

Trinity College Cambridge: January 9, 2019

## **Trinity Fellow, Ewa Paluch, Wins Blavatnik Award in the Life Sciences**

Trinity Fellow, Ewa Paluch, has won the 2019 Blavatnik Award in the Life Sciences. She joined the College last October when she became Professor of Anatomy in the University's Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience. Previously based at University College London her laboratory will move to Cambridge in 2019.

Responding to news of the award Professor Paluch said:

I am absolutely delighted to be this year's UK Blavatnik Awards Laureate in Life Sciences. As a trained physicist, I am particularly excited for this recognition of my laboratory's contribution to the Life Sciences. Our work investigates how cells control their shapes, a question that fundamentally lies at the intersection of physics and biology. A better understanding of how the shape of cells and tissues is controlled will have tremendous impact on our understanding of diseases where shape regulation fails, such as cancer and developmental malformations.

The awards are made by the Blavatnik Family Foundation and the New York Academy of Sciences. One Laureate from each of the three categories of Life Sciences, Physical Sciences & Engineering, and Chemistry receives an unrestricted prize of US\$100,000. These are the largest unrestricted cash prizes available exclusively to young scientists and engineers in the UK under the age of 42.

The citation naming Professor Paluch as Laureate for the Life Sciences hails her "novel discoveries at the forefront of cell biology":

she has elucidated key biophysical mechanisms of cell division and migration, and has established physiological roles of cellular protrusions known as "blebs." Previously thought to exist only in sick or dying cells, she established that these protrusions on the cell surface are common in healthy cells, and that blebs have important functions in cell movement and division. Her work will influence treatment for diseases such as cancer, where cell shape and migration are key to disease pathology, and she is leading the field towards a complete understanding of how the laws of physics affect the behaviour of cells.

"Recognising and encouraging the brilliant talent of the UK's best young scientists through the Blavatnik Awards is our honour," said Sir Leonard Blavatnik, Founder and Chairman of Access Industries, head of the Blavatnik Family Foundation, and member of the President's Council of the New York Academy of Sciences. "By supporting young scientists as they embark on their careers, we create a positive impact on the country's future prosperity, accelerating scientific discovery and innovation that mankind can benefit from, and encouraging others to follow their path."

The 2019 Blavatnik Awards Laureates and Finalists in the UK will be honoured at a gala dinner and ceremony at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London on 6 March 2019. The following

day the honourees will present their research in a public symposium entitled [Cure, Create, Innovate: 9 Young Scientists Transforming Our World](#) to be held at the Science Museum, London on 7 March 2019.

<https://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/news/trinity-fellow-ewa-paluch-wins-blavatnik-award-in-the-life-sciences/>