



Royal
Astronomical
Society

RAS SUPPORT FOR EARLY CAREER SCIENTISTS

Our grants scheme, prizes and fellowships are just some of the ways the RAS is committed to supporting postgraduates and postdoctoral researchers working in astronomy, geophysics and space science.

Details of all the RAS grants, awards and fellowships can be found on the website at <http://ras.ac.uk/awards-and-grants/grants-for-studies>

Grants:

Any Fellow of the RAS can apply for funds from the Society and the eligibility criteria and application process are set out on our website. Each year many early career scientists receive grants for research, conference travel and outreach activity, for example:

- We awarded an undergraduate bursary for a student to carry out a project on 'Using Machine Learning to understand the Van Allen Radiation Belts'.
- We awarded grants for a Fellows to attend the American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting
- We supported an Education and Outreach project which delivered an online inclusive storytelling performance 'Fly Me to the Moon' for EYFS children (3-5 years old) across the UK.

Undergraduate Research Bursaries:

These provide support to enable motivated undergraduates who are considering research as a career to work in a research environment for part of the summer before their 3rd or 4th year. The maximum bursary available is £1,200, independent of length of project.

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Undergraduate Award:

The Patricia Tomkins undergraduate prize of £500 is awarded for excellent laboratory work on instrumentation undertaken as part of a course related to astronomy or geophysics. The latest winner is Bradley Lewis from the Liverpool John Moores University.

Theses Awards:

A number of awards specifically target early career researchers.

The Society awards annual prizes of £1000 (£50 for runners up) for the best PhD theses in astronomy (the Michael Penston Prize) and geophysics and solar system science (the Keith Runcorn Prize). The latest winners were Dr Georgina Dransfield, (University of Birmingham) and Dr Jesse Coburn (Queen Mary University). The RAS also awards an annual prize of £1000 for the best PhD theses in instrumentation science for astronomy and geophysics (the Patricia Tomkins Prize) the most recent winner was Dr Lawrence Jones (Open University) Winners can present their work at the ordinary meetings of the RAS.

Early Career Awards (formerly Winton Awards)

The Early Career Awards of £1000 each are given annually for research by postdoctoral researchers during the first 5 years following their PhD. Established in 2010; the latest winners were Dr Chris Lovell (University of Hertfordshire) and Dr Andy Smith (Northumbria University).

Fowler Prizes

The annual Fowler Prizes for astronomy and geophysics mark the achievements of early career researchers with an award of £500. The latest winners were Dr Leah Morabito (Durham University) and Dr Chris Smith (Huddersfield New College).

Fellowships

The RAS funds several schemes for promising young scientists to be employed as Research Fellows at UK universities. The Royal Astronomical Society Research Fellowship and the Norman Lockyer Fellowship will each be available every three years.

The current RAS Research Fellow is Dr Rebecca Smethurst (University of Oxford). Previous incumbents include Thomas Collett (Portsmouth) Amy Gilligan (Aberdeen), Matt Nicholl (Edinburgh), Elisa Chisari (Oxford), Mark Wyper (Central Lancashire), Jo Eberhardt (UCL), Emma Chapman (Imperial), Ben Rozitis (OU), David Marsh (Kings College London), Ben Davies (Cambridge), Catriona Jackman (UCL), Tom Kitching (Edinburgh), Baojiu Li (Cambridge), Sarah Badman (Leicester), Nick Wright (Hertfordshire), Aline de Almeida Vidotto (St Andrews), Richard Parker (LJMU) and John Armitage (Royal Holloway).

Sir Norman Lockyer Fellowship have been awarded Cyrielle Opitom (Edinburgh) Vinesh Maguire Rajpaul (Oxford), Rowan Smith (Manchester), Adam Christopherson (Nottingham), Mark Swinbank (Durham), Roberto Trotta (Oxford), Jane Greaves (UK-ATC) and Clare Parnell (St Andrews).

RAS Specialist Discussion Meetings:

These regular meetings are held on the second Friday of the month, normally in the RAS and Geological Society lecture theatres (both at Burlington House, London). All 2024/25 meetings will be hybrid. The meetings are free to attend for Fellows and there is a reduced cost of £5 for non-fellows Online and £15 In Person tickets. Talks ranging from Galactic magnetic fields, cosmic dust, forecasting Solar energetic particles and space weather.

Specialist discussion meetings are followed by the A&G ('Astronomy & Geophysics') Highlights meeting, which have more diverse programmes of talks, at a level accessible to a general audience of scientists (and advanced amateurs). Topics covered last year included:

- Understanding Solar System evolution using outer Solar System samples
- Evidence for supermassive black holes binaries
- Exploring a High-resolution Stabilised Spectroscopy Telescope Network
- Geomagnetic Twin Satellites MSS-1: Progress and Future Plans

A&G Highlights Meetings are open to all, with free admission.