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Engaging Teachers with Large Research Facilities

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Large facilities can provide pupils with an inspirational context for learning STEM subjects and for seeing those subjects as a springboard for future study, employment and a lifetime of curiosity.

Working with teachers, rather than directly with pupils, to achieve this is highly efficient through the huge multiplier effect, the wider geographic reach achieved and, if done well, through harnessing and developing the expertise of teachers.

Giving teachers access to the laboratories and the scientists and engineers working on current projects, greatly enhances their teaching, giving them relevant ways of linking topical science back to the classroom.

However, it does not come without its challenges. Teachers are typically time-poor but rich in creative expertise. The development of a successful CPD model hinges on being attuned to the needs of the teachers, striking the perfect balance of talks and demonstrations from the “real” scientists, with high quality hands-on classroom resources from science education specialists.

Additionally, when aiming to attract teachers from different areas/countries, the different school curriculums must be taken into account, as well as different languages.

In this session, we'll use case studies of successful models of teacher engagement with large facilities to highlight the key aspects which have led to their success, and discuss the methods used to overcome the challenges.

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