

Citation for the 2018 RAS 'A' George Darwin Lecture: Professor Stephen J. Smartt

The 2018 George Darwin Lecture in Astronomy is awarded to Professor Stephen J. Smartt.

Professor Stephen J. Smartt is one of the global leaders in the field of supernovae, astrophysical transients and time domain sky surveys. He has published over 230 refereed papers, with over 12,000 citations. Professor Smartt and his team have been leaders in the new field of surveying the transient Universe and understanding the diversity in stellar explosions. He showed that a new class of the most luminous supernovae (super-luminous supernovae) can be quantitatively explained by the theory of magnetic neutron stars.

Professor Smartt is now a leader in the search for the electromagnetic counterparts of gravitational waves, and recently led a paper identifying the first electromagnetic counterpart to a gravitational wave source, showing that it was consistent with a “kilonova” event. He has been awarded several prestigious research grants, including a European Research Council Advanced Grant, and has been elected to the Royal Irish Academy. He also has an outstanding record of public speaking.

For these reasons, Professor Smartt is awarded the George Darwin Lecture.