

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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UTAS researchers celebrated as Australia's brightest minds in science

Four UTAS scientists are among the finalists for the 2011 Eureka Prizes, the annual awards presented by the Australian Museum to celebrate Australia's brightest minds in science research and innovation, journalism and communication, and leadership.

A team of scientists working to save the Tasmanian devil from extinction, led by Dr Menna Jones from the UTAS School of Zoology, has been shortlisted for the \$10,000 Sherman Eureka Prize for Environmental Research. The team, which includes Associate Professor Greg Woods from Menzies Research Institute Tasmania, is taking a multifaceted approach to solving the problem of the Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD).

"Our research is directed towards improving three possible management options," Dr Jones said.

"We're investigating the suitability of devil insurance populations for reintroduction in case of extinction of the species in the wild, as well as a potential vaccine against DFTD. We're also exploring any possible genetic resistance or tolerance against DFTD, and genetic restoration."

Meanwhile Associate Professor Michael Breadmore, from the Australian Centre for Research on Separation Science (ACROSS), has been named as a finalist for the \$10,000 Eureka Prize for Outstanding Young Researcher. This award recognised outstanding scientific research conducted by an individual or group of early career researchers who are 35 years old or younger.

Assoc Prof Breadmore has been developing chemical approaches to create technology with sample in - answer out capability. The development of portable analytical technology has applications for the remote detection of environmental pollutants in water and for point-of-care therapeutic drug monitoring.

Also from ACROSS, Professor Paul Haddad is a finalist in the category of Outstanding Mentor of Young Researchers. It's the first year that this \$10,000 prize has been offered.

Awarded to an individual who has helped develop the next generation of Australia's scientific researchers, Prof Haddad has been recognised for his sustained commitment to and success in mentoring young researchers to achieve their career goals. Prof Haddad established ACROSS in 2001 as a vehicle for the development of young researchers and it now enjoys a very high level of international recognition.

The finalists are competing for more than \$240 000 in prizemoney across a range of categories. The winners will be announced at a dinner in Sydney on 6 September 2011.

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