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## OFFICIAL STATEMENT

### On The Foundational Questions Institute, The John Templeton Foundation, and Intelligent Design

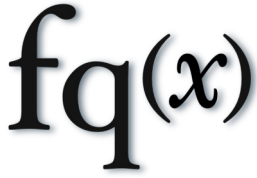
Although actively pursuing additional donors, the Foundational Questions Institute (FQXi) is currently funded by a generous seed grant from the John Templeton Foundation (JTF), formed by investor and philanthropist Sir John Templeton.

JTF's mission is "to serve as a philanthropic catalyst for scientific discovery on what scientists and philosophers call the 'Big Questions.'" Ranging from questions about the laws of nature to the nature of creativity and consciousness, the Foundation's philanthropic vision is derived from Sir John's resolute belief that rigorous research and cutting-edge scholarship is at the very heart of new discoveries and human progress. In practice, JTF distributes millions of dollars annually to fund projects exploring the interface between religion and the physical and social sciences, including its most famous award, the Templeton Prize, as well as grants in "science and religion" and "character development," among others. JTF's interest in FQXi is based on the recognition that advances in physics and cosmology have had in the past, and surely will in the future, profound implications for the deep or "ultimate" nature of our world.

JTF's interests aside, FQXi is a non-profit scientific grant-awarding organization fully independent from its donors and operated in accordance with its [Scientific Charter](#). Proposal funding is determined via a standard and rigorous peer-review process, and an expert panel appointed by FQXi. Donors – including JTF – have no control or influence over individual proposal selection or renewal.

In certain media accounts, JTF has been connected with the Intelligent Design (ID) movement popularized by, for example, the Discovery Institute. JTF has publicly stated that it "does not support the movement known as Intelligent Design, [either] as an intellectual position or a movement." In fact, JTF has funded several anti-ID programs, most notably a project in conjunction with the AAAS. Still, as might be expected for a philanthropic organization with JTF's wide reach and interests, JTF has funded individuals with theological interests in science, a small fraction of whom have later expressed sympathy with ID.

An important example is Guillermo Gonzalez, an astronomer with the University of Washington, who recently published *The Privileged Planet* with Regenry, the publishing arm of the Discovery Institute. In 2000, Dr. Gonzalez received Templeton funding in a program overseen by the current Scientific Director of FQXi, Max Tegmark. At the time of his award, Dr. Gonzalez had not publicly revealed his association with ID, and none of the scientific reviewers of his grant application knew of his sympathy with ID. Dr. Gonzalez's grant application prevailed over other qualified candidates in a fair competition, independent of JTF, using standard, rigorous peer reviewing methodology. *The Privileged Planet* has nonetheless been subsequently and wrongly attributed directly to JTF in public comments, along with the incorrect implication that JTF supports ID.



It is the view of FQXi that ID is at best very poor science driven largely by a political agenda. We emphatically reject both. However, we recognize that our stated mission – “To catalyze, support, and disseminate research on questions at the foundations of physics and cosmology, particularly new frontiers and innovative ideas that are integral to a deep understanding of reality but unlikely to be supported by conventional funding sources” – will often bring us in close contact with individuals having disparate views and opinions, some very different from ours.

FQXi welcomes the dialogue, as well as the opportunity and challenge. Our goal will always be to support rigorous scientific research on foundational questions, while accepting the reality that once a grant decision is made – on scientific grounds and via the peer review process – we cannot, nor would we want to, control what research is done or how it is interpreted. We also recognize that we can choose not to renew funding if performed research is inconsistent with the grant proposal.