



Australian Government

Chief Scientist

MEDIA RELEASE

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CELEBRATING EVERY LETTER OF STEM

Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Alan Finkel, has applauded the breadth of scientific endeavour recognised in the 2019 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science, celebrating achievements across the full spectrum of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

"The S in STEM is science – but it's often impossible to disentangle new scientific breakthroughs from the T, E and M that make them possible," Dr Finkel said.

"Where would our new anti-cancer drugs be, without the rigorous scientific trials to prove their effectiveness? How do you program self-adapting headphones to improve your hearing, without technology and engineering to make them tangible? Or the complex mathematics of group theory, central to secure banking, digital signatures and secure internet communication."

"From the development of breakthrough molecular imaging tools, and the discovery of new immune cells: the winners of this year's Prime Minister's Prizes for Science showcase the multidisciplinary nature of science today."

Dr Finkel said the prizes also recognised some of Australia's biggest advocates for the STEM subjects: school science teachers.

"It's more important than ever that we ensure our children are STEM literate: that they have the tools to navigate tomorrow's world with confidence and curiosity," Dr Finkel said.

"And in this endeavour, there's no one as deserving of praise as our exceptional primary and secondary school teachers. Their passion inspires their students in turn to challenge themselves, follow their interests, and engage in the STEM subjects.

"As the Chair of the Judging Committee, it's been my privilege and challenge to see so many wonderful examples of great Australian science. I thank the members of the committee for their tireless efforts in considering the truly exceptional Australian scientists and innovators nominated for this year's awards."

The 2019 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science were presented to recipients across seven categories, who shared in \$750,000 prize money. Further information about the prizes is available at www.science.gov.au/pm-science-prizes.

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The 2019 recipients of the Prime Minister's Prizes for Science are:

Prime Minister's Prize for Science:

Emeritus Professor Cheryl Praeger AM, The University of Western Australia

Prime Minister's Prize for Innovation:

Professor David Huang, Professor Andrew Roberts, Professor Guillaume Lessene and Associate Professor Peter Czabotar, Walter & Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research

Frank Fenner Prize for Life Scientist of the Year:

Associate Professor Laura Mackay, The University of Melbourne

Malcolm McIntosh Prize for Physical Scientist of the Year:

Associate Professor Elizabeth New, The University of Sydney

Prize for New Innovators

Dr Luke Campbell, Nura Operations Pty Ltd, Victoria

Prime Minister's Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in Primary Schools:

Mrs Sarah Finney, Stirling East Primary School, South Australia

Prime Minister's Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in Secondary Schools:

Dr Samantha Moyle, Brighton Secondary School, South Australia