

Brit in US signed in 'Beckham scheme'

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A British-born scientist is one of three researchers to be brought from the United States to Britain under the Royal Society's "David Beckhams of Science" scheme.

The Royal Society unveiled the 13 winners of the second round of the research merit awards, a joint venture with the Wolfson Foundation, this week. Designed to recruit and retain the best researchers in the United Kingdom, winners receive a salary enhancement and research expenses on top of the wage from their host UK university. The average award for this round is about £40,000.

Peter Taylor, a quantum chemist and deputy director of the San Diego Supercomputer Center at the University of California, is to take up a professorship at the University of Warwick, spanning the chemistry department and the centre for scientific computing.

Dr Taylor has spent 16 years in the US, but described the position in Warwick as "a great opportunity at an excellent university".

He said that the award would restore some parity with US salary levels. "It illustrates a commitment to research support in the UK, which creates a more attractive environment for academic researchers," he said.

The UK's research councils are believed to be carrying out their own consultation into producing similar guidelines.

The winners of the merit awards and the institution they will join are: Gabriel Aeppli, UCL; David Attwell, UCL; John Brady, Oxford; Samuel Braunstein, University of Wales, Bangor; Peter Bruce, University of St Andrews; Jon Driver, UCL; Brian Huntley, University of Durham; Timothy Karr, University of Bath; R. Stephen Sparks, University of Bristol; Peter Taylor, see above; Arkady A. Tseytlin, Imperial College; Kathryn J. Wood, Oxford, John Radcliffe Hospital; Guang-Zhong Yang, Imperial College.