

THE KAVLI PRIZE

International Stars of Science visiting Norway

H.M. King Harald will present the Kavli Prize 2024 to eight of the world's leading scientists in Oslo Concert Hall on September 3rd. Among them is Robert Langer, co-founder of the pharmaceutical giant Moderna.

The Kavli Prize is awarded to scientists in the fields of Astrophysics, Neuroscience, and Nanoscience. The prize money totals three million dollars.

Moderna Founder

Among the Kavli Prize laureates 2024 is the scientist behind one of the greatest success stories in medical research. When Robert S. Langer finished his chemical engineering degree in 1974, he received lucrative job offers from several oil companies. However, he chose a different path and used his engineering expertise to revolutionize medical research. He was the first to develop nanomaterials that enabled medicine to gradually release active ingredients in the body. He had a key role in developing the mRNA vaccine and in the founding of Moderna – the company behind one of the most widely used COVID vaccines.

Langer receives the 2024 Kavli Prize in Nanoscience along with Armand Paul Alivisatos and Chad A. Mirkin. They have also contributed with important research on nanoparticles for medical use, in particular for diagnostic purposes.

Searching for Life on Other Planets

The search for planets outside our solar system (exoplanets) is currently the hottest topic on the research front in astrophysics. Pioneers Sara Seager and David Charbonneau receive the Kavli Prize in Astrophysics for discovering exoplanets and mapping their atmospheres. They are looking for signs of life on other planets. According to Sara Seager, there has so far been found 5,030 exoplanets and 187 planets in habitable zones in the universe, but no habitable planets – yet.

Brain Researcher Cycled to Tromsø

What happens in the brain when we recognize a face? The Kavli Prize in Neuroscience goes to three scientists who have shed light on this: Nancy Kanwisher was the first to show that the brain has a specific area for facial recognition. Doris Ying Tsao and Winrich Freiwald have since mapped this function further, even on a cellular level.

Nancy Kanwisher is familiar with Norway: She first came to the country as a child when her

father was on a research stay. At 17, she wanted to visit him in Tromsø and got there from Amsterdam by bicycle and train. Now she returns, to receive one of the world's most prestigious scientific prizes.

An All-Star Team for Science

H.M. King Harald is the honorary president of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters and has participated in many Academy events over the years. In the upcoming Kavli Week His Majesty will be presenting the Kavli Prize to the Laureates in Oslo Concert Hall on September 3rd (at 2 PM) and attend the Government Banquet in Oslo City Hall the same evening.

Masters of ceremony are Selda Ekiz, physicist and science communicator known from NRK, and Jim Al-Khalili, quantum physicist and science communicator known from BBC. Barratt Due Institute of Music will provide a full junior orchestra – and eight timpani.

The Laureates with their families and over 500 guests are invited to the Government banquet. Among these are also several world-renowned scientists, such as Nobel- and Kavli Prize Laureate John O'Keefe. Helene Bøksle will sing and Master of ceremony Kåre Conradi will also contribute musically.

The Kavli Prize Week also offers events for youth and open lectures by the Laureates.

The conference CuttingEdgeAI with world-renowned AI researcher Stuart Russell is hosted by the Ministry of Education and Research. See the programme here:

<https://www.nora.ai/events/2024/cuttingedgeai-with-stuart-russell-a-kavli-prize-week-special.html>

On September 4th, the Kavli Prize Laureates in Nanoscience and Neuroscience will travel to NTNU Nano and Moser Group Kavli Institute for Systems Neuroscience at NTNU in Trondheim.

Read more about all the events here: <https://www.kavliprize.org/prize-week>

Practical information for the press

Award ceremony in Oslo Concert Hall on September 3rd at 2:00 PM:

Media wishing to cover the award ceremony in Oslo Concert Hall should register with Unni Irmelin Kvam (DNVA), u.i.kvam@dnva.no, Tel.: (+47) 95 172 672

Government banquet in Oslo City Hall on September 3rd at 5:50 PM

Media wishing to cover the banquet should register with Unni Irmelin Kvam (DNVA), u.i.kvam@dnva.no, Tel.: (+47) 95 172 672.

For photos of H.M. the King and the laureates, please contact

Unni Irmelin Kvam (DNVA), u.i.kvam@dnva.no, Tel.: (+47) 95 172 672

About the Kavli Prize

- The Kavli Prize is a collaboration between The Kavli Foundation (US), the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, and the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters
- The Kavli Prize was founded by physicist, civil engineer, and entrepreneur Fred Kavli (1927-2013)
- The prize honors scientists for breakthroughs in astrophysics, nanoscience, and neuroscience: the biggest, the smallest, and the most complex
- Three prizes of one million dollars each are awarded every other year in each of the three fields

Read more about the Kavli Prize here: www.kavliprize.org

Read more about the 2024 Kavli Prize laureates

Kavli Prize in Astrophysics:

David Charbonneau (Canada/USA), Harvard University

Sara Seager (Canada/USA), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

Kavli Prize in Nanoscience:

Armand Paul Alivisatos (USA), University of Chicago

Robert Langer (USA), Koch Institute of Integrative Cancer Research, MIT

Chad Mirkin (USA), Northwestern University

Kavli Prize in Neuroscience:

Winrich Freiwald (Germany/USA), The Rockefeller University

Nancy Kanwisher (USA), Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Doris Tsao (USA), The University of California, Berkeley

Chairs of the Kavli Prize Committees

Astrophysics: Viggo Hansteen, University of Oslo

Nanoscience: Bodil Holst, University of Bergen

Neuroscience: Kristine B. Walhovd, University of Oslo

For interview arrangements and more information, contact

Marina Tofting (Norway)

The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters

Phone +47 938 66 312

marina.tofting@dnva.no

Unni Irmelin Kvam (Norway)

The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters Phone +47 951 72 672

u.i.kvam@dnva.no

Stacey Bailey (USA)

The Kavli Foundation

Phone +1 310 739 2859

sbailey@kavlifoundation.org