

PRESS RELEASE

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IFC Films & Pressman Films' "THE MAN WHO KNEW INFINITY"

Partners With

ExpII, Ken Ono, and the Templeton World Charity Foundation

On The

Spirit of Ramanujan Math Talent Initiative

A Global Search for Undiscovered Mathematical Talent

Introducing the inaugural Spirit of Ramanujan Math Talent Initiative, which strives to find undiscovered mathematicians around the world and match them with advancement opportunities in the field.

The Spirit of Ramanujan Math Talent Initiative is presented by Ken Ono, Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Mathematics at Emory University; ExpII, the open, personalized learning platform; and the Templeton World Charity Foundation, in conjunction with IFC Films and Pressman Film, producers of the motion picture The Man Who Knew Infinity.

The creators of the Spirit of Ramanujan Math Talent Initiative were inspired by the life of Srinivasa Ramanujan, a gifted mathematician and the subject of the film. In 1913, Ramanujan, a poor Hindu college dropout who was self-taught in mathematics, reached out to renowned British mathematician G.H. Hardy in his search for mathematical peers and colleagues. Hardy was so astonished by Ramanujan's mathematical theories that he invited Ramanujan to Cambridge to study and collaborate. From the start, Ramanujan was fighting against the odds because of his poverty, his location, and the inflexibility of formal schooling. Yet with his brilliant mind, his dreams, and the support of the mathematical community, he defied those odds and went on to change the future of mathematics. Together with Hardy, Ramanujan innovated vast tracts of mathematics before returning to India in fragile health. Tragically, he died at 32, leaving three enigmatic notebooks that drive cutting-edge research to this day.

Jeremy Irons who plays Ramanujan's influential professor, G. H. HARDY, in *The Man Who Knew Infinity*, says, notes, "We were lucky to find Ramanujan, the world would be a different place if he hadn't been published. My character in the film, G. H. Hardy, states very directly that Ramanujan's genius was not discovered because of his teachers, but because of Ramanujan's own imagination and intuition. In the world today there are without a doubt talented minds out there who can advance humanity. I'm delighted that *The Man Who Knew Infinity* has shared the story of this miraculous figure, inspiring this initiative. Hopefully we will be able to discover new minds, that in turn, will lead to continued progress in the world of mathematics."

The story of Ramanujan and the program that he inspired directly relate to Sir John Templeton's interest and enthusiasm for the nurture, education, and recognition of geniuses. This unique project is distinguished by widespread awareness generated by the major film release, the use of technology to reach extraordinarily gifted people, and a series of opportunities for these people to further their intellectual development.

Dev Patel, who plays Ramanujan in the film says of the initiative, "Math was never my thing, but after researching Ramanujan for this film I've realized the profound contributions that mathematicians make in our lives. I'm fortunate to pursue my passion for acting, it's great that this competition gives those who are passionate about math to pursue theirs."

The Spirit of Ramanujan Math Talent Initiative strives to find undiscovered mathematicians around the world and match them with advancement opportunities. These include:

- An open round hosted on expii.com (via its Solve feature) invites people worldwide to solve creative mathematical puzzles through their smartphones.
- Participants in the open round will be invited to apply for further enrichment. Up to 20 eligible individuals will be awarded Templeton-Ramanujan Scholarly Development Prizes to use for furthering their educational pursuits and development. Just as Ramanujan's journey was transformed by his introduction to the mathematical community, successful applicants will be invited to participate in the 2017 Joint Mathematics Meetings, which will be held in Atlanta from January 4-7. There, they will engage with award-winning mathematicians (e.g., Fields Medalists, Cole Prize winners, Steele Prize winners, etc.) Organized by the Mathematical Association of America and the American Mathematical Society, the JMM is the largest annual mathematics conference in the world. Its purpose is to advance

mathematical achievement, encourage research, and provide the communication necessary to progress in the field.

- In the spirit of Ramanujan, up to 10 participants will be offered financial support to attend and participate in approved summer research in mathematics. They will receive a Templeton-Ramanujan Summer Fellows Prize to cover summer program expenses.
- Educational materials related to Srinivasa Ramanujan and *The Man Who Knew Infinity* will be offered to educational programs worldwide.

To enter the open round, please visit: expii.com/ramanujan

The Spirit of Ramanujan Math Talent Initiative is headed by Ken Ono with an advisory board that also includes Manjul Bhargava (Princeton), Olga Holtz (UC Berkeley), Po-Shen Loh (Carnegie Mellon), and Sujatha Ramdorai (U British Columbia).

Corporate Sponsors of the Spirit of Ramanujan Math Talent Initiative include ExpII, Texas Instruments, Springer Publishing, and Maplesoft.

The Man Who Knew Infinity (starring Jeremy Irons and Dev Patel) was advised by Ken Ono, a Guggenheim Fellow and cofounder of the Spirit of Ramanujan, and by Fields Medalist Manjul Bhargava. The film offers an in-depth view of one of the human stories behind the mathematical achievements that we take for granted in our everyday lives. For more information on the movie, visit www.themanwhoknewinfinity.com

Ken Ono, A Guggenheim Fellow and author of *My Search for Ramanujan: How I Learned to Count*, is cofounder of the Spirit of Ramanujan along with Fields Medalist Manjul Bhargava.