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PRESS RELEASE

JOHN MURRAY ACQUIRES BRITISH AND COMMONWEALTH RIGHTS TO THE OFFICIAL AND FULLY AUTHORISED BIOGRAPHY OF STEPHEN HAWKING

The Stephen Hawking Estate announced today that the official biography of the world-famous theoretical physicist and global bestselling author will be published in the UK and Commonwealth by John Murray Publishers, an imprint of John Murray Press.

Stephen Hawking was one of the greatest and most celebrated minds of our time, known for his ground-breaking work in cosmology and theoretical physics, notably for Hawking radiation and his work on Black Holes. He was the director of research at the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology and Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at the University of Cambridge. At the age of 20 he was diagnosed with Motor Neuron Disease, (also known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease) and was given two years to live. His ability to move and communicate were increasingly limited, as he was confined to a wheelchair and eventually forced to speak through a voice synthesizer. When he died in March 2018, at the age of 76, he was the longest living MND survivor. His battle with the disease was featured in the film *The Theory of Everything*.

Amongst other titles, Hawking was the author of the classic book *A Brief History of Time*, which has sold over 13 million copies worldwide and shot back to the top of bestseller lists after his death. His final book, *Brief Answers to the Big Questions*, was published posthumously by John Murray in October 2018, and has already sold over 600,000 copies across its John Murray editions, and over 1.5 million copies worldwide to date. It was a best seller in the US (Penguin Random House) and has been published in over 45 translated editions.

The official biography will be written by Graham Farmelo, the author of *The Strangest Man: The Hidden Life of Paul Dirac, Quantum Genius* which won the Costa Biography Prize and LA Times Book Prize in 2009 - Paul Dirac was a personal hero of Hawking. Farmelo will draw on Hawking's extensive archives, interviews with Hawking's immediate family, and interviews with friends and colleagues spanning every phase of his life to create the definitive portrait of one of the world's greatest minds: a rounded, gripping account of Hawking that will detail his development from boyhood to his place at the forefront of theoretical physics and beyond. It is scheduled for publication in 2024.

This Christmas will also see a special hardback edition of *Brief Answers to the Big Questions*, containing puzzles devised by the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics - Stephen Hawking's department at the University of Cambridge - and inspired by the ten questions in the book. The main edition of the book will appear in paperback in March 2020.

Robert Kirby brokered the deal on behalf of United Agents. Graham Farmelo is represented by Toby Mundy of Toby Mundy Associates.

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Lucy Hawking, Robert Hawking and Tim Hawking on behalf of the Estate said: we are really delighted to be collaborating with Graham Farmelo on the definitive account of our extraordinary father's life and work. Graham has a prize winning track record of writing compelling biographical narratives about scientists and their work. Graham will have exclusive access to all our personal records, resources and contacts.

Graham Farmelo, biographer: 'It is a privilege and a joy to be writing the life of Stephen Hawking - not only a brilliant scientist but also a truly remarkable human being. I much look forward to shedding new light on his achievement and character.'

Nick Davies, Managing Director, John Murray Press: 'I can't think of a more appropriate or exciting project to follow *Brief Answers to the Big Questions*, nor can I think of a better biographer for this project than Graham. We are delighted to continue our relationship with Lucy, Robert and Tim Hawking, and with Professor Hawking's wider community of friends and colleagues.'

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