

# Laudation

For the 2023 Jean Blondel PhD Prize

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The Jury has this year chosen to award the prize to **Delia Zollinger** for the thesis ***Structural Change, Identity Formation, and Cleavage Consolidation in 21st Century Politics***.

The jury reported the following:

Delia Zollinger's exceptional PhD thesis, entitled *Structural Change, Identity Formation, and Cleavage Consolidation in 21st Century Politics* and defended at the University of Zurich, stands as a pioneering contribution to contemporary political research.

Elegantly crafted, Zollinger's dissertation combines and advances several key strands of scholarship in political science and political psychology, thereby shedding new light on the evolving landscape of electoral politics in the 21st century. The thesis synthesizes and expands upon existing cleavage research and the study of political identities, both theoretically and methodologically.

Zollinger's work not only pushes the boundaries of our current understanding but also introduces fresh perspectives that already resonate strongly in the field.

What sets this dissertation apart is the theoretical nuance it offers combined with innovative and targeted methodology, encompassing a diverse array of observational and experimental survey designs, open survey questions, and text analysis. Zollinger handles original data and methods with skill and precision, interpreting her findings with utmost clarity and meaning.

In sum, Zollinger's thesis serves as a highly valuable reference point for those seeking to comprehend the intricacies of 21st-century electoral dynamics and its structure. We thus clearly see Delia Zollinger's dissertation as a very remarkable achievement that is to have a lasting impact.

**Hana Kubátová (Chair)**

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On behalf of the Jean Blondel Prize Jury  
European Consortium for Political Research