UC Irvine researchers win Frontiers of Science Award

Recognition spotlights origination of FASER neutrino-hunting program.
Friday, July 25, 2025
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UC Irvine News



On behalf of his co-authors, UC Irvine physicist Felix Kling (center) accepted the Frontiers of Science Award on July 13 from prominent figures in the international scientific community.

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Photo courtesy of the International Congress of Basic Sciences

Four current and former researchers in the Department of Physics and Astronomy have won the 2025 Frontiers of Science Award, recognizing contributions of outstanding scholarly value in math, physics and computer science. The distinction recognized the work of Jonathan Feng, Distinguished Professor of physics and astronomy; Felix Kling, assistant researcher; and former postdoctoral scholars Iftah Galon and Sebastian Trojanowski. The award was given for the team's 2017 paper that proposed a new project, the Forward Search Experiment, to be located at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN in Switzerland.

FASER was designed to detect neutrinos and other new particles for the first time at the LHC and was constructed in the following years by over 100 physicists from 27 institutions in 11 countries. In 2023, the FASER collaboration detected the first neutrinos at the LHC, the highest energy neutrinos ever produced by humans, which the team reported in a series of subsequent papers in the journal Physical Review Letters. The discovery was credited with creating a new subfield of collider neutrino physics.

"On behalf of my co-authors and the entire FASER Collaboration, I am honored to have been recognized by this Frontiers of Science Award," said Feng. "FASER has provided new eyes to view particle collisions at the Large Hadron Collider and continues to be instrumental in uncovering new knowledge about neutrinos and particle physics."

FASER was made possible through support from the Heising-Simons Foundation, the Simons Foundation, the National Science Foundation and CERN. The Frontiers of Science Award was inaugurated in 2023 under the auspices of the International Congress of Basic Sciences. A panel of renowned experts is asked to select a shortlist of award candidates in each research area, and a global committee then chooses the winners. FSA recipients are invited to accept the award and give a talk at the International Congress of Basic Sciences in Beijing each year.

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