A young participant builds a Hanger Scale at Sama community center in Malakasa, Greece, during Science Fun Club's first meeting. September 20, 2025 *Photo: Katerina Tsikalaki | Science United Project*

Erika Gillette and Katerina Tsikalaki
Science United Project

Twelve-Month Report– August 15, 2026

Part 1: Fellowship Summary

Name of Project	Science United Project
Geographic Focus	Greece – Cyprus
Number of original target beneficiaries	Goal 1: Teacher Training: 40 new teachers Goal 2: Distribution of Science kits: 1000 kits for 200 students from MENA and Afghanistan Goal 3: Science United Festival: participation of 150 refugee students from MENA and Afghanistan Goal 4: HELLO Science!: 15 STEM workshops for at least 120 unaccompanied teenagers from MENA and Afghanistan Goal 5: Science United Club: 10 children attending regularly and 80 children attending sporadically
Number of beneficiaries reached	Goal 1: Teacher Training: 46 new teachers, 33 completed the program Goal 2: Distribution of Science kits: 2,995 kits distributed of which the 1,471 kits verified taught 324 students from MENA and Afghanistan and 439 classmates of other cultural backgrounds Goal 3: Science United Festival: 127 student participants from MENA and Afghanistan 149 local classmates including Roma children 63 children on the move from other countries/backgrounds Goal 4: HELLO Science!: 8 STEM workshops for 76 unaccompanied teenagers from MENA and Afghanistan Goal 5: Science United Club: 20 children from MENA and Afghanistan in Sama, Malakasa 12 children in Thessaloniki - 2 from MENA and Afghanistan
Number of girls/number of boys reached	1,471 science kits reached: Total girls MENA and Afghanistan/Total girls: 167/388 Total boys MENA and Afghanistan/Total boys: 157/375 Science United Festival: Total girls MENA and Afghanistan/Total girls: 48/151 Total boys MENA and Afghanistan/Total boys: 79/188 Science Fun Club: Malakasa: 9 girls 11 boys Thessaloniki: 9 boys 3 girls HELLO Science!: 76 boys from MENA and Afghanistan
Fellowship Amount	35,000
Start Date of Fellowship	15 July 2025
End Date of Fellowship	15 July 2026

Executive Summary

With the generous support of the Blossom Hill Foundation, the Science United Project (SUP) has completed another impactful year — one defined not only by how many refugee and migrant children we reached, but by how our work brought them together with their local classmates. Across teacher training, science kit distribution, community workshops and the border-crossing Science United Festival, SUP used hands-on science as a shared language that dissolves barriers: in a single experiment, a child still learning Greek and a child born in the neighborhood build the same circuit, test the same hypothesis, and celebrate the same result. Inclusion was not a by-product of our programs this year — it was their purpose. Nowhere was this clearer than in the mainstream and ZEP classrooms our kits reached, where children from MENA and Afghanistan learned side by side with Greek children, Greek Roma children, and children on the move from many other backgrounds — often becoming the ones who explained the experiment to their peers, exactly as teacher Eva's students did, quoted in the textbox here.

> "The students explained to other students how to do the work with joy and enthusiasm, and when they showed their cards to their classmates in the mainstream class, those classmates asked to come with them to the ZEP lesson! We noticed that students who usually struggle to express themselves and explain what they did in the ZEP lesson would answer, 'We learned about the electric circuit!'"
>
> - Eva Chatzirafailidou
> ZEP teacher
> Primary school in Thessaloniki
>
> *ZEP (Educational Priority Zones) — supplementary Greek-language support that helps newly arrived children reach the level of their local peers.

Teacher Training (Science United Teachers). Now in its sixth year, the program was restructured into four monthly online training sessions — Electricity, Magnetism, Force & Motion, and Biology (eight training hours in total) — so teachers could join the topics they needed without feeling overwhelmed. 425 sample kits were mailed to schools across Greece reaching the 49 participants, and a special in-person session, hosted at a Ministry of Education science center (EKFE) in Nikaia, Athens, engaged 19 further teachers. New accountability measures — mandatory Memoranda of Understanding and certificates tied to completed lessons — markedly improved follow-through: of the educators who joined, 33 completed the full cycle of submitting lesson plans, receiving science kits, teaching, and reflections.

Science Kit Distribution. SUP distributed 2,995 free science kits — nearly tripling the original goal of 1,000 — of which 1,471 have been verified as taught across roughly 200 teaching hours.

These verified lessons reached 763 children: 324 from MENA and Afghanistan learning alongside 439 local classmates, including Greek Roma children and children on the move from other countries.

The 158 lesson plans teachers submitted show inclusion working in both directions — refugee children gaining positive, language-light learning experiences, and their local peers discovering science together with them.

Science United Festival. The 2026 festival engaged 23 student teams and 35 teachers, reaching 339 verified participants (151 girls, 188 boys): 127 from MENA and Afghanistan, 149 local classmates including Greek Roma children, and 63 children on the move from other backgrounds. Its deliberately non-competitive, video-based format let profoundly multicultural teams — some speaking many languages, some spanning fourteen nationalities — collaborate as equals. Refugee-scientist mentor stories moved children to recognize their own journeys in others', and three expert-led teacher workshops drew over 178 participant educators.

Community Centers and Shelter Programs. SUP ran 8 HELLO Science! STEM workshops for 79 unaccompanied boys (76 from MENA and Afghanistan) across three shelters in Athens, helping them build educational resilience through experiential science, and delivered Science Fun Club at two community centers in Malakasa and Thessaloniki, reaching over 30 children across both sites.

This year's results reflect meaningful growth in reach, quality and teacher commitment — and, above all, in the everyday inclusion our work makes possible in classrooms across Greece. It is a testament to the program's maturing model and to the Blossom Hill Foundation's continued investment.

Table of Contents

Key Activities and Accomplishments 6
Goal 1: Teacher Training – Science United Teachers 6
Objective 1: Training of 40 new teachers 6
Objective 2: Renewing training material for teachers. 8
Goal 2: Distribution of Science Kits 9
Objective 1: 1000 kits for 200 students from MENA and Afghanistan. 9
Objective 2: New activities and improvement of curriculum 10
Objective 3: Monitoring impact of science kits and supporting inclusion in public school classes 10
Goal 3: Science United Festival 13
Objective 1: Renewing and advancing the Science United Festival's website 13
Objective 2: Engage and support teachers to ensure the participation of 100 refugee students from MENA region and Afghanistan and their classmates. 15
Objective 3: Organizing the Science United Festival 2026. 18
Objective 4: Dissemination and Advocacy in 2 in-person events. 27
Goal 4: HELLO Science! 29
Objective 1: Educational Design of 4 different STEM workshops for unaccompanied teenagers. 29
Objective 2: Organizing and facilitating 10+6 STEM workshops for at least 80 unaccompanied teenagers 29
Goal 5: Science United Club 30
Objective 1: Design and organize science lessons in community centers 30
Objective 2: Facilitate science lessons in community centers 31
Challenges 33
Lessons Learned 33
Sustainability 34
Next Steps 35
Success Stories 36

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goal 1: Teacher Training – Science United Teachers

Objective 1: Training of 40 new teachers

Activity1: Organizing the Teacher Training sessions

Outcome: Our teacher training program run for the 6th official year thanks to Blossom Hill Foundation funding. This year, taking under consideration the delays and disturbances that happen every year in teachers' appointments, we changed our program as following:
We split our training sessions to 4 units and spread them in 4 months. This way, the teachers would have the choice to participate in the units they are interested in, focus more on each activity and not get overwhelmed, then ask for science kits after each session. Each training day we repeated the session in the morning and in the afternoon to align with the teachers' different schedules.
Schedule of completed training sessions:

- November 26, 2025: Electricity, 10:30-12:00 and 15:00-16:30 (Duration 1.5 hours) with kits: Electric Circuit and Conductors-Insulators, Paper Circuit, and LED Flower
- December 10, 2025: Magnetism, 10:30-12:00 and 15:00-16:30 (Duration 1.5 hours) with kits: Magnetic Fishing Pole and Magnetic Field Frame
- January 21, 2026: Force, Motion, and Mass, 09:30-12:30 and 15:00-18:00 (Duration 3 hours) with kits: Toy Car and Inclined Plane, Catapult with Pom Pom, Balloon Hovercraft, and Hangers-Scales
- February 11, 2026: Biology, 10:30-12:30 and 15:00-17:00 (Duration 2 hours) with kits: Paper Microscope, CD Case Greenhouse, and Paper Centrifuge

Support content:

- An 8-hour training course on experiential teaching of sciences using Science United Project science kits
- Support in lesson planning through online individual meetings
- Free experiment kits for every child in the classrooms of participating educators

Activity 2: Mailing science kits samples to teachers

Outcome: We mailed 425 science kits samples in 31 parcels to 49 teachers and Refugee Education Coordinators (RECs). The samples were prepared in September and were mailed specifically to the schools with courier and in some cases with the local bus service, to ensure they reached the teachers on time before the training.

