

27<sup>th</sup> October 2025

*Dear Partners,*

*To the Esteemed Presidents of the Science Academies in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania*

*To the Esteemed UNESCO General Secretaries in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania*

*It is with a profound sense of purpose and personal conviction that I address you regarding the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science programme. As a long-standing patroness and an academic myself, I have witnessed firsthand this programme's transformative power in nurturing scientific talent and fostering gender equality within our research communities.*

*My personal connection to this initiative dates back to 2004, when, as President of Latvia, I was honored to deliver a speech at the programme's ceremony in Paris. On that occasion, I seized the opportunity to advocate for its establishment in my home country. Since then, this globally renowned and well-established initiative has flourished in all three Baltic countries, driven by our common goal, and we are all immensely proud of 81 Alumni whose achievements have resulted in inspiring careers, significant projects for our countries, and even the establishment of centers of excellence. Their contributions not only advance scientific knowledge but also profoundly benefit the public and, most importantly, inspire young generations to pursue scientific careers.*

*While I note that the programme is still currently paused, I am deeply convinced that the spirit and objectives of this unique L'Oréal-UNESCO partnership are more relevant than ever for women in science within our Baltic region. It crucially identifies and elevates women scientists, amplifying their contributions and voices on the national and international scientific stage. The L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science programme is not merely a source of financial support. It offers a sustained,*

*Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga*

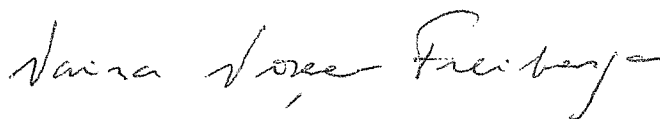
*comprehensive approach through broader recognition and publicity, training and mentorship, and an outstanding network. This empowers women scientists to reach their fullest potential, fostering international collaboration and expanded visibility crucial for modern research.*

*I also wish to share my conversation with Valéry Gaucherand, General Manager of L'Oréal Poland and Baltic, which further reinforces my confidence in the programme's future and the value of this particular, strong corporate-scientific partnership. He personally assured me of L'Oréal's steadfast commitment and firm intention to continue supporting women scientists in our region through this distinctive programme. This cause and programme are close to me, and I highlight L'Oréal's dedication to sustainable partnership and maintaining its vital funding and presence in the Baltics.*

*Therefore, as the Programme's Patroness and with utmost respect, I urge you to support the re-establishment of this crucial initiative. We must revitalize our cooperative efforts, exploring flexible and adaptable models for renewed partnership that align with your current capacities. This will enable the programme to return stronger, ensuring it continues to champion the scientific careers of talented women across our nations and contributes to the pressing global need for scientific advancement and the invaluable contribution of women in science.*

*I stand ready to offer any support I can to facilitate this crucial endeavor and look forward to the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science programme once again flourishing and inspiring a new wave of female scientific leaders.*

*With deepest respect and unwavering commitment to scientific excellence,*



*Acad. Dr. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga*

*President of the Republic of Latvia (1999-2007)*

*L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Programme Baltic Honorary Patroness*

*Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga*