

Nine Scientists Share Three Kavli Prizes



The claim that inflationary theory has been verified may have been called into question in recent weeks, but today the theory itself won an honor.

The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters has awarded the [Kavli Prize](#) in astrophysics to three physicists who pioneered the theory: Alan Guth of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Andrei Linde of Stanford University, and Alexei Starobinsky of the Landau Institute for Theoretical Physics. Beginning in the late 1970s, the three researchers helped develop the idea that the universe underwent a phase of tremendous expansion in the first sliver of a second after the big bang.

The academy also announced two other Kavli Prizes. The nanoscience award will be shared by Thomas Ebbesen of the University of Strasbourg, Stefan Hell of the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, and John Pendry of Imperial College London for their contributions to optical microscopy and imaging. And the neuroscience prize will be awarded to Brenda Milner of the Montreal Neurological Institute at McGill University, John O'Keefe of University College London, and Marcus Raichle of the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis for their discovery of specialized brain networks for memory and cognition.

The winners in each category share \$1 million. The prizes are endowed by a foundation started in 2000 by the late Norwegian-born businessman and philanthropist, Fred Kavli.