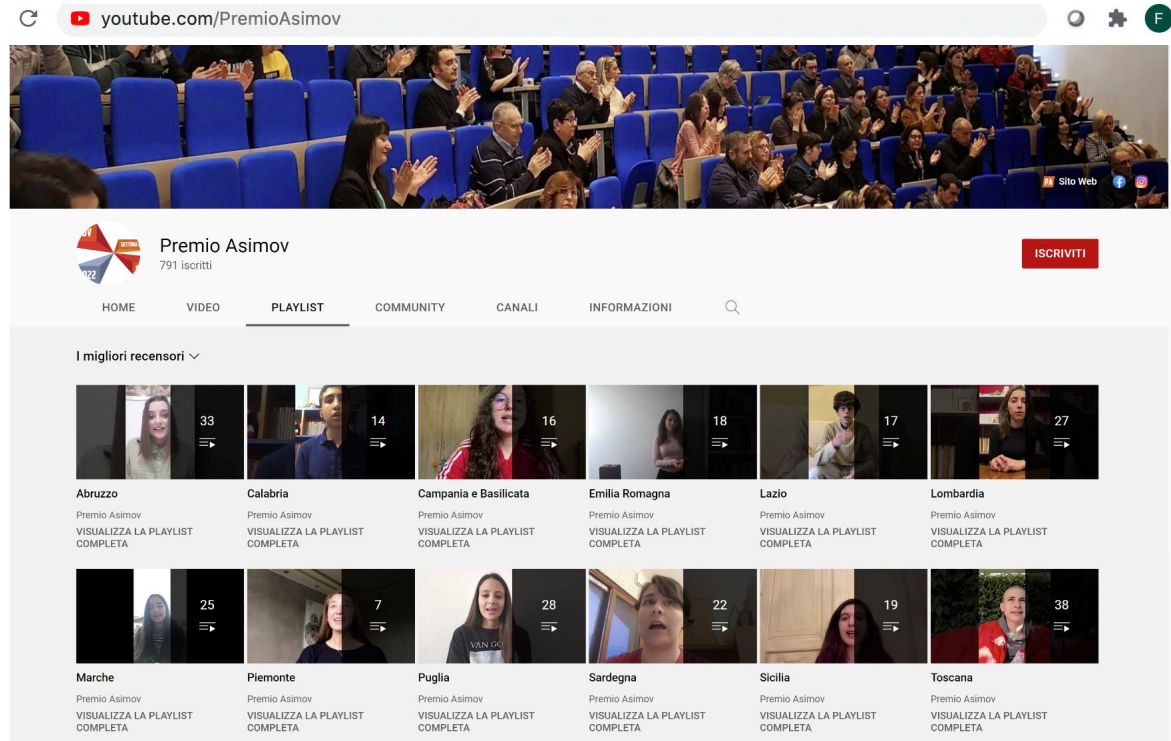


Youtube channel

All students awarded for their reviews are invited to produce **short videos** commenting the books they have read and judged.

The best videos are selected and **published** on the official YouTube channel:

