

Whitehead Prize: citation for Jonathan Evans

Short citation:

Dr Jonathan Evans of the University of Lancaster is awarded a Whitehead Prize for his contributions to symplectic topology and its relation to algebraic geometry. Among his achievements is an innovative study (with Smith and Urzua) of Wahl singularities from the symplectic viewpoint.

Long citation:

Dr Jonathan Evans of the University of Lancaster is awarded a Whitehead Prize for his contributions to symplectic topology and its relation to algebraic geometry.

Evans has been a leader in exploring the relation between symplectic four-manifolds and algebraic surfaces. This started with early work on symplectic automorphisms of Del Pezzo surfaces. More recently, Evans and Smith have shown that symplectic topology can explain the occurrence of Markov numbers in the context of degenerations of the complex projective plane. On the other hand, Evans and Urzua have used the theory of degenerations of surfaces of general type to obtain an interesting embedding result in symplectic topology.

Evans and Lekili have made an important contribution to the understanding of Fukaya categories for manifolds with Hamiltonian group actions, as well as pioneering work using Lagrangian Floer cohomology with modulo p coefficients. This is only a sample; Evans has contributed to many questions in symplectic topology and adjacent areas, using a wide range of methods (direct geometric constructions; the geometry and analysis of pseudo-holomorphic curves; and Floer cohomology and its more algebraic aspects).