

# Interview – Economist’s Look to Creativity

**Maskin, Eric**

## **1. How you define inventivity and creativity?**

Inventiveness/creativity in science is the ability to recognize a previously unseen connection between different ideas or phenomena.

## **2. What was the major catalyst which enabled the inventivity to happen in the case of invention that brought the Nobel Prize to you?**

My work was in mechanism design, the branch of economics that studies how to design institutions for achieving social goals. What I did was to provide a criterion for determining which

goals can be implemented by mechanisms and which cannot. I discovered this criterion by trying out lots of examples and then recognizing a pattern.

## **3. For small nations (like Montenegro or Serbia), what are the things to do to induce inventivity and creativity among young people?**

I think the best way to encourage inventiveness in young people in Serbia and Montenegro is the way to encourage inventiveness anywhere else: make a significant investment in good schools.

## **About the Author**

Eric Stark Maskin (born December 12, 1950) is an American economist and Nobel laureate recognized with Leonid Hurwicz and Roger Myerson "for having laid the foundations of mechanism design theory." He is the Albert O. Hirschman Professor of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study, and a visiting lecturer with the rank of Professor at Princeton University.