

Patricia Tomkins Foundation- Instrumentation Prizes and Grants

With a generous donation from the Patricia Tomkins Foundation the RAS is instituting a scheme of prizes and grants to encourage student interest in instrumentation science for astronomy and geophysics. While the support is aimed at developing skills in scientific hardware such as electronics, detectors and optics, the development of novel software specific to a hardware project will also be considered. The support will be offered in three forms:

1. The Tomkins Thesis Prize of £1000 will be awarded to the best PhD thesis submitted in the previous 12 months in the area of instrumentation development as defined above. PhD supervisors will be required to submit a written nomination of no longer than two A4 pages outlining the case for an award by the deadline of May 31st. No more than one prize will be awarded each year and the successful student will receive the prize from the RAS President at an Ordinary Meeting or at the NAM.
2. The Tomkins undergraduate prize of £500 will be awarded for excellent laboratory work on instrumentation undertaken as part of a course related to astronomy or geophysics. Applicants will be required to submit a short report (no longer than 4 pages) on their instrumentation project together with a covering letter from their academic tutor in support of the application.
3. Instrumentation grants can be applied for using the standard RAS grant application form, clearly labelling the application “Tomkins Instrumentation Grant”. Awards will be made up to a maximum of £2000 for innovative laboratory experiments or developments proposed to be undertaken by undergraduates or postgraduate students in areas related to astronomy or geophysics. The application should make clear the purpose, content and expected impact of the project, together with details of the funding requested and any other funding applied for. Funds will not be awarded for travel, consumables or generic computing equipment.

All applications should be submitted by a Fellow of the Society by the May 31st deadline. The documentation should be sent by email to ejd@ras.org.uk with “Tomkins Grant” in the subject heading. The outcomes will be announced at the National Astronomy Meeting in July.