

Service Award - Professor Ian Crawford, Birkbeck College, University of London

Full citation

Ian Crawford, Professor of Planetary Science and Astrobiology at Birkbeck College, has played a leading role in the promotion of lunar science and human space exploration both within the UK and internationally. Starting some 20 years ago, when the Moon was not a topic of great interest for the UK community, Professor Crawford has led efforts to make the case for exploring our nearest astronomical neighbour.

This has involved developing science planning for space mission designs, such as the UK MoonLITE, ESA MoonNext, and International Lunar Network proposals. He has also played a leading role in several lunar scientific experiments, such as D-CIXS on Smart 1, C1XS on Chandrayaan-1 and the forthcoming PROSPECT instrument on Luna 27.

To date, he has supervised eleven PhD theses in lunar science and astrobiology, and several of his students have gone on to play leading roles in the planetary science community. Professor Crawford's championing of human space exploration led to the 2005 RAS report that played a key role in changing the UK's stance on involvement in ESA's human spaceflight programme, which now, for example, includes British participation in the International Space Station.

Professor Crawford has given outstanding, tireless, and enthusiastic service to the UK community, as RAS Geophysics Vice President (two years) and Secretary (ten years), participation in numerous national and international advisory panels, and organising many specialist scientific discussion meetings.

Within the University of London, he founded and runs the highly successful APEX Astrobiology and Planetary Exploration seminar series, as well as developing one of the first courses on astrobiology in the UK. Professor Crawford is always at the forefront of efforts to bring astronomy and geophysics to the widest possible public audience.

For these reasons, Professor Ian Crawford is awarded the 2021 RAS Service Award for services to geophysics.

Short citation

Ian Crawford, Professor of Planetary Science and Astrobiology at Birkbeck College, is awarded the 2021 RAS Service Award for services to geophysics for his leading role in the promotion of lunar science and human space exploration both within the UK and internationally, and for his outstanding service to the community over many years, as former RAS Geophysics Vice President and Secretary, as well as countless other activities.