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For immediate release

Exceptional mathematics communicator honoured with prestigious award

The Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA) and the London Mathematical Society (LMS) are delighted to announce that Professor John Barrow, FRS, Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics, University of Cambridge will receive the Christopher Zeeman Medal for the Promotion of Mathematics to the Public.

Professor Barrow has made enormous contributions to the public understanding of mathematics, particularly in his role as Director of the Millennium Mathematics Project (MMP) at Cambridge. The MMP has done a huge amount to develop mathematical interest and ability among school students with activities such as NRICH and the online magazine *Plus*.

In a joint statement, IMA Executive Director David Youdan and LMS President Professor Angus Macintyre said, 'Our two societies have a common priority of promoting mathematics both to school students and to the adult public. Society should not lose sight of the fundamental importance of mathematics, both as a foundation for much of science and engineering, and as a human endeavour aimed at understanding some of the deepest problems about the structure of our universe. Professor Barrow has been at the forefront of mathematics communication for many years and is world famous for his contributions to public understanding of one of the oldest, most beautiful, and most essential of sciences'.

The Institute of Mathematics and its Applications and the London Mathematical Society are incorporated under Royal Charter and are Charities registered with the Charity Commissioners.

IMA registered number: 1017777. LMS registered number: 252660.

The medal is named in honour of Professor Sir Christopher Zeeman, FRS, one of the UK's foremost mathematicians who spent much of his career at the University of Warwick sharing his love of mathematics with the public. In 1978, Sir Christopher was the first ever mathematician to be asked to deliver the Royal Institution's Christmas lectures in its 125 year history.

Professor Barrow said, 'As someone who was inspired by Christopher Zeeman's compelling presentations of mathematical ideas as a school student, it is a great honour to receive this award that bears his name'.

As well as promoting mathematics through his work with MMP, Professor Barrow is also the author of many books on mathematics and cosmology. His recent publication – *One hundred essential things you didn't know you didn't know* – shows how mathematics explains our world, in a way that is accessible to anyone with only a basic mathematical knowledge. His most recent work, *The Book of Universes*, shows how mathematics has enabled us to understand so much of the Universe we see around us.

A tireless champion of mathematical awareness for several decades, Professor Barrow has won both the Royal Society's Faraday Prize and the Kelvin Medal of the Institute of Physics. He has also engaged with the arts and in 2002 his play *Infinities* premiered in Milan, directed by Luca Ronconi, and won the Premi Ubu Theatre Prize and the Italgas Prize. The Italian edition of his book *Cosmic Imagery*, about the role of pictures in the history of science and mathematics, won the 2011 Merck-Serono Prize for Science and Literature. Professor Barrow has also been both the Gresham Professor of Astronomy and Gresham Professor of Geometry at Gresham College, London and is a Fellow of the Royal Society.

Notes for Editors

1. The **Christopher Zeeman Medal** is a triennial award of the IMA and LMS to recognise and reward the contributions of mathematicians involved in promoting mathematics to the public, and to encourage others to work in this area by demonstrating that such activities are valued and are a part of a mathematician's role and responsibilities.
2. The **London Mathematical Society (LMS)** is the UK's learned society for mathematics. Founded in 1865 for the promotion and extension of mathematical knowledge, the Society is concerned with all branches of mathematics and its applications. It is an independent and self-financing charity, with a membership of over 2600 drawn from all parts of the UK and overseas. Its principal activities are the organisation of meetings and conferences, the publication of periodicals and books, the provision of financial support for mathematical activities, and the contribution to public debates on issues related to mathematics research and education. It works collaboratively with other mathematical bodies worldwide. It is the UK adhering body to the International Mathematical Union.
3. The **Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA)** is the learned and professional society for mathematics. It promotes mathematics research, education and careers, and the use of mathematics in business, industry and commerce. Amongst its activities the IMA produces academic journals, organises conferences, and engages with government. Founded in 1964, the Institute has 5000 members. Forty percent of members are employed in education (schools through to universities), and the other 60% work in commercial, industrial and governmental organisations. In 1990 the Institute was incorporated by Royal Charter and was subsequently granted the right to award Chartered Mathematician designation.
4. The LMS and IMA are members of the **Council for the Mathematical Sciences**, which also comprises the Royal Statistical Society, the Edinburgh Mathematical Society and the Operational Research Society.
5. The Millennium Mathematics Project (MMP) is a mathematics education initiative for ages 5 to 19 and the general public, based at the University of Cambridge and active nationally and internationally. The MMP aims to support mathematics education and promote the development of mathematical skills and understanding, particularly through enrichment activities.

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