

Partnership for Technology

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BP

BP is a world leading industrial organisation in the field of education and industry links. Over the past 20 years a number of pioneering, long-term projects, which have the education/industry partnership at their heart, have been established by the company. **BP Partnerships for Technology (BPPFT)** is one such project. Established by BP in 1990 as one response to curriculum changes in the teaching of science and technology, BPPFT is unique in both scale and scope. This article explains how the project operates and provides examples from its first two successful years.

BPPFT's principal mission is:

- to bring business and industry into a closer working relationship with education;
- to encourage active methods of learning and enterprise in science and technology and their related subjects.

More specifically the project assists in the development of professional training and curriculum enrichment for all of those involved in scientific and technological education of 5-18 year olds. It also helps to produce educational resources and works with other educational sectors including teachers in training.

BPPFT currently has three full time Projects Leaders (see note) **Richard Denney, Tony Edwards and Joe Kellaway**. All three are professional educators with a wide range of expertise and experience. Their work is enhanced by key representatives from BP and an extended team of other business and education personnel from agencies such as ORT and CREST. Together they help to form partnerships between BP Sites, Education Authorities, consortia of Schools and other Education Industry Agencies to develop short- and long-term school/industry based projects. These projects support and add value to local and national educational programmes.

The core team and their partners use the cross-curricular themes of environmental education and economic and industrial understanding (EIU) to foster projects and explore the world of science and technology in a responsible, innovative and creative manner. Particular attention is paid to work which has a cross-phase dimension.

They have access to resources from the BP Educational Services catalogue including, for example, the much acclaimed 'Enterprising

Technology' and 'Technology and Plastics'. These publications, although based upon plastics, can be employed in support of activities that address the technology process using any material. Both contain valuable software on market research and product costing which may be used across many curriculum boundaries.

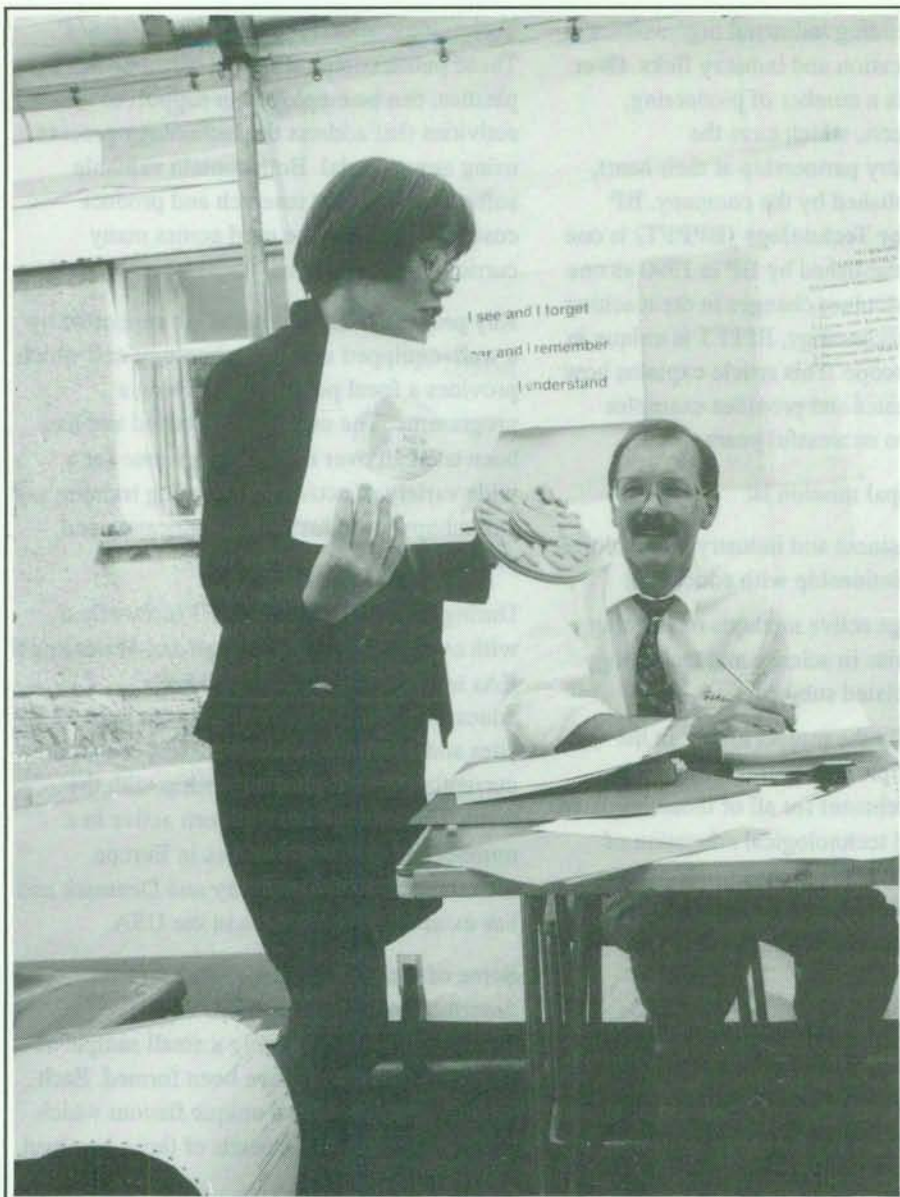
Key projects in BP site areas are supported by a well-equipped mobile technology unit which provides a focal point for launching a programme. The unit is fully staffed and has been used all over the UK as a venue for a wide variety of activities including training and workshops for industrialists, educators and pupils.

