



THE INSTITUTE OF
MATHEMATICS AND ITS
APPLICATIONS

The London
Mathematical
Society



Media release

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For immediate release

Recognising mathematics communicators

The first award dedicated to recognising excellence in the communication of mathematics has been launched by the London Mathematical Society and the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications, the Christopher Zeeman Medal.

The LMS and IMA want to honour mathematicians who have excelled in promoting mathematics and engaging with the general public. They may be academic mathematicians based in universities, mathematics school teachers, industrial mathematicians, those working in the financial sector or indeed mathematicians from any number of other fields.

Most importantly, these mathematicians will have worked exceptionally to bring mathematics to a non-specialist audience. Whether it is through giving public lectures, writing books, appearing on radio or television, organising events or through an entirely separate medium, the LMS and IMA want to celebrate the achievements of mathematicians who work to inspire others.

In a joint statement, the presidents of the LMS and IMA said, "We are delighted to be able to show how much we need and value mathematicians who can promote their subject successfully. This role is vital to inspiring the next generation of mathematicians as well as helping the wider public to enjoy mathematics."

The award is named after Professor Sir Christopher Zeeman, FRS, whose notable career was pioneering not only in his fields of topology and catastrophe theory but who was also ground breaking in bringing his beloved mathematics to the wider public.

Sir Christopher was the first mathematician to be asked to deliver the Royal Institution Christmas Lectures in 1978, a full 160 years since they began. His "Mathematics into pictures" lectures, have been cited by many young UK mathematicians as their inspiration. They also led to the creation of the Ri's Mathematics Masterclasses, weekly lectures delivered to schoolchildren across the UK via a network of 50 centres.

Sir Christopher's skill as a communicator has been recognised in the wider community. In 1988, he was the third recipient of the Royal Society's Faraday Prize, awarded annually to a scientist or engineer who has excelled in communicating science to public audiences. His award was made "for the contributions he has made to the popularization of mathematics".

On the announcement of the medal, Sir Christopher said, "I am extremely honoured to have such an important award bear my name. I hope this medal will encourage more mathematicians to see communicating their work to the wider public as a key part of their role."

Nominations for the medal are now invited. To receive a nomination form, please contact:

The Secretary to the Christopher Zeeman Medal
London Mathematical Society
De Morgan House
57-58 Russell Square
London
WC1B 4HS

or email prizes@lms.ac.uk. Forms should be returned by February 2008.

Notes for Editors

1. The **Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA)** is the professional and learned society for qualified and practising mathematicians. Its mission is to promote mathematics in industry, business, the public sector, education and research. Founded in 1964, the Institute now has 5500 members. Ten percent of members live outside the United Kingdom. Forty percent of members are employed in education (schools through to universities), and the other 60% work in commercial and governmental organisations. In 1990 the Institute was incorporated by Royal Charter and was subsequently granted the right to award chartered mathematician status.
2. The **London Mathematical Society (LMS)** is the UK's learned society for mathematics. Founded in 1865 for the promotion and extension of mathematical knowledge, the Society is concerned with all branches of mathematics and its applications. It is an independent and self-financing charity, with a membership of over 2600 drawn from all parts of the UK and overseas. Its principal activities are the organisation of meetings and conferences, the publication of periodicals and books, the provision of financial support for mathematical activities, and the contribution to public debates on issues related to mathematics research and education. It works collaboratively with other mathematical bodies worldwide. It is the UK adhering body to the International Mathematical Union and is a member of the Council for the Mathematical Sciences, which comprises the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications, the Royal Statistical Society together with the London Mathematical Society.
3. The **Christopher Zeeman Medal** was instituted by the IMA and LMS in honour of Professor Sir Christopher Zeeman FRS, President of the LMS between 1986 and 1988. The Medal is awarded triennially to an eminent mathematician involved in promoting mathematics to the public and engaging with the public in mathematics in the UK.

Since Sir Christopher, two mathematicians have given the Ri Christmas lectures: in 1997, Professor Ian Stewart spoke on "The Magical Maze" and last year Professor Marcus du Sautoy spoke on "The Num8er My5teries".

Sir Christopher became Gresham professor of geometry at Gresham College in 1988, where he delivered a programme of free public lectures on mathematics. He retired from this post in 1994.

He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) in 1975.

4. For further information contact:

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