



Prince Mahidol Award Foundation
Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital and Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Press Conference
Announcement of the Prince Mahidol Award 2017

Today (16 November 2016) at 13.30 hrs., **Professor Dr. Prasit Watanapa**, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University, in the capacity of Vice President of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation; **Ms. Busadee Santipitaks**, Director-General of the Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the capacity of the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Public Relations of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation, and **Professor Vicharn Panich**, Chairman of the International Award Committee of the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation, held a joint press conference to announce the 26th Prince Mahidol Award for 2017 at the Prince Mahidol Memorial Room, 2nd Floor, Syamindra Building, Siriraj Hospital.

The Prince Mahidol Award Foundation of which H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn is the President, has decided to confer Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Medicine to The Human Genome Project from the United States of America. In the field of Public Health, the Prince Mahidol Award is conferred to Professor Porter W. Anderson, Jr., Dr. John B. Robbins, Dr. Rachel Schneerson and Professor Mathuram Santosham from the United States of America.

There were 45 nominations from 27 countries in total. The Scientific Advisory Committee carefully screened all candidates from the year 2017, 2016, 2015 and subsequently submitted a short list of the candidates to the International Award Committee who scrutinized and made a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presided over the meeting of the Board of Trustees held on 2 November 2017 during which the final decision on the Prince Mahidol Award 2017 was made.

In the past 26 years, 74 individuals, groups of individuals, and institutions had received the Prince Mahidol Award. Among them, 4 subsequently received the Nobel Prize. More importantly, 2 of the most the recent Nobel Prize (2015) laureates in physiology or medicine were conferred the Prince Mahidol Award prior to their continual prestigious recognition namely:

- Professor Dr. Satoshi Omura was conferred the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Medicine in 1997. He is known for the discovery and development of various pharmaceuticals originally occurring in microorganisms. His research group isolated a strain of *Streptomyces avermitilis* that produce the anti-parasitical compound ivermectin—which contributed to the development of the drug ivermectin that is today used against river blindness, lymphatic filariasis and other parasitic infections.

- Professor Tu You You, a member of The China Cooperative Research Group on Qinghaosu and its Derivatives as Antimalarials, was conferred the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Medicine in 2003 as an organizational category—for the discovery of qinghaosu as a new drug for treatment of the P.falciparum malaria.
Honorable Mention of the Prince Mahidol Award Laureates, who later received further recognition:
 - Professor Barry J. Marshall from Australia was conferred the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Public Health in 2001 for the discovery of the new bacterium identified as Helicobacter pylori that caused severe gastritis, and its sensitivity to particular antibacterial drugs. He later received the Nobel Prize in the field of Medicine in 2005 for the same discovery.
 - Professor Harald Zur Hausen from Germany was conferred the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Medicine in 2005 for the discovery of the virus, namely human papilloma virus HPV16 and HPV18, from the cancer tissue and elucidated the mechanism that the viruses turn the normal cell into cancer cells. He later received the Nobel Prize in the field of Medicine in 2008 for the same discovery.
 - Dr. Margaret F.C. Chan, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, was conferred the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Public Health in 2006.
- Honorable Mention of the Thai laureates of the Prince Mahidol Award:**
- Professor Dr. Prasong Tuchinda was conferred the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Medicine in 1996.
 - Dr. Suchitra Nimmannitya was conferred the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Public Health in 1996.
 - Dr. Wiwat Rojanapithayakorn was conferred the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Public Health in 2009.
 - Mr. Mechai Viravaidya was conferred the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Public Health in 2009.

The Prince Mahidol Award Foundation under the Royal Patronage was established in commemoration of the centenary of the birth of His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla, on 1 January 1992. The Foundation is under the Royal Patronage, with Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn as President. The Foundation annually confers two Prince Mahidol Awards upon individual(s) or institution(s), which have demonstrated outstanding and exemplary contributions to the advancement of the world's medical and public health services. Each Award consists of a medal, a certificate and a sum of US \$100,000.

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn will preside over the Presentation Ceremony of the Prince Mahidol Award 2017 at the Chakri Throne hall on 31 January 2018 at 17:30 hours. Prior to the Ceremony, Siriraj Hospital, as a founder of the Prince Mahidol Award, will invite the 2017 Prince Mahidol Award Laureates to give lectures based on their achievements on 30 January 2018.