During its initial phase BPPFT has worked with over 34 LEAs in England and Wales and 8 EAs in Scotland on small and large education/industry programmes. At least 12 BP sites and their Link Schools have been, or are currently, involved in partnership with the team. The project has also been active in a number of different countries in Europe including Norway, Germany and Denmark and has extensive connections in the USA.

Some of the experiences of the team are described in the next section. These descriptions represent only a small sample of the partnerships that have been formed. Each partnership has its own unique flavour which represents the specific needs of those involved.

At **Sir John Moore's University, Liverpool**, members of the team have worked with staff and BEd students on economic and industrial understanding (KS3, KS4) through active and flexible learning packages. The focus for this work has been the science and technology curriculum. The team has provided consultancy and training for the staff at the University and supported activities with the students. This module has become so well established that it is now a fully accredited part of the education course which is attracting many industrial partners other than BP. It has also led to offers from within the initial teacher education sector for BPPFT to establish other partnerships.

In **Preston BPPFT** has worked through Compact/Indel with the Design and Technology department in secondary schools and one special school on a curriculum project using the theme of Enterprising Technology. This 18 month activity has now evolved into a primary phase. BPPFT provided a number of



and related subjects. The purpose of the project is to establish cross-sector teams of teachers who will develop cross-curricular resources and projects with the assistance of BP and other industrial partners. Extant BP educational resources are used as a starting point for many of the project topics.

At **BP Oil Sites** in Llandarcy and Hemel Hempstead BPPFT has worked with children with severe learning and physical disabilities (including Down's Syndrome and Blindness) on product development exercises using a unique thermoplastic called Plastazote. The teams of children were asked to manipulate and mould the material to create shields and puppets. The success of this partnership with children with special needs has encouraged the BPPFT team to look for other similar opportunities.

If you represent one or more of the following: a BP site, a consortium of schools, an Education Authority, an Education/Industry Agency, industries other than BP and wish to find out more about BPPFT, or think you would like to work with members of the team, write to BP Partnerships for Technology, BP Chemicals Ltd, PO Box 21, Bo'ness Road, Grangemouth, Stirlingshire, FK3 9XH or phone 051 334 0783 and ask for Tony Edwards.

Note: The secondment of the Projects Leader for Scotland (John Sowerby) has ended and plans are in hand to restore the team to its original strength of four.

days of Inset training for 40 teachers, and consultancy time which included meeting with 25 industrialists to find out how they could link into primary schools. Two working groups of teachers (KS1, KS2) have planned a 1992/93 Cross Curricular project (spearheaded by D&T and Science work) entitled 'Working with Wood, Metal, Clay and Plastics in the Primary Classroom'. The project will give rise to ongoing opportunities for workshops, enhanced links and comparing D&T levels achieved by pupils of different ages.

At **BP Exploration in Glasgow** a one year **Strathclyde Region** project is underway which involved teachers from 9 secondary schools and 30 associated primary schools. The focus is on the new curricular area for the 5-14 age group in Scotland called 'Environmental Studies'. This area encompasses science, technology, economic awareness, geography