



In memory of Stephen Hawking

ICFO honors one of the most brilliant minds in science.

March 14, 2018

This morning, the British astrophysicist Stephen Hawking passed away at age 76. As mentioned in a note sent by his children Lucy, Robert and Tim, he died peacefully at his home in Cambridge in the early hours of today, Wednesday March 14th.

Stephen Hawking was a world-renowned British theoretical physicist, known for his contributions to the fields of cosmology, general relativity and quantum gravity, especially in the context of black holes. In the 1960s and 1970s, he worked on ground-breaking theorems regarding singularities within the framework of general relativity, and made the theoretical prediction that black holes should emit radiation, which today carries the name of Hawking radiation. Throughout his career, he has come to be thought of as one of the greatest minds in physics since Albert Einstein.

He published several popular science works in which he discussed his own theories and cosmology in general, including the bestseller "A Brief History of Time". He always emphasized that one of his goals in science was to have a "complete understanding of the universe, why it is as it is and why it exists at all".

Hawking's ground-breaking research resulted in considerable fame and celebrity. At the age of 32, he was elected as one of the youngest ever Fellows of the Royal Society, was created a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1982, and became a Companion of Honour in 1989. He has accumulated twelve honorary degrees, as well as many other awards, medals and prizes, including the Albert Einstein Award, the most prestigious in theoretical physics.

Hawking retired from his position as Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge in 2009, and accepted a Distinguished Research Chair at the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics in Waterloo, Canada.

ICFO honors the prolific career of a great scientist whose work has had a revolutionary impact on society.