



HAROLD KROTO

(Chemistry, 1996)

Sir Harold Kroto was an English chemist and passionate defender of the universal right to freedom of opinion and expression, which he viewed as vital for scientific endeavor and as the “bedrock” of society.

Recognizing the role of fundamental freedoms in the search for truth, and in combating dogma, Kroto was deeply involved in promoting their realization worldwide. Throughout his life, he advocated in support of fellow scientists and many other individuals persecuted for the peaceful expression of their views.

Kroto believed that, along with rights, scientists have responsibilities toward humankind. He was dedicated to expanding access to information and education, both as a means to realize human potential and to reduce societal injustice. During the latter part of his career, he explored ways to leverage technology to reduce inequality by providing free online access to educational materials worldwide. Kroto established the Vega Science Trust, a free platform allowing scientists to communicate directly with the public through digital media, with the aim of integrating science more fully into everyday culture. He also founded the educational initiative, Global Educational Outreach for Science, Engineering and Technology (GEOSSET), to provide freely accessible online educational resources. Kroto, a humanitarian and champion of social justice, died on April 30, 2016.

“I believe in a secular, democratic society in which women and men have total equality, and individuals can pursue their lives as they wish, free of constraints.”