<http://youtube.com/PremioAsimov>



Benefits for students and teachers

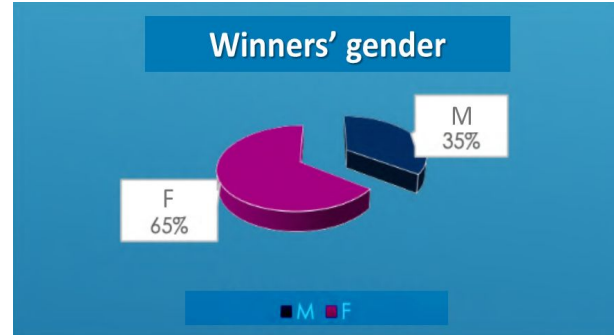
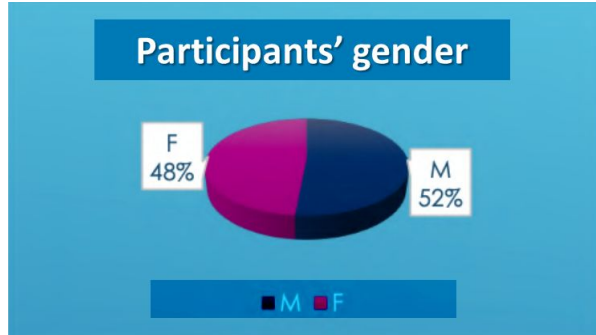
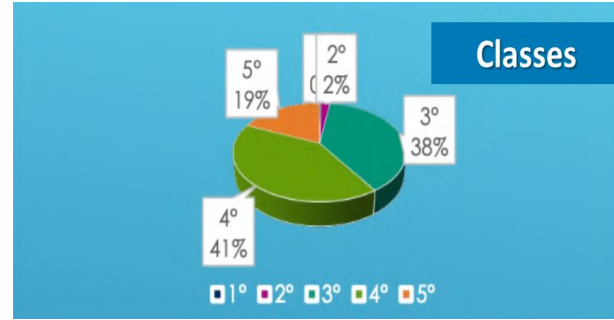
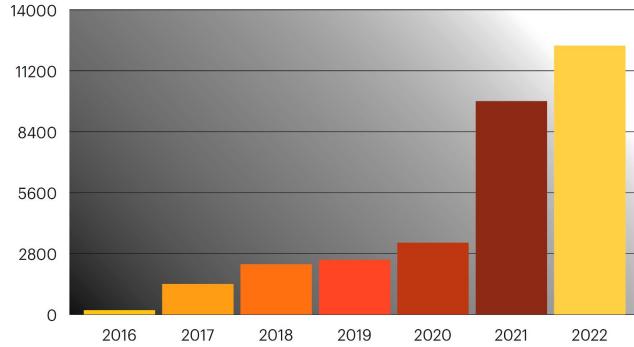
Students are encouraged to participate to the Asimov Prize and read at least one book to obtain **school credits** and/or recognition of **young apprenticeship programs** (for a total of 30 hours per book).

Awarded students obtain **gadgets, bonuses** for buying books or **educational trips** to one of the organizing bodies.

Teachers taking part to the national/regional committees acquire the recognition of successful completion of an official **teachers training course**.



Some statistics on gender and classes



The students who participate to the Asimov Prize grow year after year. They are equally divided between boys and girls, mainly with **age 17-18**.

65% of times the **girls** realize the best reviews.

The Asimov Prize at cultural events and fairs

“Il libro possibile”
Polignano a Mare (7-10/7/2021)

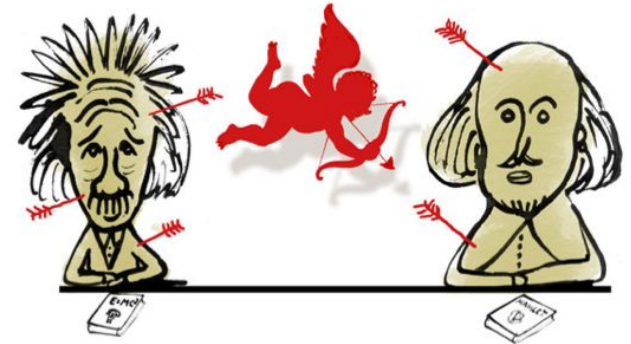


“Turin International Book Fair”
Turin (14-18/10/2021)

Two Cultures, one Prize

After seven successful editions, the Asimov Prize has proved –once more– that the old “Two Cultures” legend (*1959 Rede Lecture by C. P. Snow*) can be today considered as definitively dispelled. Literary intellectuals and scientists are not in conflict, as the apparent divide between **Science** and the **Humanities** is now fully outdated by the youngest generations.

