



A Look Back at the Fifth Annual French American Science Festival

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The French-American Science Festival was held for the fifth time during the third annual French Innovation Week in Chicago from April 21 to April 29. The French Innovation Week was organized by the Consulate General of France in Chicago and its partners (Business France, the French-American Chamber of Commerce, the Alliance Française, etc.).

The Office for Science and Technology was involved in this event through the organization of the French-American Science Festival which was launched in 2011. This event aims at making science accessible to a broad audience and at promoting French scientific excellence. It is organized in partnership with Rick Morimoto's Laboratory at Northwestern University and the Alliance Française of Chicago. For the past three years, this event has gained visibility and a wider scope as part of the French Innovation Week.

During three days, two different kinds of events were presented:

- A full-day of workshops, experiments and exhibits dedicated to schoolchildren from Chicago
- Two public lectures on key scientific issues

The hands-on activities dealt with a wide variety of scientific fields such as nanotechnologies, astrophysics, robotics, chemistry, nuclear energy, biology. The booths were run by French and American scientists from prestigious institutions, including Northwestern University, the University of Kansas, the Great Lake Bioenergy Research Center, the University of Chicago, the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, among others. Overall, nearly four hundred students from American schools and the Lycée Français came to discover the activities offered by fifty animators, engineers, PhD students and researchers. Both the quality of the scientific booths and the fact that it was in French and in English were much appreciated by the students and their teachers.



The two lectures allowed leading scientists from prestigious French research institutions to present their work. **The first lecture** was with Professor Régis Céréghino, from University Paul Sabatier in Toulouse, who presented his research on freshwater biodiversity. His analysis of Great Lakes biodiversity was particularly appreciated by the audience. **The second lecture** focused on the mechanisms of ageing, led by Professor Miria Ricchetti, from the Institut Pasteur in Paris. The two lectures were held in English and open to all

members of the public.

This fifth edition of the French American Science Festival was a success thanks to the pool of talented innovators and high-level researchers. This event also highlighted the dynamism of French-American collaborations on these topics.

For more information:

- on *French Innovation Week*: <https://frenchinnovationweek-chicago.com/>

- on *French-American Science Festival*: <http://sciencefest.france-science.org/>