



IOP Annual Nuclear Physics Conference 2018

4–6 April 2018

University of the West of Scotland, Paisley, UK

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Who split the atom?

Public lecture by Jim Al-Khalili

4 April 2018, 6.30pm

Chancellor's Hall, University of the West of Scotland, Paisley, UK

Apart from the confusion about what this popular phrase means – it is of course the nucleus that is being split, not the entire atom – there is also debate about when it was achieved and who should take the credit. One thing that is not in doubt is that Ernest Rutherford will have been involved in some way. So, what was the father of nuclear physics working on exactly 100 years ago, in 1918, just before the end of the Great War and just before he moved down from Manchester to The Cavendish? Digging into the history, we see that he was in fact busy... “splitting the atom”. This talk will look back at some of the key moments in nuclear physics in the first decades of the 20th century.



Professor Jim Al-Khalili is theoretical nuclear physicist, author and broadcaster. Since 2005, he has held a joint chair in physics and in public engagement in science at the University of Surrey. He received his PhD in nuclear reaction theory in 1989 from Surrey before working as an SERC Postdoctoral Fellow at UCL before returning to Surrey. In 1994, he was awarded a five-year EPSRC Advanced Research Fellowship before being appointed as a permanent member of staff in 1999.

Jim has written 11 books, between them translated into 23 languages. His book, *Pathfinders*, was shortlisted for the Warwick Prize in 2013, and more recently, *Life on the Edge: the coming of age of quantum biology* was shortlisted for the 2015 Royal Society Winton Prize. He is a regular presenter of TV science documentaries, including the Bafta nominated *Chemistry: A Volatile History* and *Shock and Awe: The Story of Electricity*. For the past seven years he has presented the award-winning weekly BBC Radio 4 programme, *The Life Scientific*.

Jim is president-elect of the British Science Association, and will be taking up office in September of this year. He is a current board member of CaSE (Campaign for Science and Engineering), a trustee of the Institute of Physics and on the judging panel of the Queen Elizabeth Prize for Engineering. As an advocate for secular humanism, he served as president of Humanists UK for three years. He is a recipient of The Royal Society Michael Faraday medal, the Institute of Physics Kelvin Medal and the Stephen Hawking Medal for Science Communication. He received an OBE in 2007 for “services to science”.

Registration for this lecture is free of charge.

Please note, you will need to confirm your attendance in advance. For further information, visit <http://nuc18.iopconfs.org> or email Ana Santos, Institute of Physics at ana.santos@iop.org