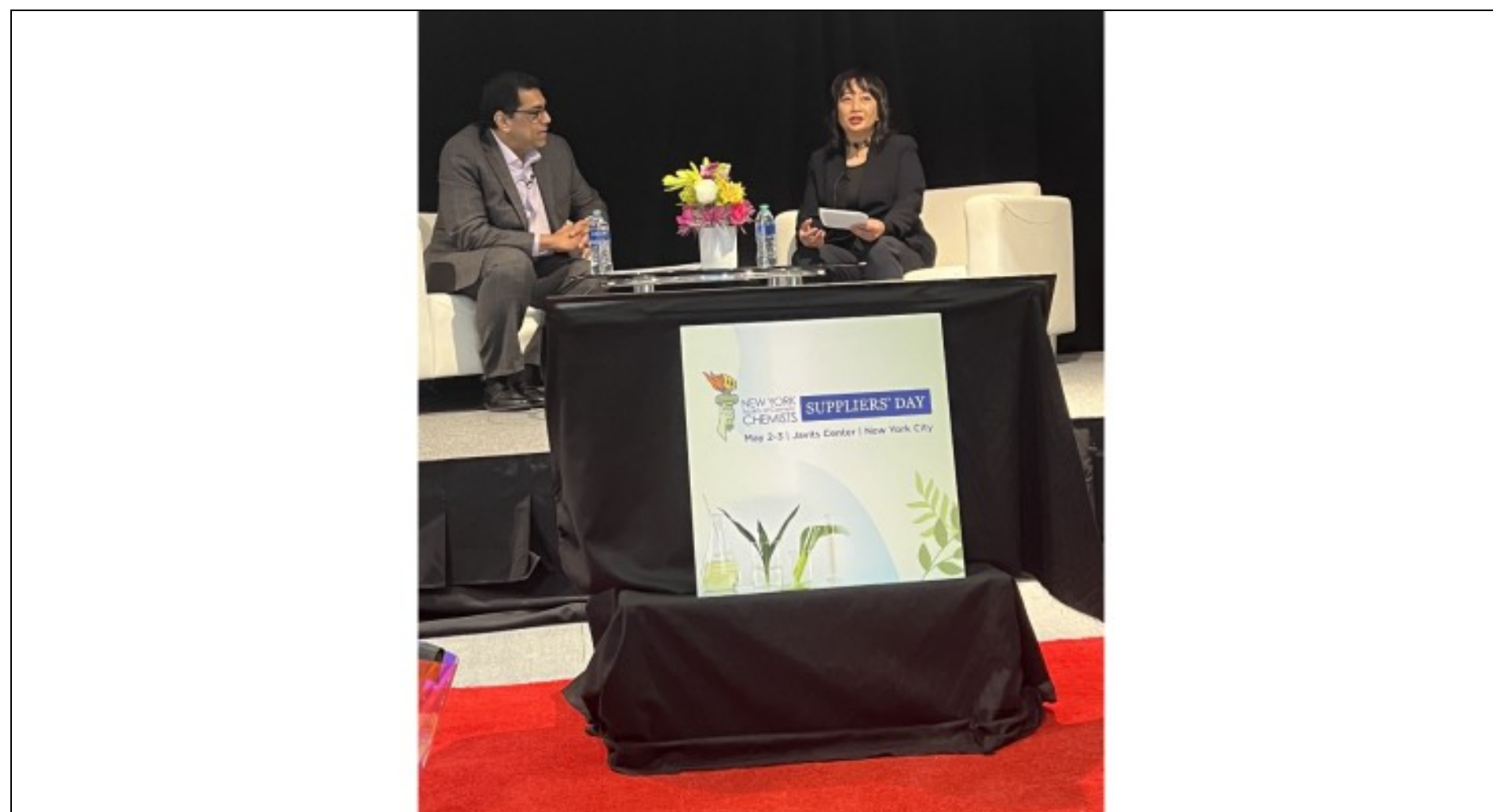


ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

Green Science, Sustainability and Inclusivity Drive L'Oréal's Future in Beauty

"Open innovation is really critical to the beauty industry," said L'Oréal Chief Open Innovation Officer Mohamed Kanji at NYSCC Suppliers' Day.



Mohamed Kanji, chief open innovation and operational excellence officer, NA, L'Oréal and Lan Vu, founder and CEO, BeautyStreams.

Lianna Albrizio, Assistant Editor • 05.08.23

Green science was a hot topic during a conversation with Mohamed Kanji, L'Oréal's chief open innovation and operational excellence officer, North America. Kanji spoke during a fireside chat with Lan Vu, founder and CEO of **BeautyStreams**, during Suppliers' Day, hosted by the New York Society of Cosmetic Chemists (NYSCC) at the Javits Center in New York City on May 3.

"Green science is one of the pillars of what we are working on," said Kani. "To embrace the challenges ahead of us making sure that we are creating beauty that is respecting our diversity and natural resources. We are committed to moving our portfolio formulations where there are more green sciences."

L'Oréal's science and chemistry roots date back 110 years when the brand "disrupted" the beauty industry with the first hair color dye. The company's goal, Kanji said, was to create beauty at the pinnacle of quality, safety and inclusivity while ensuring responsibility.

Situated in 150 countries with more than 87,000 employees, the company creates a close connection with its consumer base by leveraging local technical ecosystems. L'Oréal has 11 R&I centers across 20 different countries and some 4,000 scientists.

"The beauty space is the largest in terms of investments, research and innovation with over 1.1 billion euros worldwide annually," he said.

L'Oréal USA, which **opened a new West Coast headquarters in the Los Angeles area last year**, is constructing a **state-of-the-art research and innovation (R&I) Center in Clark, NJ** to replace existing facilities that had been in use for the past 60 years.

The \$140 million project represents the most significant investment in an R&I facility in the company's history.

L'Oréal's Open Innovation Strategy

Kanji said open innovation is an area that the company is building across the world and is looking at partnerships spanning various areas of expertise.

"We are working with established suppliers such as the ones present today," he said, referring to the exhibitors with booths at the two-day trade show organized by NYSCC.

The beauty giant is also partnering with academia for scientific expertise, from MIT to Berkeley. L'Oréal is also working with Verily Life Sciences—an Alphabet company focused on applying AI and data science to accelerate evidence generation and enable more precise interventions—to understand skin and hair aging mechanisms and clinical testing.

Biotech: A New 'Frontier of Scientific Discovery'

Green science is at the heart of "**biotech**," a crossroads of biology and technology and the new frontier of scientific discovery, said Kanji. He cited L'Oréal's **recent investment in a joint venture helmed by sustainable materials leader Geno** as a prime example that supports the brand's water strategy, which acts as an avenue for sustainable alternatives to ingredients commonly found in cosmetic products.

The venture, established in late March, is committed to meet a growing demand for sustainable ingredients using biotechnology to improve the environmental profile of popular products and meet consumer demand for more traceable supply chains.

The partnership, Kanji said, aligns with the L'Oréal's current beauty commitments, one of which is to have its formulas be 100% eco-designed by 2030. Currently, 95% of its ingredient sources come from renewable resources.

"This is a perfect match for us in terms of leveraging external partnerships [through] technical expertise," he told the audience.

Kanji said L'Oréal is open to collaboration with other biotech companies and creating other relationships with brands at all stages that align with its sustainability values and commitments.

"Open innovation is really critical to the beauty industry, especially when we talk about how responsible we need to be," he said. "Making sure that we—not only as a company, but as an industry—can be responsible for the planet that we live in and give back to the world that we are taking."