

Fred Hutch Launches Scientific Training Program for High School and Middle School Teachers

Partners in Science 2.0 to train science teachers alongside Fred Hutch researchers making leading-edge advances in cancer research

July 15, 2024 By Fred Hutch News Service

Fred Hutch Cancer Center has launched [Partners in Science 2.0 @ Fred Hutch](#) (PS2@FH), a new summer research program that trains middle school and high school teachers in Fred Hutch labs to expand hands-on learning experiences they can take back to the classroom.

“We’re excited to launch PS2@FH and offer expanded opportunities for teachers to really engage with the science happening at Fred Hutch,” said [Jeanne Chowning](#), PhD, associate vice president of Science Education and Community Partnerships at Fred Hutch. “By providing teachers with research experiences and resources, we are also making it possible for them to empower the next generation of scientists.”

Over two summers, PS2@FH participants will focus on a collaborative biomedical research project with a Fred Hutch scientist. For example, the Fred Hutch lab of [Kevin Barry](#), PhD, will host Dean Thompson, a science teacher at Newport High School in the Bellevue School District, to study mechanisms that control the innate immune system within melanoma tumor cells.

Funded through the [M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust](#), the program will be offered alongside the Hutch Fellowship for Excellence in STEM Teaching and Science Education Partnership teaching programs. These programs, along with student-focused summer programs, are all part of Fred Hutch’s Science Education team’s aim to increase diversity in the next generation of scientists.

“Our programs provide teachers with an opportunity to step into a research lab to see for themselves what contemporary research is like,” said Kristen Bergsman, PhD, program manager for the Hutch Teacher Fellowship and PS2@FH. “Spending two summers in a Fred Hutch lab can help teachers develop their identities as scientists, refine their lab skills and spark an interest in a new scientific field.”

Summer programs for students and teachers

Over 600 teachers have participated in science education programs at Fred Hutch since 1991, and this summer the Fred Hutch Science Education team expects over 160 students to take summer courses. These programs include:

- [Science Education Partnership](#): Launched in 1991, this three-week program pairs scientists with teachers to get hands-on experience in laboratory research. These connections help scientists engage with communities and give teachers resources and new ideas to take back to the classroom.
 - Fred Hutch South Lake Union Campus, July 8 – 26 (Public Open House: July 26)
- [Hutch Fellowship](#) for Excellence in STEM Teaching: This two-year research program for middle school and high school educators was established in 2017 and funded by the National Cancer Institute and private philanthropic donations. It centers on a cancer-focused research project along with the design of cancer-focused curriculum materials.
 - Fred Hutch South Lake Union Campus, July – August 2024 (Public Open House: Sept. 14)
- [Pathways Explorers](#): Rising 10th and 11th grade students spend two weeks touring working labs and meeting scientists at different stages of their careers.
 - Fred Hutch South Lake Union Campus, July 29 – August 9, August 12 – 23
- [Summer High School Internship Program](#): An eight-week, full-time, paid internship for rising 12th graders. They are immersed in mentored activities in a Fred Hutch research group. The program culminates with intern presentations to the Fred Hutch community.
 - Fred Hutch South Lake Union Campus, June 24 – August 16
- [Coding for Cancer](#): A monthlong virtual program that connects students with computational biologists, teaches hands-on skills and shows how coding and computational tools are used in cancer research.

Upcoming Fred Hutch programs and free resources for teachers

The Science Education team recently received a \$1.3 million, five-year National Institutes of Health Science Education Partnership Award for a new program focused on cancer health equity. In addition to developing new curriculum and teacher offerings, it creates a new program specifically for Indigenous high school students led by Indigenous scientists and staff. The two-week program will focus on engaging students in a culturally relevant science research project and learning about community health.

Beyond creating opportunities for students, teachers and researchers to engage, the Science Education team develops [free, open-source lessons with topics ranging from immunotherapy to mRNA vaccines](#). The program's Intro to Cancer unit was recently designated as one of the few examples of a quality high school biology unit aligned to science standards used across the U.S., as part of the Next Generation Science Standards.

[This news release](#) was originally published June 27, 2024, by Fred Hutch News Service. It is republished with permission.