

THE PALAIS DE LA DÉCOUVERTE 2025 UNVEILS ITS FUTURE SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL CONTENT



After more than eighty successful years and thirty-five million visitors, the Palais de la découverte **is undergoing its first major renovation**. Building on almost a century of history, the new Palais **will reopen in 2025 with revised content and fully renovated facilities** as part of the wider renovation of the Grand Palais, led by the Réunion des musées nationaux – Grand Palais (RMN-GP) and with François Chatillon, chief architect at the Monuments Historiques, as its main contractor.



Founded in 1937, the Palais de la découverte revolutionised the way science was presented to general audiences, in France and around the world. Advances in scientific research and changing cultural practices required us to rethink this almost century-old institution.

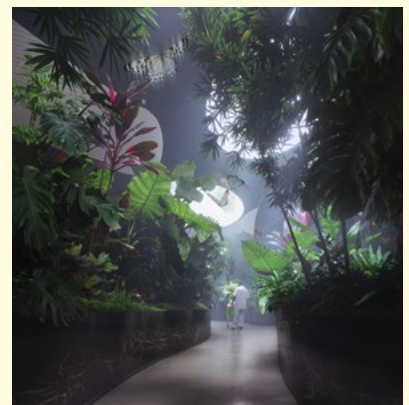
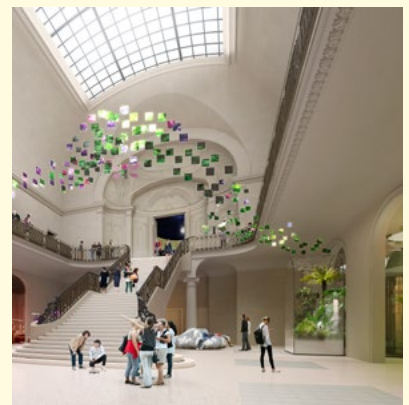
Following the completion of the renovation works in 2025, visitors will discover a transformed Palais de la découverte.

To address this challenge, the Palais de la découverte is working in conjunction with its lead scientific partner for this project, the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS). The new Palais de la découverte will focus on research and discovery.

In a world where science plays a vital role, access to scientific culture is a basic requirement and a prerequisite of a democratic society. The Palais de la découverte is committed, in 2025, to helping everyone share in the wonders of science through new content and its teams of mediators.

Bruno Maquart, Chairman and CEO of Universcience.

[▶ The Palais de la découverte : 85 years of history](#)



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PALAIS 2025: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Palais de la découverte will offer everyone critical insights into contemporary science and research

When it reopens in 2025, the Palais will provide an overview of the latest scientific practices in France and around the world through revamped content that everyone can access.

The new lead scientific partner of the Palais, the CNRS will assist the teams from Universcience throughout the project by making available scientific curators for each discipline and by coordinating the scientific and cultural committee overseeing the project.

From presentations to hands-on workshops, exhibitions, artistic activities, immersive experiences, and discussions with researchers, content will be made available through new exhibition spaces and human demonstration to foster direct interaction with the public.

The Palais de la découverte 2025 will explore:

- > **every aspect of science** as a body of knowledge, a process, and a social reality, based on disciplinary, interdisciplinary as well as multidisciplinary approaches combining basic science, applied science and the social sciences.
- > **science that challenges** the general public's knowledge, by enabling them, thanks to our partnership with the CNRS, to be in direct contact with the research community and to learn how it works, in order to stimulate the curiosity of visitors and develop their critical thinking skills.
- > **shared science**, as a horizontal, fun and group approach to science, based around activities such as incubators, hands-on projects, hackathons, performances, presentations on research projects, and discussions with young researchers.
- > **open science** with more seamless exhibition and demonstration spaces, and also more open to the world, and hybrid exhibits and displays combining art, science and technology.

PALAIS 2025: NEW CONTENT

New content in Palais 2025 will include:

- > **laboratories** equipped with scientific instruments where visitors can take part in live experiments – with a mediator, scientist or artist – on living matter, information technology, chemistry and more. These multi-discipline laboratories will be completed by demonstration areas within the exhibition spaces. They will include "The laboratory of living matter", the only one of its kind, presenting a tropical Guiana ecosystem under real-life conditions.
- > **stand-out interactive exhibits:** large-scale, spectacular and dynamic devices installed throughout the museum, illustrating a core scientific principle or scientific phenomenon.
- > **curiosity islands:** interactive mini exhibitions on basic science, research and the latest scientific developments designed to sharpen and develop our critical and scientific thinking.
- > **a remote gallery** equipped with immersive digital technology offering an in-depth look at major contemporary global research facilities.
- > **a children's gallery:** a space with original content based around temporary art/science exhibitions for children aged 4 to 10, co-produced with the Réunion des musées nationaux – Grand Palais.

