

Royal Canadian Institute for Science recognizes the unsung heroes of science communication

RCIScience 2023 announces science communication awards to Toronto science writer Terry Collins and the producers of CBC Radio's Quirks & Quarks science program

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, October 30, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Royal Canadian Institute for Science](#) (RCIScience) awards the 2023 Sandford Fleming Medal for Excellence in Science Communication to independent science writer [Terry Collins](#) and the William Edmond Logan Award to the team behind CBC Radio's national weekly science program, [Quirks & Quarks](#).

A knowledge translator for over 27 years, Terry Collins' reporting has been picked up by journalists in Canada and worldwide, awakening public interest in and deepening understanding of diverse sciences, fostering political will and mobilizing resources for change.

Nominator Dr. Peter A. Singer, former Special Advisor to the Director-General of the World Health Organization, remarks that Terry "has been the common denominator in an extremely long series of successful efforts to raise the general public's scientific interest and knowledge."

He has interpreted and explained the essence and importance of research findings from scores of scientific institutions, including ten UN bodies. His work has benefited critical global causes and advanced many scientific careers. Most notably, Terry's behind-the-scenes efforts made an impactful contribution to the UN's historic Global Biodiversity Framework agreement in 2022.

Mineralogist and astrobiologist Robert Hazen of the Carnegie Institution for Science in Washington DC, a frequent collaborator, calls Terry "a genius at communicating science to the



For 174 years, RCIScience has been connecting people in Canada with science to foster dialogue, discovery and community and build an engaging science culture for everyone, valuing scientific knowledge and integrity for a stronger Canada. The institute wa

broadest possible audience. His polished and compelling treatments of sometimes difficult scientific topics are distinguished by their eloquent prose, their accessibility, and, perhaps most importantly, their creative framing. And the results are absolutely spectacular.”

Says Mr. Collins: “Many thousands of people at colleges, universities, scientific organizations and elsewhere put complex ideas into everyday language, helping the public to understand and engage, encouraging scientific literacy and curiosity. This prestigious award is dedicated to all of them.”

Quirks & Quarks is one of Canada's most beloved science news programs. Since it first aired in October 1975, Quirks & Quarks is consistently rated among the most popular CBC programs, attracting almost a million listeners globally each week. Three of its four hosts have previously been awarded the Fleming Medal, but it is the production team behind the scenes who receive this year's William Edmond Logan Award, led by showrunner Jim Lebens.



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From particle physics to dinosaurs to black holes, the Quirks & Quarks four-person production team brings all manner of science stories, from the serious to the quirky, to the Canadian public. The average listener may not be aware of just how much work goes into making the show

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Carrie Boyce, Executive Director, RCIScience

happen every week. From initial pitch to polished product, over 150 hours of work go into producing each episode! No quick or easy feat.

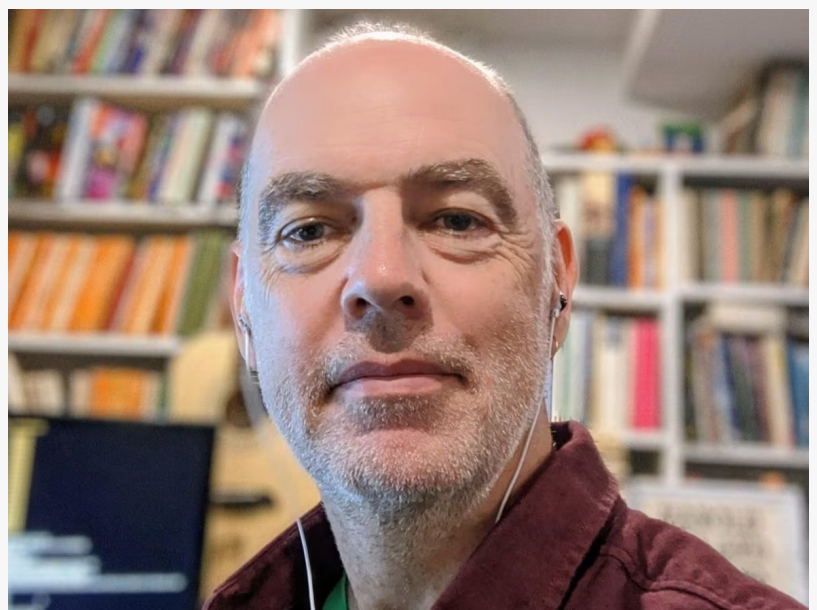
It is the team's keen sense of what makes a good science story, combined with their deep intuition for what works (and what doesn't work) on radio, that heralds Quirks & Quarks as the gold standard for audio science communication and a bucket list interview for so many researchers worldwide.

“It's really a treat for us to be able to approach scientists and bring their work to our audience. Fortunately, the

show's reputation means people are usually happy and even excited to be on," said Senior Producer Jim Lebens.

Carrie Boyce, Executive Director of RCIScience, remarks, "I'm absolutely thrilled that RCIScience is recognizing just a few of the unsung heroes of science communication who work so diligently behind the scenes to make science engaging and accessible for everyone in Canada."

A public ceremony to celebrate Mr. Collins' and the Quirks & Quarks team's contributions to science communication in Canada will be held at the Centre for Social Innovation (Annex), 720 Bathurst St, Toronto, on Wednesday, November 29th, at 7 PM.



Jim Lebens is Senior Producer of CBC Radio's award-winning science program, Quirks & Quarks, where he has worked, with small interruptions, since 1993.

Of particular interest to scientists, aspiring science writers and public information officers, the award winners will participate in a roundtable discussion and Q&A on the behind-the-scenes newsmaking process, from identifying the news hook to airing a story nationwide.

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Since 1982, the charity has awarded the Sandford Fleming Medal and Citation annually to a Canadian who has made outstanding contributions to the public understanding of science – to advance our vision.

Previous recipients include David Suzuki, Ursula Franklin, Chris Hadfield, Molly Shoichet, Bob MacDonald, Timothy Caulfield, Ivan Semeniuk, and André Picard.

The William Edmond Logan Award was created in 2015 as a companion to the Fleming Medal to recognize organizations rather than individuals.

Past winners include Celestica, Sanofi Pasteur Canada, IBM Canada, the Science Communication Program at Laurentian University and Toronto Metropolitan University's SciXchange.

Together, the Fleming Medal and Logan Award are two of a very small number of awards

celebrating outstanding science communication efforts in Canada.

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