10 2014

Petition - Everyone Should Have a Right to Philosophy

Save the Collège international de philosophie

The Collegial Assembly of the Collège international de philosophie

In November 2014, if an arm of the state does not decide to intervene, the *Collège international de philosophie* will close its doors after 30 years of activity and production in substantial international networks. A space of experimentation, of innovative research and original training, will disappear. The blade of the Ministry of Research has fallen: a subsidy of 240,000 Euros is about to be eliminated. The *Collège* needs this sum immediately in order to pay the four salaried employees of its administrative unit who, without this, will be unemployed. It needs it for its minimal subsistence, in order to support the activities, in France and abroad, of 50 unpaid program directors.

A non-profit association, recognized as being of public benefit, the *Collège international de philosophie* was born in 1983 from the union of the political will of the French state and an unconditional demand for thought, brought forth by intellectuals and philosophers, including François Châtelet, Jacques Derrida, Jean-

Pierre Faye and Dominique Lecourt. Along side institutions of higher learning and research, the *Collège* has always fulfilled its commitments. It does not defend any official philosophic program. It develops its activities with derisory means, if one compares them to the number and the quality of its activities as well as to their impact on intellectual live, philosophy and the human sciences. Without any other condition than the demand to think, it favors exchanges between philosophers, intellectuals, writers, scientists, artists, and with civil society. It participates in the construction of a public space in which critical thinking can take place and renew itself in complete freedom, overcoming national, linguistic and disciplinary boundaries.

Last year, it offered 720 hours of free, public seminars. It organized conferences, colloquia, and debates with authors on their books. With four issues per year, its review *Rue Descartes*, entirely online for free consultation, has seen its readership continue to climb.

The *Collège* is henceforth an associate member of the *Université Paris Lumières*, composed of the *Universités Paris 8* and *Ouest Nanterre*, the *CNRS* and other institutions. The subsidy promised by the Ministry of Research via the *Université Paris Lumières* has in the
end—and without explanation—not been paid. This places the *Collège* on the verge of bankruptcy.

We request that the "Research" finance plan of 240,000 Euros per year, which allows the *Collège* to function, be maintained. In the name of the right that everyone has to philosophy, in a democratic society, we also request that these conditions for the life of the *Collège* be made permanent.

Does there exist today in France a clear political will, which is ready to commit itself to the defense of free and ambitious research? Our wish is that the *Collège*, for years to come, host other generations of thinkers, from around the world, working for the production of free and critical thought that is open to all.

Paris, October 17, 2014
The Collegial Assembly of the *Collège international de philosophie*
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Please sign the online petition: https://www.change.org/p/sauvons-le-coll%C3%A8ge-international-de-philosophie-pour-le-droit-%C3%A0-la-philosophie-pour-tous