



MINERVA FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Minerva Project Announces \$500,000 Prize For Innovation In Teaching *Names Nobel Laureate Roger Kornberg As Governor Of Minerva Academy*

San Francisco, Calif. – April 22, 2013 - Minerva Project, which is redefining a top-tier university experience to prepare global leaders and innovators, today announced the launch of the Minerva Academy, a society of educators dedicated to promoting and rewarding innovation and excellence in teaching. Led by Nobel Laureate Roger Kornberg, who will serve as Governor of the new Academy, the group will select and award the *Minerva Prize for Advancements in Higher Education*. This international honor and \$500,000 prize, the largest of its kind, will be bestowed on one distinguished educator each year whose innovations have led to extraordinary student learning experiences. Nominations are open through November 30, 2013 at www.minervaproject.com/academy and the first Minerva Prize will be awarded in May 2014.

“While academic research has long been internationally recognized, and rightfully so, communication of the passion that lies behind it has gone largely unnoticed. We seek to enhance the intellectual development of students and inspire their interest, while continuing to support the creation, dissemination and preservation of knowledge within the professoriate,” said Dr. Roger Kornberg, governor of the Minerva Academy. “The new Minerva Academy and Prize are a step toward balancing emphasis and recognition in higher education.”

The Minerva Academy is an honorary institution that will induct the best educational innovators from around the world. Academy members will be identified and invited based on recognized expertise focused on student learning as well as published research. The objective of the Minerva Academy is to promote, recognize and reward extraordinary advancements in teaching excellence by providing a forum for open exchange of new ideas and enhanced practices in higher education instruction.

The Academy will recognize achievement through the *Minerva Prize for Advancements in Higher Education*, to be awarded annually to one faculty member, from any institution worldwide, who has demonstrated extraordinary, innovative teaching and advancements in learning experiences. The Minerva Prize is the largest teaching award of its kind, focusing on significant advancement in student learning in higher education. One \$500,000 cash prize will be awarded to the winner, who will be selected through a rigorous nomination and review process. The winner will also be inducted into the Academy. Details on the prize can be found at www.minervaproject.com/academy on the Minerva Project website. Nominations are open through November 30, 2013.

“The launch of the Minerva Academy and the Minerva Prize reinforces our dual commitment to research and excellence in teaching,” said Ben Nelson, founder and CEO of the Minerva Project. “We are thrilled that Roger Kornberg has agreed to take an active role in shaping the Academy and administering the Prize. We will adopt the best innovations in higher education teaching and will apply these best practices to the unique curriculum and learning experience that we are developing for the university.”

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Roger Kornberg, Ph.D., is the 2006 Nobel Prize winner in chemistry for his work in understanding how DNA is converted into RNA, a process known as transcription.

Dr. Kornberg is currently the Mrs. George A. Winzer Professor in medicine and professor of structural biology at Stanford University School of Medicine. Dr. Kornberg holds a doctorate in chemistry from Stanford University. Following postdoctoral work at the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge, England, he joined the scientific staff there. He later became part of the faculty in the Department of Biological Chemistry at Harvard Medical School before returning to Stanford as professor of structural biology.

To view a video of Roger Kornberg talking about the Minerva Prize, please visit:
www.minervaproject.com/academy

About Minerva Project

Minerva Project is launching a top-tier university built to accelerate the life trajectories of the world's brightest and most motivated students. Opening in Fall 2015, Minerva will draw on the best traditions of a research-based university education while leveraging cutting edge technologies and harvesting decades of research on student learning and success. Minerva is committed to providing an unparalleled educational experience for preparing global leaders for the 21st century. Minerva was founded by CEO Ben Nelson in 2011 and received a \$25 million seed investment from Benchmark Capital in 2012. To learn more, visit <http://www.minervaproject.com>.

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