



Press release

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh to present 2012 RSE Royal Medals and Maxwell Award

Dr David Milne and Professor Sir Edwin Southern will receive RSE Royal Medals on Wednesday 26 September, alongside Professor Gerhard Sessler who will receive the James Clerk Maxwell Award.

All will be presented with their Awards by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

The Royal Society of Edinburgh's Royal Medals were instituted by The Queen to mark the Millennium and recognise outstanding achievement in all intellectual fields. Previous recipients have included Nobel Laureates Sir James Black and Sir James Mirrlees, as well as the distinguished Scottish historian Prof Tom Devine, and theoretical physicist Professor Peter Higgs.

The earlier award to Professor Higgs is of particular relevance this year, given the findings of the international team of scientists at CERN that has confirmed the theories that Professor Higgs first proposed in the early 1960's. After the award of the Royal Medals and the Maxwell Award, The Duke will inaugurate an exhibition entitled "From Maxwell to Higgs".

The James Clerk Maxwell Award, sponsored by Wolfson Microelectronics plc, was created in 2007 and is awarded annually by the RSE and IEEE to those who follow in Maxwell's footsteps and create technologies with worldwide benefits for humanity.

President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Sir John Arbuthnott, said "One of the greatest privileges of my role is to preside over the ceremony of awarding the Royal Medals alongside the James Clerk Maxwell Award. Whilst I have spent much of my life working with inspirational people, I never cease to be enthused by their achievements. The Royal Medals recognise the very best of the people who have contributed towards the advancement of useful knowledge in our society – a principle at the heart of the RSE.

I am delighted that The Duke of Edinburgh, an Honorary Fellow of the Society, is here today to present the Society's Royal Medals and the Maxwell Award. These are our highest accolades. We greatly appreciate the interest HRH has taken in the Society over the years and his personal involvement in the presentation of these prestigious awards".

Professor Sir Edwin Southern receives his Medal in respect of the impact that he has had on the field of molecular biology. His work has been crucial in the development of biomedical research in the last 20 years. He is a supreme inventor and innovator in molecular genetics

Dr David Milne is the leading Scottish microelectronics entrepreneur. He pioneered the first SME spin-out from the University of Edinburgh and led the expansion of Wolfson Microelectronics, contributing to the development of products by several of the world leading electronic companies.

Professor Gerhard Sessler, who is awarded the James Clerk Maxwell Award, helped revolutionise the modern microphone market twice in his career. Firstly when working at Bell Labs in the 1960's, he co-invented the first polymer electric condenser microphone and then again in the 80's when with his colleague Dietmar Hohm he designed the first microelectromechanical systems condenser microphone. These were introduced to the market in 2002 and are used in mobile phones, laptops, MP3 players and hearing aids.

Following the award of the Royal Medals and the James Clerk Maxwell Award, HRH will view the "From Maxwell to Higgs" Exhibition along with Professor Peter Higgs, Sir John Arbutnott and Dr Gordon Day, President of IEEE.

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Further information is available from:

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Please contact Bristow Muldoon if you would like to arrange an interview with any of the three awardees. The RSE will have a photographer on duty on the day and will be able to make photographs available.