

# Heineken Young Scientists Award 2022 in the Medical/Biomedical Sciences awarded to **Laura Kervezee**



Laura Kervezee  
Photo: Bram Belloni



Amsterdam, 12 July 2022 — Chronobiologist Laura Kervezee (1989), who works at Leiden University Medical Centre, has been awarded the Heineken Young Scientists Award 2022 in the field of Medical/Biomedical Sciences. The jury praised her research into the biological clock and its practical translation into the improvement of patient care. The chronobiological knowledge that Kervezee provides, gives insight into ways of keeping the biological clock healthy in our 24-hour society and other situations in which the clock becomes disturbed, such as when ageing or in hospital. In health care, these insights are used to improve the functioning of drugs and therapies.

The Heineken Young Scientists Awards are awarded every two years to four highly promising young researchers working in the Netherlands. The winners are selected from four fields of science: Medical/Biomedical Sciences, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences is responsible for the nomination and selection process. The award includes a cash prize of EUR 10,000 and a work of art. Previous laureates in the field of Medical/Biomedical Sciences include Meta Roestenberg (2020) and Joost Snijder (2018). The award was created in 2010 by Charlene L. De Carvalho-Heineken.

## Laura Kervezee's research shows that the timing of drug administration affects the effectiveness of the drugs

### **About the study**

Kervezee is fascinated by the biological clock and its effect on health and disease. Her research focuses on the effects of the biological clock on ageing, disease, and bodily functions such as sleep, metabolism, and the immune system. She also studies the effect of the disruption of this internal clock on physiology and health, for example in night shift

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workers and hospital patients. For example, her research shows that the effectiveness of drugs depends on the time at which they are taken. She shows that by applying chronobiological knowledge in healthcare, patient care can be improved in a simple way.

## **Jury praises translation into public communication**

It is unique how Kervezee manages to clearly communicate the complex data from her research to society, according to the jury. She gives workshops for NEMO Science Museum and creates teaching materials about the biological clock for secondary schools. With her research, she not only contributes to the fundamental knowledge of the biological clock, but she also looks for ways to counteract the disruption of our internal clock, which promotes health. Her work is noticed by national media, setting an example for a new generation of scientists.

## **About Laura Kervezee**

Laura Kervezee (The Hague, 1989) studied biomedical sciences at University College Utrecht. She then completed a master's degree in neuroscience at University College London and obtained a doctorate from Leiden University Medical Centre for her research on the biological clock. She is now researcher and chronobiologist at the Circadian Clocks group of the Department of Cell and Chemical Biology at Leiden University Medical Centre. In addition, she is co-initiator and co-coordinator of the BioClock Consortium, a national network of researchers and social partners focusing on restoring and maintaining the health of the biological clock in modern society, which was recently launched thanks to a grant from NWO. In addition to the Heineken Young Scientists Award, she recently received a ZonMw Veni grant for her project '*It's about time*' and has won previous awards including the KHMW Essay Award (2015) and the McGill MedStar Award (2019).