

Little scientists with lots of curiosity

Children are fascinated by the world of science – especially when they are able to test the theory in practice themselves. With its Baylab student laboratories, Bayer offers authentic life-science experiments from the fields of biology, medicine, chemistry and also physics in age-specific projects as a supplement to school lessons. Bayer's aim is to awaken and foster an interest in science among young people at an early age and to open up opportunities through education. The approach has been hugely successful all over the world.



Leverkusen – Baylab in Baykomm. Since 2010
More than 24,000 schoolchildren
(3rd to 13th grade)
Health care and agriculture

Mexico City – Baylab Mexico. Since 2011
 More than 206,000 visitors (age 4 +)
 Chemistry and life science; extension planned for
 late 2016



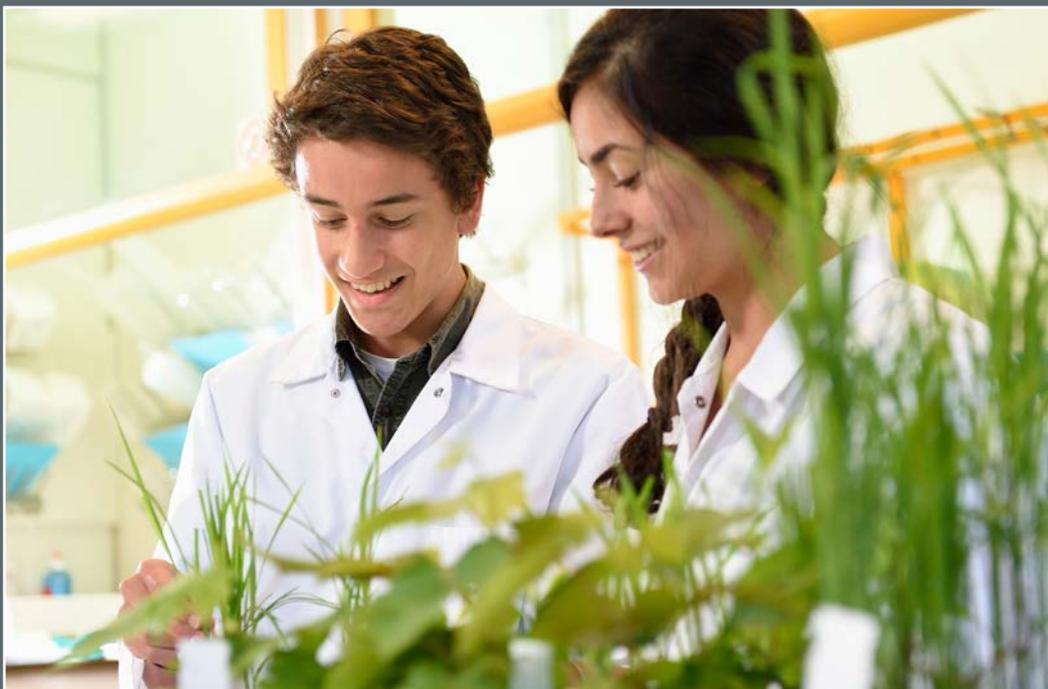
Most research careers start small. "The Baylab gave me my first opportunity to experience how biology experiments are conducted in real life," says Joel Jaegers. In 2009, the now 24-year-old attended the Baylab on the topic of molecular biology in the Pharmaceutical Research Center in Wuppertal. The day in the student laboratory left a lasting impression on him – and even influenced his later career choice.

Baylab lets children and young people discover the latest research methods. It all started in Wuppertal, where the first student laboratory, initiated by Pharmaceutical Research, was launched in 1998 under the motto "Discover Science." Employees at the Berlin site were very im-

pressed by the idea as well. "Young people of almost all ages have been conducting experiments with us since 2008," says Martin Rimkus from the Baylab team in Berlin.

In 2009, Baylab opened in Monheim, focusing on plant biotechnology. One of the experiments young researchers can carry out there is extracting oil from rapeseed. And since 2010, visitors have been able to gain insights into research in the Baylab in Baykomm in Leverkusen.

