

In memory of his scientific work and to promote young academics, the Family Speidel endows - at the Faculty of Environment and Natural Resources of the University of Freiburg - the

Gerhard Speidel-Prize

For outstanding scientific achievements
in forestry-related economic and social sciences.

Prof. Dr. Gerhard Speidel was one of the outstanding German-speaking forest economists. In 1957, he was appointed as the Chair of Forest Policy and Forest Economics at the Georg-August-University in Göttingen, and changed in 1965 to the Albert-Ludwigs-University Freiburg to the Chair of Forest Management and Forest Economics. With his scientific program, Gerhard Speidel has over decades significantly shaped research and education in the field of forest economics and has laid the foundations of modern forestry-related economic and social sciences through supervision of more than 60 PhD- and habilitation theses. At the same time, he achieved merits through extensive and manifold political consulting and the establishment of the first Brazilian forest faculty in Curitiba.

Target group

The awardees should be distinguished by outstanding scientific research work that can also influence or include practical applications.

We are seeking dedicated forest scientists working in the field of forestry-related economic and social sciences, namely: forest (micro and macro) economics, forest planning, forest management, forest policy, forest governance and related disciplines of social sciences with reference to forestry.

The focus of the research work should be in the field of sustainable forest management following the (Central-) European model, however, research work with an international orientation can also be awarded with this prize.

Design of the prizes

Every year 2 prizes will be awarded:

1. A major prize for an actual (as a rule not older than two years) outstanding PhD- dissertation, habilitation (monography or cumulative work) or a scientific achievement on a comparable level (e.g. DSc) having received an excellent grade. Work that has been written in German or English will be considered. The major prize is endowed with 10.000 Euros.
2. A prize for young academics for an actual, outstanding Master-thesis or scientific work on a comparable level having received an excellent grade. Work that has been written in German or English will be considered. The prize for young academics is endowed with 4.000 Euros.

Decisions about the prize winners and timing of the award ceremony

The prizes will be awarded by a board consisting of the Donor and Professors of the Faculty of Environment and Natural Resources of the Albert-Ludwigs-University of Freiburg, the Georg-August University of Göttingen and the ETH Zürich.

The award ceremony of the prize will take place in the framework program (evening event of the first day) of the „Freiburger Winterkolloquium Forst und Holz“ in the last week of January (Thursday, Friday) each year in Freiburg. Date of the ceremonial act of the year 2025 will be Thursday, 29th of January 2026.

Applications

Potential awardees can apply for the prize by email (all documents attached as pdf) with curriculum vitae, the original scientific work, list of publications (if applicable) and a letter of recommendation of one of the supervisors of the work (either in English or German). Applications should be sent to forecon@ife.uni-freiburg.de.

Deadline for the submission for 2025 is the 15th of December 2025. The successful candidates will be informed end of 2025/beginning of 2026.