In search of female scientists in Singapore

L’oreal Singapore, together with the Singapore National Commission for Unesco and the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*Star), yesterday launched the L'Oreal Singapore For Women in Science National Fellowships - each worth $20,000 to be given to three young women scientists.

A seven-member panel, consisting of some of Singapore’s most pre-eminent scientists and presided by Professor Leo Tan, member of the Singapore National Commission for Unesco and chairman of the Science Sub-Commission, will be selecting the three female scientists.

Sheldon Shaeffer, director of Unesco’s Bangkok office and Regional Bureau for Education in Asia and the Pacific, and Unesco Representative to Singapore, said the awards are to encourage young women to become scientists.

He noted that the declining number of young people enrolling in the sciences is a great concern.

‘It is therefore vital to engage young people, especially young women, in the sciences, and this is what this partnership has achieved,’ he said.

Dr Hazel Khoo, director, Cross-Council Office, A*Star also noted that the pursuit of scientific excellence requires strength, tenacity and sacrifices.

‘Due to the traditional roles of women in society, not many stay the course. It is therefore very encouraging to see the FWIS launched in Singapore, to recognise women’s contributions to the global science community. A*Star strongly supports the FWIS and hopes to see more women step forward to take up these challenges.’

The For Women in Science National Fellowship is open to doctorate women scientists 35 years old or below, or post-doctorate women scientists 45 years or below, pursuing research study in the fields of Life or Material Sciences.

The L’Oreal Unesco For Women In Science programme was founded 10 years ago by L’Oreal and Unesco on the premise that the world needs science and science needs women.

In total, over 700 women in 70 countries have been recognised for their research and received funding to further their studies since the programme was founded in 1998.

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