

# L'ORÉAL

## The 2006 Unesco-L'Oréal Fellowships For Women In Science

### The 2006 UNESCO-L'ORÉAL Fellowships For Women in Science awarded to 15 young women researchers from around the world

Paris, March 1st - Each year, UNESCO and L'OREAL grant 15 international fellowships to young women researchers in the Life Sciences, allowing them to pursue their research projects as guest scientists in laboratories outside their home countries.

During the 2006 fellowship ceremony today at UNESCO in Paris, Béatrice Dautresme, Vice President, Corporate Communications and External Relations for L'ORÉAL, and Walter Erdelen, Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences at UNESCO, announced that the length of the fellowships will be doubled starting this year. From now on, each fellowship can last for a maximum of two years and will be worth up to \$40,000.

The 15 UNESCO-L'ORÉAL Fellowships for 2006 were allocated according to the 5 UNESCO regions, with 3 winners per region: Africa, Arab States, Asia/Pacific, Europe/North America, Latin America/Caribbean.

#### **-The UNESCO-L'ORÉAL 2006 Fellows: eco-citizens of the world**

The work of the Fellowship beneficiaries can be grouped under 4 themes which illustrate their commitment to the issues facing their native countries and the world:

#### **Preserving Biodiversity:**

**-Priyadharshini MADHOU (Mauritius – Region Africa)** Plant biotechnology: Study of genes controlling plant resistance to fungus infection.

Host institution: University of Cape Town, South Africa

**-Sabah BEN FREDJ (Tunisia – Region Arab States)** Microbiology: Study of the genetic variability of fungi found on grapes in Tunisian vineyards, whose toxin can cause kidney damage in humans.

Host institution: National Institute for Agronomic Research (INRA), Versailles, France

**-Ghada Ahmed Mohamed ABU EL-HEBA (Egypt – Region Arab States)** Molecular biology: Improvement of nitrogen-fixation in legumes, leading to limitation of the use of environmentally unfriendly nitrate fertilizers.

Host institution: Institute of Plant Science, CNRS, Gif-sur-Yvette, France

#### **Decoding Life in the Extreme:**

**-Prudence MUTOWO (Zimbabwe – Region Africa)** Molecular biology: Study of gene regulation in Archaea, a group of primitive organisms which live in extreme environments.

Host institution: School of Biosciences, University of Nottingham, UK

**-Mun Peak NYON (Malaysia – Region Asia/Pacific)** Structural biology: Determining the three-dimensional structure of cutinase, a fungal enzyme of great interest to the detergent industry.

Host institution: Krebs Institute for Biomolecular Research, University of Sheffield, UK

**-Anita KRISKO (Croatia – Region Europe/North America)** Structural biology: Computer modeling to investigate how degradation of proteins in the eye lens can lead to blindness.

Host institution: Genomic and Molecular Bio-informatics Unit, University of Paris VII, France

**-Zeina DAHER (Lebanon – Region Arab States)** Biochemistry: Study of mitochondrial DNA mutations, responsible for numerous diseases such as neurodegenerative disorders and cancer.

Host institution: REGER Laboratories, CNRS, Victor Segalen University Bordeaux II, France

#### **Detection for Improved Targeting**

**-Ruchi SINGH (India – Region Asia/Pacific)** Parasitology: Identification of genes involved in drug-resistance of Leishmaniasis, a parasitic disease that affects 1.5 million people every year and in extreme cases can lead to death.

Host institution: FDA Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, Maryland, USA

**-Juana DEL VALLE MENDOZA (Peru – Region Latin America/Caribbean)** Immunology: Design of a therapeutic vaccine against HIV-1, the virus responsible for AIDS.

Host institution: Hospital Clinic, University of Barcelona, Spain

**-Andréa MANTESSO (Brazil – Region Latin America/Caribbean)** Health sciences: Study of dental stem cells to provide innovative solutions for cavities and craniofacial deformities, such as cleft palate.

Host institution: Department of Craniofacial Development, King's College, London, UK

**-Valérie GBONON (Côte d'Ivoire – Region Africa)** Microbiology: Study of the virulence factors of Group B Streptococcus bacteria infection to improve antibiotic treatment for pregnant women and newborn babies, a significant public health issue in Africa.

