

10 February 2009



ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
incorporated in the ACT

Nominations open for astronomy communication award

Entries are now open for the David Allen Prize, awarded by the Astronomical Society of Australia (ASA) for exceptional achievement in astronomy communication.

“The David Allen Prize rewards those who work hard to explain the amazing stories of astronomical discovery and who share their knowledge with the wider public” says ASA President, Professor Warrick Couch. “I encourage all interested astronomers, science communicators, journalists, documentary makers and academics to enter and show the important role they play in building an understanding of astronomy amongst the public.”

The Prize is particularly important in 2009, as the world celebrates the International Year of Astronomy and 400 years since Galileo first turned a telescope to the sky.

Previous winners of the David Allen Prize are: Australia’s most experienced astro-journalist Jonathan Nally (2001) and Professor Fred Watson (2003), Astronomer-in-Charge at the Anglo-Australia Telescope and highly-renowned author and guest speaker.

The International Year of Astronomy aims to reconnect people with the night sky and highlights the contributions astronomy has made to our society and culture.

“Throughout history astronomy has been responsible for some of the most significant changes to the course of humanity and the way we see ourselves” said Nally. “But it’s not enough for scientists to make their breakthroughs and increase their own knowledge. Those breakthroughs must be shared with the wider world.”

The Prize is named in honour of David Allen, who was a highly innovative and prolific astronomer. He was among the founding group of astronomers at the Anglo-Australian Observatory and worked there from 1975 until his untimely death in 1994, at the age of 47. He was the winner of the 1993 Eureka Prize for the Promotion of Science.

In 2009, the judging panel for the David Allen Prize includes Jonathan Nally and Dr Graham Phillips, astrophysicist and Presenter of ABC TV’s Catalyst. Closing date for nominations is 23 March 2009 and entry details can be found at: asa.astronomy.org.au/DAP

The Prize consists of a plaque together with an award of \$5,000. Presentation of the Prize will occur at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the ASA to be held in Melbourne in July 2009.

For further information, interviews and images please contact:

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