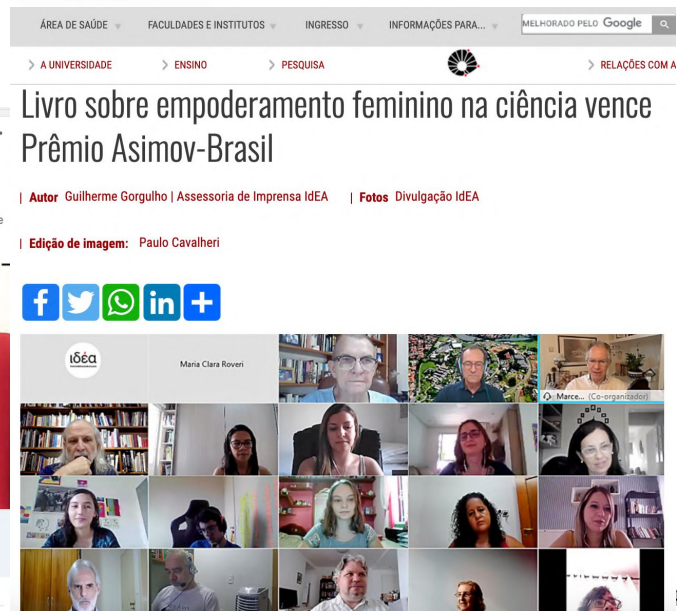
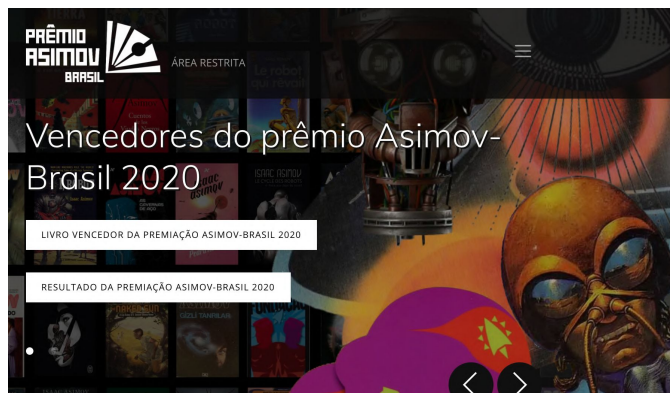
Students involved in the Asimov Prize gain a new perception of scientific literature, coming into a fresh-minded contact with science and technology subjects through an **innovative approach** and developing a deep critical and conscious judgment.



Asimov Prize in other countries

The Italian experience with the Asimov Prize has been replicated in **Brazil**. Participation could be extended to other countries in the world.

Everybody is invited to join!



Conclusions and perspectives

In seven editions since 2016, the **Asimov Prize** has been continuously growing, awarding the authors of popular science best sellers, thanks to a Jury composed of more than 12,000 students from 270+ Italian High Schools.



Edition after edition, the initiative has proved to be **increasingly successful** and is now ready to reach an international relevance, as already experienced in Brazil with encouraging results.

Colleagues from **other countries are invited to join** the Asimov Prize!

The National Committee of the Asimov Prize is already working to select the five finalist books of the **eighth Italian edition**, to be held in 2023.



for your attention!



The "senior" members of the Asimov Prize National Committee

Backup slides

Abstract

This seminar presents the ASIMOV Prize for scientific publishing, born in Italy in 2016. The Prize aims to bring the young generations closer to scientific culture, through the critical reading of popular science books. The books are selected by a committee that includes scientists, professors, Ph.D. and Ph.D. students, writers, journalists and friends of culture, and most importantly, over 800 school teachers. Students are actively involved in the Prize, according to the best practices of public engagement: they read, review the books and vote for them, choosing the winner. The experience is quite successful: 14,000 students from 270 schools all over Italy participated in the last edition.

In this seminar, some crucial issues concerning the ASIMOV Prize are examined: the theme of "Two Cultures", STEM subjects, the so-called gender gap. The possibility of replicating this experience in other countries, as has been done in Brazil – with more than encouraging results – is discussed.

Asimov Prize: organizing bodies and sponsors