Host institution: Bacteriology Service, Cochin Hospital, Paris, France

**-Irene MAIER (Austria – Region Europe/North America)** Biomedicine: Development of an immunological biochip to facilitate clinical diagnosis of food allergies.

Host institution: Department of Food Science, University of Leeds, UK

#### **Ecosystem Sentinels**

**-Diana PEREZ STAPLES (Mexico – Region Latin America/Caribbean)** Behavioral ecology: Study of biological pest control to reduce the use of environmentally dangerous insecticides.

Host institution: Macquarie University Centre for the Integrative Study of Animal Behaviour, Sydney, Australia

**-Dilfuza EGAMBERDIYEVA (Uzbekistan – Region Asia/Pacific)** Environmental microbiology: Development of environmentally friendly, bacteria-based fertilizer to fight crop disease in her native country.

Host institution: Institute of Biology, University of Leiden, The Netherlands

**-Stéphanie JENOUVRIER (France – Region Europe/North America)** Ecology: The impact of global warming on the population dynamics of Emperor penguins.

Host institution: Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Massachusetts, USA

### **The three actions of the L'ORÉAL-UNESCO For Women in Science program**

The L'ORÉAL-UNESCO Fellowships are an element of the L'ORÉAL-UNESCO For Women in Science program, which is built around three initiatives:

! Consacrating excellence through the **L'ORÉAL-UNESCO Awards**, the founding act of the program. These prestigious annual distinctions, awarded to five leading women researchers, one per continent, identify exceptional women as role models for the generations to come. The 2006 Award Laureates will be announced on March 2nd.

! Encouraging talent through the **UNESCO-L'ORÉAL International Fellowships**. Granted annually since 2000 to 15 promising young women scientists, doctorate or post-doctorate, they reinforce international scientific cooperation and the development of cross-cultural networks.

! Developing diversity through the **L'Oréal National Fellowships with the support of the UNESCO National Commissions**, which anchor the For Women in Science program in countries around the world, while respecting their particularities and their specific needs. Every year, nearly sixty fellowships are allocated in some twenty countries.

Created in 1998, the L'ORÉAL-UNESCO For Women in Science partnership is the fruit of an exemplary collaboration, illustrating the way that the private sector and an intergovernmental institution can pursue joint projects to support women of science, encourage the advancement of knowledge, and enhance development on a global scale.

For more information on the L'ORÉAL-UNESCO For Women in Science partnership, please see: <http://www.forwomeninscience.com>

**L'Oréal** is a worldwide leader in the cosmetics industry, developing innovative products to meet the diverse needs of customers in 130 countries worldwide. Nearly 2,900 people work in the Group's 14 research centers, located in France, Asia and America. Their findings are responsible for the registration of hundreds of patents annually. Women represent 55% of the research workforce – a percentage unmatched anywhere else in the industry. <http://www.loreal.com>

Since its creation in 1945, **UNESCO** has been dedicated to eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting equality between men and women. While designing scientific education programs intended especially for young women, UNESCO has created several academic chairs that connect women of science around the world. The international report on science, technology and gender that UNESCO will shortly publish is intended help its 191 Member States develop appropriate policies in this area.

<http://www.unesco.org/science/women>

*For more information and to set up interviews with Laureates and Fellows, please contact:*

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## About L'Oréal

L'Oréal has devoted itself to beauty for over 100 years. With its unique international portfolio of 34 diverse and complementary brands, the Group generated sales amounting to 25.8 billion euros in 2016 and employs 89,300 people worldwide. As the world's leading beauty company, L'Oréal is present across all distribution networks: mass market, department stores, pharmacies and drugstores, hair salons, travel retail, branded retail and e-commerce.

Research and innovation, and a dedicated research team of 3,870 people, are at the core of L'Oréal's strategy, working to meet beauty aspirations all over the world. L'Oréal's sustainability commitment for 2020 "Sharing Beauty With All" sets out ambitious sustainable development objectives across the Group's value chain. [www.loreal.com](http://www.loreal.com)

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