

Director General of CERN to Receive Honorary Degree

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Professor Rolf Dieter Heuer, the Director General of CERN, the European Organisation for Nuclear Research, will receive an honorary doctorate at a degree congregation at the University of Birmingham on Friday 16th December at 1.45pm.

Professor Heuer is to receive this accolade in recognition of his outstanding contribution in the field of particle physics and his distinguished career at CERN, one of the world's largest centres for scientific research.

CERN is the location for the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), one of the largest and most significant experiments in human history, where scientists are recreating conditions of the early universe by colliding particles together at high energies in a 27km underground tunnel that crosses the Swiss and French borders.

Birmingham physicists play a crucial role in three experiments at the LHC, one investigating matter and antimatter, a second focussing on lead ion collisions and a third experiment that is searching for new phenomena including the elusive Higgs Boson particle that is thought to explain why particles have mass.

Pete Watkins, Professor of Particle Physics at the University's School of Physics and Astronomy, said: *'Rolf Dieter Heuer played a leading role in the OPAL experiment at CERN where the Birmingham Particle Physics group also made major contributions and worked closely with him for many years. He was an outstanding choice as Director General at CERN which is one of the most demanding and exciting jobs in science.'*

Professor Heuer said: *'It's more than just an honour for me to receive an honorary degree from the University of Birmingham, it's also a great personal pleasure. My working relationship with the Birmingham physics department goes back well over 20 years, and I have many friends here. I worked with the Birmingham group in the 1980s and 90s on the OPAL experiment at CERN. Today, it's great to see them continuing to make strong contributions to the LHC experimental programme.'*

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. Professor Rolf Dieter Heuer will receive a Doctor of Science (DSc) from the University of Birmingham.
2. There will be an opportunity to photograph the honorary graduand in the 15 minutes prior to the degree ceremony. Please phone the Press Office for accreditation.

For further information

Kate Chapple, Press Officer, University of Birmingham, tel 0121 414 2772 or 07789 921164.

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