

Press release
March 19th, 2014

16TH ANNUAL L'ORÉAL-UNESCO FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE AWARDS

*An evening devoted to
women and scientific excellence*

PARIS, 19 MARCH 2014 **The 16th Annual L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards were held in the Sorbonne's historic lecture hall tonight, before an audience of key opinion leaders from the worlds of science, economics, academia, public affairs and culture. Five outstanding researchers were awarded the L'Oréal-UNESCO prize by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, Jean-Paul Agon, Chairman and CEO of L'Oréal and Chairman of the L'Oréal Foundation, and Professor Günter Blobel, Winner of the Nobel Prize for Medicine and President of the Jury.**



Long-term commitment to women in science

Every year, the L'Oréal Foundation and UNESCO renew their commitment to acknowledging the scientific excellence of women who help change the world, support future talent and encourage scientific vocations.

For 16 years, the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science program has identified, rewarded and celebrated more than **2,000 women** around the world, two of whom have subsequently received the Nobel Prize. It is now a benchmark for scientific excellence on an international scale and makes a major contribution to the creation of female role models, thus opening the way for a whole generation of young girls.

In the words of Irina Bokova: *"Science and gender equality are two accelerators of development. By combining them, we can release an enormous force for the good of us all."*

While Jean-Paul Agon adds: *"In science as in other fields, it is talent which makes the difference. It is unimaginable to exclude the talent of half of all humanity. Reward and highlight the women who have chosen this path is the duty of a corporate citizen like L'Oréal."*

A ceremony in honor of exceptional women

"This year again, the five women recognized have dazzled me with their boldness and the pertinence and scope of their work," said Chairman of the Jury, Professor Günter Blobel. The overriding selection criterion is scientific excellence. Brilliant, creative and passionate, these women all boast a career that demands admiration. Their discoveries have already led to concrete applications in the areas of neurobiology, immunology and ecology.



Laureate for Europe, Professor Brigitte Kieffer. Professor, University of Strasbourg, France; Research Director, Institut de Génétique et de Biologie Moléculaire et Cellulaire (IGBMC), Illkirch, France; Scientific Director, Douglas Institute Research Center, McGill University, Montreal, Canada. She is honored for her work on the brain mechanisms involved in pain, mental illness and drug addiction.

Laureate for North America, Professor Laurie Glimcher. Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean, Weill Cornell Medical College, New York, NY, USA; Provost for Medical Affairs, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA. She is honored for her discovery of key factors controlling immune response and their role in allergies and in autoimmune, infectious or malignant diseases.

Laureate for Latin America, Professor Cecilia Bouzat. Member of the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET); Professor, Universidad Nacional del Sur, Bahia Bianca; Deputy Director, Institute of Biochemical Research of Bahia Bianca (INIBIBB), Argentina. She is honored for her work on understanding the basis of how brain cells communicate among themselves and with the muscles.

Laureate for Asia-Pacific, Professor Kayo Inaba. Professor, Graduate School of Biostudies, Kyoto University, Japan; Vice-President for Gender Equality and Director of the Center for Women Researchers, Kyoto University, Japan. She is honored for her discoveries concerning the decisive role of dendritic cells in the immune system of healthy and diseased subjects.

Laureate for Africa and the Arab States, Doctor Segenet Kelemu Director General, International Center for Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE), Nairobi, Kenya. She is honored for improving the resistance and productivity of tropical and sub-tropical forage grasses via the use of microorganisms.



Fifteen young, talented women scientists this evening received UNESCO-L'Oréal International Fellowships which will support them in the pursuit of their research abroad. Specializing in neurobiology, medicine, genetics, ecology, or biotechnology, they are the incarnation of the future of science.

Additional information and visuals are available on www.discov-her.com/mediacenter

Stay connected on Facebook and Twitter **#womeninscience**

Photo credits : People Avenue

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ABOUT THE L'ORÉAL FOUNDATION

The L'Oréal Foundation is committed to two main causes, that of science and that of beauty care as a means to helping the most vulnerable members of society. Based on values of excellence, generosity and creativity, science is at the core of the Foundation's commitments, most particularly its commitment to supporting women researchers through its For Women in Science program, a worldwide initiative in partnership with UNESCO. As well, rooted in the belief that beauty care is an essential need met by passionate professionals skilled in creating human relationships, the Foundation has launched several programs anchored by a vision of beauty as a path toward a fairer and more generous society. The Foundation is committed to assisting the economically disadvantaged and those suffering from physical and mental ailments in regaining their sense of self-esteem through beauty care and training in beauty care professions. www.fondationloreal.com

ABOUT UNESCO

Since its creation in 1945, UNESCO has pursued its mission of promoting science at the service of sustainable development and peace. It stresses policies and the reinforcement of capacities in science, technology and innovation, science education, sustainable management of freshwater, ocean and terrestrial resources, the protection of biodiversity and addressing the issue of climate change. The Organization also has an overarching objective to eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote equality between men and women, especially in scientific research.