

**PRESS RELEASE
WINNERS ANNOUNCED
1999/1419H KING FAISAL INTERNATIONAL PRIZE
IN
MEDICINE**

Topic: ALLERGIC DESEASES

Detailed documents prepared by the Secretariat were distributed to each Committee member. The Committee members noted that the Secretariat of the King Faisal International Prize had advertised the prize in national and international newspapers and scientific journals. In addition, 1613 invitations were distributed internationally to medical and relevant scientific institutions and universities. Thirty- one nominations were received, one was rejected because it did not meet the set deadline and 20 were eliminated by the expert as they were either not of an appropriate standard, or did not fall within the scope of the Prize topic. Ten nominations were short-listed and were sent to three independent international referees. These nominations together with the external referees' reports were presented to the Committee for consideration. The Committee expressed its sincere appreciation for the meticulous manner in which this extensive documentation was prepared by the Secretariat.

The Committee members made an exhaustive study of all the available documents including the referees' reports. It was unanimously agreed that the nominated works of all the short-listed candidates were of an exceptionally high standard.

After prolonged discussion it was agreed unanimously that the Prize for I419H (1999) should be shared equally between:

**POFESSOR PATRICK G. HOLT
and
PROFESSOR STEPHEN T. HOLGATE**

Professor Patrick Holt was born in Australia in 1945, and had his basic and postgraduate education at the University of Western Australia where he obtained both Ph.D. & D.Sc. degrees. Currently he

is a Senior Principal Research Fellow at the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia, Deputy Director and Head of Division of Cell Biology at the TVW Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Microbiology, University of Western Australia.

Professor Holt extensive studies on the respiratory immune responses to inhalant allergens have revealed important findings with major implications in understanding the pathogenesis of asthma. His animal experiments, supported by findings in infants with atopic sensitization and immune modulation very early in life have potential application in primary prevention of allergy. This experimental work paves the way for the development of a novel vaccine, which will be expected to prevent allergic diseases.

Professor Stephen Holgate, a UK citizen born in 1947, is the Medical Research Council Clinical Professor of Immunopharmacology at the University of Southampton England, and Honorary Consultant Physician to hospitals in Southampton and Bournemouth. His work is on asthma as an inflammatory disease. He has demonstrated the role of cytokines released from human mast cells and the role of T cells in prolonging the inflammatory response. Professor Holgate's research has also included the role of respiratory viral infections in asthma and has shown that fibrosis may occur in some patients. This may be important in deciding whether anti-inflammatory therapy should be prolonged. In addition Professor Holgate has investigated the role of genetic predisposition to allergic diseases.