

Chancellor

Mr Robyn Williams AM is one of the most influential science journalists and broadcasters in the English-speaking world, and is among the most reliable friends and defenders of Australian science.

He is best-known as host of the Science Show on ABC Radio National, which he launched in 1975. With more than 2000 episodes, it is one of the world's longest-running programs of its type.

Through this and other avenues he has done a great deal to democratise the understanding and appreciation of science. Masterfully, he brings complex work out of the pages of peer-reviewed journals and the proceedings of conferences, and into the minds of a vast and diverse audience - from school children to Nobel laureates.

His topic selections and astute questions reflect his education in science, his voracious reading of journals, and his links with scientists across the globe.

Born in England and schooled there and in Austria, he gained a Bachelor of Science with Honours from the University of London.

Moving to Australia in the early 1970s, he earned his broadcasting stripes in the ABC Science Unit, before starting and anchoring the Science Show.

Its hour-long weekly format has stood the test of time - as has its host. For 42 years, undeterred even by a period of serious illness, Mr Williams has relentlessly researched, edited, curated and interviewed. Along with the Science Show he presents Ockham's Razor (described as a 'soap box for all things scientific), and he has published 10 books.

While countless people have benefitted from his services to science and the media, his contributions have been valued particularly at The University of Queensland.

Multiple UQ staff, students and alumni have been guests on his programs. He was an adjunct professor for more than 16 years; and he has avidly supported initiatives that encourage students and emerging researchers – including the UQ-born Three Minute Thesis competition.

Moreover, he is a founding member of UQ's Global Change Institute Advisory Board, where his contributions include helping develop the new Global Change Scholars program, which gives enhanced leadership training to PhD candidates from a range of disciplines.

While exploring deadly-serious issues and interviewing some of the world's most distinguished minds, Mr Williams occasionally allows for comic relief. His skilful timing hints at an era before he came to Australia, when he performed with some of his generation's most irreverent comedians - the Monty Python team and the Goodies. He also appeared on Dr Who – years before the next Doctor, Jodie Whittaker, was even conceived.

Seriously, many eminent institutions have recognised his talent and his contributions. He was the first journalist to be made a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, and was a Reuters Fellow at the University of Oxford. He is an honorary Member of the Order of Australia and a Centenary Medallist. Officially, he is an Australian Living National Treasure.

Chancellor, I present to you Mr Robyn Williams, Member of the Order of Australia, Bachelor of Science with honours of the University of London, Doctor of Science *honoris causa* of Deakin University, Doctor of Science *honoris causa* of Macquarie University, Doctor of Science *honoris causa* of The University of Sydney, Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* of Australian National University, Doctor of Science *honoris causa* of the University of New South Wales, Doctor of the University

honoris causa of University of South Australia, Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, and Fellow of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, for the award of Doctor of Science *honoris causa*, bestowed by the Senate of The University of Queensland.