The Prime Minister of Australia awards five prizes each year for leadership in science and science teaching.

The Prime Minister’s Prize for Science comprises a solid gold medallion and a cash prize of $300,000. It recognises outstanding achievement by Australians in science and technology which promotes human welfare.

Early career researchers who have made outstanding achievements in their field are recognised with two Prizes comprising a solid silver medallion and a cash prize of $50,000 each - the Science Minister’s Prize for Life Scientist of the Year and the Malcolm McIntosh Prize for Physical Scientist of the Year.

Teachers who have made an outstanding contribution to science education in Australia are recognised with the Prime Minister’s Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in Primary Schools and the Prime Minister’s Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in Secondary Schools. These Prizes comprise a solid silver medallion and a cash prize of $50,000.

Closing Date: Friday, 13 May 2011, 5.00 p.m. AEST

Further information on Eligibility Criteria and Selection Information is available from:

Phone: (02) 6270 2878 or (02) 6270 2826
Fax: (02) 6213 7125
Email: pmprize@innovation.gov.au

Online Nominations:

John Shine
Prime Minister’s Prize for Science

As a PhD student at the Australian National University, John Shine discovered the importance of a brief sequence of genetic code. At its core are five letters—CGACG—which tell ribosomes, the protein factories in all living things, to start making a protein. Today’s gene sequencers would take a fraction of a second to do the same job. But John’s discovery and his subsequent gene cloning work at the University of California helped kick-start a biotechnology revolution.

Since 1990 John has led the Garvan Institute of Medical Research guiding its growth in staff, budget and stature.

Next year, when he stands down from his leadership role, he will focus fully on research and, with his team, expand their investigation of neural stem cells as potential therapies for neurodegenerative disorders.

Katherine Trinajstic
Malcolm McIntosh Prize for Physical Scientist of the Year

Three hundred and eighty million years ago, in what is now the Kimberley Ranges, our early ancestors were developing teeth, jaws, limbs, and even a womb.

It was also when many of our oil and gas reserves were laid down. Kate Trinajstic has made this period her own through her discovery that the finest Gogo fish fossils are more than perfectly preserved bones—their muscles and internal organs have also been fossilised. Today she is using synchrotron light and CT scanning to virtually dissect these ancient fossils and discover how fish developed teeth, jaws and a womb.

Her work is crucial not just to our understanding of how life on Earth has evolved and responded to extinction events, she is also helping in the search for new oil and gas reserves.

Benjamin Kile
The Science Minister’s Prize for Life Scientist of the Year

Benjamin Kile is unravelling the secrets of blood in a series of discoveries at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research in Melbourne.

He has discovered why platelets—the blood cells responsible for clotting—have a short shelf life at the blood bank.

He has also discovered a gene that’s critical for the production of blood stem cells in our bone marrow. It turned out that the gene was already well known to science—but as a cancer gene.

These discoveries are just the beginning for this young scientist. Now he is using them to try and extend the life of blood bank products, and to get to the heart of some big questions in cancer. What causes good cells to go bad? How does cancer start?
OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN SCIENCE – EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE TEACHING

We are seeking nominations for Australia's national science and science teaching awards:

■ The $300,000 Prime Minister's Prize for Science
■ The $50,000 Science Minister's Prize for Life Scientist of the Year
■ The $50,000 Malcolm McIntosh Prize for Physical Scientist of the Year
■ The $50,000 Prime Minister's Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in Primary Schools
■ The $50,000 Prime Minister's Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in Secondary Schools

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Science Prizes Secretariat
Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
PO Box 5322, KINGSTON ACT 2604
Phone: (02) 6270 2878 or (02) 6270 2826  Fax: (02) 6213 7125
Email: pmprize@innovation.gov.au