



## 2024 L'Oréal-UNESCO UK and Ireland For Women in Science Rising Talent Programme

### 2024 Application Terms & Conditions

#### Applications for the 2024 L'Oréal-UNESCO UK and Ireland For Women in Science Rising Talent Programme

**Closing date: October 25, 2023**

#### 1.0 What is the 2023 L'Oréal-UNESCO UK and Ireland For Women in Science Rising Talent Programme?

The L'Oréal-UNESCO UK and Ireland For Women in Science Rising Talent Programme offers awards from a partnership between L'Oréal UK & Ireland, the UK National Commission for UNESCO and the Irish National Commission for UNESCO, with the support of the Royal Society, to promote, enhance and encourage the contribution of women pursuing their research careers in the UK or Ireland.

The Rising Talent Awards are offered under the umbrella of the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women In Science Programme, which has promoted women in scientific research on a global scale since 1998.

Five Rising Talent Awards will be granted in 2024 to outstanding women scientists in the early stages of their career to enable and/or facilitate promising scientific research. The Rising Talents are tenable at any UK or Irish university or research institute to support a 12-month period of postdoctoral research in any area of the life science, physical sciences, mathematics and computing, engineering or sustainable development.

The value of each rising talent award is £15,000 (equivalent € for candidates in Ireland). The awards are designed to provide flexible support. The prize money can be spent in innovative ways to enable women scientists to pursue and continue their research careers – such as buying equipment, paying for childcare or funding travel costs to an overseas conference.

#### 2.0 Who is Eligible?

- Candidates must identify as female postdoctoral level researchers who have already been awarded their research doctorate in the fields of life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics and computer science, engineering or sustainable development.
- Candidates must have no more than 10 years' active full-time equivalent postdoctoral experience (discounting career breaks, but including teaching experience and/or time spent in industry) at the time that their application is submitted.
- Candidates must not currently hold a permanent academic post or have ever held a permanent

academic post in the past, or have received, before the start date of the award, the promise of a permanent academic post.

- Candidates must be undertaking research in the fields of life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics and computer science, engineering or sustainable development.
- Psychology, science education and social sciences are not eligible for this Award.
- Candidates must be conducting their research at a UK or Irish university or research institute.
- Candidates can be a citizen of any country, but must already have a confirmed position at a university or institute within the UK or Ireland. This contract must cover the 12-month period of the award, starting from when the grant is awarded (March 2024).
- Candidates must be residing within the UK or Ireland at the time of application. Applications are welcome from candidates who wish to establish/re-establish themselves after a career break or other period of absence from active research or where the candidate is establishing a research career as a mature entrant or after experience in other fields.
- Candidates who have been unsuccessful in previous years may apply again.
- The subject areas that are eligible within the key disciplines include **but are not limited to** the following:

<p><b>Physical Sciences</b></p>	<p><b>Physics</b> - Astrophysics, Astronomy, Experimental Physics, Nanomaterials, Particle Physics, Plasma Physics, Quantum Physics, Theoretical Physics.</p> <p><b>Earth Sciences</b> - Atmospheric physics, Climatology, Environmental Science Geophysics, Volcanology.</p> <p><b>Chemistry</b> - Analytical Chemistry, Environmental Chemistry, Inorganic Chemistry, Materials Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Physical Chemistry.</p>
<p><b>Life Sciences</b></p>	<p><b>Medical Science</b> – Cancer Science, Cardiovascular Medicine, Haematology, Infectious Disease, Inflammation, Medicine, Medical Imaging, Medical Physics, Medicinal Chemistry, Pharmacology, Regenerative Medicine.</p> <p><b>Epidemiology</b> – Behavioral Science, Cognitive Neuroscience, Evolutionary Biology, Neuroscience, Nutrition, Psychiatry, Women’s Health.</p> <p><b>Biological Sciences</b> – Biochemistry, Bioinformatics, Biophysics, Biotechnology, Cell Biology, Chemical Biology, Computational Neuroscience, Developmental Biology, Endocrinology, Epigenetics, Genetics, Genomics, Immunology, Molecular Biology, Mycology, Stem Cell Biology, Virology.</p> <p><b>Ecology</b> – Agriculture, Conservation Biology, Microbiology, Paleontology, Plant Biology.</p>
<p><b>Mathematics and Computer Science</b></p>	<p><b>Engineering</b> - Bioengineering, Biomedical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Material Science, Software Engineering.</p> <p><b>Mathematics</b> - Applied Mathematics, Statistics.</p> <p><b>Computer Science</b> – Theoretical Computer Science, Computer Systems, Computer Applications, Software Engineering</p>
<p><b>Engineering</b></p>	<p><b>Engineering</b> - Bioengineering, Biomedical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Material Science, Software Engineering.</p>

<p><b>Sustainable Development</b></p>	<p><b>Sustainability Science</b> can include disciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary science. It can be geared towards the generation of basic knowledge, towards applied technology or towards sociocultural innovation as well as towards new governance or social and economic models.</p> <p>Sustainability Science - Environmental Science, Environmental Protection and Conservation, Biodiversity, Biofuels, Biodegradable plastics, Clean. Energy and Technology.</p> <p>Applicants should consider how their research contributes to the <u>UN's Sustainable Development Goals</u>.</p>
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### 3. Online Application Procedure and Deadline

We can only accept applications made online.

You will need to visit [www.forwomeninscience.com](http://www.forwomeninscience.com) to create an account and complete an application. Applications must be made for one of the following Disciplines: Life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics and computer science, engineering or sustainable development.

Alongside your application form, you are required to submit the following documentation:

- 1 x **Letter of Acceptance** from host institution (must confirm that the university/research institute is able to provide you with the appropriate space and facilities for the duration of the 12-month period to undertake the research that the award would support)
- 2 x **Letters of Recommendation** from academic supervisors acquainted with recent periods of formal study or research
- 1 x **Candidate Statement**, includes breakdown of expenditure (maximum 500 words)
- 1 x **Research Proposal** (maximum 500 words, not including bibliography)

You do not have to complete your application in one sitting; you may log back into your application and add to it or edit it as many times as you like up until the point you submit it. You are able to click through the different sections of the application form and you can print your application at any stage.

The deadline for the receipt of completed applications is 30 November 2022 17:00 GMT. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the application, including two letters of recommendation, is complete and submitted before the deadline. For a complete application to be considered you **must** select the 'submit' button on the online application form; applications which have not been submitted by the deadline, or which are incomplete, cannot be considered.

A team of multi-disciplinary Readers will review the applications and mark them in accordance with the criteria described below ("Stage 1 Long Listing Criteria"). During "Stage 2 Shortlisting", the top 30 applications selected by the Readers will be forwarded for final review by the Jury panel. The Jury then selects the top 10 candidates for interview.

Interviews will be held virtually in March, 2023. The Awards Ceremony will take place in April 2023 at a Central London location. Candidates shortlisted for interview will be notified in March 2023. Applicants will need to be available to attend both the interview and awards ceremony should they proceed to the final.

Successful candidates must take up the Rising Talent Award within six months of announcement. The offer will otherwise lapse. Only in exceptional circumstances will a later start date be considered.

## **Examination of the applications – 3 stages**

### **Stage 1 Long Listing**

#### **Who?**

A team of multi-disciplinary readers with relevant scientific expertise will review the eligible applications from the disciplines (Life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics and computing, engineering or sustainable development.)

Readers have been appointed on the recommendation of the Research Councils and other sources and are academic experts based in the UK & Ireland.

Each application will be assessed by a minimum of two readers.

#### **When?**

November 2023 – December 2023

#### **What will be assessed?**

Candidates' application forms will be assessed against the criteria listed below:

#### **Intellectual merit of candidate**

- Academic records
- Ability to interpret and communicate research findings
- Evidence of originality, initiative and productivity
- Strong recommendation in a reference letter

#### **Clearly articulated research proposal**

- The relevance of the research and its impact
- The originality of the research proposal
- The proposal should be presented in a clear and compelling way

#### **How the rising talent award will enhance the candidate's career and/or assist with a successful return to scientific research**

- Whether the candidate has made a convincing case for the difference that this award will make to her

### **Stage 2 Shortlisting**

#### **Who?**

Shortlisting is carried out by jury panel of senior UK & Ireland scientists.

#### **When?**

December 2023 – February 2024

#### **What will be judged?**

Top 30 candidates' applications (based on highest aggregate reader scores and comments) comprising applications from each of the disciplines (Life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics

and computer science, engineering or sustainable development).

Following the completion of the Stage 1 reader assessment, the jury panel reviews the top 30 candidates' applications; the jury panel will receive details of the marks and comments given by Stage 1 readers.

The jury will select the top 10 - scoring candidates to be taken forward to the final interview day comprising applications from across the following disciplines. (Life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics and computer science, engineering or sustainable development).

The assessment criteria are the same as Stage 1.

### **Stage 3 – Final interview day**

#### ***Who?***

Interviews to be carried out by the jury panel. Where the relevant expertise does not exist on the jury panel, an external examiner may be brought in to conduct parts of the interview for a single candidate.

#### ***When and where?***

Week commencing 19<sup>th</sup> of February 2024, over Microsoft Teams.

#### ***What will be judged?***

Each of the final 10 candidates will deliver a 10-minute presentation of their research proposal, followed by 20 minutes of questions from the Jury Panel.

The top five candidates will be selected as 2023 Rising Talents.

The 5 remaining candidates will be recognised as Highly Commended Candidates.

The Jury Panel will assess the interviews based on the same criteria as in Stage 1 and Stage 2.

The five winners of the 2022 L'Oréal-UNESCO UK and Ireland For Women in Science Rising Talent Programme will be announced at an Awards ceremony in April 2023.

### **Key Dates**

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- Applications open: 4 September - 25 October 2023
  - Reader assessment: November 2023 - December 2023
  - Jury assessment: December 2023 - February 2024
  - Interview day: Week commencing 19 February 2024 (online via Microsoft Teams - exact date and timing to be confirmed)
  - Awards reception: 18 March 2024 (In the evening, Central London location)
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### **5.0 Further Information**

For further information, visit [www.forwomeninscience.com](http://www.forwomeninscience.com)

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

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#### **Applications**

**How do I apply for the Programme?**

Candidates should follow the below steps to apply to the Rising Talent Award:

- Create an account on the platform <https://www.forwomeninscience.com>
- Learn more about the UK and Ireland Rising Talent Award here:

<https://www.forwomeninscience.com/authority/united-kingdom-and-ireland---national-programmes>

- Complete application
- Upload all of the required documentation, and then press 'submit' to finalise your application

**How do I find out whether my application is successful?** Candidates shortlisted for interview will be notified by email by mid-March, 2023. If you do not hear from us by then, please assume that your application has been unsuccessful. Unfortunately, due to the very high volume of applications that we receive, we are unable to give feedback on individual applications.

### Eligibility

**I am not a UK/Irish citizen but am currently undertaking research in the UK/Ireland, am I eligible?** Yes, applications are open to all citizens. Applicants must already have a confirmed contract at a university or research institute within the UK or Ireland. Candidates ***must*** be residing in the UK or Ireland at the time of application.

**Which fields of research are covered by the Programme?** The fields of research are life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics and computer science, engineering or sustainable development. Psychology, science education and social sciences are not eligible for this Award.

There will be one winner from each of the below categories:

- Life Sciences
- Physical Sciences
- Mathematics and Computer Science
- Engineering
- Sustainable Development

**I am currently working towards my PhD. Am I eligible?** No. Candidates must have completed and been awarded a research doctorate by the time of application. Award money cannot be used as PhD funding.

**What is counted as no more than 10 years active full-time equivalent postdoctoral experience?** Candidates must have no more than 10 years active full-time equivalent postdoctoral experience. This discounts career breaks, such as maternity leave, carer leave, ill health, EU national service and voluntary service overseas, but includes teaching experience and/or time spent in industry.

In addition to the actual time taken off work, an additional amount of time equivalent to 100% of the duration of leave taken will be added on top, up to a maximum of 6 months (e.g. for 4 months leave, an additional 4 months would be added, and a total of 8 months would be deducted from the postdoctoral experience.)

10 years is counted from time that application is submitted, and part-time work is counted on a pro-rata basis. There is no 'maximum time' that can be added, as long as the active postdoctoral experience (excluding these breaks) does not exceed 10 years.

**How do you define not holding a 'permanent academic post'?** Candidates must not currently hold a permanent academic post, or have held a permanent academic post in the past, or have received, before the start date of the award, the promise of a permanent academic post.

A permanent academic post is defined as one which includes lecturing and administrative

responsibilities alongside research, and which is not dependent on research income but funded from general university/institute funds; it is also for an indefinite period, but may be terminated on notice.

**I am returning to science research after taking a career break. Do I qualify for the Programme?** The programme is intended to provide flexible support for women scientists to pursue and continue their research careers in the UK or Ireland. Applications are welcomed from candidates who wish to establish/re-establish themselves after a career break or other period of absence from active research or where the candidate is establishing a research career as a mature entrant or after experience in other fields.

Career breaks can include periods such as maternity leave, carer leave, ill health, EU national service and voluntary service overseas. If you are currently returning to scientific research following a career break, please ensure that you indicate clearly in your application.

**Am I able to hold the award on a part-time basis?** The Rising Talent Award is intended to provide flexible support for women scientists to pursue and continue their research careers in the UK or Ireland. Recipients can take up the award to pursue their research project either full-time or on a part-time basis to allow them to meet caring responsibilities etc. The award timeframe can be extended relative to the FTE.

**I want to use the Rising Talent Award to conduct research outside the UK/Ireland. Am I able to do so?** Awards must be held at a UK or Irish university or research institute, and research must be carried out under the auspices of an academic supervisor or mentor at the host institution. However, award holders may conduct field work overseas as *part* of the UK or Ireland-based research supported by the Programme.

**Do you accept joint applications?** The Rising Talent Awards are presented to individuals. We do not accept joint applications.

**I have previously applied for the For Women in Science UK & Ireland Rising Talents Programme. Can I apply again?** Candidates who have been unsuccessful in previous years may apply again.

## Required Documentation

**Can I submit a paper application?** We can only accept applications made online. You will need to visit [www.forwomeninscience.com](http://www.forwomeninscience.com) to create an account and complete an application.

**What are the guidelines regarding the length of the proposed research plan?** The research plan should not exceed 500 words (not including references).

**What should be included in the candidate statement?** The candidate statement should explain how the award will enable you to undertake your research and contribute to your career, and why the award is important to the funding of your research. Please specify how this award will help to overcome any obstacles and barriers which may have impeded your career progress to date. You should bear in mind that the Rising Talent Awards are designed to provide flexible support and make a convincing case for the difference that this award will make to you.

The candidate statement should include a budget outline with justification for the proposed expenditure choices. This is an estimate and does not need to include exact figures/quotes or be formally approved by your institution.

**What are the guidelines regarding the length of the candidate statement?** The candidate statement should not exceed 500 words. This includes the budget outline.

**How should my research plan and candidate statement be presented?** There are no specific requirements regarding layout, but please ensure they are readable and easy to navigate for the reviewers who will be accessing your application electronically (appropriate line spacing and font size etc.)



You may include images/figures, or anything else that you feel supports your application (as long as it does not exceed the word limit).

**What is required from the letter of acceptance from my proposed host institution?** Your application needs to include a letter of acceptance from your proposed host institution. **The letter must confirm that the university/research institute is able to provide you with the appropriate space and facilities for the duration of the 12-month period to undertake the research that the award would support.**

You must upload the letter (as a pdf document) to your application. This letter must be on headed paper and signed by a representative of the host institution in order for us to confirm it as eligible for our records.

**How many letters of recommendation are required?** A completed application requires two letters of recommendation. These should be written by individuals who have personal knowledge of your qualifications and suitability for the Rising Talent Award. The referees should be academic supervisors acquainted with your most recent periods of formal academic study or research.

**How should letters of recommendation be submitted?** When you have received the letters of recommendation, you will be asked to upload onto the system as part of your application form. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that the letters of recommendation are completed and received before the deadline. We do not accept letters received directly from referees. They must be uploaded directly onto the portal by applicants.

**To whom should my referees address their letters of recommendation?** Letters of recommendation should be addressed to "The 2023 For Women in Science Jury Panel".

**Do I need to send degree certificates as supporting documentation?** You do *not* need to send us your degree certificates at the time of application. If you are shortlisted for interview, you will be required to provide certified copies of your undergraduate and postgraduate degree certificates.

**What should I do if my research does not fit exactly within the areas on the application form?** Please try and find the closest subject area in the dropdown list. However, do not worry too much at this stage if your research doesn't sit comfortably in a specific area. This is to help us match your application with a the most appropriate reviewer.

**Are research projects that involve animal experiments eligible?**

If animal experiments are carried out as part of the submitted research project, these experiments must be described in detail. The necessity of the animal experiments or the lack of alternatives must be justified.

## **Award Payment and Use**

**What can I use the Rising Talent Award money for?** The Rising Talent Award is intended to provide flexible support for women scientists to pursue and continue their research careers in the UK or Ireland. The award money can be spent by the recipient on any costs that will enable and/or facilitate her research, such as consumables, equipment, conference travel, child care etc. The award money **cannot** be used to pay the salary of the candidate. Applicants are required to provide a budget estimate for proposed expenditure in their completed application.

**What is the payment structure/timing for the award money?** The Award is intended to support a 12-month period of postdoctoral research. The award money will be paid in full at the start of the Rising Talent Programme, which must be within 6 months of the announcement of the award. Only in exceptional circumstances will a later start date be considered. Recipients are required to submit a final scientific report and a final financial expenditure statement on completion of the Programme.

**Who is the award paid to?** The award is paid directly to the Beneficiary unless the beneficiary requests that it should be paid into a university department bank account on her behalf.

