

Girls' Day at ETH

Successful experimental day for girls at IAC in July 2014

The Institute for Atmospheric and Climate Science offered once again an experimental day for girls in July this year. The event took place within the framework of the Swiss ProJuventute holiday program for children and was organised and carried out in collaboration with ETH's office of equal opportunities Equal! and the office for events and location development.



Dr. Christina Schnadt Poberaj explains weather.



The children make their own barometer.

Under the motto „Being weather and climate researcher at ETH“ 20 girls aged between 10 and 13 years and one boy spent one day at IAC, guided by meteorologists and researchers of the institute. In so doing, they could experience in a playful way how it is to be a scientist and discover their enthusiasm for the natural sciences.



Magic trick: water in a glass upside down.



Guided tour in ETH main building

The one-day holiday workshop at ETH aims to strengthen the self-confidence of the girls and familiarise them with the natural sciences – by everyday-life like and application-oriented experiments and female role models.



Prof. Ulrike Lohmann explains climate change.



Experiment cloud in a bottle

After an introductory talk by Dr Christina Schnadt Poberaj about weather the girls engaged in the topic in practical applications. During the morning the pupils built their own little weather station instruments, with which they measured air pressure, humidity, and temperature. A visit to the weather station on the roof of the CHN building rounded off the morning programme. In the early afternoon, the girls had a rest from their research activity and visited ETH's main building in a guided tour, which was specifically tailored for the childrens' needs and which gave them an impression of active student life.



Global circulation explained.



Global circulation simulated in an aquarium

Back to the seminar room Prof Ulrike Lohmann explained what climate and climate change is and how us humans influence it. In the subsequent experiments, the girls investigated how clouds are formed, how the latitude dependent solar insolation triggers the global circulation, why the greenhouse effect occurs and what potential consequences can be expected from the melting of ice masses. At the end of the event, the children could test their meteorological skills in a helium balloon contest, in which they used trajectory forecasts to estimate where their balloon would land. We look back on a successful day that was enjoyable both for the children and the instructors.



The children test what happens if land and sea ice masses melt.



Meteorological balloon competition, Balloons on the rise