

Secularist of the Year 2013

Secularist of the Year 2013

Tickets are no longer on sale for this event. For any enquiries please call 020 7404 3126.

The Irwin Prize for Secularist of the Year award is presented annually in recognition of an individual or an organisation considered to have made an outstanding contribution to the secular movement. The award is kindly sponsored by NSS honorary associate Dr. Michael Irwin.

Previous winners include Peter Tatchell, Sophie in 't Veld MEP, Southall Black Sisters, and Evan Harris MP with Lord Avebury.

This year's prize will be presented by Michael Cashman MEP CBE on Saturday 23 March at a lunch in central London.

This year's nominations for this year's award are:

Jacque Berlinerblau – for his book *How to be secular: A call to arms for religious freedom* and for broadening the appeal of secularism by dispelling the misconception that it synonymous with atheism.

British Muslims for a Secular Democracy – for raising awareness within British Muslims and the wider public, of democracy – particularly 'secular democracy', helping to contribute to a shared vision of citizenship.

Carlos Celdran – Performance artist and political/cultural activist in the Philippines, for his tireless challenges to the privileged Catholic Church there, particularly in his advocacy for gay health and freedom, and for the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012 which guarantees universal access to methods of contraception, fertility control, sexual education, and maternal care – long opposed by the Catholic church.

The Dalai Lama – for his promotion of secular ethics beyond religion and respect for nonbelievers globally.

Oliver Kamm – Leader writer and columnist for *The Times*, for his regular and excellent defence of the separation of Church and State.

Malala Yousafzai – for campaigning for girls' education in the face of violent and brutal Islamist opposition.

Previous winners

2012 ? Peter Tatchell, for his lifelong commitment to the defence of human rights against religious fundamentalism (presented by Nick Cohen)

2011 ? Sophie in 't Veld MEP, for her work as chair of the European Parliamentary Platform for

Secularism in Politics (presented by A. C. Grayling)

2010 ? The Southall Black Sisters group, for their support of black and Asian women's human rights (presented by Michael Irwin, accepted by Pragna Patel)

2009 ? Evan Harris MP and Lord Avebury, joint award for their work in the abolition of blasphemy law (presented by Richard Dawkins)

2007 ? Mina Ahadi, founder of the German Central Council of Ex-Muslims (presented by Joan Smith)

2006 ? Steve Jones, biologist at University College London and author of a number of books on evolution (presented by Lord Taverne)

2005 ? Maryam Namazie, for her work in defence of women's rights and the right to freedom of expression (presented by Polly Toynbee)

[See photos from Secularist of the Year 2012](#)

[See photos from Secularist of the Year 2011](#)

[See photos from Secularist of the Year 2010](#)

[See photos from Secularist of the Year 2009](#)