

## **Citation for the 2018 RAS 'A' Honorary Fellowships: Professor Pascale Ehrenfreund**

The 2018 RAS Honorary Fellowship for Astronomy is awarded to Professor Pascale Ehrenfreund.

Professor Pascale Ehrenfreund is the Chair of the Executive Board at the DLR, the German space agency, and she holds professorships at the University of Leiden and George Washington University.

As chair of the DLR, Professor Ehrenfreund is the leader of its 8,000 staff, and is responsible for a budget of over €2 billion. The DLR participates in numerous space missions (including Dawn, Rosetta and Mars Express), and jointly operates the SOFIA airborne observatory. Prior to joining DLR, Professor Ehrenfreund served as president of the Austrian Science Fund, and was lead investigator at NASA's Astrobiology Institute.

Her primary expertise is in the study of organic molecules in diverse situations, including interstellar dust, evolved stars, comets, meteorites and Mars, as well as their role in prebiotic chemistry. In 1994, Professor Ehrenfreund and her collaborator Bernard Foing made the first identification of a chemical species (C<sub>60</sub>+) responsible for a diffuse interstellar band (DIB) – a problem that had perplexed astrochemists since the 1920s.

For these reasons Professor Ehrenfreund is awarded a Royal Astronomical Society Honorary Fellowship.