The student laboratories have also been enjoying international success. In late 2011, Baylab Mexico opened its doors – and some visitors have since become regulars. "We have a five-year-old fan who insists on



Baylab in Monheim. Since 2009
More than 12,000 schoolchildren (9th to 13th grade)
Plant biotechnology



Baylab in Wuppertal. Since 1998
More than 45,000 schoolchildren (3rd to 13th grade)
Chemistry, biology, molecular biology, physics;
vacation courses

his 'Science Friday,' says Jorge Luis Pech Carmona, part of the Baylab team in Mexico City. In 2012, a small science initiative in Warsaw grew into Baylab Poland and now operates as the "Baylab Innovation Center", where students and employees explain how our cardiovascular system works in a way that children can understand.

Baylab Romania opened in Bucharest in 2014, focusing on health and nutrition. Ruxandra Pirojoc, head of Communications in Romania and Bulgaria, took over the project management a year later. "As a mother, I knew that my sons sometimes found school lessons very boring." She wanted to captivate children using practical experiments instead. In Sofia,

Elisaveta Vladova has worked hard to establish Baylab Bulgaria and life science experiments since 2015.

In South Africa, a mobile Baylab has been visiting disadvantaged schools in the Mpumalanga region since June 2016, as part of a collaboration with the Penreach development program. Bayer is also bringing hands-on natural science into the classroom in Argentina as well. Thanks to Science Kits, teachers who have been previously trained in their use can conduct experiments by themselves with their classes.

The most recent addition to the family is the Baylab initiative in Vietnam, which features a children's book containing simple experiments



Vietnam – Child-appropriate experiments. The “Science Discovering Adventure” picture book uses simple experiments to awaken children’s scientific curiosity.



South Africa – mobile Baylab. In 2016, the mobile lab will reach 3,000 schoolchildren (in 12 schools), teaching math and natural science.



“My most vivid memory is the feeling I had the first time I isolated pure DNA – the molecule that forms the basis for all life.”

Joel Jaegers, biological laboratory technician at Bayer

designed to get younger children acquainted with science. In the United States, Bayer’s Making Science Make Sense® initiative has been introducing kids to the natural sciences for 20 years.

Baylab visitors around the world have expressed their enthusiasm. The enjoyment of and interest in life sciences never left Joel Jaegers either. Instead of studying electrical engineering, he began training as a biology laboratory technician at Bayer and now really enjoys his work.



Bucharest – Baylab Romania. Since 2014
More than 7,000 visitors (age 6 to 12)
Health care and nutrition



Argentina – experimentation boxes. Since 2016
More than 15,000 schoolchildren (1st to 6th grade)
Science, nutrition, agriculture and health care



“In the beginning was molecular biology”

Baylab student labs have been offering scientific experiments to children and young people since 1998. The person who came up with the Baylab concept was Dr. Birgit Faßbender from Bayer Pharmaceuticals Research. “Back then, I asked myself how we could best involve the next generation in what we are actually doing in research,” explains Fassbender. “Hands-on” was clearly the right approach.

Faßbender’s team started with molecular biology for senior classes. “The participating schools were enthusiastic and

asked us straight out whether we could also offer something for younger children. We therefore gradually expanded our program to include every age group and also offered vacation programs,” says the biologist, describing how the program developed. There was never any intention to set up the Baylab as competition to schools. On the contrary. “We supplement everyday schooling with experiments that simply would not be possible there, primarily because they do not have the materials for them.



Warsaw – Baylab Poland. Since 2012
More than 14,000 visitors (age 8 +)
Nutrition and health



Baylab student labs offer practical experiments in real-life conditions (photo left). Baylab initiator Dr. Birgit Faßbender (photo right) at the Long Night of the Sciences in Berlin.

We are currently working on offers for teachers and above all on making it possible for new target groups to take part in our programs in the interest of equal opportunities in access to education." For Faßbender personally, the main thing is that children and young people gain an opportunity to gather as much practical experience and as many insights as possible during their visits. "Even if they later go on to other professions, they will be more aware of the scientific background to socially relevant topics and be able to contribute to solutions." ■