A revised visitor route through interconnected spaces

When it reopens in 2025, the Palais de la découverte will offer the public a fresh new design: by locating all content within the galleries of the Palais, it will form a circuit that spatially combines content explored through demonstration and self-guided visits. This close proximity will weave links between scientific themes and across scientific disciplines. This new approach to museum design aims to create dynamic, memorable and direct encounters with science in the making.

THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSORTIUM LEADING THE MUSEOGRAPHY AND SCENOGRAPHY OF THE PALAIS DE LA DÉCOUVERTE

Following a tender process, Universcience awarded the museography and scenography of the spaces in the future Palais de la découverte to a consortium of fifteen companies including:

- **Atelier Phileas** (authorised legal representative), architecture
- **Casson Mann:** museum, exhibition and gallery design

 *Interview: Gary Shelley, Creative Director of Casson Mann*

- **Cros&Patras and Loma:** interactive exhibit design
- **Téra-Création:** graphic design and signage
- **8'18:** light design
- **Clair Obscur:** planetarium development
- **Lundi 8:** digital engineering
- **Fox consulting:** zootechnics and plant science
- **CET:** engineering and design studio (ED)
- **Plan 02:** environment ED
- **Remix:** materials recovery ED
- **Think Acoustique:** acoustics ED
- **Adequat:** project costing
- **Ame en science:** scientific consultant to the consortium

Palais 2025 will invite visitors to rediscover its renovated iconic areas:

- > **the planetarium**, equipped with new hybrid projection technology, exceptionally sponsored by Konica Minolta France.

 Interview: Jonathan Leyva, CEO of Konica Minolta France

- > **the electricity room**, combining electrostatics with electromagnetism in a breath-taking and redesigned display, providing visitors with the opportunity to discover surprising phenomena.
- > **the presentation rooms**, completely redesigned to host mediator-led and often spectacular demonstrations.

Art/science: a key component of the future Palais 2025:

- > Historic works commissioned by the French government for the *Exposition internationale des arts et techniques appliqués à la vie moderne* of 1937 **will benefit from a new hanging in the reception and exhibition areas** to reflect the revised arrangement of the Palais de la découverte in 2025. They include *Le Transport des forces* by Fernand Léger – a unique example of the work produced by the artist for the international exhibition.
- > Alongside these historic works, the Palais de la découverte 2025 will present *Points d'interrogation* ("Question Marks"), **temporary exhibitions of unique artworks commissioned during residences coproduced with contemporary art centres.**

AVAILABLE IN 2025

Preopening exhibitions, spring 2025

- > **THE BIG TEST BENCH**: in line with its experimental approach, the Palais will invite visitors to try out and help improve some of its largest interactive exhibits at the final prototype stage in spring 2025. It's a unique opportunity for visitors to chat with the design team and to give input into the design of a museum in the making.
- > **UNKNOWN TERRITORIES**: this original exhibition exploring the contemporary relationship between art and science will run in parallel to *The big test bench*. Under the creative direction of Gaël Charbau, artistic consultant to Universcience, it will feature permanent works commissioned from contemporary artists which will be moved to the new themed rooms at the Palais de la découverte when it reopens.

Inaugural exhibitions

- > **CRITICAL THINKING: THINK AGAIN!**

To mark its official opening, the Palais de la découverte will present *Critical thinking, think again!*, a co-production presented in Bordeaux (Cap Sciences in 2021) and then Toulouse (Quai des Savoirs in 2022). In an unprecedented situation in which information and knowledge is more readily available than ever before, the development of critical thinking is a fundamental priority for our society. Since 2021, Universcience has made it one of the three key components of its scheme of work. Through displays inspired by everyday situations, the public is confronted with illusions, misinterpretations, falsifications and manipulations...

The Grand Palais renovation project

Project owner: Réunion des musées nationaux – Grand Palais

Architect: François Chatillon

Project management consortium: L'Atelier Senzu (architect), Samy Rio (designer) and 2x4 (signage)



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