

Press Release
For Immediate Release
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ADELAIDE FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES THE BETTISON AND JAMES AWARD RECIPIENT

The Adelaide Film Festival (ADL Film Fest) is proud to announce internationally recognised palaeontologist **Professor John Long**, from Flinders University, as the recipient of the annual Jim Bettison and Helen James Award.

Established in 2015, the prestigious \$50,000 award recognises high achieving Australians whose exemplary and inspiring life-long work, within their area of expertise, has benefitted the wider Australian community.

Adelaide Film Festival CEO and Creative Director, Mat Kesting, said, “The Adelaide Film Festival is proud to be associated with the Jim Bettison and Helen James Foundation. This award has enabled some outstanding individuals to continue to extend their brilliant work and we congratulate the next recipient, **Professor John Long**, as he joins a number of impressive individuals who have all made substantial contributions to the Australian community.”

Professor Long’s research achievements have broadened the understanding of science, evolution and the processes of knowledge creation for all Australians and have led to ground-breaking discoveries that have refined our views of the evolution of life.

Professor Robert Saint AM, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research at Flinders University, where Professor Long teaches and supervises PhD students, said, “An incredibly worthy recipient, Professor John Long is at the forefront of expanding global knowledge about the evolution of life on earth and is making crucial discoveries about vertebrate evolution that explain key characteristics of humans today. From discovering the origins of sex to revealing the hidden mysteries of remote Antarctica, including what it tells us of climate change, his insatiable appetite to unlock the past is informing our future. John truly epitomises the Flinders University determination to make a difference.”

Doreen Mellor, spokesperson for the Jim Bettison and Helen James Foundation, said, “Professor Long’s achievements in both science communication and scientific research and discovery have long inspired many, including children who love dinosaurs, grown-ups who want to understand more of the history of human evolution and civilisation, and the worldwide scientific community. The Jim Bettison and Helen James Foundation is delighted to be able to acknowledge Professor Long’s outstanding past and continuing contributions in Australia and internationally.”

An award-winning author, educator and science communicator, Professor Long’s public appearances, lectures and writing about prehistory and evolution - which include fiction and non-fiction books for adults and children - are an accessible exploration of a wide range of topics, including the evolution of life, the history of fishes, Australia’s dinosaurs and ancient

mammals, and ancient Antarctica, through to climate change and the history of human civilisation.

Professor Long believes in the power of Integrating the humanities within science, stating, "While science can provide answers to specific questions about our key issues, there also needs to be more collaboration with the humanities to find real solutions to our problems today.

"I look forward to using this award to progress my upcoming sciences-humanities cross-disciplinary book and documentary film project. We are excited to have the backing of the SA Film Corporation in the form of start-up funding, and this award will allow us to further invest in sharing knowledge of science and life on Earth to benefit our communities and future."

Professor Long will join the alumni of exceptional Australians who are previous recipients of the award: historian and social justice activist **Jackie Huggins AM FAHA**, social documentary and arts photographer **Robert McFarlane**, pre-eminent figure in Australian dance **Meryl Tankard**, adventurer and environmental scientist **Tim Jarvis** and creator of the Adelaide Festival of Ideas, **Greg Mackie OAM**.

The Adelaide Film Festival administers the Bettison James Award on the behalf of the Bettison and James Foundation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE JIM BETTISON AND HELEN JAMES FOUNDATION

The Jim Bettison and Helen James Foundation was established to realise the vision of Dr Jim Bettison and Ms Helen James, who were committed to supporting a wide range of activity in the community through philanthropy and professional engagement. Jim co-founded Codan, a successful and award-winning Adelaide company, established the Developed Image Photographic Gallery and served as Deputy Chancellor at the University of Adelaide. Helen was an exhibiting studio artist. She served on various key arts committees and was a founding member of the National Library of Australia's Foundation Board.

ADELAIDE FILM FESTIVAL

The ADL Film Fest has secured a reputation around the globe as an essential screen culture event and was named in *Variety Film* magazine's 50 Unmissable Film Festivals list. The ADL Film Fest takes place immediately after the Venice and Toronto Film Festivals, signifying the beginning of the awards season. Australian screen industry icons Margaret Pomeranz and David Stratton are patrons of the festival. More: www.adelaidefilmfestival.org

MEDIA INFORMATION:

Interviews: available with **Professor Long** – please forward all requests.

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