In 2016 the Exploratorium launched a long-term initiative to serve all of California’s teachers

The initiative’s core strategy involves creating, inspiring, and supporting a statewide network of teacher leaders and professional development leaders who can advocate for science and help local classroom teachers implement the CA Next Generation Science Standards. By extending its reach, the Exploratorium aims to broaden educators’ access to its high-quality STEM professional learning opportunities, its online tools and resources for teachers and professional learning providers, and its promotion of phenomenon-based, inquiry-rich science learning for all students.

Accomplishments of Year 1

✓ Launching a network of 296 leaders from 37 counties, who are well positioned to support local science

  - 44% are science teacher leaders, 56% are professional learning providers
  - 50% work in districts, 35% in schools, and 16% in county offices of education

✓ Conducting uniquely high quality and valuable programs for science leaders

  - 100% rate Exploratorium programs as high quality, 93% rate them as higher quality than other science professional development
  - 98% rate Exploratorium programs as high value, 90% rate them as higher value than other science professional development

✓ Contributing to science improvement in CA by infusing Exploratorium activities into local leadership

  - 103 members of the new Exploratorium network reported that they had provided local professional development in 29 counties, serving 6,546 K-12 teachers, science specialists, and administrators

  Leaders use multiple Exploratorium activities and materials in their local professional development, and introduce their colleagues to web resources

  “As I have learned, I have shared, and it has really made an impact in the growth, direction, and pedagogy of our science department at my site, and in my entire district.” – Exploratorium teacher leader

Unique Features that Make the Exploratorium’s Programs Exceptional

In interviews and surveys, these science leaders say Exploratorium programs are unique in offering all of these benefits:

- First-hand experience of learning science from phenomenon-based inquiry
- Access to deep expertise and relevant, valuable resources of the Exploratorium and staff
- Professional collaboration and access to a statewide network for ongoing learning

Survey finding: The Exploratorium is a go-to source for teaching science (98% agree) and for CA NGSS (97% agree)

A Promising Investment in Science Improvement across California

The Exploratorium’s statewide initiative is not just a project. Rather, it is an investment designed to support the long-term, steady work of building cumulative local capacity for science improvement. Early returns on the investment include creating a statewide network of skilled science leaders, inspiring them, and equipping them with exceptionally rich knowledge and resources they can adapt to their local contexts. These first-year accomplishments suggest that the initiative has very great potential to extend the Exploratorium’s reach across the state in ways that will contribute to CA NGSS implementation and greater science learning opportunities for students.