

Christiane Rousseau to Receive the 2018 Bertrand Russell Prize of the AMS

Christiane Rousseau, Université de Montréal, will receive the inaugural Bertrand Russell Prize of the AMS in recognition of her many contributions furthering human values and the common good through mathematics.

Throughout her career, Professor Rousseau has inspired people of all ages and diverse backgrounds through her lectures, publications, and a wide range of activities reaching out to the general public. In particular, through her visionary leadership of the thematic year Mathematics of Planet Earth 2013 and her continuing active involvement in the ongoing activities that grew from it, Professor Rousseau has created opportunities for the mathematics community worldwide to confront crucial challenges facing our planet while highlighting the contributions of mathematicians to the well-being of society.

Through her commitment, dedication, energy, and ability, Professor Rousseau has mobilized mathematicians to take on world challenges, advancing the discipline and making her a most appropriate recipient of the first Bertrand Russell Prize of the AMS.

Biographical Sketch of Christiane Rousseau

Rousseau served as president of the Canadian Mathematical Society from 2002 to 2004, vice president of the International Mathematical Union from 2011 to 2014, and has been a member of the Scientific Board of UNESCO's International Basic Sciences Program since 2015. She was named an AMS Fellow in 2013 and won the MAA's George Pólya Prize in 2014 for her article "How Inge Lehmann Discovered the Inner Core of the Earth" (The College Mathematics Journal, Vol. 45, no. 3).

Response from Christiane Rousseau

I feel extremely privileged to receive the 2018 Bertrand Russell prize of the AMS, and I am very thankful to the AMS for this honor. The success of Mathematics of Planet Earth (MPE) came from teamwork, and I am very grateful to my American colleagues, in particular Brian Conrey, Hans Kaper, and Mary Lou Zeeman, for their commitment to the success of MPE2013 and to the move to MPE at the end of the year. As soon as I had the idea for Mathematics of Planet Earth, it became a passion for me to learn more about the many contributions of mathematics to the understanding of our planet. At the same time, the more I learned about the threats coming from global changes and the increase in world population, the more I felt that our community has to play a role. Indeed, mathematics has so much to say on these challenges that it is a must to train a new generation of researchers who can contribute to these problems: this is why MPE spread by itself over the world. And one does not need to be an applied mathematician to convey the message through one's teaching or outreach activities. MPE has made the case that, by joining forces internationally, we can have an impact. The work is just starting. A scientific consensus has grown on global changes and has led to the Paris climate agreement of December 2015. But that agreement is now in danger and many countries do not respect their commitments. We must continue the work with our colleagues from other scientific disciplines.



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Background of the Prize

The Bertrand Russell Prize of the AMS honors research or service contributions of mathematicians or related professionals to promoting good in the world and recognizes the various ways that mathematics furthers human values. The prize was established in 2016 by Thomas Hales (University of Pittsburgh) and will be awarded Thursday, January 11, 2018, at the Joint Mathematics Meetings in San Diego.

Full biography, response, and photo are available from the AMS Public Awareness Office.

Find out more about the Bertrand Russell Prize of the AMS : <http://www.ams.org/profession/prizes-awards/russell-prize>.

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