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**THE WORLD NEEDS SCIENCE AND SCIENCE NEEDS WOMEN:
L'OREAL, UK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO AND THE ROYAL INSTITUTION OF
GREAT BRITAIN LAUNCH THE "L'OREAL UK FELLOWSHIPS FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE"**

L'Oréal UK, together with the UK National Commission for UNESCO and the Royal Institution of Great Britain, has announced the launch of the L'Oréal UK Fellowships For Women In Science, a new partnership to promote women in science and provide financial support to outstanding female scientists at post-doctoral level.

Women are still underrepresented in science professions, with research showing that they make up only 38% of qualified scientists and engineers in the UK. In addition, it's estimated that up to (16,000) women scientists with science, engineering and technology qualifications leave the public and private sectors, often due to maternity leave, and do not return to pursue a career in science. Funding criteria is sometimes linked to the number of published papers or to teaching hours in a host institution so a scientist who has taken a break can often be disadvantaged.

The L'Oréal initiative in partnership with the UK National Commission for UNESCO and the Royal Institution will see fellowships of £10,000 awarded each year to assist three outstanding women scientists to further their research. The fellowships have been innovatively designed to provide practical help for the winners to continue in their chosen fields. For example, winners may choose to spend their fellowship on buying scientific equipment or paying for childcare costs – whatever enables them to continue with their research.

An additional £10,000 fellowship, co-funded by L'Oréal UK and the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (UKRC), will be available exclusively for women scientists at post-doctoral level who are returning to scientific research following a career break.

The judging panel will be chaired by Baroness Susan Greenfield, Director of The Royal Institution, and will include Dame Anne McLaren (L'Oréal UNESCO Award Winner in 2001), Dr Nancy Lane, Professor John O'Reilly, (Vice-Chancellor, Cranfield University) Professor Malcolm Grant (UCL President and Provost), Phil Willis MP (Chairman, Science and Technology Select Committee, Professor Alec Boksenberg (Chair, UK National Commission for UNESCO) and Dr Raniero De Stasio (Director of Science, L'Oréal UK).

Speaking last night at the launch ceremony attended by leading figures in the world of science and business, Baroness Susan Greenfield said:

“Over the years, women scientists’ contribution to research has led to a number of significant breakthroughs that have benefited the UK economy. However, women scientists remain critically underrepresented in the UK and we need to remove the barriers that prevent them from pursuing and maintaining a career in their chosen field. This initiative highlights the importance of their contribution and will give outstanding scientists a practical boost to pursuing their careers and providing breakthroughs in the future”.

Commenting on the launch of the initiative, Professor Alec Boksenberg CBE FRS, Chair of the UK National Commission for UNESCO, said:

“We are delighted to announce this initiative in the UK to encourage women scientists to continue the vital work they carry out in both academia and the corporate world. As an organisation we are dedicated to pursuing the advancement of knowledge and are proud to partner with L’Oréal and the Royal Institution in promoting the participation of women in science”.

Sophie Gasperment, L’Oréal UK MD, said:

“We’re honoured to be working with the UK National Commission for UNESCO and the Royal Institution and our esteemed panel of judges on this vital programme to assist women scientists. L’Oréal was founded by a chemist exactly one hundred years ago and science continues to underpin our business. With sixty five percent of our 3,000 research staff worldwide being women, we firmly believe in the value of harnessing and promoting the role of women in science”.

The initiative is an extension of L’Oréal and UNESCO’s global ‘For Women in Science’ programme launched in 1998. It aims to encourage the role of women in science at all levels by recognising excellence in research at an international platform and helping them to progress their careers. More information is available at www.forwomeninscience.com

The L’Oreal UK For Women in Science fellowships in partnership with UNESCO and the Royal Institution are now open to application and interested scientists can read more about the scheme and download an application form at www.unesco.org.uk/For_Women_In_Science.htm.

The deadline for applications is 18th April 2007 and winners of the fellowships will be announced in June.

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Notes to Editors

The L'Oréal UNESCO For Women in Science programme

In partnership with UNESCO, the company launched a unique global programme in 1998 to promote, enhance and encourage the role of women in science at all levels. The L'Oréal – UNESCO For Women in Science programme has since recognised 152 women scientists from 59 countries for excellence in research or received encouragement to pursue their careers, including 2 British Laureates.

In parallel, L'Oréal has also established a programme of national initiatives to address the country-specific issues surrounding the status of women in science. Today, 22 countries run national initiatives.

L'Oréal

L'Oréal is the world's number one cosmetics company, present in over 130 countries with 52,000 employees world-wide and a turnover of 15.8 billion euros in 2006, an annual increase of 8.7%. L'Oréal is the only cosmetics group that is present in every distribution channel: mass market, hair salons, department stores and pharmacy. Its brand portfolio includes L'Oréal Paris, Garnier, Maybelline, Soft Sheen Carson, Matrix, Redken, L'Oréal Professionnel, Kérastase, Vichy, La Roche-Posay, Lancôme, Biotherm, Kiehl's, Shu Uemura and Armani, Cacharel and Ralph Lauren fragrances. The company acquired The Body Shop in 2006.

The company has been present in the UK for more than 70 years. Today L'Oréal UK is the fourth largest subsidiary of L'Oréal in Europe and the fifth world-wide. L'Oréal UK is a major player in the UK cosmetics market, with an annual turnover of £626 million in 2006. 67% of women in the UK use one or more L'Oréal product. Overall, L'Oréal employs over 2,500 people in the UK who work across five sites including: a manufacturing and distribution centre in Llantrisant, South Wales; two distribution centres in Manchester; a centre in Nottingham and the headquarters in Hammersmith.

UK National Commission for UNESCO

The UK National Commission for UNESCO (www.unesco.org.uk) is an independent body re-established by HM Government in 2004. It acts as a national coordinating body for the engagement of the UK civil society (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) in UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; www.unesco.org) global activities in education, sciences, culture and communication.

The UK National Commission works in partnership with both HM Government and UK civil society to provide expert advice for the Government on UNESCO related matters, develop UK input to UNESCO policy-making, promote reforms within UNESCO, and encourage support in the UK for UNESCO's ideals and work.

Since its creation in 1945, UNESCO has been dedicated to eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting gender equality. While designing formal and non formal science education programmes specifically for girls, UNESCO has set up a series of networks linking women scientists around the world. The Organization is also developing new indicators to measure women's access to scientific training and to help develop appropriate policies in its 191 Member States.

The Royal Institution of Great Britain (Ri)

Since the Ri was established over 200 years ago, it has supported 14 of resident scientists who have received the Nobel Prize and witnessed the discovery of 10 of the chemical elements of the Periodic Table as well as numerous inventions for the public and private sector.

During these two centuries the Ri has hosted famous scientists such as Humphry Davy, Michael Faraday, James Dewar and William and Lawrence Bragg who all based their innovative and groundbreaking work at the Ri. The discoveries of these scientists still impact our daily lives such as the electric generator, miner's safety lamp and the atomic structure of crystals.

The Ri has always provided open public debate and education about science and scientific issues for people of all ages through its year-round, high-calibre events that break down the barriers between science and society.

The Public and Young Person's Events Programmes of the Ri deliver independent science-based discussion on an issue where community interest lies. This has included such varied topics as climate change, cutting edge discovery in combating serious illness such as Leukaemia and Alzheimer's and the 'The Life Cycle of a Diamond'.

The Ri also has 6 star (the highest) rated research facility, The Davy Faraday Research Laboratory. This Laboratory is at the forefront of current solid-state science, with a broad programme of experimental and computational studies of the chemistry and physics of complex materials.

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