

*Women & Science :
Less than 1 researcher in 3 is a woman,
according to a report commissioned by the L'Oréal Foundation*

Paris, March 19, 2014. To mark the occasion of the 16th L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards, and in the presence of the five 2014 Awards Laureates, the L'Oréal Foundation this morning published the conclusions of an international report conducted by Boston Consulting Group on the position of women in the science sector. The results show that the under-representation of women in the international scientific community remains flagrant, despite some improvement over the past ten years. This gap between women and men widens at several key moments of their academic and professional careers.

Since the end of the 90's, the percentage of women in scientific research has increased by only 12%

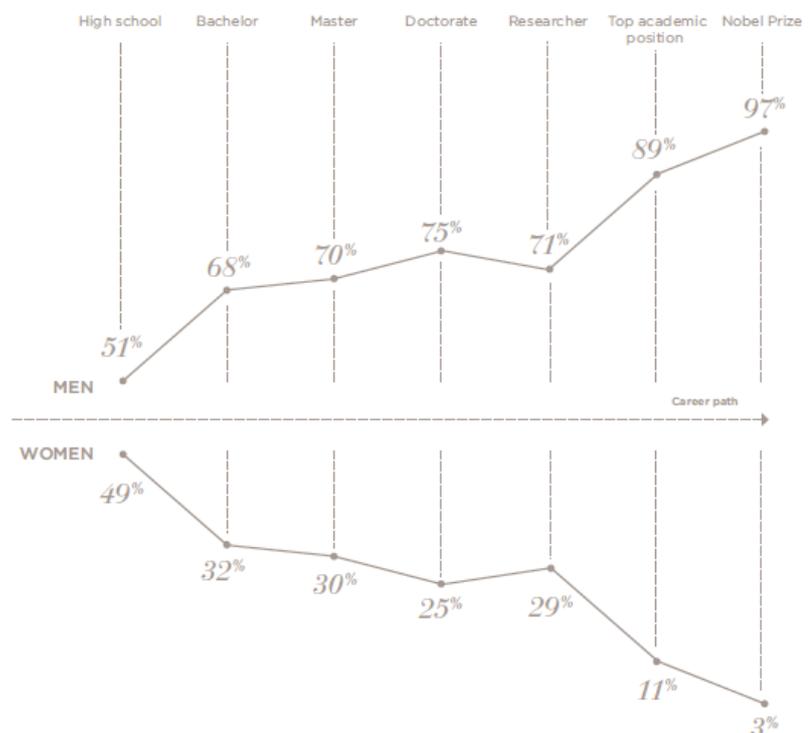
In order to better understand the persistent imbalance between men and women, and the various key stages at which women fall behind, the L'Oréal Foundation commissioned a status report of the current situation. Worldwide, **less than one research scientist in three is a woman**. The inevitable conclusion is that equality between male and female researchers has barely improved.

A high school girl is three times less likely than a high school boy to go on to get a science doctorate

Even though girls and boys show similar performance in science subjects in high school,¹ young women gradually move away from science over the course of their careers.

Similarly, looking along the career path, we can observe that **only 32% of science undergraduates are women**. This proportion drops to **30% for master's degrees** and **25% for doctorates**.

In the European Union, **only 11% of the highest academic positions in scientific disciplines are held by women**. The proportion of women at the head of scientific institutions varies from one country to the next: 6% in Japan, 27% in the USA, 29% in France and 34% in Spain. As for **Nobel Prizes in the sciences, less than 3%** have been awarded to women since the



¹PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) and OECD study- 2012 - 65 countries



inception of these honors in 1901; a total of 16 prizes, 2 of which went to Marie Curie.

Stereotypes and prejudice: the first obstacles for young women students in choosing scientific careers

Young women – but also their parents, teachers and society as a whole – appear to have preconceived ideas which discourage some of them from studying science: “science is dull”; “boys aren’t interested in girls who like science”; “there are no jobs for science majors”; “I want to make a difference and change the world, and working in a lab or studying physics is not the way to do it”; “I don’t want to seem like a ‘mad scientist’, incapable of social relationships”. But the most alarming stereotype is the one that suggests that men are better at science... something for which there is no evidence.

The L’Oréal Foundation, ever more committed to the cause of women in science

For 16 years now, the L’Oréal Foundation, through its international program, L’Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science, has identified and honored exceptional female scientists and has also awarded research fellowships to promising young women scientists. In total, more than **2,000 women** have been recognized since 1998.

To put the spotlight on the women around the world who are driving scientific progress, the L’Oréal Foundation launched **DiscovHER, the first on-line media dedicated to women in science**, on March 8th: www.discov-her.com.

“Rewarding the scientific excellence of these women and helping them become better known by the public has contributed to giving successful models to the younger generations. It proves that science is not the private domain of men. The L’Oréal Foundation will now endeavour to make more young women want to choose scientific careers,” noted Sara Ravella, Chief Executive Officer of the L’Oréal Foundation.

Next autumn, the L’Oréal Foundation will unveil its new projects to encourage ever greater participation by women in science and break down stereotypes, thus providing a concrete response to the inequalities identified by the Boston Consulting Group report.

THE BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP REPORT - November 2013

Research conducted by Boston Consulting Group in 14 countries: France, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, United States, Japan, urban China, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, Morocco, Egypt, India and Indonesia.

Analysis was concentrated on 7 countries which are comparable in terms of access to education and the rights of women: France, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, United States, Japan, urban China.

The figures above are based on analysis of the statistics from these countries and of data collected by the Boston Consulting Group for the L’Oréal Foundation.

Main sources: UNESCO, OECD, national statistical offices (2000, 2011, 2012), Boston Consulting Group.



The report is available at www.discov-her.com/mediacenter

For more details on the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science program: www.loreal.fr/foundation

Follow the program:

- on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/forwomeninscience>

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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