

Johann Wempe Award for Dr. Ignasi Ribas

Award Ceremony at the Astrophysical Institute Potsdam (AIP)

This year the Johann Wempe Award is awarded to Dr. Ignasi Ribas from the Institut d'Estudis Espacials de Catalunya, Spain, for his distinguished work on the study of M dwarf eclipsing binaries and the habitability of exoplanets. The award is financed from funds left in the will of Johann Wempe, the last director of the former Astrophysical Observatory Potsdam (1906-1980). It consists of a stipend to facilitate a research visit of up to six months at the AIP. The recipient may either be a promising young scientist who has already made notable achievements, or a senior scientist in recognition of his or her life's work. So far the Johann Wempe Award has been awarded to Dr. Tom Abel from Stanford University, Dr. Russel D. Cannon from the Anglo-Australian Observatory Sydney, Dr. Isabelle Baraffe and Prof. Gilles Chabrier from the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon, Dr. Alexander G. Kosovichev from Stanford University and Prof. Eva Grebel from the Astronomical Institute of the University of Basel.

Dr. Ribas now joins this list of important scientists. His central goal is the analysis of the interior life of stars. He studies the convective energy transport and the rotation of stars as well as the influence of their magnetic fields. By means of detailed observations of M dwarf stars in eclipsing binaries, he draws conclusions on their internal structure. As early as 1999, he was honoured for his doctoral thesis at the University of Barcelona. From 2000 to 2001 he was employed at Villanova University in the USA, first as a Fulbright Fellow, and after that as a post-doc. From 2001 to 2004 he was assistant professor at the University of Barcelona. Presently, he does his research as a Ramón y Cajal Fellow at the Institut d'Estudis Espacials de Catalunya, Spain. With his 142 accepted publications he is one of the leading young European astronomers in his field.

Prof. Dr. Artie P. Hatzes from the Landessternwarte Thüringen will give a lecture on the topic of "The Current Status of Exoplanet Research" at the Wempe Award Ceremony on 9th November 2007.

Image Titles:

Image 1: The laureate Dr. Ignasi Ribas [Image: S. Bonatz]

Image 2: Prof. Johann Wempe, former Institute director of the AOP and founder of the Johann Wempe Award [Image: AIP]