



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## *News Release*

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### **Edinburgh honorary degree for former Indian president**

The former president of India, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam has been awarded an honorary degree by the University of Edinburgh. He received the degree of Doctor of Science last night (Thursday 15 May), during a dinner held in his honour at the University's Playfair Library.

The award – presented by University Principal and Vice Chancellor, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea – is in recognition of Dr Kalam's outstanding contribution to science and technology, and his commitment to helping transform India into a developed nation by 2020.

Dr Kalam, who was president of India from 2002 to 2007, studied physics at the St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli, and aerospace engineering at the Madras Institute of Technology (MIT), Chennai. He is regarded as the father of his country's space programme and in recent years has campaigned to highlight the plight of India's rural poor, advocating the use of technology to address social and economic inequalities.

Earlier in the day, Dr Kalam provided the keynote address at the inaugural conference of the University's Edinburgh India Institute. The Institute will help coordinate the work of Edinburgh academics who are working with a wide range of partners across India.

“It is a privilege to welcome Dr Kalam to Edinburgh and to present him with an honorary degree,” said Sir Timothy O'Shea. “It recognises his extraordinary work as a scientist, as a figurehead for his country and for working to tackle rural poverty and injustice over many years.”

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