Activity 3: Facilitating teacher training sessions

Outcome: All training sessions took place accurately at the above mentioned dates and times.

The new form of our program, which we named **Science United Teachers** with the advice from our business mentors, along with revised and clear instructions, a mandatory MoU with the schools, and lots and lots of reminder emails, has brought results better than any other year. In addition, we added the term that we will only give certificates to the teachers who complete the program: submit lesson plans, teach with the science kits and submit a reflection by the end of the school year. This seems to have motivated teachers more and also discourage the ones who were only interested in getting a certificate.

Activity 4: In person training session in Athens

Outcome: We were also surprised to be invited to host an **in person training for public school physics and Greek language teachers with refugee students classes at a science center (EKFE) by the Ministry of Education.** It took place at Nikaia, Athens on November 21st with the participation of 19 teachers. The participants experimented with 95 Electricity & Magnetism science kits during the session, and 1 teacher continued with our next online training sessions and is going to complete the program by the end of the year.

Image 1: Katerina Tsikalaki with the teachers who participated at the in person training in Nikaia, Athens on November 21st, 2025

Objective 2: Renewing training material for teachers.

Activity 1: Improvement and extension of teacher workshop presentations

Outcome: This year we decided to add time to the training sessions since we split them in 4 monthly meetings instead of 3 meetings in the same week as we did last year, making it a total of 8 hours instead of 6 that it was last year.

These are the folders with the materials we shared with the participating teachers:

Electricity

Magnetism

Force and Motion

Biology

Electricity & Magnetism in Nikaia

Key Indicators

- ✓ 81 teachers and 8 Refugee Education Coordinators (RECs) applied to participate
- ✓ 41 new teachers of refugee children from MENA and Afghanistan and 6 new RECs participated (3 dropped out due to personal reasons)
- ✓ 33 teachers completed the program by teaching with the science kits, submitting feedback and have received certificates
- ✓ 19 teachers participated in the in person training in Nikaia, Athens
- ✓ 8 online training sessions of 16 training hours in total
- ✓ 1 in person training session in Nikaia, Athens, of 2 hours
- ✓ 26 MoUs with Public schools
- ✓ 49 teacher training kits samples sets with 425 science kits were mailed in 31 parcels to participating schools
- ✓ 19 teacher training kits samples sets with 95 science kits were distributed at the in person training in Nikaia, Athens
- ✓ 1 45min lesson plan support session
- ✓ 1 1-hour lesson plan support session
- ✓ 1 extra 1-hour training session in August, with science kits redistributed.

Goal 2: Distribution of Science Kits

Objective 1: 1000 kits for 200 students from MENA and Afghanistan.

Activity1: Preparation and distribution of science kits to teachers with students from MENA and Afghanistan in public schools, unaccompanied minor shelters and non-formal education centers

Outcome: We sent 2,995 science kits to 38 teachers in 29 schools and education centers in Greece. Thanks to the new form of our teacher support program, the Science United Teachers, teachers responded much better than the previous years. 37 of the 47 teachers in the program requested science kits (78.7% success, versus the ~30% average of previous years). One further teacher, trained in a separate August session, also received redistributed kits, bringing the total to 38 teachers who received kits over the year.

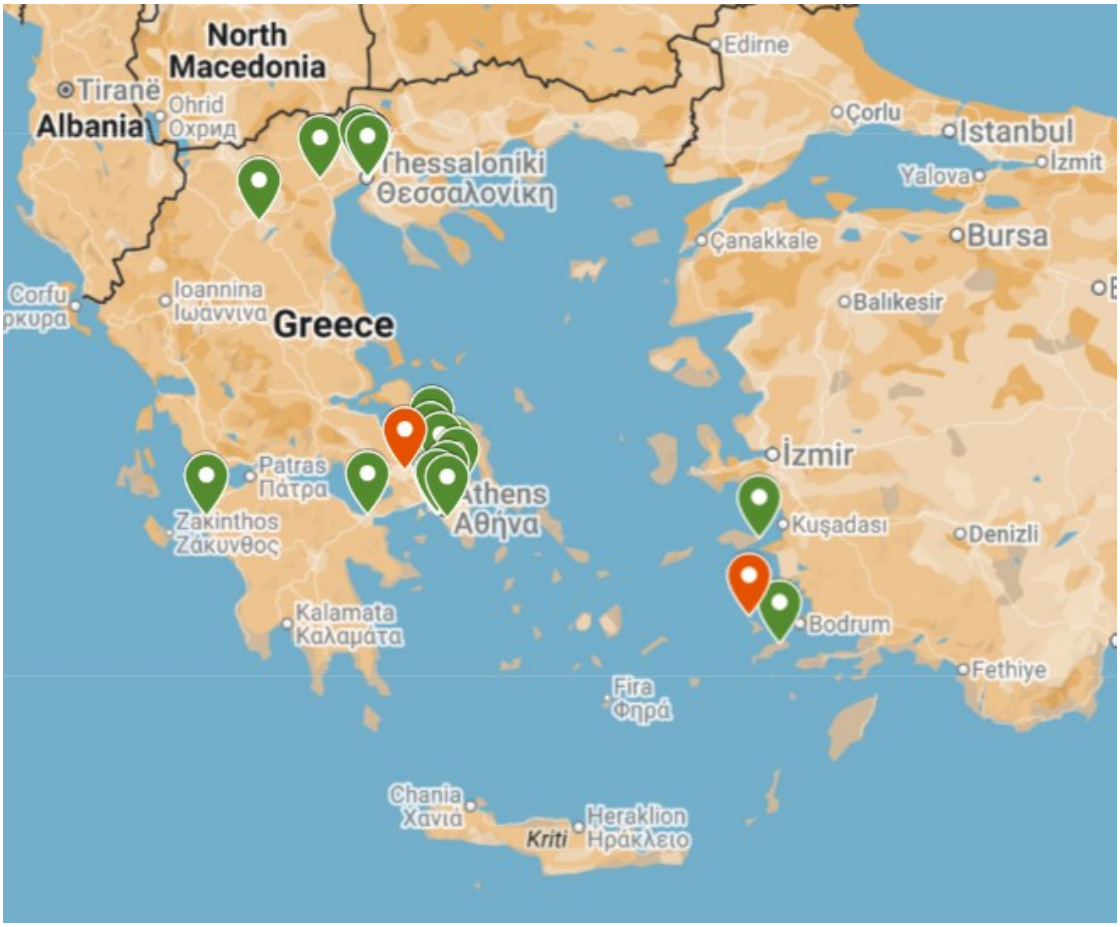


Image 2: Map showing the locations of the schools that received science kits. With green are marked the classes who actually were taught with SUP's science kits, red the ones that didn't make it.

Objective 2: New activities and improvement of curriculum

Activity1: Add new activities to the curriculum
Outcome: We have added one more science kit at the Biology Unit: the Paper Centrifuge and it was requested by 2 teachers. The Paper Centrifuge was designed by biomedical engineer Dr. Brian Gillette for another educational program, *ΑΙΜΑ στο Μουσείο!* (Blood in the Museum!) we designed and facilitated in collaboration with ANASSA and the Physiology Lab of the Medical School of the University of Athens in 2022. In addition, we distributed to the classes the left over worksheets, designed and printed in October 2023 from the same program. We also provided an additional video with instructions to the teachers.

