Rewarding and Stimulating Excellent Teachers

In total, 15 teachers from Germany and the region represented by the International Lake Constance Conference (IBK) took part in the two-day "Teaching Spirit 2.0" programme at #LINO24. With this outreach project, the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings aim to inspire those who are themselves seeking to galvanize the coming generation of STEM students.

Participation in the Teaching Spirit programme recognizes and rewards teachers who have made an outstanding contribution to the teaching of science at their schools – for example, by establishing or supervising project groups and similar measures beyond their general teaching obligations and over a longer period of time.

As part of the programme, supported for the first time by the Wilhelm and Else Heraeus Foundation, the teachers had the opportunity to attend the lectures held by Nobel Laureates in the Inselhalle, to mingle with Young Scientists, and experience the Bavarian Evening as well as the final day on Mainau Island. A lunch with Nobel Laureates who gladly devoted their time was another highlight of the programme.

However, the teachers not only gained an insight into the Lindau Meeting's programme, they also received valuable input for lesson planning. The curious participants had the opportunity to explore numerous hands-on experimental stations in detail. The work units' main topics were "nanotechnology and modern materials in physics lessons", "exploring physical phenomena by means of augmented reality", and "how does science work, e.g. in the context of climate modelling?". For the AR topic, selected online Nobel Labs 360° from the Lindau Mediatheque could be tested using virtual reality headsets. The afternoon session was enriched with a Q&A by Nobel Laureate Hartmut Michel, who spoke in an informal atmosphere about suitable approaches for sparking and nurturing interest in scientific research.

This year's candidates – mostly physics teachers, in accordance with this year's thematic focus – were nominated by the German Physical Society (DPG), the education ministries of the federal states, the EWE Foundation, the German Philologists Association (DPhV), the International Lake Constance Conference (IBK), the German Association for the Promotion of Mathematics and Science Education (MNU), the Siemens Foundation, the Jugend forscht Foundation, and Teach First Germany.

The didactical core content of the programme "Teaching Spirit 2.0" was developed in a collaborative project involving the University of Tübingen (Professor Stefan Schwarzer) and the University of Gießen (Professor Kerstin Kremer), supported by Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich (Christoph Hoyer). Funding was provided by the Vector Foundation and the Siemens Foundation.

Q&A session with Nobel Laureate Hartmut Michel

Teachers discussing climate-simulation models

Measuring the film thickness of a soap bubble

Synthesis of gold nanoparticles

Demonstrating an atomic force microscopy for educational purposes

Gathering inspiration for the classroom

Lunch with Nobel Laureates – and a splendid view

Stefan Jorda, Wilhelm and Else Heraeus Foundation