



Australian Government

Chief Scientist

MEDIA RELEASE

18 OCTOBER 2017

CELEBRATING SMALL SCIENCE WITH BIG IMPACT

The Australian science community has celebrated big discoveries on the smallest of scales at the presentation of the 2017 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science.

Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Alan Finkel, said the Australian scientists and innovators were all about dreaming big – even when their work was only visible by microscope.

"When we think of the undiscovered reaches of science, it's easy to look to the vast frontiers of space travel or the deep oceans to fuel our imagination," he said.

"But as this year's Prime Minister's Prizes for Science remind us that great things often come in small packages, and have enormous impact on our lives.

"From understanding chromosome control systems; proteins to repair tooth damage; new genetic data techniques; and microscopes that can see individual molecules inside living cells, the 2017 Prizes recognise big breakthroughs played out on a tiny canvas.

"The Prizes also recognise the incredible role played by teachers, who understand that from little things, big things grow! Great teachers provide fertile ground for our children to become tomorrow's great scientists and innovators in turn."

Dr Finkel said the Prizes showcased the enormous strength and dedication of the Australian science community.

"As Chair of the science prizes selection committee, it was a pleasure to see the incredible depth and breadth of Australian science through the lens of the many outstanding nominations received," he said.

"I'd also like to thank the members of the committee for their tireless efforts, as we faced the welcome challenge of considering each exceptional candidate."

The 2017 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science were presented to recipients across six categories, who shared in \$700,000 prize money. Further information about the prizes is available at www.science.gov.au/pmscienceprizes.

Media enquiries: 0410 029 407 or communications@chiefscientist.gov.au.

The 2017 recipients of the Prime Minister's Prizes for Science are:

Prime Minister's Prize for Science:

Distinguished Professor Jenny Graves AO, La Trobe University

Prime Minister's Prize for Innovation:

Laureate Professor Eric Reynolds AO, The University of Melbourne / Oral Health CRC

Frank Fenner Prize for Life Scientist of the Year:

Professor Jian Yang, The University of Queensland

Malcolm McIntosh Prize for Physical Scientist of the Year:

Professor Dayong Jin, University of Technology Sydney

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

Mr Neil Bramsen, Mount Ousley Public School, Wollongong

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

Mr Brett McKay, Kirrawee High School, Sydney