Deji Akinwande has been selected to receive a 2016 Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) by President Obama, the United States government’s highest honor for scientists and engineers in the early stages of research. Prof. Akinwande is an associate professor in electrical and computer engineering and the Jack Kilby/Texas Instruments Endowed Faculty Fellow in Computer Engineering in the Cockrell School of Engineering at The University of Texas at Austin.

He is among 106 recipients announced by the White House on Thursday. The winners, who will be honored at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., this spring, were selected for having research that is both innovative and beneficial to society. Prof. Akinwande is one of two PECASE recipients from The University of Texas at Austin. The other recipient is Prof. Keji Lai from the Department of Physics.

“These early-career scientists are leading the way in our efforts to confront and understand challenges from climate change to our health and wellness,” President Barack Obama said. “We congratulate these accomplished individuals and encourage them to continue to serve as an example of the incredible promise and ingenuity of the American people.”

Now in its 20th year, the Presidential Early Career Awards are coordinated through the President’s Office of Science and Technology Policy, which selects winners for their pursuit of innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology and their commitment to community service as demonstrated through scientific leadership, public education, or community outreach.

Prof. Akinwande is known for his groundbreaking research on nanomaterials, sensors, devices and flexible technology. He is considered one of the top researchers in the world in the areas of graphene, silicon electronics and 2-D nanomaterials for use in flexible
electronics. In 2015, Akinwande created the first transistor out of silicene, the world?s thinnest silicon material, and he is continuing to advance the capabilities of computer chips and other electronics.

Prof. Akinwande has been the recipient of several prestigious awards, including the Inaugural IEEE NANO "Geim and Novoselov Graphene Prize," an IEEE Early Career Award in Nanotechnology, a National Science Foundation Career Award, an Army Research Office Young Investigator award, and a Young Investigator award from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency.