

RULES AND REGULATIONS

L'OREAL-UNESCO FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE LEVANT REGIONAL YOUNG TALENTS PROGRAMME - 2026

1. Introduction

L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Levant regional young talents programme, launched in 2014 in partnership with the National Council for Scientific Research-Lebanon (CNRS-L), aims to promote the participation of young women in science coming from **Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syrian Arab Republic**. This programme identifies and rewards talented young female researchers in the field of Life Sciences (such as biology, biochemistry, biophysics, genetics, physiology, health sciences, neurosciences, biotechnologies, ecology and ethology) as well as in the field of Physical Sciences (such as physics, chemistry, petroleum engineering, mathematics, engineering sciences, information sciences, Earth and Universe sciences).

The Programme honors **six talented young Arab women researchers** for the quality of their research works and encourages them to pursue a brilliant career in science in the above-mentioned countries.

- **3 endowments amounting to Ten Thousand Euros (€ 10,000)** each will be granted to Arab women researchers working in Research Laboratory, Institute, or University in one of the following countries: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syrian Arab Republic.
- **3 endowments amounting to Six Thousand Euros (€ 6,000)** each will be granted to Arab women pursuing a PhD (doctoral degree) in Research Laboratory, Institute, or University in one of the following countries: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syrian Arab Republic. The total amount must be used to cover expenses related to regional or international scientific missions, trainings, specialized courses, conferences, and congresses. It could be used as well to purchase special software, scientific articles/ books and fees of publications in international indexed journals.

The L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Levant Regional Young Talents Programme is funded by the Fondation L'Oréal.

2. Eligibility Criteria

A- Postdoctoral Researchers:

Applicants must meet the following general criteria:

- Having obtained a PhD in one of the science fields mentioned in paragraph 1.
- Being of Iraqi, Jordanian, Lebanese, Palestinian, or Syrian nationality.

- Working in a Research Laboratory, Institute, or University in one of the countries mentioned in paragraph 1.
- Candidates must be no more than 45 years old, considering the year of birth (Born in 1981 and beyond).
- Only researchers who are actively engaged in research activities and having obtained a PhD within the last 10 years at the time of application are eligible.

B- PhD Students:

Applicants must meet the following general criteria:

- Having obtained a Bachelor (B.Sc.) and a Master (M.Sc.) degree, or equivalent, in one of the science fields mentioned in paragraph 1.
- Should be full time student in PhD and having registered during 2025-2026 in the 2nd year of the PhD programme, or one year before the thesis defense.
- Being of Iraqi, Jordanian, Lebanese, Palestinian, or Syrian nationality.
- Working in a Research Laboratory, Institute, or University in one of the countries mentioned in paragraph 1.
- Candidates must be no more than 35 years old, taking into account the year of birth (born in 1991 and beyond).

3. Selection Criteria

The selection criteria of the candidate by the jury are the following:

- The candidate's outstanding academic record (including number, quality and impact of the scientific publications, conference presentations, patents...).
- The scientific quality and usefulness of the research project.
- Abide by international ethical regulations in all research steps.
- The innovative approach (rationale, relevance, originality, outputs, applications, etc.) and the expected outcomes of the research.
- The ability of the candidate to communicate and promote sciences to a younger audience and to encourage young female researchers.
- The candidate's career-path.
- The application will be considered complete if it contains a detailed description of the research project and its methodology.
- Consideration with regards to animal testing:
 - o Any project using experimental protocols likely to generate animal suffering will be rejected, even if it has been approved by an ad hoc ethics committee.
 - o If animal experimentation is to be conducted as part of the applicant's submitted research, it must be described in detail and indicated in what way it cannot be substituted. The necessity of the animal experiments or the lack of alternatives must be justified. Jury members must take a position based on these elements or ask for clarification if necessary.
 - o A commitment by the candidate not to cause animal suffering during the project for which she is applying for the award will be included in the application forms and must be officially signed.

Endowments are exclusively dedicated to the development of scientific research and can under no circumstance be a substitute to the duties of the laboratory vis-à-vis its researchers.

Endowments are non-renewable and can be combined with other research grants.

4. Applications

Applications can only be submitted by the candidates themselves through the online platform: www.forwomeninscience.com.

An application is considered complete only if it includes all below documents:

A - Postdoctoral Researchers:

- CV including:
 - Professional career: awarded fellowships, previous post-doctoral trainings, scientific visits, workshops, previous jobs, and various distinctions, etc.
 - Previous achievements of the candidate in her field of research (short list - not to exceed 50 words).
 - Scientific production: article, books, conferences, etc.
 - Candidate's activities having an impact on the development of scientific research in her country (administrative functions related to research, coordination of national and international projects, lecturing, etc. (not to exceed 100 words).
 - Collaborations and partnerships with foreign institutions (table mentioning the type of collaboration, project title, partner institution, researchers, project funding, achievements, etc.)
- Copies of the degrees or recent diplomas: certificates of PhD, M.Sc. and B.Sc. (or equivalent), etc.
- A signed declaration attesting to the respect of international ethical norms and regulations in all research aspects (experimental, publications, applications, ...), as part of previous and post-doc proposal. Example : "*I, [Your Full Name], hereby declare that all my previous research activities, including my doctoral, postdoctoral work and the proposed research project, have been and will continue to be carried out in full compliance with international ethical norms and regulations, covering all aspects including but not limited to experimental design, data collection, analysis, publication, and any applications thereof. [Signature] [Date]*"
- Letters of recommendation from the research supervisor and/or the director of the scientific institution where the research project is carried or the Dean of the Faculty or the President of the University under which the candidate is running her research.
- The proposed use of the grant and some budget indications. This budget must clearly indicate the planned use of the grant, detailing estimated costs for each activity such as scientific missions, trainings, specialized courses, software, regional and international conferences, publications fees and other research expenses. The budget must also explicitly detail any justified personal expenses directly related to and facilitating the candidate's research work.

