



19TH EDITION OF THE L'ORÉAL-UNESCO FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE AWARDS - AN EVENING TO HONOUR WOMEN WHO HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Paris, March 24th 2017 – Last night, for the 19th edition of the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards Ceremony at the Maison de la Mutualité, the international scientific community gathered to honour and celebrate five exceptional women scientists and their accomplishments in the physical sciences. The event was opened by Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO and Jean-Paul Agon, Chairman and CEO of L'Oréal and Chairman of the L'Oréal Foundation.

THE 2017 LAUREATES: WOMEN AT THE CUTTING-EDGE

The 2017 Edition of the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards Ceremony celebrated 5 eminent women scientists and their excellence, creativity and intelligence. Each woman received an Award of 100,000 € to commend their scientific contributions in the fields of quantum physics, physical sciences and astrophysics.

These 5 exceptional women, from 5 different world regions, are each contributing in their own way to change the world for the better:

Professor Niveen M. KHASHAB (Saudi Arabia), for designing novel nanoparticles that could improve early detection of disease.

Her work in analytical chemistry could lead to more targeted and personalized medical treatment.

Professor Michelle SIMMONS (Australia), for pioneering ultra-fast quantum computers.

Her work on atomic-scale transistors could give birth to tomorrow's computers.

Professor Nicola A. Spaldin (Switzerland), for reinventing magnetic materials for next-generation electronic devices.

Her research on multiferroic materials could lead to a new generation of electronic equipment components.

Professor Maria Teresa Ruiz (Chile), for discovering a new type of celestial body, halfway between a star and a planet, hidden in the darkness of the universe.

Her observations on brown dwarfs could answer the universal question of whether there is life on other planets.

Professor Zhenan Bao (United States), for inventing skin-inspired electronic materials.

Her research on flexible, stretchable and conductive materials could improve the quality of life of patients with prostheses.



Jean-Paul Agon highlighted the power of these women scientists, as well as all of the women scientists who have been celebrated this year, in his opening speech: *“Only a shared, controlled science, at the service of the world's population, is able to meet the major challenges of the twenty-first century, and our researchers are the proof. They are the ones that give science all its greatness”*.

THE 2017 L'ORÉAL-UNESCO FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE AWARDS:

Since 1998, **the L'Oréal Corporate Foundation and UNESCO have been committed to increase the number of women working in scientific research.** 150 years after Marie Curie's birth, only 28%* of researchers are women and only 3% of Scientific Nobel Prizes are awarded to them. That is why, for the past 19 years, the L'Oréal-UNESCO *For Women in Science* programme has worked to honour and accompany women researchers at key moments in their careers. Since the programme began, it has supported more than 2,700 young women from 115 countries and celebrated 97 Laureates, at the peak of their careers, including professors Elizabeth H. Blackburn and Ada Yonath, who went on to win a Nobel Prize.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Discover more about the 5 Laureates and the 15 International Rising Talents:

- <http://fondationloreal.com/categories/dossiers-de-presse/lang/en>

Stay connected on Facebook (L'Oréal-UNESCO *For Women in Science*) **and Twitter** (@4womeninscience) **#womeninscience**

CONTACTS

L'Oréal Foundation

Ludivine DESMONTS-MORNET / ludivine.desmonts-mornet@loreal.com / +33 (0)1 47 56 77 47

UNESCO

Vincent DEFOURNY / v.defourny@unesco.org / +33 (0)1 45 68 12 11

Agence MATRIOCHKA for the L'Oréal Foundation

Delphine HILAIRE / delphine.hilaire@mtrchk.com / +33 (0)6 22 68 29 64

Carly NEWMAN / carly.newman@mtrchk.com / +33 (0)6 65 00 41 66

About the L'Oréal Corporate Foundation

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

Through its' For Women in Science programme, the L'Oréal Corporate 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 programmes, the L'Oréal Corporate 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 programmes for beauty industry professions.

*UNESCO Science Report Toward 2030, 2015



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 programmes 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.