

Press release
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Strengthening early STEM Education across the globe: IDoS Network welcomes new European member organisations

Press contacts:

Julia Kirchweger
Siemens Stiftung
Phone: +49 / 89 / 54 04 87-1 10
julia.kirchweger@siemens-stiftung.org

Nina Henke
Stiftung Haus der kleinen Forscher
Phone: +49 / 30 / 23 59 40-3 43
presse@haus-der-kleinen-forscher.de

Project management:

Badin Borde
Siemens Stiftung
badin.borde@siemens-stiftung.org

Nina Henke
Stiftung Haus der kleinen Forscher
Phone: +49 / 30 / 23 59 40-3 43
presse@haus-der-kleinen-forscher.de

The “International Dialogue on STEM Education” (IDoS) – a joint initiative of Siemens Stiftung and the “Haus der kleinen Forscher” Foundation (Little Scientists’ House) – welcomes new members to its ranks in April. The Finnish STEM initiative “LUMA Centre Finland” and the French foundation “La main à la pâte” with its “Office for Climate Education” will amplify the education network’s efforts to push early STEM Education for children aged 3 to 10 up the international agenda.

During a virtual session, the two initiators of the “International Dialogue on STEM Education” (IDoS) and the US-based Smithsonian Science Education Center welcomed new member organisations. The Finnish STEM initiative LUMA Centre Finland and French foundation La main à la pâte together with the Office for Climate Education focus on training educational professionals and teachers to improve children’s education in the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering/computer science, and mathematics) as well as in the area of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). With these activities, the organisations are enriching a growing network of like-minded institutions. Last year, IDoS already gained a strong member committed to furthering a professional discussion on early STEM Education in the Smithsonian Science Education Center. Since a kick-off event in June 2021, the International Dialogue has been held regularly once a quarter.

Early STEM Education benefits from a global scientific exchange

“We all agree that early STEM Education for Sustainable Development is crucial to find effective solutions to global challenges like the climate crisis, digitalisation and social inequality,” said Michael Fritz, Executive Manager of the German “Haus der kleinen Forscher” Foundation. “High-quality training and continuing professional development for pedagogical staff is a decisive factor in this and numerous initiatives around the world are committed to achieving this goal. At IDoS, we pool the expertise of the most outstanding organisations, share our knowledge, and join forces to develop new approaches that enable us to improve early STEM Education for Sustainable Development in Germany, Europe and around the world. With this in mind, we are delighted to welcome such established educational initiatives from France and Finland to our network.”

Dr. Nina Smidt, Managing Director and Spokesperson of the Board of Directors at Siemens Stiftung, underscored the importance of international networking to create a strong education system: “If we are to pull in one direction as an international community on a topic such as climate change, we need contemporary, holistic education concepts that can be adapted effectively to local contexts and thereby also have a direct impact on society. The experience with our Red STEM Latinoamérica (STEM network Latin America) has shown that, if we are to be successful, effectively combining and exchanging experience from local education practice and global knowledge at the cross-regional and international level is of central importance. The IDoS Network is a pioneer in this context.”

Siemens Stiftung
Kaiserstrasse 16
80801 Munich
Germany

Phone: +49 / 89 / 54 04 87-0
Fax: +49 / 89 / 54 04 87-4 40

Position paper planned to outline network's efforts

A draft international position paper entitled "Impact (oriented) Networks" was presented and discussed at the recent meeting of the IDoS members, known as "Peers". The aim is to use examples to highlight the similarities and differences in the work of different education networks. Based on the authors' best-practice experiences, the paper outlines in concrete terms how global knowledge can be translated into local network practice.

For further information about the IDoS project, please read and feel free to quote the following blog posts (in German):

<https://blog.haus-der-kleinen-forscher.de/dialog-zur-mint-bildung-ein-netzwerk-entsteht>

<https://blog.haus-der-kleinen-forscher.de/international-vernetzt-fuer-gute-fruehe-mint-bildung>

About the "International Dialogue on STEM Education"

The International Dialogue on STEM Education (IDoS) is a joint initiative of the international Foundation "Siemens Stiftung" and the "Haus der kleinen Forscher" Foundation (Little Scientists' House) that promotes high-quality early STEM Education for Sustainable Development worldwide. Together with selected expert members, the initiative aims to establish a "Peer Dialogue" – that is, systematic and regular exchanges at international level – that will benefit the actors and organisations involved in the development of the education sectors in their respective countries. Parties concerned would be able to learn from and with the best players in the field of early STEM Education (the so-called "IDoS Peers") worldwide and thus implement their work at home more efficiently, more effectively, and in a more knowledge-based way.

IDoS operates under the auspices of the German Commission for UNESCO and the OECD; it receives financial support from Siemens Stiftung and the DAAD (from funding provided by the German Federal Foreign Office).

haus-der-kleinen-forscher.de/en/international-dialogue-on-stem-education

About the "Haus der kleinen Forscher" Foundation

The non-profit "Haus der kleinen Forscher" Foundation (Little Scientists' House) is Germany's largest early childhood education initiative in the domains of science, technology, engineering/computer science, and mathematics (STEM). With an accompanying focus on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), the aim of the programme is to strengthen children for the future, provide them with important skills, and enable them to act in a sustainable way. Together with its local network partners, the Foundation provides a nationwide continuing professional development programme that supports pedagogical staff at early childhood education and care centres, after-school centres, and primary schools in facilitating the exploration, inquiry, and learning of children between the ages of three and ten. The partners of the "Haus der kleinen Forscher" Foundation are Siemens Stiftung, the Dietmar Hopp Stiftung, the Dieter Schwarz Foundation, and the Friede Springer Stiftung. It receives funding from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

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Siemens Stiftung

As a non-profit foundation, Siemens Stiftung promotes sustainable social development, which is crucially dependent on access to basic services, high-quality education, and an understanding of culture. To this effect, the Foundation's project work supports people in taking the initiative to responsibly address current challenges. Together with partners, Siemens Stiftung develops and implements solutions and programs to support this effort, with technological and social innovation playing a central role. The actions of Siemens Stiftung are impact-oriented and conducted in a transparent manner. The geographical focus of its work is on regions in Africa and Latin America as well as Germany and other European countries.

[siemens-stiftung.org/en/](https://www.siemens-stiftung.org/en/)