

Six South African women scientists receive awards from L'Oréal and UNESCO for Women in Science



Photos: Supplied

From left to right: Jessica Thibaud, Dr Farzahna Mohamed, Dr Thilona Arumugam (top), and Boitumelo Mabakachaba, Dr René Booysen and Dr Asanda Mtintzila (bottom).

The L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science National Awards recognised six outstanding South African women scientists for their contributions to science at a ceremony held in Johannesburg recently.

This year's recipients, Dr Thilona Arumugam, Dr René Booysen, Boitumelo Mabakachaba, Dr Farzahna Mohamed, Dr Asanda Mtintzila and Jessica Thibaud, join a long list of women scientists honoured by L'Oréal and UNESCO every year. As part of this recognition, each woman received a generous grant in support of their PhD or post-doctoral studies.

L'Oréal South Africa country manager, Serge Sacre says women scientists are leading ground-breaking research across the world, but in spite of their remarkable discoveries, they only represent 33.3% of researchers globally, and their work rarely gains the recognition it deserves. "Less than 4% of Nobel prizes for science have been awarded to women and they hold disproportionately few senior positions in science, worldwide."

Sacre says the programme is underpinned by the understanding that the world needs science and science needs women. "Women have a vital role to play in science, which is why this programme is so significant. It encourages the vocations of girls in high school, supports women in research, and recognises excellence in a field where women are under-represented."

Based on the conviction that science needs women, UNESCO and the L'Oréal Foundation are committed to promoting women in science. In order to make them more visible, make their talent known and inspire vocations in future generations, the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science programme aims to accelerate the careers of women scientists and to fight against the obstacles they encounter.



Since the creation of the For Women in Science programme in 1998, 122 laureates and more than 3 800 talented young scientists, doctoral and post-doctoral students, have been supported and honoured in more than 115 countries. To date, five of the 122 laureates have gone on to win Nobel prizes.

become more compelling than ever in recent years and to be effective, science must draw on all talents and not leave the contributions of women scientists behind. – IOL.co.za and Unesco.org

Umcimbi we L'Oréal-Unesco, umcimbi wokuklomelisa abacwaningi besifazane abavelele kweze sayensi, uklomelise abesifazane abayisithupha baseningizimu Afrika ngokuzinikela kwabo kulomkhakha, emcimbini ububanjwe egoli. Ngokubamba kwabo iqhaza bathole uxhaso lwemali, kuxhaswa izifundo zabo zobudokotela kanye nocwaningo abazolenza emva kokuthola iziqu zobudokotela kwezobu chwepheshe.

Translated by Zamantimande Kunene

