The Breakthrough Prize cites the "powerful influence" of the supergravity formalism, which provided the first quantum field theory that truly unified gravity with the strong, electromagnetic and weak forces of the Standard Model. It has served as a link from string theory to many realms of physics and mathematics, with applications to condensed matter and nuclear physics.

This award is only the fifth Special Breakthrough Prize, a category in its own right, and the invention of Supergravity joins the discoveries of gravitational waves, of pulsars, of the Higgs boson, and those of Stephen Hawking, in receiving this recognition.
Peter van Nieuwenhuizen Shares $3M Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics for “Invention of Supergravity”. Peter’s work with Dan Freedman and Sergio Ferrara was done at Stony Brook.