

Winner of 1st Charles Kao Award announced!

FTTH Conference 2019 in Amsterdam: Greg Mesch, Chief Executive Office of CityFibre, wins the 1st Charles Kao Award.

Amsterdam, 14 March 2019 – At the closing ceremony of the FTTH Conference 2019, the FTTH Council Europe has presented the inaugural **Charles Kao Award, in honour of fibre pioneer Professor Charles Kao who passed away in 2018**. Sir Charles Kuen Kao was awarded in 2009 the [Nobel Prize in Physics](#) for "ground-breaking achievements concerning the transmission of light in fibres for optical communication".

The first recipient of this new and prestigious award is **Greg Mesch, Chief Executive Officer of CityFibre**, the UK's leading alternative builder of full fibre infrastructure. Greg Mesch was selected for several reasons. Most recently we recognise his extraordinary contribution to the acceleration of full fibre deployment in the UK, a country that has until recently sat far behind in the European rankings for FTTH/B access. Before this, Greg had over 25 years of telecom, internet and technology-based experience with five companies successfully built from start-up phase, including major European fibre builders including Versatel and Esat Telecom.

As founder and Chief Executive of CityFibre, Greg has built a dynamic business that has introduced critical wholesale infrastructure competition into the UK market for the first time. Under his leadership, CityFibre has secured the capital investment and industry alignment needed to underpin one of Europe's most digitalised economies with future-proof fibre infrastructure, prompting the market to respond and driving improved services and lower prices.

Speaking during the closing ceremony of the FTTH Conference, Ronan Kelly President of the FTTH Council Europe said: *"When we decided to create the Charles Kao Award, it was clear that the winner had to be a firm believer in the benefits of full fibre. CityFibre's strategic partnership with Vodafone, its recent fundraise of over £1.1bn towards its rollout to at least 20% of the UK market as well as his global experience of several other markets such as the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany is testament to Greg's leadership and the scale of his contribution to our industry."*

Accepting the award, Greg Mesch said: *"To be associated with Charles Kao, such an innovator in our industry, is a real honour so I'm delighted and grateful for this award. With the potential of a full fibre future dawning on countries around the world, it has been a rare privilege to help set the four different countries on a path to making it happen. I urge all those individuals keen to do the*

same to reject the status quo and harness the desire for a new generation of businesses to take the reins.”

About the FTTH Council Europe

The FTTH Council Europe is an industry organisation with a mission to accelerate ubiquitous full fibre based connectivity empowering a leading Digital Society throughout Europe. The FTTH Council Europe’s vision is that fibre connectivity will transform and enhance the way we live, do business and interact, connecting everyone and everything, everywhere.

The FTTH Council Europe consists of more than 150 member companies. www.ftthcouncil.eu

To join our mission, don’t forget Gimme Fibre day on 4 November: <http://www.gimmefiber.eu/> and join the “I want Fibre” page on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/iwantfibre/>

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