

**For immediate release.**

**American Astronomical Society honours Professor at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies with Rossi prize.**

Professor Felix Aharonian, a scientist working in the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, is one of the recipients of the highest honour of the High-Energy Astrophysics Division of the American Astronomical Society, the Rossi prize. At its 215th annual meeting held 3-7 January in Washington DC the society announced “The 2010 Rossi prize is awarded to Felix Aharonian, Werner Hoffmann, Heinz Voelk and the H.E.S.S. collaboration for their outstanding contributions to imaging TeV Astronomy, which addressed fundamental questions related to particle acceleration and the origin of the Cosmic Rays through the study of SNRs, PWN and nearby AGNs.”



Felix Aharonian

Professor Aharonian, originally from Armenia, has worked in Moscow, Yerevan, Chicago, Paris and Heidelberg before joining the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies in 2006. His work addresses fundamental issues to do with how some astronomical systems accelerate charged particles to very high energies and the possibilities of observationally detecting these particles through the high-energy gamma-rays they produce. The H.E.S.S. (High Energy Stereoscopic System) collaboration, of which the Dublin Institute is a member, has revolutionised the field by opening up a new observational window for astronomers at extremely high energies. There is a strong Irish connection, apart from the presence of Professor Aharonian, in that the development of imaging TeV astronomy builds on the legacy of the late Professor Niall Porter of UCD who was a pioneer in the field and his many students, most notably Trevor Weeks who was the first to demonstrate the practicality of the technique. However it is the H.E.S.S. consortium, already recognised with the Descartes prize of the European Union for collaborative European Research in 2007, which has brought it to fruition.

In congratulating Professor Aharonian the Chairman of the Governing Board of the School of Cosmic Physics in the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Professor Gerry Wrixon, noted “this is the kind of global standard that can be reached when you have focused researchers working to international standards in an Institute for Advanced Studies. It puts us on the international map.”

The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies is an independent statutory research agency funded by the Department of Education and Science.

For further details contact: Professor Luke Drury, Director of the School of Cosmic Physics, Cell phone +353-86-8228815 or [ld@cp.dias.ie](mailto:ld@cp.dias.ie)

For information on H.E.S.S. see <http://www.mpi-hd.mpg.de/hfm/HESS/>  
For the Rossi prize see <http://www.aas.org/head/rossi/rossi.prize.html>