Objective 3: Monitoring impact of science kits and supporting inclusion in public school classes

Activity 1: New forms for Lesson Planning and Reflection Journal
Outcome: We created new forms, one for each unit, to be able to collect all the necessary info for the preparation of the science kits for each class. Each teacher might require slightly different numbers of each kit's material, and there are also some optional materials, for example cardboard squares and/or wooden skewers for the Magnet Fishing Pole. This way we decreased individual communications with teachers, to save time and effort since we are always understaffed.
These are the new Lesson Planning Journal forms:
All Kits-Lesson Planning Journal
Magnetism-Lesson Planning Journal
Force, Motion and Mass-Lesson Planning Journal
Biology-Lesson Planning Journal
This resulted in 37 teachers submitting **158 lesson plans** (Electricity, Magnetism, Force and Motion, Biology) **initially** for 435 students from MENA and Afghanistan and 435 local classmates including Roma children and children on the move from other countries and backgrounds.

Eventually, we sent 2,995 science kits to 38 teachers in 29 schools and education centers in Greece.

Yet we need to make certain clarifications:

Of the 2,995 science kits sent by Science United Project, 1,471 have been verified that actually reached the children in 199 teaching hours of experiential science learning provided by 29 teachers.

By studying the Reflection Journals submitted by teachers, we concluded that 1,176 science kits of the 1,471 above mentioned, reached classes with refugee children from MENA and Afghanistan. **324 refugee children from MENA and Afghanistan participated in a total of 188 teaching hours of experiential science learning, receiving 658 science kits along with their 280 classmates who received the rest of the 1,176 science kits.**

The rest of the 295 science kits that were taught reached 159 children in 11 teaching hours by 2 teachers, who initially declared they had students from MENA and Afghanistan, yet they didn't attend the class the day the kits were taught. This might be due to the frequent family relocations or a random absence that day, which happens often with refugee children.

The remaining 7 teachers who received science kits:

- 1 teacher did send us reflection via email yet didn't share with us the number of students attended.
- 2 teachers failed to teach the science kits because the shelter where they worked closed down suddenly.
- 1 teacher returned their science kits without having taught them due to the very frequent relocations of children. We redistributed most of these science kits to two teachers who submitted their requests during the summer.
- 1 teacher told us they delivered the lessons yet haven't sent us a reflection so far
- 1 teacher couldn't be reached via phone or email.

Overall, based on our communications via phone, we are convinced that more science kits were taught to a larger number of children than those recorded, but the teachers haven't had the time or energy to complete their reflection journals.

Activity 2: Monitor Reflection Journals and media from teachers

Outcome: We have received so far 92 Reflection Journals from 33 teachers.

The deadline for teachers to submit their Reflection Journal was in the end of the school year, June 30th. By the time of writing this report, we have verified that 33 teachers completed the program by teaching most of the science kits we mailed them. 2 teachers couldn't complete the program and teach the science kits due to the sudden closing of the shelter for unaccompanied minors where they were working, and we were not able to retrieve these science kits. 1 teacher returned their science kits without having taught them due to the very frequent relocations of children. In July and August, we were able to redistribute these science kits to a summer camp with refugee students and to an unaccompanied children's shelter. Another 2 teachers dropped out due to personal reasons.
We were able to verify in total that 199 teaching hours were taught with 1,471 of our science kits to 763 students .

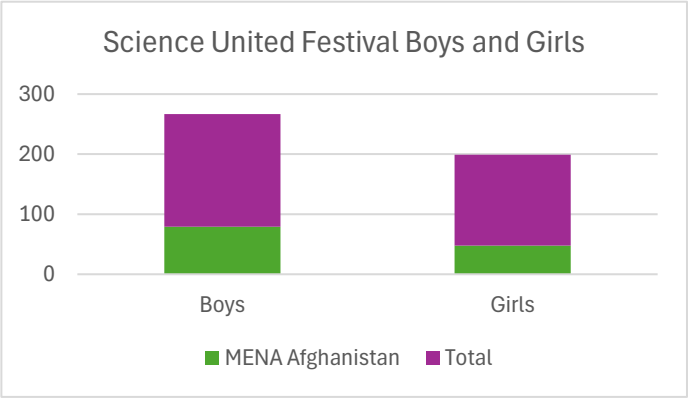
Key Indicators

- ✓ 2,995 free science kits distributed to refugee students' classes
- ✓ 162 science kits were returned, 102 redistributed to 2 other teachers
- ✓ 1,471 science kits were verified to have been taught
- ✓ 199 teaching hours of experiential science learning verified
- ✓ 10 volunteers supported the making of the science kits (Ismini Tzourntou, Dimitra Stamatopoulou, Antonis Tsikalakis, Maria Stefanidou, Eleni Katsiki, Pelagia Ntagianta, Katerina Tzouganaki, Silvia Caccin, Farah Gargouri, Vivian Giotaki)
- ✓ 324 students from MENA and Afghanistan were taught and have received 658 science kits (167 girls and 157 boys)
- ✓ 439 local classmates including Roma children and children on the move from other countries/backgrounds benefited with science kits and experiential science lessons alongside their peers from MENA and Afghanistan
- ✓ 158 (Electricity, Magnetism, Force and Motion, Biology) lesson plans from 37 teachers
- ✓ 92 Reflection Journals from 33 teachers
- ✓ 38 teachers actively engaged and supported with science kits
- ✓ 33 teachers taught their classes with our science kits

Goal 3: Science United Festival

Our 2026 Science United Festival engaged 23 classes and their 35 teachers who created 23 science projects, with verified 339 student participants in total: 151 girls and 188 boys. Of these children, 127 are from MENA and Afghanistan, 149 are local classmates including Roma children and 63 are children on the move from other cultural backgrounds.

The analogy for total girls MENA and Afghanistan/Total girls is 48/151 and total boys MENA and Afghanistan/Total boys is 79/188.



Objective 1: Renewing and advancing the Science United Festival's website

Outcome:

- The Festival website was extended with a form for the teachers to fill in the content of their page: the team flag, the team description, the team name, teachers names, teacher(s) photo(s), and the video.

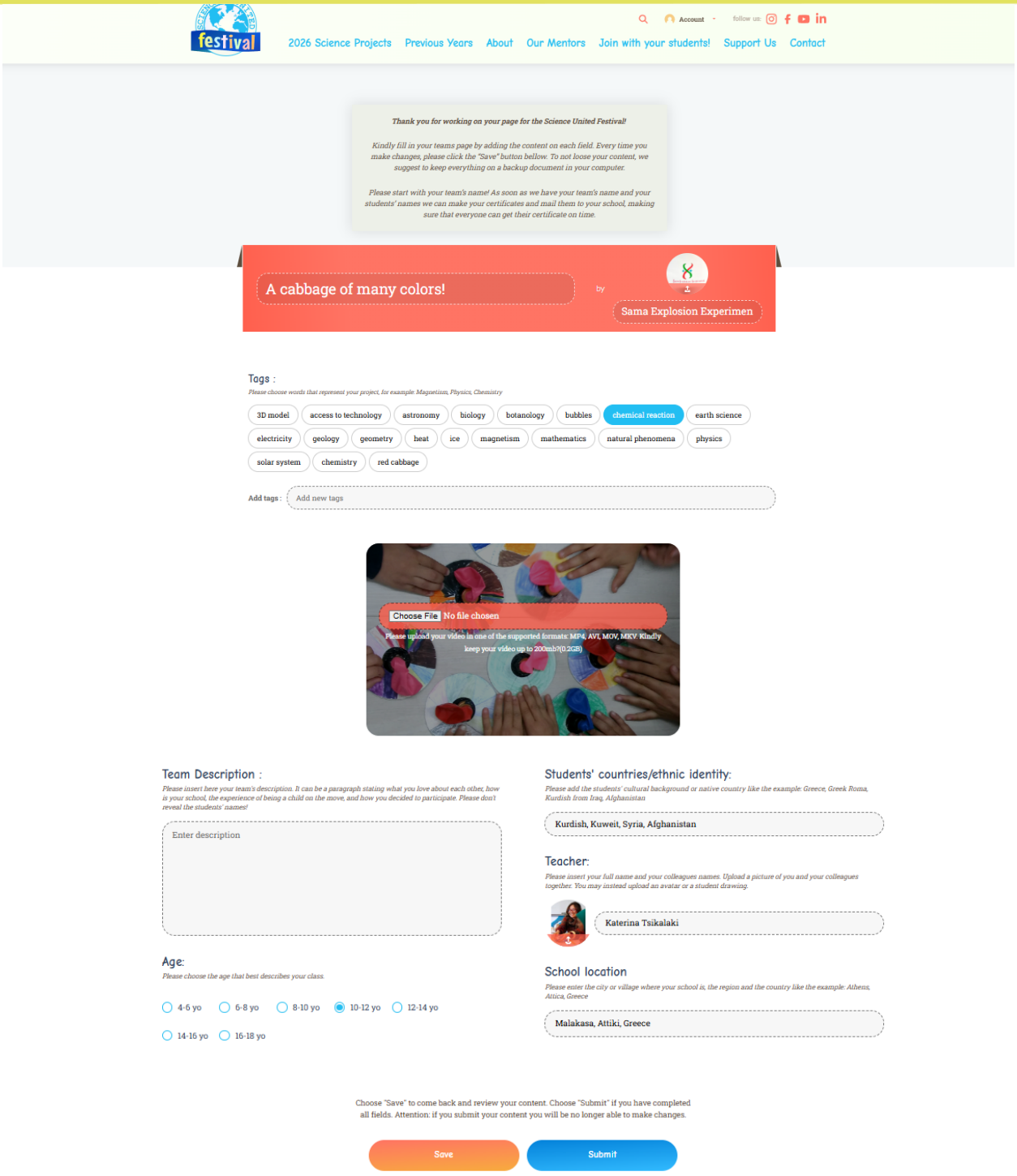


Image 3: The user environment where teachers submit the info, pictures and videos for their team's participation page.

- We still review all content before publishing each page.
- By April 17th the 2026 science projects that were ready have been published to the website and we are still working on small errors that occur by the teachers' interaction with the website.
- Overall the new form has saved us time and has helped teachers understand better and at their own pace what is necessary for their participation to be complete.

Objective 2: Engage and support teachers to ensure the participation of 100 refugee students from MENA region and Afghanistan and their classmates.

The Science United Festival requires teachers to work actively and produce a science project video with their students collaboration. Most teachers need support and we will provide training, mentorship and direct support on their science project videos.

Outcome:

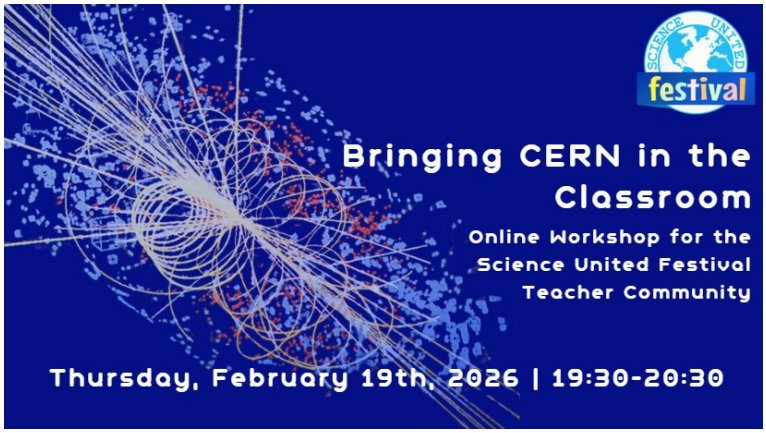
We organized 3 teacher community meetings of 1h each. The meetings were held in Greek since all participating teachers were Greek speaking, and they were scheduled right before the workshop, to save time and commitment.

- 1st Teacher Community Meeting, February 18th, 2026
  15 teachers attended
- 2nd Teacher Community Meeting, March 5th, 2026
  15 teachers attended
- 3rd Teacher Community Meeting, March 17th, 2026
  10 teachers attended

We organized 3 workshops for teachers:

"CERN in the Classroom, again!" – February 19th, 2026, 78 teachers attended

Dr. Anastasia Tezari, coordinator of educational workshops at the CERN Science Gateway introduced CERN and educational resources on quantum and nuclear physics.
FB event: Φέρνοντας το CERN στην Τάξη ξανά! | Facebook



"The Universe in the Classroom" – March 5th, 2026, 50 teachers attended

Dr. Yannis Kontogiannis, postdoctoral researcher at ETH Zurich, introduced the teachers to Astronomy, different activities that can be done in the class and also how to use real data and images of the Sun to engage children in Astronomy.
FB event: Το Σύμπαν στην τάξη | Facebook

"From Adversity to Learning: Creating a Supportive School Environment" –

March 17th, 2026, 50 teachers attended.

Dr. Eirini Adamopoulou, Assistant Professor of School Psychology in the Department of Primary Education at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, introduced teachers to the concept of adverse childhood experiences, explored the reasons behind the behaviors that traumatized children exhibit and suggested methods to approach them and create a supportive school environment.

FB event: [Από την αντιξοότητα στη μάθηση: Δημιουργώντας ένα υποστηρικτικό σχολικό περιβάλλον | Facebook]

We provided individualized support to 6 teachers:

- Victoria Koemtzopoulou and Nopi Soilemezi, RECs at the Diavata refugee accommodation site received training and support in online meetings and calls with SUP's Education Work Team Leader Alexandra Gkosiou
- Zafeiroula Vergopoulou, primary school teacher in Thessaloniki, received training and support in online meeting with SUP's Education Work Team Leader Alexandra Gkosiou
- Olympia Athanasiou, primary school teacher, was supported with video editing by Dora Zacharopoulou, SUP's Education Work Team Executive.
- Thekla Giannouli, physics teacher of an afternoon welcome class for refugee students in Korinthos, was supported with video editing by Dora Zacharopoulou, SUP's Education Work Team Executive.
- Katerina Giovani, at an emergency shelter for unaccompanied minors: our AIESEC volunteer Farah Gargouri prepared and taught the Bridge Challenge activity with the aid of Katerina Tsikalaki, leading to the children's participation at the 2026 Science United Festival.

Objective 3: Organizing the Science United Festival 2026.

Setting up the Festival website, disseminating the Festival on Social media and the Press, preparing and sending students and teachers certificates, encouraging the mentors to comment on students' projects, hosting the celebration ceremony in the end.

Activity 1: Publishing the teams' pages at the Science United Festival website
Outcome: The 23 2026 Science Projects - Science United Festival have all been published.

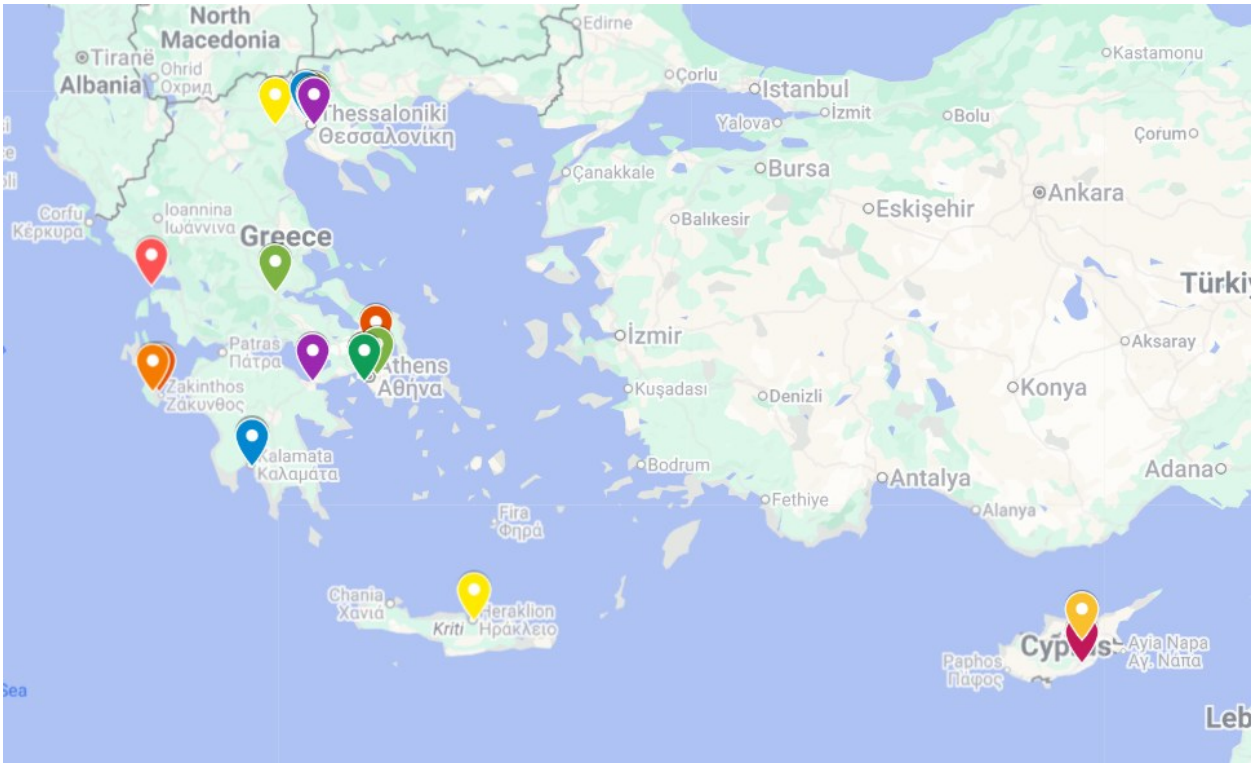
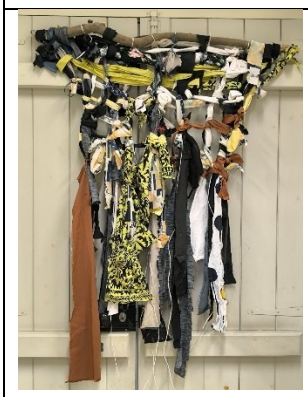
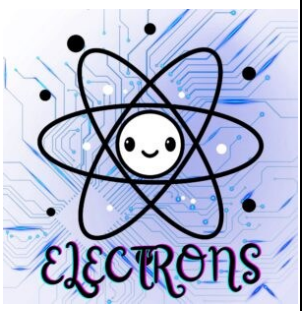
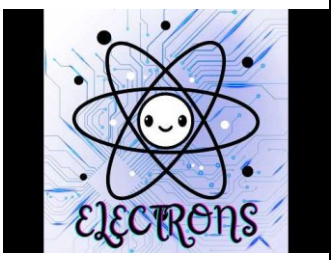


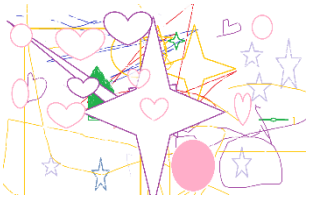
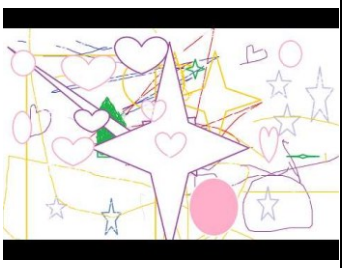
Image 4 Map with the locations of the schools and education centers who took part in the Science United Festival.

Here are the final teams' pages:

	The Magma-tics Hi! We are "The Magma-tics", a team of primary school explorers fueled by curiosity and a love for "why." What we love most about our group is how we balance each other out—some of us are great at building things, others have the wildest ideas, and there's always someone to keep us laughing when a project gets tricky.	
	The Polyglots Our superpower is that we speak many languages! But it was through Greek that we met, worked together, and became a team exploring new paths in physics. We invite you to join us on our journey of discovery!	
	**Little Stellars.** Hello everyone. We are little…and not so little stars coming from different parts of the sky, all currently lighting up one particular part of it! We all have so many different interests but somehow one day we figured out we have a definite one in common! Yes, you guessed it: the sun and planets!	

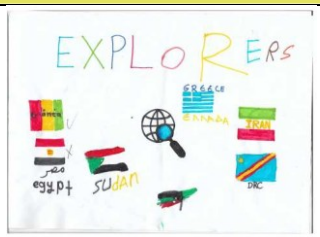
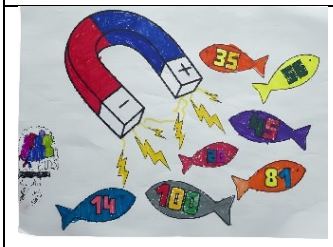
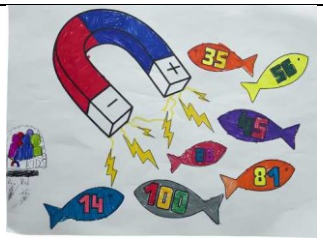
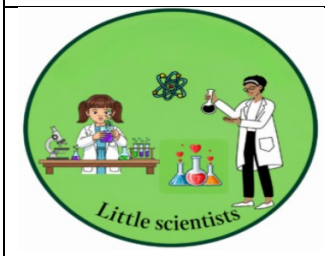
	The pufferfish We are a team of enthusiastic children who love learning and playing together. We enjoy discovering new things and doing experiments. Working as a team makes us happy because we help each other and share ideas. Our school is in Tragaki, on the beautiful island of Zakynthos in Greece. We decided to participate because we	

	like exploring, asking questions and learning in a fun way.	
	**Electrons** We are the "Electrons" team. We are the 5th grade students of a primary school in Zakynthos, in Greece! We come mostly from Greece, but also from Albanía. We like science. We like experiments and learning about the human body. We also like working together and with other schools.	
	ΑΕΡΟ...ΟΜΑΔΑ! - AERO...OMADA We built our own windmills… …and wind instruments. The anemometer to measure wind speed and the wind vane to determine wind direction. To better understand the different wind directions, we conducted the experiment with hair and a hair dryer. We learned G. Drosinis's poem "The North Wind and the South Wind" …and much more!	
	Explosive Sphere Gang "We are the Explosive Sphere Gang and we've come to bring order to the galaxy's chaos! Who needs batteries and screens when you have an "explosive sphere" (the Sun, of course!) telling you the time? We're building a sundial to prove that time only moves when the right gang is watching. Warning: Our energy is hotter than the surface of the Sun!"	

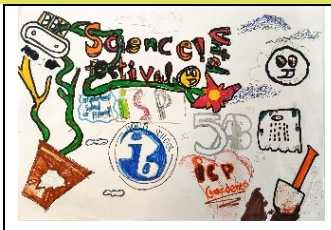
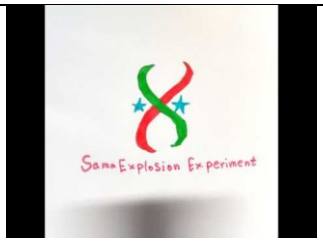
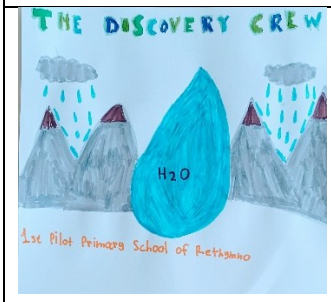
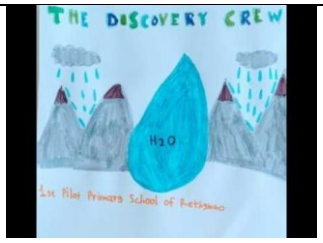
	The fantastic scientists Inspired by this ancient discovery and by the myths of the ancient Greeks, we carry out an experiment with magnetic slime! We create a fictional Cyclops named MagniSakis. According to mythology, the Cyclopes were craftsmen who worked with iron and fire deep inside the earth. So we make a slime that contains iron and bring a magnet close to it to observe what happens. When the magnet approaches, the slime begins to move and follow it, as if it were alive.	
	**The Unicorns** The “Unicorns” team explored the world of light and shadows through creative activities and observation of nature. After reading a story where the continuation of the story was hidden in the shadows, the children carried out simple experiments in the classroom and in the school yard. By playing “shadow tag” and observing the natural environment, they discovered how shadows change in size and direction at different times of the day. The project concluded with a small shadow puppet theatre.	
	Al-Mustaqbal “Al-Mustaqbal” means “the future” in Arabic, and it is a word that is important to us. Our team is made up of children who learn, play, and grow together every day. We support each other, listen to each other, and try to help when someone needs it. Our school is a place where we feel safe and where we can share our thoughts and experiences. Being children on the move is not always easy. Many of us have traveled far from our homes and faced different challenges. Still, we continue to learn and dream about our future. Our past is part of who we are, but our future is ours to write.	

	All different,all together Our team is made up of children who share a love for learning, collaboration, and creativity. Our school is a place where we feel safe and encouraged to express our ideas, experiment, and grow every day. Having experienced moving and adapting to new environments, we have learned to respect diversity, support each other, and see challenges as opportunities for growt. Our decision to participate came from our desire to work together, share our experiences, and create something special as a team.	

	Science Crew 4 Hello everybody! We are the “Science Crew 4” from Larissa. Do you know us? This is the fourth time that we participate at the festival. We are excited! Now we will show you an amazing experiment. We hope you will like it as much as we did!	
	The Smoky Chemists The Smoky Chemists conduct a series of demonstrations designed to reveal how materials respond to rapid temperature changes and catalytic reactions. They perform the catalytic decomposition of hydrogen peroxide producing vigorous oxygen release and characteristic smoke-like plumes. Using liquid nitrogen, the team freezes a banana and a rose, showing how organic structures become brittle at cryogenic temperatures. They then combine dry ice with water to generate dense CO_2 vapor, visualizing sublimation and heat transfer in real time. Through these experiments, the team transforms core chemical principles into clear, atmospheric visualizations of matter in motion.	

	Explores Our group consists of children from North Africa, Central and West Africa, the Middle East. In our school, students can change every two-eleven months because they are children who move from their countries of origin to European countries. What we love about each other is the understanding and empathy we show in our relationships and thus we help each other.	
	**Magnetic Kids** We are the Magnetic Kids, a small but diverse group made up of Greek, Greek-Roma, Ukrainian, and Syrian kids. In our classroom, we conduct experiments, build things, and explore the world around us. Watch our video to get an idea of everything we're learning together!	
	**Little scientists** Our team consists of five students who enjoy learning and working together in a supportive and friendly classroom. Our school promotes inclusion, respect, and equal opportunities for all children. Some of our students come from Roma backgrounds and face daily challenges such as social exclusion and limited access to resources. Despite these difficulties, they show resilience, creativity, and a strong willingness to learn, enriching our team with their experiences. We decided to participate in this project after learning about it from a colleague who took part last year. We are excited to collaborate, learn from others, and share our experiences as a team.	
	The Real Bridge Engineers Hello! We are a creative team of teenagers from different countries: four from Egypt and one from Somalia. Even though we come from different places, today we worked together as engineers to solve one exciting challenge. Our mission was to build a bridge that can	

	hold 2 kilograms, using only the materials we were given and by following the engineering thinking process. While building, we learned about forces like compression and tension, and we discovered that the triangle is the strongest shape in geometry because it does not bend and it spreads forces evenly. We worked in three groups, and after testing our bridges, something amazing happened: every bridge successfully held the weight! Today we didn't just build bridges with materials, we also built teamwork, creativity, and engineering skills. Thank you very much!	
	Diavatistas Our team consists of boys and girls from different countries and of different ages, whose common characteristic is that they are all great fighters.	
	Space Vision- The Earthers Our school is a multicultural school. Teachers and students from 14 different nationalities coexist here every day. We face difficulties related to language on daily basis, but our good will and cooperation help us overcome them. We are one big family, we are friends and it makes us very sad when one of us leaves.	
	Space Vision-The Outer Spacers Our school is a multicultural school. Teachers and students from 14 different nationalities coexist here every day. We face difficulties related to language on daily basis, but our good will and cooperation help us overcome them. We are one big family, we are friends and it makes us very sad when one of us leaves**.**	

	**ISP Gardeners** We really liked the collaboration with other classmates in our multicultural school. Every child wherever it comes from achieved to care about the same plant and used the technology on order to support all this process. We've decided to participate after our teachers' encouragement**!**	
	Sama Explosion Experiment We are a team of children from different countries! We met at Malakasa in November 2025, but by Spring 2026 some of us have left and some of us are still here. We hope our journeys always lead us to fun learning experiences like this one!	
	**The Discovery Crew** Hello from the "Discovery Crew"! We are a team of seven bilingual students in the Reception Class of a Primary School in Rethymno. We are curious about the natural world and love exploring new things. For the Science United Festival, we investigated water through a series of exciting experiments. We invite you to watch our video and join us on our journey of discovery!	

Teachers' Feedback

Fourteen teachers from fourteen schools and NGO education centers completed the evaluation questionnaire. The response was unanimously positive: all fourteen rated the Festival a valuable experience for themselves and for their students, felt supported by the Organizing Committee, and tellingly every respondent said they intend to take part again next year.

Across the open-ended responses, several themes recur. Teachers valued the Festival's experiential, inquiry-based approach, where concepts emerged from direct observation rather than instruction. As Eleni Karpouza (primary school teacher, Zakynthos) put it, participation

"turned theory into practice," with students "acting as little scientists"—forming hypotheses, testing, and analyzing results.

The non-competitive, inclusive philosophy was a favorite element. Karpouza appreciated "the requirement to produce a video with a direct recipient, without a competitive process," and the chance to draw inspiration from other schools' work. Watching other groups' videos, teachers reported, nurtured critical thinking and constructive feedback, and revealed the collaborative, social nature of science.

The refugee-scientist mentor video-stories clearly moved students. Rachel Kallianidou (afternoon welcome class teacher, Alexandreia) noted the children "fell silent when they realized the mentors had been through situations similar to their own." For another teacher, the stories were decisive "as a driving force of inspiration and identification"—one child even shared their own family's story of crossing a border.

Perhaps the warmest note came from Viktoria Koemtzopoulou (Temporary Accommodation Facility, Diavata), on what she loved most:
"The joy of creation… when we see that what we had in mind actually works."

Activity 2: Disseminating the Festival on Social media and the Press
Outcomes:
Social Media:
Festival teacher community workshops: We opened and promoted our 3 Festival workshops for all interested teachers on Facebook and this caught the attention of 31,867 viewers and resulted in 411 registrations to the Facebook events in total.
Festival teams' projects: We prepared and posted 23 social media posts with small teaser videos and captions describing each project and team for 23 teams that are already at the Festival website.
Between April 19th and June 8th, during the time of the Festival posts, our total views on Facebook reached 21,500 and 199 interactions and on Instagram 17,000 total views and 499 interactions.

Newsletter:
We sent in total 7 different newsletters for the Festival from January to June 2026 to our audience of approx. 1,500 and they were opened 3,052 times.

Dissemination by our mentors and Organizing Committee members:
Our mentors received guidelines on how to comment on the teams projects, and 4 of them managed to make comments on the teams projects: Dr. Rana Mustafa, Raghad Zino, Nargis Koghadai and Dr. Anastasia Tezari.
In total 103 comments were exchanged from the Festival community, 36 from mentors and 67 from the teachers and their classes.

Activity 3: preparing and sending students and teachers certificates
Outcome: We have prepared, printed all the students and teachers certificates and we mailed them to 21 schools and organizations in Greece and Cyprus.

Activity 4: Hosting the celebration ceremony in the end of May
Outcome: The ending ceremony was held live on YouTube on June 8th 2026 and so far has 110 views.

Objective 4: Dissemination and Advocacy in 2 in-person events.

Activity 1: Athens Science Festival
Outcome: We already participated at the Athens Science Festival on December 19th, 2025 to promote our work and the Festival. We also seized the opportunity to bring 20 unaccompanied children from two emergency shelters for unaccompanied minors to see the exhibition, feel proud for their exhibits and interact with other children.

Activity 2: Antiracist Festival of Athens

Outcome: On July 3, 4 and 5 we participated in the open air 27th Antiracist Festival of Athens, in Goudi Park. On 3 and 4 July 2026, we held two science workshops for all the children in the Children's Play Area of the 27th Athens Antiracist Festival.

More than 65 children, local and migrants, who long for peace worked together, created, and opened our eyes with their wonderful ideas. Our team and our volunteers: Alexandra Gkosiou, Dora Zacharopoulou, Vivian Giotaki, Katerina Tsikalaki, Dimitra Stamatopoulou, Ismini Tzourntou, Maria Stefanidou, Eleni Katsiki, Spyros Papakonstantinou, Petros Kontes and Svetlana Aristakesyan, together devoted more than 200 hours before, during, and after the Antiracist Festival. More than 45 people registered in our newsletter and/or donated showing interest and appreciation among more than 100 who stepped by our booth.

Key indicators:

- ✓ Festival Website was successfully renewed to be dynamic and support teachers' participation
- ✓ We had 23 student teams
- ✓ 6 teachers received individualized support
- ✓ 3 teacher community meetings with 40 participations
- ✓ 3 teacher workshops with 178 participations
- ✓ 35 teachers and 3 assistants were actively involved and participated with their students
- ✓ 103 encouraging comments were exchanged by the Festival community
- ✓ Final numbers of students who participated and received certificates:
  339 student participants in total: 151 girls and 188 boys
  127 student participants from MENA and Afghanistan
  149 local classmates including Roma children
  63 children on the move from other countries/backgrounds
- ✓ 2 advocacy opportunities seized: Athens Science Festival and Antiracist Festival of Athens with a total of 85 actively involved children.
- ✓ 1 ending ceremony live on YouTube
- ✓ 26 social media posts, one for each team's science project plus 3 posts with the best moments of the science projects
- ✓ 7 newsletters were sent and in total were opened 3,052 times

Goal 4: HELLO Science!

Objective 1: Educational Design of 4 different STEM workshops for unaccompanied teenagers.

Activity 1: Design the HELLO Science Friends series of workshops

Outcome: Due to the overwhelming demand of science kits and the fact that we didn't have any regular volunteer/intern help during fall and winter, we have not managed to work on this objective, although we did initially agree with an unaccompanied minors shelter that we would do the program with their children in Athens.

Objective 2: Organizing and facilitating 10+6 STEM workshops for at least 80 unaccompanied teenagers

The goals where to reach:

- 20 teenagers from MENA and Afghanistan with the HELLO Science Friends series of workshops that would be designed in Objective 1 (2*5session series=10 workshops) at 2 long term shelters
- 60 teenagers from MENA and Afghanistan with 6 HELLO Science workshops in the emergency accommodation shelters

And to have further impact for the classmates from other regions and inspiration for continuing their academic efforts, educational material will be used in the future by more teachers to maximize impact

Activity 1: HELLO Science Friends series in long-term shelters

Outcome: as mentioned in Objective 1-Activity 1, we didn't manage to work on the workshop series.

Activity 2: HELLO Science workshops at unaccompanied minors shelters

Outcome: We held 8 workshops at three emergency shelters for unaccompanied minors in the Athens area, reaching 79 unaccompanied boys. All children received certificates. The Magnetic Trains created during the December workshops were exhibited at the Athens Science Festival.

The April workshop "The Bridge Challenge" was designed and led by our volunteer Farah Gargouri. This session was filmed and became a participation at the Science United Festival.

Key Indicators:
76 unaccompanied minor participants from MENA and Afghanistan and 3 from Asia and Africa
8 HELLO Science! workshops – 16 teaching hours
2 teaching hours for each student (1 workshop)
1 new workshop: the Bridge Engineering Challenge
3 Accommodation Facilities for Unaccompanied Minors

Goal 5: Science United Club

Objective 1: Design and organize science lessons in community centers

Activity1: Design science lessons

Outcome: We designed 8 science sessions for the Science Fun Club, as it was named eventually, using SUP's science kits and adding some extra activities. To support our lessons, we designed worksheets in Greek and in English, as we had to adapt to different contexts in Malakasa and Thessaloniki.

Activity 2: Organize science lessons

Outcome: We signed a MoU with Sama in Malakasa and one with ARSIS-Youth Support Center in Thessaloniki.
We also created consent forms in Greek, English, Arabic, Kurdish, Persian and French that were signed by parents of participating children. To reach the interested families, we designed and printed posters and flyers that were distributed to the communities by the community centers.
We designed a membership card where each child received stickers every time they participated in an activity. The Membership Cards were kept by SUP's teachers, and this way we could monitor attendance.

Image 5: Membership cards, certificates and stickers at Sama Community Center in Malakasa. November 1st, 2025

Objective 2: Facilitate science lessons in community centers

Activity 1: Science lessons

Outcome: The Science Fun Club lessons took place the following dates:

- In Sama, Malakasa:
    - September 20, 2025 – Hanger Scales
    - September 27, 2025 – Plants, Starch test, CD case Greenhouse
    - October 4, 2025 – Magnetic Fishing Pole, Magnetic Poles
    - October 11, 2025 – Pom Pom Catapults
    - October 18, 2025 – Electric Circuits, Insulators and Conductors, Paper Circuits, LED Flowers
    - October 25, 2025 – Paper Microscope
    - November 1, 2025 – Chemistry with Acids and Bases – filming for Festival
    - November 8, 2025 – Toy cars and Ramps, LED flowers
- In ARSIS, Thessaloniki:
    - September 16, 2025 – Hanger Scales
    - September 23, 2025 – Plants, Starch test, CD case Greenhouse
    - September 30, 2025 – Magnetic Fishing Pole, Magnetic Poles
    - October 7, 2025 – Study of plants from CD case Greenhouse-Hanger Scales

- October 14, 2025 – Electric Circuits, Insulators and Conductors, Paper Circuits
- October 21, 2025 – Pom Pom Catapults
- November 4, 2025 – Preparation of Magnetic Game with Math for Festival
- November 11, 2025 – Preparation of Magnetic Game with Math for Festival
- November 18, 2025 – Filming of Magnetic Game with Math for Festival

Activity 2: Participations with each group at the Science United Festival

Outcome: We created 2 videos, one with each children group at each community center and we are soon going to publish the pages at the Science United Festival website. All participating children received certificates.

Key Indicators:

MoUs with 2 community centers close to Athens and Thessaloniki
20 children from MENA and Afghanistan in Sama
12 children in Thessaloniki - 2 from MENA and Afghanistan
8 science lessons designed
7 new worksheets designed
8 sessions in Malakasa
9 sessions in Thessaloniki
130 science kits
2 participations at the 2026 Science United Festival: Follow the fish and find the operation! - Science United Festival and A cabbage of many colors - Science United Festival

CHALLENGES

- Teacher training and Science Kits:
  This year we had tremendous response by teachers and we had the challenge to maintain our quality support, keep with up the monitoring of the science kits implementation, as well as working on our other programs. We need to ensure we have constant help from volunteers and interns all year long.
  Certain science kits materials gave us a hard time to find, especially one compound from the Paper Microscope, which we had to ship from Switzerland, where Erika brought it, and pay extra customs for it. Even then, every year we can only use 60% of the compounds we buy, because many of them turn out to be defective, after we carefully examine each one. We know this to be a problem, yet there's no other way to get these materials. One way to save us time and stress would be to order from the beginning of the school year a certain amount and just distribute the ones we have to the first teachers who request them, and apologize to the rest.
  Also, we faced a lot of challenges with processing the students and science kits data retrieved from the teachers Lesson Plans and Reflection Journals. We worked with the invaluable help of AI, or else our small team wouldn't have made it, and we spent many hours in testing our methods and the data files to result in calculating the number of the actual students that attended the lessons with our science kits.
- Science Fun Club:
  The attendance of science lessons at Sama, Malakasa, was unstable. We understand now that in order to engage families more, there's a lot of outreach and community building necessary. This will require more trips at Malakasa next year specifically to promote the science lessons. The community center next to the camp is a challenging context, and there has to be also a space that is suitable for these activities, and separates children from adult activities. Overall we understand the challenges now and will plan to have a bigger team, with the aid of regular volunteers and interns, since just one person is not enough to successfully pull this through and manage to get the video interviews required by Blossom Hill.

