

Citation Professor Colin Arthur Norman

Professor Colin Arthur Norman is being nominated for an Honorary DSc at the University of Melbourne. Professor Norman is a graduate of the University of Melbourne, and has maintained strong links with the university over the intervening decades, in particular with the Astrophysics group in the School of Physics.

After his undergraduate degree, Professor Norman was awarded a number of extremely prestigious scholarships and fellowships to study overseas, including a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford University, a Magdalen College Prize Fellowship and a Miller Fellowship at UC Berkeley. Since 1984, Colin Norman has been a professor in Physics and Astronomy at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, cross-appointed as an astronomer at the Space Telescope Science Institute.

Professor Norman has a prodigious publication record with around 200 refereed publications, over 14,000 citations and an h-index of 59. These are impressive results for a theoretician in astrophysics. Many of his key papers have only two or three authors, attesting to the seminal role he has played in each. His list of co-authors reads like a veritable who's who in modern astrophysics.

Key achievements of Professor Norman include papers with Hasan and Sellwood (1990, 1996) in galactic dynamics, showing that galactic bars could be transitory features, a seminal paper with Ikeuchi (1989) developing our understanding of the recycling of gas in the galaxy, which is responsible for ongoing star formation, and many papers over the decades published on the physics of X-ray clusters.

In addition to these major contributions to theoretical astrophysics, Professor Norman has maintained an active interest and involvement in observational experiments, most recently in developing new technologies for high contrast imaging. The range and depth of his interests and contributions is unmatched in Australian astrophysics, and he stands with the most distinguished internationally.

Professor Norman was Head of Academic Affairs at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore for 6 years, followed by a similar period as Director of the prestigious Hubble Fellowship program, in all responsible for the mentoring and development of a generation of young astrophysics talent based in the USA. Recently he has founded the Center for Planets and Life at the Johns Hopkins University, with the promise of exciting new ideas emerging from this initiative.

Finally, Professor Norman has always been generous with his time and his ideas, in particular in supporting young Australian astronomers, anywhere in the world. To this day, he would prefer to sit in an office with the postdoctoral fellows, engaging in lively debate around the latest observations or new ideas.

Professor Norman is one of the world's leading theoretical astrophysicists. The University of Melbourne could take great pride in awarding an Honorary DSc to Colin Arthur Norman.