



Royal
Astronomical
Society

Professor Francis Keenan – Service Award (A)

Professor Francis Keenan has been a champion of astronomy throughout his decades long research career and has played a pivotal role engaging the wider public with astronomy through his extensive outreach activities. Professor Keenan has conducted world leading research performing atomic physics calculations and applying this research to a diverse range of astrophysical environments. Professor Keenan has spent his career in Queen's University Belfast, rising to be Head of the School of Mathematics and Physics sandwiched between two terms as Director of Research for the Astrophysics Research Centre.

Professor Keenan's work was fundamental to calculating the atomic physics needed to underpin codes used to interpret spectra from telescopes across a range of wavelengths. The radiative and collisional data atomic data calculated by Professor Keenan was key to the successful performance of these analyses. Professor Keenan's work has also focussed on the analysis of plasmas in laboratory settings, particularly where these mimic astrophysical environments. Professor Keenan has always been very generous with his work, and has had a longstanding commitment to ensuring it's availability to the community through open access repositories.

Additionally, Professor Keenan is passionate about encouraging the next generation of scientists, mathematicians and astrophysicists to enter a career in STEM. He is one of the most active members of the university's outreach programme and has presented to numerous schools, societies and public audiences on STEM related topics. He has acted as a mentor in the field to countless PhD students, many of whom now hold senior academic and industry positions.

Professor Keenan has also given generously to the community through his service on many external panels and committees including the PPARC Ground Based Facilities Committee and chairing the STFC Panel for Allocation of Telescope time.