**Am I eligible to apply based on my current research or does it need to be a new research project?** The research can either be a new or existing research project, but we would encourage you to make it clear in the candidate statement section how the additional funding will allow you to



**advance** your research or take your project to the **next level**.

**Am I able to hold the Rising Talent Programme alongside other awards?** Yes. Recipients are allowed to hold the Rising Talent alongside other awards, grants, scholarships and fellowships, but these must be declared. Candidates should advise the For Women In Science Team if they receive another award, grant, scholarship or fellowship which covers the proposed research project.

### **Technical Problems**

**I am experiencing technical problems completing the form online. Who do I contact for help?**

If you experience technical problems with completing the form, please contact us by emailing [ForWomeninScienceUK@loreal.com](mailto:ForWomeninScienceUK@loreal.com).

**I have not received the email confirming my registration. What shall I do?** Emails sometimes auto-filter into junk or spam, please check these inboxes. If you still have not received the confirmation email, please contact [ForWomeninScienceUK@loreal.com](mailto:ForWomeninScienceUK@loreal.com).

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## **7.0 Miscellaneous**

Applications cannot be returned and are the property of the Promoter. Copyright and other rights and interests in each application are hereby assigned to the Promoter.

The Promoter may use the application for post-event publicity (including newspapers, magazines, online, broadcast bulletins and other forms of media), on the For Women In Science website and the Promoter's corporate and internal website and any other material which reports or promotes the award. No additional compensation will be paid for such promotional activities. Accordingly, entrants assign to the Promoter any copyright and other intellectual property which exist in their entry and irrevocably waive any moral rights that would vest in them under the Copyright, Design & Patents Act 1988.

### **Use of Rising Talent Award winner in publicity and promotional materials**

The winners will be photographed, filmed and interviewed by the Promoter for purposes linked to communicating and advertising the "For Women in Science" programme and these photos, videos and texts will be used in publications and audio visual means including but not limited to written press, television, social media (including, but not limited to, Twitter and Facebook) internet, photographs and brochures including distribution to the media worldwide.

The winners expressly authorise the Promoter to reproduce, represent and use their image, name, distinctions and titles, worldwide. Such authorisation shall be limited to non-commercial uses in relation to the For Women in Science Rising Talent programme

The winners will not receive any remuneration for such promotional activity.

The winners will join the L'Oréal-UNESCO UK and Ireland For Women in Science Alumni and are expected to act as ambassadors representing the position of women in science in the UK and Ireland. Rising Talents may be asked to attend events or be available for interviews in relation to the For Women in Science programme. Rising Talent winners, where possible, agree to take part in communication activities in the framework of the UK and Ireland L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Programme and allow photographic and video material to be used by the partners for communication purposes. At the same time, the professional photographic and video materials will also be at the disposal of the laureates free of charge for their future use. Rising Talent winners should, where possible, attend programme events and promote the award through their own professional channels to help reach more female scientists who are considering applying in future years.

## **Beneficiary's Reporting Obligations**

The winners are required to submit a final financial expenditure statement on the actual Fellowship expenditure incurred on the Research Project, within three months of the end of the Fellowship Programme. The statement should be accompanied by appropriate receipts, copies of invoices etc.

The winners are also required to complete an end-of-fellowship questionnaire, within three months of the end of the Rising Talent Programme.

The Promoter reserves the right to require the winners to complete and submit a progress report or a statement of expenditure at any time during the Fellowship programme, or to provide supplementary information in support of a final expenditure statement.

The prizes are as stated and there are no alternatives or cash substitutes.

Any applications which do not conform to the Terms & Conditions will not be valid. Proof of sending will not be accepted as proof of receipt.

Responsibility cannot be accepted for lost, damaged or delayed entries whether due to technical or connectivity problems or otherwise.

The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

If the prize is declined or if the winner forfeits the prize under these Terms & Conditions, then the judges may at their absolute discretion select an alternative winner in accordance with the judging criteria specified above.

The Promoter reserves the right at its absolute discretion to add or to waive any of the Terms & Conditions, or to cancel the competition at any stage, in the event of circumstances ongoing beyond its reasonable control.

English law applies and the English courts shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any proceedings in connection with this promotion.

### **By entering this competition, applicants will be deemed to have accepted the Terms & Conditions**

On winning a Rising Talent Award, applicants will be asked to sign an additional Winner's Terms & Condition document, regarding the Terms & Conditions attached to the award payment.

### **Promoter**

L'Oréal (UK) Limited in partnership with the UK National Commission for UNESCO, the Irish National Commission for UNESCO and the Royal Society.