

Hearing the universe

Physicist Karsten Danzmann to receive the Körber Prize 2017 for his pioneering research on the direct detection of gravitational waves

Hamburg, 29 August, 2017. The astrophysicist Karsten Danzmann is to receive the Körber European Science Prize 2017, endowed with 750,000 euros, from the Körber Foundation. Hamburg's Mayor Olaf Scholz will welcome the guests to the award ceremony in the City Hall on 7 September at 11 am, and Ranga Yogeshwar will present the winner and his research work.

Danzmann and his team developed the key technologies, including high-precision lasers, with which detectors in the USA were able to provide direct evidence of gravitational waves for the first time in 2015. In doing so, astronomers have opened a hitherto hidden window to the cosmos. "You could say gravity has now sent us its own messenger," says Danzmann. "Gravitational wave research already promises a lot of fundamentally new findings purely because 99 percent of the universe is dark and was therefore almost impossible to explore." With the funds of the Körber Prize, Danzmann intends, amongst other things, to further refine laser technology for earth-based detectors.

At the invitation of the University of Hamburg, Karsten Danzmann will give a lecture entitled "Gravitational waves: we can hear the universe!" in the Physics Department at 4 pm on 6 September. Admission to the Körber Lecture in the Wolfgang Pauli lecture theatre is free. The lecture will be held in English.

The **Körber European Science Prize** has been awarded each year since 1985 for a major breakthrough in the physical or life sciences in Europe. It honours excellent and innovative research approaches with high application potential. With 750,000 euros in prize money it is among the world's most highly-endowed prizes. Six winners of the Körber Prize have already gone on to receive the Nobel Prize.

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Through its operational projects, in its networks and in conjunction with cooperation partners, the present focus of the **Körber Foundation** is on three current social challenges: "Digital Literacy", "New Working Lifetime" and "Russia in Europe". Inaugurated in 1959 by the entrepreneur and initiator Kurt A. Körber, the foundation is now nationally and internationally active from its sites in Hamburg and Berlin.

Live stream of the award ceremony on 7 September from 11 am at www.koerber-preis.de.

Note to the media

You are cordially invited to the award ceremony on 7 September in Hamburg City Hall. Please register with Julian Claassen, by e-mail at claassen@koerber-stiftung.de or by calling +49 (0) 40 80 81 92-233

Further **information and photos of the award ceremony** are available to download on 7 September from 3 pm at www.koerber-stiftung.de/koerber-preis-2017