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Sixteen Think Tanks Receive Recognition for Important Work In Advancing Liberty

ARLINGTON, VA -- Think tanks from nine countries have received recognition as winners within the [2008 Templeton Freedom Awards program](#), the [Atlas Economic Research Foundation](#) announced today. Representing four continents, the 16 recipients were chosen from over 170 applications from 58 countries, by an independent panel of expert judges.

Named for the late investor and philanthropist, [Sir John Templeton](#), the awards program was established in 2003 to recognize the contributions of independent think tanks to the understanding of freedom. This year, three new prize categories were added to the program to honor special achievements using *Innovative Media*, by a *University-based Center*, and by a *Young Institute*. These categories complement the program's traditional prizes for developing and promoting *Free-Market Solutions to Poverty*, combining traditional think tank work with *Social Entrepreneurship*, explaining how *Ethics and Values* relate to free competition, reaching new minds through *Student Outreach*, and showing *Initiative in Public Relations*.

The 2008 Templeton Freedom Awards grant a \$10,000 prize to each winner. There are two winners in each category: one represents an "established institute" (older than eight years), and one is an "emerging institute" (eight years or younger). In the *Young Institute* category, restricted to groups less than five years old, one winner is chosen from a developed country, and another from more difficult parts of the world.

[Free Market Solutions to Poverty](#) -- The [Unirule Institute of Economics](#) (China) won as the "established institute" for its sustained efforts to promote marketization of public services in China. Unirule's plan for privatization offers a market alternative that provides better services for consumers and creates transparency in government links to the private sector. The prize for "emerging institutes" was awarded to [Fundación Ecuador Libre](#) (Ecuador) for its *Free Society Development Model* based on individual freedom, private property and rule of law. The FEL program involves educating young leaders, entrepreneurs, and public authorities on topics including: democratic values; NGO and public management; production and trade; and strengthening institutions.

[Social Entrepreneurship](#) -- The "established institute" prize was awarded to [Japanese for Tax Reform](#) (Japan) for its *Local Financial Reform* program. With help from the public awareness spurred by National Taxpayers Day and the translation of *The Road to Serfdom* into Japanese, JTR has spearheaded a campaign for reform with 169 pledges from local politicians. The "emerging institute" winner was [Deep Springs International](#) (USA), a non-profit founded at Grove City College in Pennsylvania. DSI's unique program to increase the availability of safe water in Haiti facilitates the development of locally owned businesses that supply water treatment products at prices that rural Haitians can afford.

[Ethics & Values](#) -- The [American Center for Civic Character](#) (USA) won as the "established institute" for its Better Business Bureau Ethical Enterprising project to fortify free-market business leaders and its *Civil Society Advocacy Tutorial*, leadership developed for Secretary's of State. The four booklet tutorial examines core ethics and stresses the importance of every social institution to fortify future generations to prize and preserve America's core principles. The series includes founding texts such as the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, and the Bill of Rights, and transfers their timeless values into a context for leaders to reference today. As the "emerging institute" winner, the [Polish-American Foundation for Economic Research and Education, PAFERE](#) (Poland), was recognized for its *Magister PAFERE* program, designed to encourage graduate students to study free-market ideas. The program's competition for best thesis by a Masters candidate in economics focuses on subject of freedom and individual responsibility. *Magister PAFERE* is promoted in several Polish periodicals with circulation topping 200,000 readers and has received over 30 theses in its first year.

[Student Outreach](#) -- The [Center for the Dissemination of Economic Knowledge](#) (Venezuela) won as the "established institute" for its *Program for Free Market Economic Education for the Kids and Youth (PFEJ)* which uses storytelling, children's books, movies, and musicals to teach Venezuelan youth the basic principles of a free market economy. At the university level, CEDICE sponsors forums to discuss and debate the merits of socialism versus liberalism and provide academic workshops to deepen students' knowledge of free market economics. [Institut de Formation Politique](#) (France), won the "emerging institute" prize for educating more than 200 of

France's brightest young men and women since 2004 through its *Seminar Program*. IFP selects sixteen top-level students for rigorous weekend seminars, where experts train them in classical liberal and conservative principles and arm them with techniques to effectively implement them in civil society.

[Initiative in Public Relations](#) -- The **[Goldwater Institute](#)** (USA) won as the “established institute” for its media outreach through the Scharf-Norton Center for Constitutional Litigation. Devoted to protecting liberty both in court and in the court of public opinion, the center litigates cases with personal stories to increase media impact and public awareness in areas such as school choice and property rights. **[Institución Futuro](#)** (Spain) was awarded the “emerging institute” prize for its *Tax Freedom Day* campaign and website which allows citizens to calculate how many days each year they work solely to pay taxes and identify the day in which they begin working for themselves. The campaign aims to raise consciousness of the tax burden, remind the population that public services are not free, and encourage citizens to demand fiscal responsibility from policymakers.

[Innovative Media Award](#) – The “established institute” prize was awarded to the **[Reason Foundation](#)** (USA) for accomplishments in communicating the ideas of individual liberty, free markets, and the rule of law through innovative video journalism on their *Reason.tv* website. Since October 2007, Reason has created over 100 original videos, including 20 for the *Drew Carey Project*, their signature series featuring television personality Drew Carey. Offering high production values with carefully researched supporting evidence and expert commentary, Reason.tv videos has been viewed more than 12 million times. The “emerging institute” winner was the **[Institute of Economic and Social Studies](#)** (Slovakia) for their website, *The Price of the State*. This site presents accurate and detailed information on the components of public finance in a manner that is easily comprehensible by a viewer with no economics background. With the goal of increasing public pressure to restrain state expenditures, *The Price of the State* monitors state waste and enables taxpayers to calculate his or her own tax burden.

[Award for Special Achievement by a University-based Center](#) – The **[Mercatus Center at George Mason University](#)** (USA) won the prize as the “established institute” for its *Crisis and Response in the Wake of Hurricane Katrina* project. Now in its third year, the project has attracted over 20 scholars and graduate students to monitor the response and recovery efforts, assess the effectiveness of the rebuilding efforts, and explain the role of free enterprise and civil society play in preparedness and response to future crises. The “emerging institute” prize went to the **[Political Theory Project at Brown University](#)** (USA) for its dedication in promoting intellectual diversity at Brown. With its mission to invigorate the study of institutions and ideas that make societies free, prosperous, and fair, the PTP broadens and deepens the discussion of social and political issues on campus. The Project sponsors a variety of activities including: new courses for undergraduates; open seminar discussions; public lectures featuring speakers with contrasting viewpoints; fellowships for graduate students; support for faculty research; and a postdoctoral research associates program.

[Award for Special Achievement by a Young Institute](#) – The **[Prometheus Institute](#)** (USA) receives the prize for its three well-designed initiatives to advance liberty in the United States. The *Upgrade Social Security* initiative is dedicated to helping the idea of private Social Security accounts gain political traction among younger generations. The *Do-It-Yourself Democracy* initiative promotes local government activism, term limits reform, and campaign finance deregulation by empowering the public with the tools, knowledge and resources to help change their government for the better. Lastly, the *People for the American Dream* is a campaign to help citizens recognize that the foundation of the “American Dream” is built on classical liberalism. The effort promotes the expansion of the traditional concept of entrepreneurial capitalism and provides tips on ways to enhance economic and social independence. The other prize winner is the **[Instituto Juan de Mariana](#)** (Spain), being recognized for its multi-faceted approach that includes: hosting a Summer University; offering Masters of Austrian Economics degrees; managing a student essay contest and publication program; creating the *Medicina en Libertad Project*; and establishing *The Economic Business Cycle Center*.

Atlas is hosting a **[Templeton Freedom Awards conference](#)** to feature the winners on November 13, 2008 at the Renaissance Mayflower Hotel in Washington D.C. The program will include TFA winners presenting on the *Moral Imperative of Economic Freedom* and *Innovation in Promoting Liberty*.

The Atlas Economic Research Foundation (www.atlasUSA.org) has been supporting independent think tanks that promote the free society for more than 25 years. Atlas currently works with more than 250 think tanks in 80 countries. More than half of these organizations were assisted in their formative years by Atlas through financial support or advisory services. The Templeton Freedom Awards program was launched in 2003 with funding from the **[John Templeton Foundation](#)**, with more than \$1.25 million in prizes and grants distributed. The program utilizes a prestigious **[panel of independent judges](#)** to identify outstanding work by independent research institutes.