LESSONS LEARNED

Planning carefully according to the current capacity of the organization is the key to successful completion of our goals. We didn't expect to be left with only Katerina and Alexandra for the whole period of October 2025 - March 2026, since we were expecting a promised funding that didn't happen eventually. This has brought huge pressure and stress. We now know that we

cannot rely on promised funds and we need to plan ahead and make sure we have regular volunteers/interns and other income sources.

As we realized after the in-person teacher training, it is always important to be very specific and maintain a consistent and frequent communication for the teachers to understand the procedure of our support program, sign the MoU and continue. It is essential to always follow our procedures in all contexts, even when we have to adapt them.

SUSTAINABILITY

- We are planning regular activities that will provide some funds beyond grants. Although we have a huge portfolio of science workshops for children and families and a good reputation and network, we haven't had the time to build this into our business plan, yet this summer we indeed started working on this.

- We keep evidence of our program being successful well documented, by requesting evaluations forms, keeping recordings and asking teachers to provide lesson plans, reflections and photos/videos of their teaching with our educational material. All these require a lot of time to communicate through emails and telephone calls, and we know that most of the time these efforts pay back. This year we used AI to process data, since the numbers were much bigger for our small team to handle, and this way we raised the bar and advanced our approach to identify more important Key Indicators.

- We have been supporting a few teachers and community centers in Connecticut thanks to Blossom Hill bringing us in contact with them. These collaborations haven't followed the same method as we have been following in Greece, and we will be working on a Blossom Hill Fellowship application along with Elena's Light to establish our procedures and build a more robust program in the US.

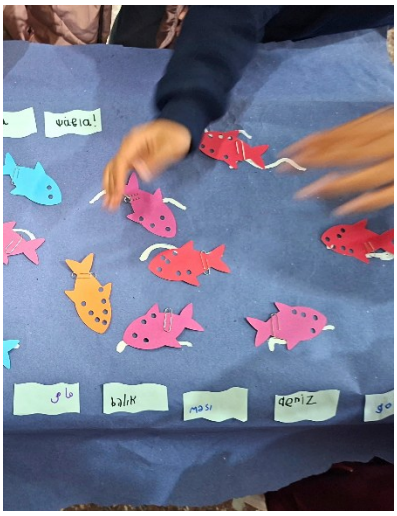
- Our programs Science Fun Club and HELLO Science! can be replicated in other areas near Athens and Thessaloniki, but we would need to expand our team by paying Alexandra and Katerina full-time and adding one more fulltime employee. This would significantly expand our capacity to facilitate these in person programs. Yet this would exceed the Blossom Hill Fellowship grant limit if we were to keep all our other programs, meaning Teacher Training, Science Kits distribution and Science United Festival.

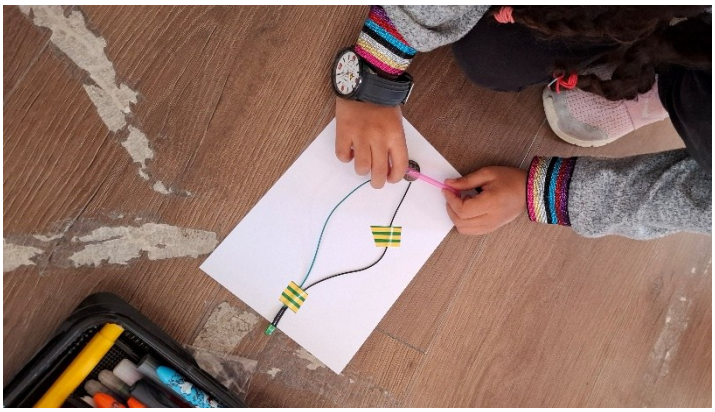
Next Steps

Our next steps are to work on the financial sustainability of our program and to establish a regular volunteer and intern program that would secure the support we need to accomplish our goals with the given funding, while expanding our program to the US through a new Blossom Hill Fellowship.

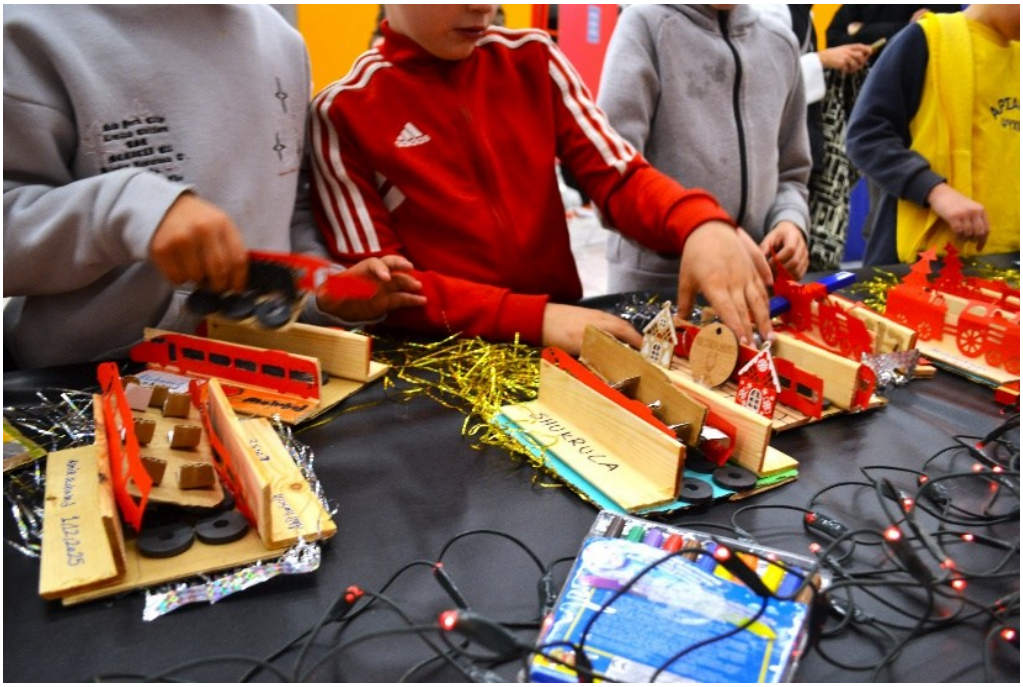
Success Stories

We tripled our original goal by distributing 2,995 free science kits to classes with refugee students from MENA and Afghanistan and their classmates. This year, 37 teachers submitted 158 lesson plans and received these kits for classes declared to include 435 children on the move from MENA and Afghanistan and 435 local Greek classmates, including Roma children and children on the move from other countries and backgrounds. By the end of the year, we had verified that 1,471 of these kits were taught across 199 teaching hours, reaching 763 children — 324 from MENA and Afghanistan learning side by side with 439 classmates. 92 reflection journals from 33 teachers, filled with photos and videos, confirm these lessons. SUP prepared and mailed every kit thanks to 10 dedicated volunteers and the tireless efforts of our small team.





Unaccompanied children participated with their Magnetic Levitation Trains at the Athens Science Festival. HELLO Science! is a series of STEM workshops for unaccompanied minors living in emergency shelters. Leveraging SUP's science kits and equipment, the children have the opportunity to learn science and math experientially, overcoming the language barrier and gaining positive learning experiences to support their educational resilience. One of SUP's workshops is the Magnetic Levitation Train, an engineering and physics challenge that engages children to craft a levitating device and learn about magnetism. These Magnetic Levitation Trains were exhibited at the Athens Science Festival in December 2025, where hundreds of children played with them. SUP ensured the in-person visit of 20 children from two of these shelters.



Science United Project