



## Press Release

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# Luc Blanchet laureate of the French Académie des Sciences's CNES Astrophysics & Space Science award

Tuesday 20 January, Luc Blanchet, Research Director at the French national scientific research centre's IAP astrophysics institute in Paris, received the CNES Astrophysics & Space Science award from the French Académie des Sciences. Researchers in the fields of Universe sciences and Earth sciences whose work is partly funded by CNES were also distinguished at today's ceremony.

This May, CNES and the French Académie des Sciences renewed the partnership agreement they signed in 2015 and created the new CNES Astrophysics & Space Science Award. This award distinguishes a French or international researcher (or research team) for their work in astrophysics at a French research laboratory, whether space technologies were used for the research or not. The winner receives €10,000. The CNES Astrophysics & Space Science Award is judged through the same procedure for soliciting and presenting nominees as the other prizes awarded by the French Académie des Sciences and is included in the Universe Sciences category. The judging panel is made up of members of this section of the academy and chaired by the section's delegate or deputy delegate.

Luc Blanchet is a theoretical physicist and a leading expert in the theory of gravity, general relativity and gravitational radiation. He has played a fundamental role in calculating and precisely quantifying the emission of gravitational waves by binary neutron star systems and black holes within the framework of general relativity. His research, based on post-Newtonian approximation, has enabled a very precise description of the spiralling phase of compact binary star systems just before they merge. These predictions are used directly in signal analysis of gravitational waves on the LIGO and VIRGO experiments. Luc Blanchet is also working on modified-gravity systems to resolve the problem of dark matter. He previously chaired CNES's Fundamental Physics group.

On the sidelines of the awards ceremony, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "This first CNES Astrophysics & Space Science award illustrates the close partnership between CNES and the French Académie des Sciences. I would like to congratulate Luc Blanchet most warmly for his work on gravitational waves, which are a key topic of fundamental research."



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The French Académie des Sciences is devoted to developing and promoting science and its applications. Every year, it awards numerous prizes and medals honouring distinguished scientists or encouraging young researchers just starting their career. These awards cover all domains of fundamental and applied research, contributing directly to the academy's mission to support science.

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