B - PhD Students:

- CV including:
 - Administrative overview about the PhD: starting date, expected date of graduation, Supervisor, institution, scholarship, etc.
 - Previous achievements of the candidate in her field of research (short list - not to exceed 50 words).
 - Scientific production: article, books, conferences, etc.
 - Candidate's activities having an impact on the development of scientific research in her country (administrative functions related to research, coordination of national and international projects, lecturing, etc. (not to exceed 100 words).
 - Collaborations and partnerships with foreign institutions (table mentioning the type of collaboration, project title, partner institution, researchers, project funding, achievements, etc.)
- Copies of the degrees or recent diplomas: certificates of B.Sc. and M.Sc., or equivalent.
- A signed declaration attesting to the respect of international ethical norms and regulations in all research aspects (experimental, publications, applications, ...), as part of previous/ongoing PhD thesis. Example: *"I, [Your Full Name], hereby declare that all research activities conducted as part of my ongoing PhD thesis, and any subsequent research, have been and will continue to be carried out in full compliance with international ethical norms and regulations, covering all aspects including but not limited to experimental design, data collection, analysis, publication, and any applications thereof. [Signature] [Date]"*
- Letter from the University certifying that during 2025-2026 the candidate is in the second year or the year preceding the submission of the doctoral thesis.
- Letters of recommendation from the thesis advisor and/or the director of the scientific institution where the thesis research project is carried or the Dean of the Faculty or the President of the University under which the candidate is running her thesis research.
- Letter of intent specifying the targeted activities and a table summarizing the expected budget for each activity (scientific missions, trainings, specialized courses, regional and international conferences, etc.).

Files which are incomplete, or which are received after the application deadline, as well as candidatures that do not meet the requirements mentioned above shall not be taken into consideration.

5. Young Talents Selection

Candidates will be selected by the *For Women in Science* Levant jury chaired by **Professor Marie Abboud Mehanna**.

The results will be communicated by phone and email to the six Young Talents after deliberations of the jury in charge of granting the endowments. They must remain confidential until the Levant Young Talents' ceremony.

The decision of the jury cannot be contested or subject to explanation or justification.

6. Young Talents Commitment

Young Talents must commit to:

- Pursue the research work for which the L'Oréal-UNESCO *For Women in Science* Levant endowment was obtained, failing that, the total amount of the endowment must be immediately refunded to the L'Oréal entity that granted the amount.
- Within one year after receiving their endowments, Young Talents are expected to submit a status report on the awarded research project to L'Oréal Liban SAL.
- Within one year after receiving their endowments, Young Talents are expected to submit to L'Oréal Liban SAL a final financial expenditure statement on the actual endowment expenditure incurred on the research project or Thesis project.
- Not use the award to cover laboratory expenses.
- Not to substitute the award as a salary.
- Play a role of ambassadress of the programme for the young generation and participate to events and activities related to the For Women in Science programmes.
- Sign authorization for sharing their contact information with the Fondation L'Oréal and UNESCO as ambassadress of the programmes.
- The six Young Talents will be expected to attend the Levant Awards Ceremony that will be held in Lebanon. Exact date will be announced on a later stage.
- Attendance is mandatory. The travel and accommodation expenses for Young Talents will be covered by L'Oréal Liban SAL.

The payment of the endowments will be made directly to the Young Talents after the Levant Awards Ceremony, and after having signed the contract and received the original documents for the wire transfer of funds. The endowments are not transferable for any other purpose whatsoever.

7. Communication

Young Talents shall mention “L'Oréal-UNESCO *For Women in Science* Levant Young talents programme”, in all publications and other forms of media communication, including media appearances, press releases and conferences, that result from or are in any way connected to the research project wherever possible. Young Talents must inform L'Oréal Liban SAL of any publications and other forms of media communication as above.

Young Talents agree to be photographed, filmed, and interviewed for noncommercial objectives and *For Women in Science* programme related purposes. These photos, videos and texts will be used in publications and audiovisual means including but not limited to written press, television, internet, photographs and brochures including distribution to the media in the Levant countries, and worldwide. A separate written authorization shall be signed by each of the Young Talents. Young Talents will not receive any remuneration for such promotional activity.

8. Timetable

- Application opening date: **20 January 2026**
- Application closing date: **31 May 2026**
- Attribution of applications and review by jury members: **from June 8 to June 28, 2026**
- Second review of applications by the jury for semi-finalists: **from July 6 to July 19, 2026**
- Selection of Young Talents and announcement: **Last week of July 2026**
- Awards' Ceremony: **Exact date will be announced on a later stage.**

• Rules and Regulations

By applying to L'Oréal-UNESCO *For Women in Science Levant Young talents programme*, candidates agree to the rules and regulations posted on the online platform www.forwomeninscience.com