

# Bright sparks among 'Asia's Nobel Prize' winners

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NASA scientist Gerald Fishman and Italian astro-physicist Enrico Costa won the astronomy prize for their work on gamma rays.

A press statement from the organisers said they were picked "for their leadership of [space missions](#) that enabled the demonstration of the cosmological origin of gamma ray bursts, the brightest sources known in the universe".

A [gamma ray burst](#) is believed to mark the final death throes of a star as it collapses, billions of light years away from Earth.

The Shaw Prize, now in its eighth year, consists of three annual awards each carrying a \$1 million prize.

The life science and medicine award went jointly to Jules Hoffmann, from the University of Strasbourg, Yale University's Ruslan Medzhitov and Bruce Beutler, from The Scripps Research Institute, California.

The trio shared the award for "their discovery of the molecular mechanism of innate immunity, the first line of defence against pathogens".

The third prize, for mathematical sciences, was shared by Demetrios Christodoulou, from the ETH Zurich, and Richard Hamilton, from Columbia University.

They were given the prize for their "highly innovative works on nonlinear partial differential equations" and their applications to [general relativity](#) and topology -- the study of geometrical shapes with unique properties.

The Shaw [Prize](#), funded by Hong Kong film producer and philanthropist Run Run Shaw, honours exceptional contributions "to the advancement of civilisation and the well-being of humankind".

The presentation ceremony is scheduled for September 28. For more detailed information, visit [www.shawprize.org](http://www.shawprize.org)

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