

May 2, 2008  
IQOQI Media alert 8/2008



## **Peter Zoller becomes a member of the US National Academy of Sciences**

**The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences also elects Zoller as member**

**Institut für Quantenoptik und Quanteninformation**  
Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften

Otto Hittmair-Platz 1 / Technikerstraße 21a  
6020 Innsbruck, Austria, Europe  
Tel +43 512 507 4701  
Fax +43 512 507 9815  
iqoqi-ibk@oeaw.ac.at  
[www.iqoqi.at](http://www.iqoqi.at)

Geschäftsführender Direktor  
Univ.Prof. Dr. Rainer BLATT  
rainer.blatt@oeaw.ac.at

**Physicist Peter Zoller received an exceptional international recognition this week. The most prestigious science academy in the world, the US National Academy of Sciences, elected him to become a member. The trail blazer of Austrian quantum physics thus joins the ranks of the handful of scientists who receive this rare honour. In the same week Peter Zoller was also made a member of the Royal Dutch Academy of Arts and Sciences.**

“Being elected into the US National Academy of Sciences is a great honour for me as a scientist and an impressive international recognition of my work to date,” admits a delighted Peter Zoller, professor of theoretical physics at the University of Innsbruck and Scientific Director of the Institute for Quantum Optics and Quantum Information at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. “I shall use this new position also to strengthen the role of Austrian science in the world,” the Tyrolean scientist explains.

As a recognition of their significant research contributions, 18 foreign scientists from nine countries were elected as members of the United States National Academy of Sciences. The renowned US institution currently has 397 foreign members including a large number of Nobel laureates from all academic disciplines. The US National Academy of Sciences also has 2,041 active US members, 72 of which were elected to the prestigious institution this year. The only Austrian member of the US National Academy of Sciences to date was Viennese physicist Walter Thirring, who became a member 20 years ago. The US National Academy of Sciences is a private organization, founded in 1863 by the then US president Abraham Lincoln. It advises the United States of America on all scientific issues.

### **“A rare and great distinction”**

“The Academy accepts very few members from outside the USA, so this is indeed a rare and great distinction,” explained US physics Nobel laureate William D. Phillips, one of the first to congratulate Peter Zoller. In the same week, the Innsbruck physicist was elected as a member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2005 Zoller had held the prestigious Lorentz chair at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands.



Peter Zoller is a full member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and has collected many internationally known awards including the Max Planck Medal, the Dirac Medal, the Niels Bohr Gold Medal and the Wittgenstein Award. The theoretician works on quantum optics and quantum information and is known best for his pioneering work in quantum computing and quantum communication as well as for his research on links between quantum optics and solid state physics.

### **Trendsetter of Austrian physics**

Peter Zoller was born in Innsbruck in 1952. He studied physics at the University of Innsbruck, obtained his doctorate there in February 1977, and became a lecturer at their Institute of Theoretical Physics. For 1978/79, he was granted a Max Kade stipend to research at the University of Southern California. In 1980, he stayed in Auckland, New Zealand. In 1981 Peter Zoller applied to qualify as a professor by receiving the “*venia docendi*” at the University of Innsbruck. He spent 1981/82 and 1988 as Visiting Fellow at the Joint Institute for Laboratory Astrophysics (JILA) of the University of Colorado in Boulder. In 1991 Peter Zoller was appointed Professor of Physics and JILA Fellow at JILA and at the Physics Department of the University of Colorado in Boulder. At the end of 1994, he accepted a chair at the University of Innsbruck, where he has worked ever since. Numerous guest professorships have taken him to all major centres of physics throughout the world. Since 2003 Peter Zoller has also held the position of Scientific Director at the Institute for Quantum Optics and Quantum Information (IQOQI) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW).

You can find pictures of professor Zoller on: <http://www.iqoqi.at/media/download/>

Information on the US National Academy of Science: <http://www.nasonline.org/> and on the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences: <http://www.knaw.nl/english/>

#### Contact:

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Peter Zoller  
Institut für Theoretische Physik, Universität Innsbruck  
A-6020 Innsbruck, Technikerstraße 25  
Institut für Quantenoptik und Quanteninformation  
Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften  
A-6020 Innsbruck, Technikerstraße 21a  
Tel.: +43 512 507 4780,  
Email: peter.zoller[at]uibk.ac.at

Dr. Christian Flatz  
Public Relations  
Institut für Quantenoptik und Quanteninformation  
Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften  
Technikerstraße 21a, A-6020 Innsbruck,  
Tel. +43 650 5777122  
E-Mail: pr-iqoqi@oeaw.ac.at