

In 1998, UNESCO and L'Oréal established the landmark For Women in Science partnership which aims to recognize and promote the role and significance of women in science. Each year, the joint program includes the prestigious L'Oréal-UNESCO Awards to five outstanding women researchers, and the UNESCO-L'Oréal International Fellowships for 15 promising young women at the beginning of their scientific careers. Awarded since 2000, the Fellowships permit women scientists at the doctoral and postdoctoral level to pursue their research in host laboratories outside their home countries. Importantly, the Awards and the Fellowships provide support and recognition for women from all regions of the world with awards made equally to the five regions—Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the USA, and Latin America.

The UNESCO Science, Technology and Gender Report of 2007 emphasizes that “much talent is being wasted as girls turn away from S&T careers, and as women in S&T become discouraged by discriminatory treatment.” In research, women are still underrepresented, and this is particularly so at the decision-making level of science where research agendas are set. UNESCO is dedicated to eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting equality between men and women. In addition, we believe women can bring about change for the better in science and that science needs women! An important starting point to addressing these inequalities and to promoting women's role in science is to provide support for talented young women, from all corners of the globe, early in their careers. This booklet highlights the effectiveness of the UNESCO-L'Oréal International Fellowships in encouraging and enabling talented young women to pursue their passion for science.

The stories of the young women highlighted here demonstrate the rich diversity of backgrounds, interests, and personalities that makes for an outstanding collection of potential leaders in science throughout the world. As young women, they have a powerful voice to speak as effective and inspiring role models for others. Through the opportunities that the Fellowships provide for visibility, nationally and internationally, these young women develop their talents as advocates and public speakers for science and for women. The networks they are forming and the links with each other will be important components for their scientific work in the future. With each award, a new link is created in an ever-growing global network of women in science that is of great importance and relevance to both developed and developing countries. We believe that the talented recipients of the UNESCO-L'Oréal International Fellowships will use the training and experience gained during their fellowships to meet the challenges of using science for peace and sustainable development.

Walter Erdelen
Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences
UNESCO

Photo Opposite Page (Bottom):

Béatrice Dautresme (left) and
Walter Erdelen (right) with fellowship
award winner Gisella Cruz Garcia
in 2007 (see page 26 for her story)



Rehana Jauhangeer
(see page 10)



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