

Prof Barbara Romanowicz - Institut de Physique du Globe de Paris



Professor Barbara Romanowicz is one of the most influential geophysicists of her generation. Originally a mathematician, she came to geoscience through the development of tomographic methods to image Earth's structure using seismic waves, and her research since has revolutionised our understanding of Earth's internal circulation – the driver of plate tectonics.

Born and educated in France, she studied mathematics at the Ecole Normale Supérieure before taking a PhD in Geophysics at the University of Paris 7. Between 1982 and 1990 as a researcher at the French National Centre for Scientific Research she developed GEOSCOPE, a global network of geophysical sensors to study earthquakes and illuminate the structure of the Earth's interior. In 1991 she was appointed Director of the Berkeley Seismological Laboratory, in which role she helped establish a joint UC Berkeley/US Geological Survey real time earthquake notification system for northern California. More recently, she founded the Cooperative Institute for Dynamic Earth Research (CIDER), which brings together and trains researchers from across the Earth sciences to tackle fundamental questions relating to global geodynamic processes. In 2011 she was appointed to the Chair of Physics of the Earth's Interior at Collège de France in Paris.

Among honors received, she was elected to the US National Academy of Sciences in 2005 and she was the recipient of the AGU William Bowie medal in 2019.

As a scientist, Professor Romanowicz is both influential and inspirational. Her work provides novel and exciting fundamental insights into the structure and workings of our planet, which ultimately impact the quality of human life.