

African women recognised for role in science

14 young female scientists were recognised at the 2017 edition of the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Sub-Saharan Africa ceremony. Their fields of research vary across different disciplines and address key global issues.



2017 L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Sub-Saharan Africa regional fellowship recipients

Since 1998, the L'Oréal Corporate Foundation and UNESCO have been committed to women in science and to increasing the number of women working in scientific research. 150 years after Marie Curie's birth, still 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 Nobel Prize.

Sandeep Rai, MD, L'Oréal South Africa highlighted the power of these women scientists and the women scientists who have been celebrated this year. "The world continues to face unprecedented challenges such as climate change, water scarcity, illnesses and food security among other issues. 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."

The recipients of the postdoctoral regional fellowships of €10,000 each are:

1. Charlette Tiloke, South Africa - Durban University of Technology

Title of project: Anticancer and antimicrobial activity of *Moringa oleifera*, and *Sutherlandia frutescens* and their nanoparticles

2. Kenda Knowles, South Africa - University of Kwazulu-Natal

Title of project: Statistical study of diffuse radio emission in ACT galaxy clusters with MeerKAT

The recipients of the doctoral fellowships of €5,000 each are:

1. Oluwadamilade Fayemiwo, Nigeria - University of Johannesburg

Title of project: Novel tannin-based adsorbents from green tea for the removal of organic pollutants in oilfield produced water

2. Priscah Omoke, Kenya - Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science And Technology

Title of project: Characterisation of similarity orbits of invariant subspaces of norm-attainable operators

3. Olawumi Sadare, Nigeria - University of the Witwatersrand

Title of project: Development and evaluation of adsorption coupling bio-desulphurisation (AD/BDS) process for the desulphurisation of South African petroleum distillates

4. Juliana Mandha, Uganda - Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology

Title of project: Value addition in the fruit processing chain to increase the nutritional value and to enhance the small holder farmers' income in Uganda

5. Carol Mahachi, Zimbabwe - Stellenbosch University

Title of project: Inflammation markers associated with kidney disease in HIV positive patients

6. Godiraone Nkoni, Botswana - University of Botswana

Title of project: variability in lower stratospheric ozone concentration over the Kalahari transect as a precursor for climate change assessment

7. Verena Gounden, South Africa - University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

Title of project: Effect of environmental endocrine disruptor Bisphenol A BPA on epigenetic regulation of steroid hormone metabolism and influence on associated levels of hormones among mother and child pairs

8. Cynthia Tamandjou, Cameroon - Stellenbosch University

Title of project: Hepatitis B virus mother-to-Child-transmission in Namibia: transmission dynamics and possibilities for elimination

9. Therina Du Toit, South Africa - Stellenbosch University

Title of project: The profiling of C11-oxy steroids by UPC2-MS/MS quantification in clinical conditions characterised by androgen excess and in steroid abuse

10. Lethiwe Mthembu, South Africa - Durban University of Technology

Title of project: Ionic liquid optimisation and synthesis of levulinic acid and levulinic acid derivatives from sugarcane bagasse

11. Maléki Assih, Togo - Université Ouaga I Pr Joseph Ki-Zerbo

Title of project: Immunity in viral hepatitis B: Evaluation of the cytokine profile and immunoglobulins in vaccinated individuals and carriers of HBsAg in Burkina Faso

12. Augustina Frimpong, Ghana - University of Ghana

Title of project: Analysis of T cell receptor diversity in paediatric malaria patients

The L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Sub-Saharan Africa programme has reached many women across Africa. The prestigious awards ceremony where the scientists were presented with the fellowship took place on the evening of 8 November at The Venue Greenpark, Johannesburg.

For more information on the For Women in Science programme, go to www.ForWomenInScience.com.

**UNESCO Science Report Toward 2030, 2015*