



THE 2016 L'ORÉAL-UNESCO FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE AWARDS: HONOURING WOMEN IN SCIENCE WHO HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Paris, March 10th 2016 – On March 24th 2016, the international scientific community will gather for the 18th edition of the *L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards*, to celebrate 5 exceptional women scientists and their ground breaking work, as well as 15 promising young researchers. In the face of unprecedented global challenges, from climate change to healthcare to sustainable energy, their discoveries are offering new solutions and answering vital questions. They are proving time and time again that women in science have the power to change the world.

THE 2016 L'ORÉAL-UNESCO FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE AWARDS: TOWARDS TOMORROW

Since 1998, the *L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science* programme aims to ensure that research in every field takes full advantage of the intelligence, creativity and passion of one-half of the population of the planet. Over the past 18 years, the program has honoured 92 distinguished Laureates and supported 2,438 greatly talented women for their outstanding accomplishments that contribute to making the world a better place.

Impacting the lives of people around the planet, their discoveries are offering new solutions and answering vital questions. Their ground breaking innovation is advancing entire fields of research and even opening new ones. The Laureates' work and research is contributing to curing diseases, increasing food supplies, enabling sustainable development, helping ensure the survival of our planet to better understand our universe, adding to our knowledge of the very foundations of life.

This year, 5 brilliant women are recognised from each of the following regions: Africa and the Arab States, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America and North America. The 5 Laureates were nominated by more than 2,600 leading scientists and then selected by an independent and international jury of 13 prominent scientists in the global scientific community. **Professor Elizabeth H. Blackburn, 2008 Laureate L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science, 2009 winner of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine**, is this year President of the jury and the first woman to be at the head of the Jury in the history of the Awards.

THE 2016 LAUREATES: AT THE CUTTING-EDGE

The 2016 Edition of the *L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards* celebrates the tenacity, the creativity and the intelligence of 5 eminent women scientists. The 5 Laureates will be awarded on March 24th at the Grand Amphitheatre of the Sorbonne in Paris and will receive a Prize of €100,000 each to reward their contribution to science:



AFRICA AND THE ARAB STATES

Professor Quarraisha **ABDOOL KARIM**

CAPRISA, Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

FOR CONTROLLING THE SPREAD OF HIV.

36.9 million people live with HIV infection worldwide. Professor Abdool Karim's research has empowered women to help prevent HIV infection in Africa.



ASIA/PACIFIC

Professor Hualan **CHEN**

Harbin Veterinary Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Harbin, China

FOR PROTECTING LIVES FROM DEADLY FLU VIRUSES.

Thanks to her research, the world has been protected from pandemics through innovative vaccines.



LATIN AMERICA

Professor Andrea **GAMARNIK**

Molecular Virology Laboratory, Fundación Instituto Leloir, Conicet, Buenos Aires, Argentina

FOR LIMITING THE SPREAD OF DENGUE VIRUS.

Every year, 390 million people suffer from Dengue infection. Professor Gamarnik's research has the potential to control the spread of the disease.



EUROPE

Professor Emmanuelle **CHARPENTIER**

Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology, Berlin, Germany

FOR REINVENTING GENETIC RESEARCH.

There are over 10,000 incurable conditions caused by single genetic defects. The gene editing technology developed by Professor Charpentier has the power to "rewrite" DNA.



NORTH AMERICA

Professor Jennifer **DOUDNA**

Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Department of Molecular and Cell Biology, University of California, Berkeley, United States

FOR REINVENTING GENETIC RESEARCH.

There are over 10,000 incurable conditions caused by single genetic defects. The gene editing technology developed by Professor Doudna has the power to "rewrite" DNA.

For Professor Blackburn, the **"2016's laureates bring an extraordinary vision and immediate solutions to major human health issues, encompassing HIV, avian flu or dengue fever and have revolutionized genome editing, enabling precise 'rewriting' of the DNA genetic code. All their careers are exceptional, their discoveries truly new, and they epitomize top-level research."**



THE L'OREAL-UNESCO 2016 INTERNATIONAL RISING TALENTS

For many years, the *L'Oréal UNESCO For Women in Science* programme has recognized the importance of highlighting the achievements of younger women who are in the early stages of their scientific careers. The International Rising Talents grants, founded in 2014 were the result.

