

MEDIA RELEASE

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PROFESSOR GRAEME CLARK WINS CSL FLOREY MEDAL

Australian cochlear implant pioneer Professor Graeme Clark last night received the CSL Florey Medal in the presence of 90 of his peers at the 2011 Association of Australian Medical Research Institute's annual dinner in the Mural Hall at Parliament House Canberra.

Over the past thirty years hundreds of thousands of people have had their lives transformed by Graeme Clark's work. Thirty-three years after Rod Saunders became the first recipient of Clark's cochlear implant, Graeme is returning to the laboratory to improve the implant, and the new generation of implantable hearing devices following it.

He announced yesterday that he will be joining NICTA, Australia's national ICT Research Centre of Excellence, to help it close the gap between electronics and the brain – making better connections and enabling a cochlear implant that would provide true hi-fi hearing.

In addition, he will bring to the laboratory precious brain and ear samples donated by Rod Saunders, the first cochlear implant recipient. Rod died in 2007 and bequeathed his body to medical science.

In winning the CSL Florey Medal, Graeme joins an elite bunch of Australian medical researchers following in the footsteps of Howard Florey who developed penicillin.

They include:

- Nobel Laureates Barry Marshall and Robin Warren, for discovering that bacteria cause stomach ulcers;
- Jacques Miller, who unravelled the role of the thymus in the immune system;
- Colin Masters, for his pivotal work on Alzheimer's disease;
- Peter Coleman, who unveiled the structure of the 'flu virus, leading to the anti-'flu drug Relenza;
- Ian Frazer, for the development of the vaccine against cervical cancer.

The medal has been presented every two years since 1998 by the Australian Institute of Policy and Science (AIPS). The prize money has doubled this year thanks to the support of CSL.

"Graeme Clark is a fitting winner," says CSL's Chief Scientist, Dr Andrew Cuthbertson. "Professor Clark had a big idea and took it through a tortuous scientific and regulatory path to create a device that has transformed the lives of people around the world. His ideas have seeded many other initiatives in bionics."

Now 76, Graeme shows little sign of slowing down. “I don’t think I’m genetically engineered to wind down, but I’m trying hard, for my family’s sake.”

More information, photos and links at www.scienceinpublic.com.au/florey medal.

Ends

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About Australian Institute of Policy and Science (AIPS)

The Australian Institute of Policy and Science is an independent and non-partisan not-for-profit organisation first founded in 1932. We have grown with Australia’s public policy history and work to:

- Increase public engagement in science
- Promote excellence in research, innovation and the promotion and communication of science
- Inform and influence policy and policy-making
- Invest in a scientifically inspired, literate and skilled Australia that contributes to local and global social challenges

AIPS achieves its objectives through an extensive network of partners spanning university, government, industry and community actors.

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About Cochlear Limited (ASX: COH)

Cochlear is the global leader in implantable hearing solutions. It has a dedicated global team of more than 2,500 people who deliver the gift of sound to the hearing impaired in over 100 countries around the world. Our vision is to connect people, young and old, to a world of sound by offering life enhancing hearing solutions.

Over almost 30 years this vision has seen Cochlear help over 250,000 people either hear for the first time or reconnect them to their families, friends, workplaces and communities.

To this end, Cochlear offers four distinct product lines, each of which provides solutions for different types of hearing loss. These include: cochlear implants, bone conduction implants, implants for electro-acoustic stimulation and implants for direct acoustic stimulation. Whether these hearing solutions were implanted 25 years ago or today, the company's commitment to backward compatibility guarantees that new upgrades and innovations can be offered to Cochlear recipients without further surgery.

Cochlear has a track record of being the industry's largest investor in research and development. In the 2011 financial year, the company invested 13% of its global sales revenue in R&D and we are currently working in collaboration with over 100 research partners based in 20 countries.

Cochlear's mission of *Hear now. And always* embodies the company's commitment to providing its recipients with the best possible hearing performance today and for the rest of their lives.

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