

L'Oréal-UNESCO programme for women in science launched

By Juliet Akyaa Safo

THE L'Oréal Foundation, in collaboration with the Ghana National Commission for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), has launched the 10th edition of the L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science sub-Saharan Africa Programme aimed at providing financial support to young women scientists.

Applicants for the programme must be a PhD or Post-doctorate holder and must not be above 45 years.

Grants would be offered to 20

applicants from sub-Saharan Africa, with 16 PhD holders receiving €10,000 each and €15,000 each to be given to four post-doctorate holders.

The application, which was opened on February 26, would be closed on April 26.

Launch

At a ceremony to launch the programme, the Director in charge of L'Oréal Africa, Mr Tahirou Gourouza, explained the criteria for the selection process and said, "applicants must be a national from a sub-Saharan African country, must be working in a Research Laboratory or Institution in one of the region's countries or must be enrolled in a doctoral programme at a university in sub-Saharan Africa."

He added that the applicant must be pursuing research in the fields of Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Computer sciences.

He, therefore, encouraged interested applicants to submit applications online via their website.

Foundation

Mr Tahirou said the aim of the foundation was to contribute to developing the interest of African women to excel in Science, adding that the foundation was committed to building the capacity of African female scientists.

"The world needs science and science needs women: We want to reinforce our commitment to giving all sub-Saharan African women

scientists and opportunity," he added.

He explained that the foundation was the social investment arm of L'Oréal, a global cosmetic company which focuses on using its expertise to drive and deliver major projects and change people's mindset in science and beauty.

Women scientists

The Managing Director of L'Oréal West Africa, Mr Sekou Coulibaly, advised women scientists who have continually applied for the facility but were not selected not to give up, saying that persistency was the surest way to increase their chances of being selected for the grant.

However, he said the contribution of women in

sciences was paramount to the development of the continent, adding "their contributions were very critical to make the environment evolve."

@ a glance



The L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science sub-Saharan Africa Programme aims at providing financial support to young women scientists in the sub-region.

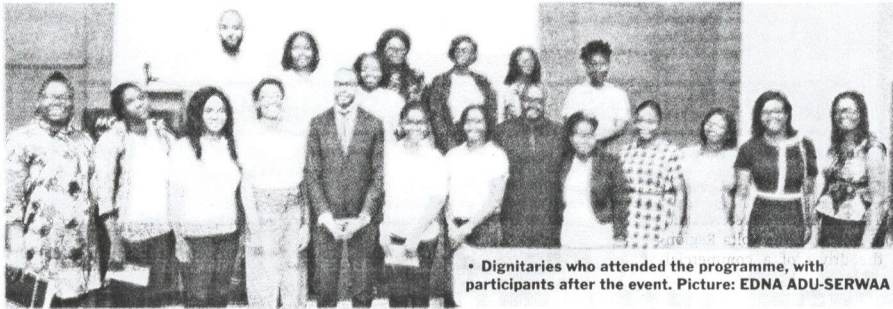
UNESCO Ghana

The Principal Programme Officer, Natural Sciences of the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO, Mr Apollonius Osei-Akoto Asare expressed his appreciation to the L'Oréal team in Ghana for creating a platform to educate participants.

"I believe the L'Oréal Sub-regional team is here today because of the low participation in the programme from Ghana, thus we

appreciate the effort to educate women in sciences in the country."

Describing the programme as one of the most prestigious fellowships that UNESCO had for women in science, he expressed the hope that majority of applicants from Ghana would be selected.



• Dignitaries who attended the programme, with participants after the event. Picture: EDNA ADU-SERWAA