This year's International Rising Talents work towards changing the world in four categories:

Technology and Engineering: Innovations that could change the face of medicine

- **Doctor Eszter Farkas, HUNGARY.**
TARGETS FOR NEW THERAPIES TO LESSEN STROKE-RELATED BRAIN INJURY.
- **Professor Jasmeen Merzaban, SAUDI ARABIA.**
RESEARCH ON THE MIGRATION OF STEM CELLS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW THEY MIGHT BE USED TO TREAT DISEASE.
- **Doctor Yilun Ying, CHINA.**
USING TINY HOLES TO SEQUENCE DNA.

Physical Sciences: A profound impact on our World

- **Doctor Elisa Orth, BRAZIL.**
DEVELOPMENT OF NANO-CATALYSTS FOR MULTI-PURPOSE SENSORS.
- **Doctor Dorthe Ravnsbæk, DENMARK.**
DEVELOPMENT OF NEW BATTERY TECHNOLOGIES FOR MORE EFFICIENT, ECONOMICAL ENERGY USE AND GREATER ENERGY STORAGE CAPACITY.
- **Doctor Sabrina Stierwalt, UNITED STATES.**
THE STUDY OF GALAXY MERGERS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF HOW GALAXIES EVOLVE.

Life and Environmental Sciences: Critical issues for the future of our planet

- **Doctor Maria del Rocio Vegas Frutis, MEXICO.**
THE STUDY OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY SOIL FUNGI IN THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MEXICO'S HIGH-ALTITUDE CLOUD FORESTS.
- **Doctor Irina Didenkulova, RUSSIAN FEDERATION.**
STUDYING TSUNAMIS, ROGUE WAVES AND STORM SURGES TO BETTER PREDICT MARITIME HAZARDS AND MITIGATE THEIR EFFECTS ON LAND AND SEA.
- **Doctor Anaïs Orsi, FRANCE.**
THE STUDY OF HISTORICAL WEATHER PATTERNS IN THE INTERIOR OF ANTARCTICA TO ENABLE IMPROVED PREDICTIONS FOR FUTURE CLIMATE CHANGE.

Solutions in Health Sciences through modern medicine

- **Doctor Habiba Alsafar, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.**
IDENTIFYING GENETIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH DIABETES-INDUCED OBESITY AND DIABETES-INDUCED HEART DISEASE.
- **Doctor Maria J. Buzón, SPAIN.**
THE STUDY OF NEW THERAPEUTIC STRATEGIES TO CURE HIV.
- **Doctor Hiba El Hajj, LEBANON.**
DEVELOPING NEW STRATEGIES FOR TREATING ACUTE MYELOID LEUKAEMIA.



- **Doctor Risa Mukai, JAPAN.**
RESEARCHING THE UNDERLYING VIRAL THAT CAUSE ADULT T-CELL LEUKAEMIA.
- **Doctor Bernadeta Szewczyk, POLAND.**
BOOSTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ANTIDEPRESSANTS WITH ZINC SUPPLEMENTS.
- **Doctor Elena Tucker, AUSTRALIA.**
UNDERSTANDING THE GENETIC BASIS OF EARLY MENOPAUSE.

This year, to raise awareness and bring visibility to women in science who are changing the world, an International campaign will be launched on March 16th. Among other actions, millions of people on the streets of Paris and travellers passing through the Charles de Gaulle and Orly airports will discover two unique exhibitions of the 5 Laureates, thanks to exclusive partnerships with JCDecaux and Aéroports de Paris. Viewers worldwide will also be able to stay up to date on the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards week through short daily video updates on the L'Oréal Foundation's YouTube channel from March 21st – 25th.

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About the L'Oréal Foundation

Accompany. Value. Communicate. Support. Move boundaries. The convictions, the core values which drive the L'Oréal Foundation's commitment to women everyday. A commitment divided into two main areas - science and beauty.

Through its' For Women in Science program, a worldwide partnership with UNESCO, the L'Oréal Foundation motivates girls in High School to pursue scientific careers, supports women researchers and rewards excellence in a field where women remain underrepresented.

Through its beauty programs, the Foundation assists women affected by illness, who are economically disadvantaged or isolated, to recover their sense of self-esteem and femininity in order to feel better and to fare better. Its' actions also include providing training programs for beauty industry professions.

About UNESCO

Since its creation in 1945, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization supports international scientific cooperation as a catalyst for sustainable development and for peace between people. UNESCO assists countries in the development of their public policies and in building their capabilities in the fields of science, technology, innovation and scientific education. In addition, UNESCO leads several intergovernmental programs for the sustainable management of freshwater, ocean and terrestrial resources, for biodiversity protection and to promote science's role in combating climate change and natural disasters. To meet these goals, UNESCO is committed to ending discrimination of all kinds and to promoting equality between women and men.