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Dear Sir or Madam

Providing a good education for every child is not just the responsibility of the state but of society as a whole. Early investments in education and a common commitment are decisive for improving educational opportunities for all children. Children need stimulus and support in finding and developing their interests and inclinations. This calls for well-trained specialist staff to accompany the children and promote their competencies from an early age.

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has therefore been funding Germany's biggest early childhood education initiative, the "Little Scientists' House" for several years now. The initiative, which was launched in 2006, aims to arouse children's enthusiasm for the natural sciences, mathematics and technology at an early age and thus contribute to preparing a future generation of experts in these fields.

Over a million children in Germany are already profiting from the resources provided by the "Little Scientists' House"; the initiative has reached out to more than 27,000 child-care facilities, after-school care centres and primary schools – impressive figures that are unparalleled throughout the world.

The "Little Scientists' House" is at the same time an excellent example of how public and private partners are working hand-in-hand in Germany to encourage better educational opportunities for girls and boys. Partners in the initiative are the Helmholtz Association, the Siemens Foundation, the Dietmar Hopp Foundation, the Deutsche Telekom Foundation and the Autostadt Wolfsburg.

The "Little Scientists' House" is also making its experience available to stakeholders in other countries. More than 8,000 child-care facilities in Thailand are conducting research and experiments in "Little Scientists' House" projects; and a "Haus der kleinen Forscher" association has been set up in Austria and is already encouraging mathematical, scientific and technical skills at 120 nursery schools.

The BMBF thoroughly supports the long-term implementation of this compelling initiative and would be delighted if international partners in politics and industry would commit themselves to establishing more "Little Scientists' Houses" all over the world.



Prof. Dr. Johanna Wanka
Federal Minister of Education and Research