

## About La main à la pâte

The aim of the *La main à la pâte* foundation is to **improve the quality of science and technology teaching** in primary and middle school. The common content and skills of these curricula favour a far reaching impact and allow for the inclusion of equal opportunity initiatives.

The foundation's activities are implemented throughout France and internationally, providing **assistance and professional development for science teachers**. Programs are designed to help teachers facilitate **inquiry-based learning** which stimulates analytical and critical thinking skills, develops language skills and deepens the pupils' understanding of the world.

*La main à la pâte*, **a foundation for scientific cooperation** created by decree in 2011, was founded by the Académie des Sciences, the École Normale Supérieure (Paris) and the École Normale Supérieure of Lyon. It continues the work started by the *La main à la pâte* operation, which was launched in 1995 by the Académie des Sciences at the initiative of Georges Charpak, Nobel Prize in Physics, 1992.

The Foundation's head office and [Staff](#) offices are at 43, rue de Rennes in Paris.

## Priorities

The *La main à la pâte* foundation has five main priorities:

- Produce and distribute **teaching resources**
- Provide **professional development for teachers**
- Develop **international cooperation** on science teaching
- **Encourage equal opportunities** through science education: support is provided for scientific education programs in difficult or rural school environments. Pilot centres assist primary school teachers and Pilot middle schools benefit from partnerships with laboratories and researchers. The foundation also actively contributes to a science and disability program for special needs pupils.
- **Bring together science and industry** in the development of science teaching. The Foundation coordinates in particular the [ASTEP program](#) (accompaniment in science and technology in primary school) which aims to reinforce the commitment of scientific professionals to primary school teachers and their pupils.

## Key figures

- A national [team](#) of thirty people
- Nearly 400 class activities available online, mostly in French
- 10 themed educational projects produced since 2000 and freely distributed to 55,000 teachers worldwide, among which some of them are translated in English
- International collaborations developed with more than 50 countries worldwide within three regional networks (European Union, South East Asia and Latin America)
- A network of twenty [pilot centres](#) in France
- About 50 junior high-schools are involved in a pilot programme promoting integrated science teaching and an opening of the school to its environment (scientific community, businesses...)
- 9 [Houses for Science](#) for teachers, regionally-based since 2012

## The history of *La main à la pâte*

From Georges Charpak to the *Houses for Science*, discover the full history of *La main à la pâte* [here](#).

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