

# CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE 20TH BREMEN SOLIDARITY AWARD 2027

## AUTHORITARIAN NATIONALISM AS A THREAT TO DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM AND THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

The international Bremen Solidarity Award for Democracy and Human Rights is awarded every two years by the Senate of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen. Thanks to a private donation, the award is endowed with € 10,000. It aims to encourage and honour individuals and initiatives that advocate for human rights and democracy and against the legacies of colonialism and racism.

In addition to the prize money, a key component of the Bremen Solidarity Award is the networking of the laureates with key figures and organizations from politics and civil society in Bremen, as well as in Berlin or Brussels. This is organised as part of a guided networking trip.

The 20th Bremen Solidarity Award seeks to honour civil society initiatives, umbrella organisations or individuals who, in their national context and/or through international cooperation, offer a sign of hope for the future through their fight for democracy, a strong civil society, freedom of expression and of the press, against hatred and incitement, against disinformation and for respectful interaction with one another, while promoting respectful, fact-based public discourse.

We are primarily looking for actors from the Global South, who creatively and innovatively oppose authoritarian nationalism within fragile democracies or autocratic regimes and stand up to it through their commitment. This commitment may address various fields of action such as the fight against shrinking space for civil society, for freedom of expression and of the press, access to information and the fight against disinformation, tax justice and holding national governments to account, as well as the promotion of democracy. Nominations for initiatives led by young people or young activists are particularly welcome.

At a time of particularly crisis-ridden international relations and growing uncertainty, nationalist sentiments and authoritarian movements are on the rise in many countries worldwide. This affects societies in both the northern and southern hemispheres, industrialised nations as well as countries of the Global South.

In many countries, we are witnessing the advance of an authoritarian form of nationalism. Movements such as 'My Country First' deliberately oppose the established international legal order and multilateralism. By questioning international organisations and the value of international cooperation they unsettle not only their own populations but also friendly nations and states. In doing so, they willingly accept the disadvantages this causes for other countries. National interests and 'the right of the strongest' are pitted against international solidarity and the interests of partners; political processes are undermined; the separation of powers is disregarded; targeted disinformation campaigns are carried out and put democracy under an existential threat.

This clear trend, driven by major powers with far-reaching influence, not only poses a massive threat to democracy, freedom of expression and freedom of the press within their own countries, but also leads to negative social change. It brutalises public debate by normalising a culture of disparagement and hatred. Authoritarian nationalism also undermines established legal mechanisms and structures once believed to be secure and undermines the fundamental values of the multilateral world order. The resulting economic fallout hits vulnerable countries in the Global South particularly hard.

Against this backdrop, positive examples and signs of hope for the promotion and preservation of democracy, rule of law, freedom of expression and of the press, government accountability, a strong civil society and multilateral cooperation are of particular importance and will be the focus of the 20th Bremen Solidarity Award.

The award is also intended to ensure that the publicity generated can contribute to the protection of the laureate or the award-winning organisation or initiative.

Reasoned proposals for possible awardees may be submitted until **30 September 2026**. An online nomination form is available for this purpose. Self-nominations cannot be accepted. If you have any queries, please contact:

Office of the Advisory Committee for the Bremen Solidarity Award

c/o Senate Chancellery, Free Hanseatic City of Bremen

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Further information on the Bremen Solidarity Award can be found at:

[www.solidaritaetspreis.bremen.de](http://www.solidaritaetspreis.bremen.de)



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