


AWARD
BREAKTHROUGH PRIZE: 3 MILLION DOLLARS FOR GRAVITATIONAL WAVES

The selection committee for the Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics has awarded this year's special prize to the LIGO and VIRGO collaborations - in which Italy is taking part with the INFN - and to the founders of the American research project. The prize was awarded for the historical milestone achieved by the scientists who, one hundred years after Albert Einstein's theoretical prediction, have demonstrated the existence of gravitational waves. A one million dollar prize was awarded to Ronald W.P. Drever, professor emeritus of physics at Caltech; Kip S. Thorne, professor emeritus of theoretical physics at Caltech; and Rainer Weiss, professor emeritus of physics at MIT. The two LIGO and VIRGO collaborations, involving more than 1,000 scientists, 150 of whom Italian, were awarded a total of \$ 2 million. The winners will receive their prizes at a ceremony in the autumn of this year, where the Annual Breakthrough Prize for fundamental physics (separate from the special prize) will also be presented, along with the other awards in life sciences and mathematics.

The Breakthrough Prize, awarded by the Breakthrough Foundation founded by Sergey Brin and Anne Wojcicki, Jack Ma and Cathy Zhang, Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan, and Yuri and Julia Milner, celebrates the best achievements in science and has the ambitious aim of inspiring future generations of scientists. The Selection Committee is made up of former winners of the prize. ■