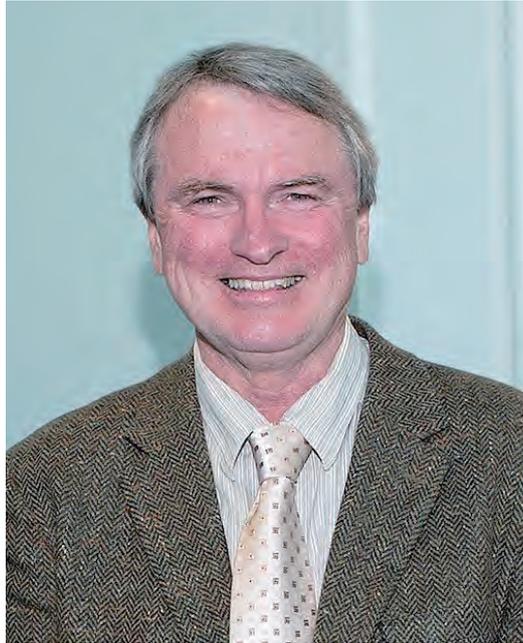

Society News

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS



Prof. David McClelland.

DAVID MCCLELLAND AWARDED 2017 BOAS MEDAL

AIP Fellow Professor David McClelland (Australian National University) has been awarded the AIP's 2017 Boas Medal for his role in the first detection of gravitational waves and for securing Australia's place in the international collaboration that made it possible.

David and his group at ANU were invited to join the LIGO project in 2009. In the following years, David devised new stabilisers to dampen out spurious vibrations, as well as high-precision mirrors. His refinements brought LIGO's instruments up to the astonishing level of sensitivity that allowed the successful September 2015 detection of a black hole merger one billion light years away, a watershed moment in the history of physics.

As a result of David's leadership and vision Australia became the fourth member of the international coalition responsible for the discovery. Today, he continues to lead the Australian effort as Advanced Detector Chair of the LIGO Collaboration, where he is currently overseeing the implementation of new quantum optics that could double the detector's reach.

The Walter Boas Medal, which promotes excellence in physics research over the previous five years, is given annually to an AIP member resident in Australia and was established in 1984 to perpetuate the memory of Australian metallurgist Walter Boas.



Professor Michelle Simmons (photo credit: Salty Dingo).

MICHELLE SIMMONS NAMED 2018 AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR

AIP Fellow Michelle Simmons, Professor of Physics at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) and Director of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Quantum Computation and Communication Technology, CQC2T, based at UNSW, has been named 2018 Australian of the Year in recognition of her pioneering research and inspiring leadership in quantum computing.

As Centre Director, she leads a team of more than 200 researchers at eight Australian universities who are developing a suite of technologies for quantum computing, information storage and communications. Professor Simmons' research group is the only one in the world that can manipulate individual atoms to make atomically precise electronic devices. Her team at CQC2T is leading the world in the race to develop a quantum computer in silicon.

Last year, she also established Australia's first quantum computing company, bringing together representatives of governments, industry and universities in a unique A\$83 million consortium based at UNSW to develop and commercialise the Centre's world-leading research.

2018 AIP NATIONAL CONGRESS

Every two years the Australian Institute of Physics holds a National Congress. The 2018 Congress will be held in Perth, Western Australia, 9-14 December, and will be held jointly with the Australian Optical Society Conference, the 43rd Australian Conference on Optical Fibre Technology and the 2018 Conference on Optoelectronic and Microelectronic Materials and Devices. For more information see: www.aip2018.org.au.