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Netzwerk Teilchenwelt: Where High School Students Participate in HEP Research and Young Talents are Promoted

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To enable high school students to participate in the fascinating research in HEP physics, 30 universities in Germany have joined forces to form Netzwerk Teilchenwelt. About 150 researchers are active in the outreach program and bring cutting edge physics research into the classroom, for example with Masterclasses. They inform high school students about current findings, open questions and research methods in particle and astroparticle physics. Every year about 4000 students are reached and work with original data from CERN or study cosmic particles with particle detectors. In the advanced stages of Netzwerk Teilchenwelt, motivated pupils continue to engage in research and attend workshops at CERN. The most committed students can spend two weeks at CERN doing their own research projects. Preparation and follow-up of this work takes place close to home. The finished projects are usually taken to the Abitur (university entrance qualification) or competition entries, e.g. Jugend forscht, and are often awarded prestigious prizes.

Through a fellow program, young people who found their way to particle physics via Netzwerk Teilchenwelt are further supported as students. The program offers students early contact with research at their place of study, personal support and further education, as well as nationwide networking opportunities. Through the fellow program, research groups can attract highly motivated and educated young scientists who can take on future research and development tasks, but also help with scientific activities such as conferences or outreach events.

Since 2019, Netzwerk Teilchenwelt has joined forces with other players in the BMBF-funded KONTAKT project, e.g. Weltmaschine, in order to expand the range of programs to include topics of hadrons and nuclear physics on the one hand and to address other target groups such as the general public and journalists on the other.

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