

Maria Telkes facts for kids

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Telkes was born on December 12, 1900, in Budapest, Austria-Hungary (now in Hungary). She studied physical chemistry at the University of Budapest, graduating with a B.A. in 1920 and a Ph.D. in 1924. Telkes became an instructor at the institution in 1924. She decided to immigrate to the United States, however, after visiting a relative in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1925 Telkes accepted a position as a biophysicist for the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. There she worked with American surgeon George Washington Crile to create a photoelectric device that recorded brain waves.

In 1952 Telkes became the first recipient of the Society of Women Engineers Achievement Award. She received a lifetime achievement award in 1977 from the National Academy of Sciences Building Research Advisory Board for her contributions to solar-heated building technology. That same year Telkes received the Charles Greeley Abbot Award from the American Solar Energy Society. She died on December 2, 1995, in Budapest.

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Maria Telkes (1900-1995). Hungarian-born American physical chemist and biophysicist best known for her invention of the solar distiller and the first solar-powered heating system designed for residences. She also



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invented other devices capable of storing energy captured from sunlight.

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Known as the "Sun Queen" for her lifelong promotion of solar heating, Maria Telkes was a press-friendly public intellectual who appeared on TV and in countless newspaper stories and magazine articles, but she struggled to have her aspirations and work taken seriously by her colleagues and collaborators throughout her career.

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