Houses for Science

The Houses for Science for Teachers project was launched in 2012 at the initiative of the Académie des Sciences, with the support of the Investissements d’Avenir fund.

A network for teacher professional development

The aim of the Houses for Science is to help teachers to bring innovation to their science teaching practices. Each House caters to its own region, offering professional development courses to teachers from kindergarten to the final year of middle school who teach science and technology to their classes.

The network is made up of 9 Houses for Science (from September 2015) and is coordinated by the Fondation La main à la pâte, which is its national centre. This national centre also proposes professional development courses that are specifically targeted towards primary and secondary level teacher educators (education advisors, inspectors, academics, etc.) across all of France.

Professional development with the living sciences at its core

The core aim of this project is to allow teachers to build or strengthen ties with up-to-date, appealing science and technology programs for schools that are rooted in history. In order to bring the educational and scientific worlds together, the Houses for Science are established in major universities, ideal locations for living science and its transmission.

Designed as prototypes for the renewal of education, they work closely with the existing structures (boards of education, teacher training colleges, research centers for mathematics teaching, research bodies).

From in-service training to professional development

Like in any profession, teachers build their skills all throughout their careers. To go further than in-service training, the professional development initiatives offered by the Houses for Science place the teacher at the heart of his/her own career path. They also encompass all situations in which the teacher may develop his/her skills: formal and informal situations, alone or interacting with a group, face to face or in distance learning.

So that science teaching practices in primary and middle school can evolve with a long-term perspective, these programs focus on:

- A coherent vision of experimental and observation sciences and mathematics, while developing interdisciplinary approaches and language mastery;
- Practicing inquiry-based learning;
- Coherence and continuity in the content and teaching from kindergarten to the end of middle school (age 15);
- Bringing the educational, scientific and industrial communities closer together.