

Introduction Two years ago the European Chapter of the International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers ("IAML") established an Essay-writing Award for young family lawyers, to be awarded on an annual basis. 2011 and 2012 were the first years and were a great success. The Award aims to promote research and excellence among young family lawyers and to increase awareness among other legal professionals of the work and objectives of the IAML. The Essay will address a topic of relevance to the IAML and European family lawyers, typically with an international dimension and/or requiring analysis of recent or planned developments.

Prize The annual Award consists of a prize of €1,000 to the author of the winning Essay and, for the first time this year, €500 for each of the two best runners-up. The main Award will be presented at the Annual Meeting of the European Chapter to be held in Salzburg, Austria from 22 to 26 May 2013. The winning Essay will be announced approximately two months prior to that meeting. The winning author will also receive a travel bursary of up to €2,000 to allow him/her to travel to and attend the meeting.

Selection A panel composed of European Chapter Fellows from a number of jurisdictions will be responsible for the selection of the winning Essay (and the runners-up). The winning Essay will be chosen according to originality, the importance and complexity of the legal issues involved, the relevance of the subject matter to the IAML, any research undertaken and the structure, writing style and presentation.

This year's Competition Essay Title

Is it possible to devise a pre-nuptial agreement which will prove effective throughout Europe - identify positives and pitfalls?

Subject Matter This year's topic will require you to analyse the technical problems, and to make proposals for possible solutions, in drafting international marriage contracts and pre-nuptial agreements. Whether from your national standpoint European family law at present appears to be converging or diverging, what minimum requirements for an effective international pre-nuptial agreement would you stipulate? Examples of draft provisions you consider universally acceptable and desirable should be included.

The Essay should be not less than 2,000 words and should not exceed 3,000 words in length (excluding footnotes). Although the working language of Academy Meetings is English, for the purposes of this award essays written in any language will be welcome.

Eligibility Entrants must be qualified and practising family lawyers of up to ten years qualification and/or experience who reside and practise in a European country.

Publication The winning Essay will be published on the IAML website and also in the IAML Newsletter. The entry should not have been published or be under consideration for publication elsewhere, although it can subsequently be published elsewhere with appropriate reference to the IAML. The invitation to apply will be published on the IAML website and all Fellows of the European Chapter will receive a notice to circulate details and highlight awareness of the Award in their respective jurisdictions.

Time Deadlines Essays for consideration in respect of this third annual award should be submitted no later than 31 January 2013, and should be sent electronically to Donna Goddard of the IAML at donna.goddard@iaml.org.