

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
9 June, 2022

Contacts: Ole Sandmo
(+47) 98 00 18 78
ole.sandmo@uib.no

The Holberg Prize conferred upon Professor Sheila Jasanoff

(Bergen, Norway) – Today, the Holberg Prize was conferred upon Professor Sheila Jasanoff, of Harvard Kennedy School, by HRH Crown Prince Haakon of Norway.

At a prestigious award ceremony today in the University Aula in Bergen, Professor Sheila Jasanoff received the international research award from HRH Crown Prince Haakon of Norway.

The Holberg Prize is worth NOK 6 million (approx. USD 650,000) and is awarded annually for outstanding contributions to research in the humanities, social sciences, law or theology.

“It is a humbling experience to stand here today as the 2022 Holberg Prize Laureate,” said Jasanoff, “not only because I follow in the footsteps of so many distinguished predecessors, but because I am called upon to represent a set of concerns and a field of study of such immediacy and salience that no one person could possibly be up to the task of expressing what this award means for us at this time in our collective history.”

In a career spanning more than four decades, Jasanoff has come to be regarded as a pioneer in the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS), which examines the creation, development, and consequences of science and technology in their historical, cultural, and social contexts. Her research has made her one of the world's leading contemporary scholars at the nexus of science, technology, law, democratic theory, and public policy.

In her acceptance speech, Jasanoff described how researchers in the academic fields covered by the Holberg Prize must take on their role as “critical thinkers and as purposive, moral agents.” This, she stated, “has never seemed more urgent or challenging than now, as we confront the layered catastrophes of a receding pandemic, climate change, resource depletion, economic inequality, political polarization, and the rise of extremism and violence.”

Jasanoff explained how the global problems of our time have made it necessary to “revisit the fundamental questions of what we know and how we know it every bit as earnestly as during the great periods of religious reform in the past, only this time from a free-thinking, secular perspective.” The Laureate asserted how questioning the foundations of collective knowledge requires us to ask “not only how do *I* know, but how do *we* as social formations know, from family to ethnic group to nation states and the entire globe?”

About the Laureate

Since 2002, Sheila Jasanoff has been the Pforzheimer Professor of Science and Technology Studies at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, where she was Professor of Science and Public Policy from 1998 to 2002. She is an Affiliate of the Department of the History of Science and Visiting Professor at Harvard Law School. At Harvard, Jasanoff founded and still directs the Kennedy School’s Program on Science, Technology and Society. Previously, she was Founding Chair of the STS Department at Cornell University. In 2002, she founded the Science and Democracy Network, an international community of STS scholars dedicated to



improving scholarly understanding of the relationships among science, technology, law, and political power.

Jasanoff was previously Professor (1990–1998), Associate Professor (1984–1989) and Research Associate (1978–1984) at Cornell University. From 1976 to 1978, she practiced environmental law as an associate with Bracken, Selig and Baram. Jasanoff has been Visiting Professor at Tel Aviv Law School (2017), London School of Economics (2016), Paris Sciences et Lettres (2014), University of Cambridge (2005–2007), Kyoto University (1999), Harvard University (1995), and Yale University (1990–1991), as well as Distinguished Visiting Professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2009), Honorary Visiting Professor at University of Sussex (2007), Karl W. Deutsch Guest Professor at Social Science Center Berlin (2004), and Adjunct Professor at Boston University (1993).

Jasanoff has served on the American Association for the Advancement of Science’s Board of Directors and as President of the Society for Social Studies of Science. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, as well as a foreign member of the British Academy and the Royal Danish Academy. She is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Her honors include the Social Science Research Council’s Hirschman prize, the Humboldt Foundation’s Reimar-Lüst award, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, as well as honorary degrees from the Universities of Twente and Liège.

About the Holberg Prize

Established by the Norwegian Parliament in 2003, the Holberg Prize is one of the largest annual international research prizes awarded to scholars who have made outstanding contributions to research in the humanities, social science, law or theology. The Prize is funded by the Norwegian Government through a direct allocation from the Ministry of Education and Research to the University of Bergen. Previous Laureates include Julia Kristeva, Jürgen Habermas, Manuel Castells, Onora O’Neill, Cass Sunstein, Paul Gilroy, Griselda Pollock and Martha Nussbaum. To learn more about the Holberg Prize and the call for nominations, visit: <https://holbergprize.org/en>.

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