

## **Support letter of International Association for Neo-Latin Studies (IANLS)**

Dear Mr. Secretary-General of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences,

Along with my fellow members of the Executive Committee of the International Association for Neo-Latin Studies (IANLS), I watch the current developments of the academic sphere in Hungary with genuine concern. The “program of excellence” launched by the Hungarian Ministry for Innovation and Technology on January 31, 2019, according to which the research network of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has to apply for its basic funding, created a situation where the further functioning of this well-established and internationally renowned institution seems to be impossible. In spite of the growing popularity of project-based funding for research institutions, we know of no other examples where the financial backing for the maintenance of the entire institutional framework, including basic costs, such as heating, electricity, the salaries of the institution’s administrative staff and auxiliary personnel would have to be fully covered from competitive research grants. The fact that the assessment procedure of the tenders for this “program of excellence” is unclear leaves space for justified concerns whether the decision would be based on academic merit. It is our firm conviction that the freedom of academic life from political interest is one of the pillars of a functioning democracy and vigorous intellectual inquiry. The entire Executive Committee of IANLS looks back with gratitude and respect at the generous hospitality and the inspiring intellectual fervor our Association was privileged to experience in 2006, when the Hungarian Academy of Sciences acted as host of our XIIIth International Congress. Therefore, we express our firm support for the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and trust that the integrity of this research institution with its venerable traditions and promising potential be preserved, and that the autonomy of scientific research in Hungary be further maintained.

Professor Dr. Marc Laureys

University of Bonn,

President of the International Association for Neo-Latin Studies (IANLS)