

Studies of space, hearing and DNA attract \$1 million awards

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Seven scientists will share three \$1 million prizes for studying the birthplace of stars, the mechanisms of hearing and a widely used tool for editing DNA.

Winners of the Kavli Prizes were announced Wednesday after their selection by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters. They will receive their awards in September in Oslo.

Three researchers share the neuroscience [prize](#) for studying how we hear: A. James Hudspeth of the Rockefeller University in New York, Robert Fettiplace of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Christine Petit of the College of France and the Pasteur Institute in Paris. They provided insights into how cells of the inner ear transform sound into electrical signals the brain can interpret.

The astrophysics prize was given to Ewine van Dishoeck of the University of Leiden in the Netherlands for her studies of chemistry of interstellar clouds, where stars form.

The prize in nanoscience, which deals with the world on the level of atoms, was given for development of CRISPR-Cas9, which provided scientists a faster and simpler way to alter DNA. The award is shared by Jennifer Doudna of the University of California, Berkeley, Emmanuelle Charpentier of the Max Planck Society in Berlin, and Virginijus Siksnys of Vilnius University in Lithuania. Siksnys worked independently of the other two winners.

The Kavli prizes are a joint program of the Norwegian academy, the California-based Kavli Foundation and the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. Awarded every two years since 2008, the prizes are named after philanthropist Fred Kavli, a Norwegian-born American who died in 2013.

Hudspeth and Doudna are paid by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, which also supports The Associated Press Health & Science Department.

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