



DOPPER, NETHERLANDS

Changemaker Challenge Junior

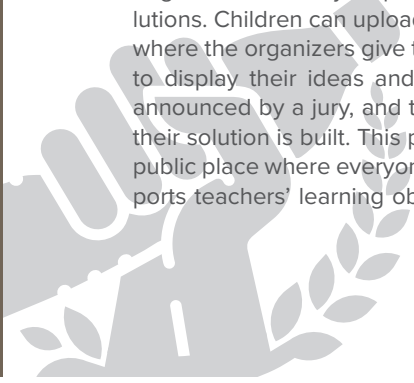
Dopper, a Dutch social enterprise selling reusable water bottles, is on a mission towards a world with crystal clear water in every ocean and from every tap. They run initiatives like the Dopper Changemaker Challenge Junior, which is an international competition for children aged eight to twelve that challenges them to develop solutions to reduce single-use plastic pollution in the oceans.

Children have unlimited imagination and creativity, which – if guided well – can lead to brilliant solutions. It is important to the Dopper team that children learn that their input is valued and taken seriously. The international competition – held in the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, and Nepal – is both accessible for teachers, who can take part with their pupils, and for children independently. Educational materials are provided and designed specifically to guide them every step of the way leading to genius solutions. Children can upload their sketches on the website where the organizers give them the platform they deserve to display their ideas and solutions. Finally, a winner is announced by a jury, and together an actual prototype of their solution is built. This prototype is then displayed in a public place where everyone can see it. The initiative supports teachers' learning objectives and at the same time,

children get the chance to grow and expand their skill set. They develop their creativity, collaboration skills, and readiness to deal with a complex future and embrace a changemaker attitude.

BRONZE AWARD WINNER

Anneke Hendriks, Dopper
 Chrissie van Heijningen, Dopper
 Anne Sallaerts, Designathon Works



Coffee Talk with Anneke

Firstly, please tell us a bit more about yourself and what you do. My name is Anneke and I live in Haarlem, a city in the Western part of the Netherlands. I am working for Dopper, a social enterprise that sells reusable water bottles. And this bottle is on a mission. We empower people to act in an eco-responsible way by creating awareness campaigns. Within Dopper I am in charge of education, partnerships, and impact investment projects, and have been doing this for a couple of years now.

So what motivated you to work for a social enterprise? I've always been interested in sustainability. After I had been working for a few years, I decided to try and contribute to living more sustainably on a daily basis. I realized that the plastic problem was so big and as an individual, you can feel pretty overwhelmed or powerless at times. What I like about social enterprises is that a lot of them are focused on the solutions instead of the problem in a very creative, entrepreneurial way.

Please tell us a few words about Dopper Changemaker Challenge Junior. This challenge is to empower children to contribute to solutions for the issue of single-use plastics. We guide them by brainstorming to think of a solution. They will sketch out their solution and eventually build a prototype. This can be either a machine or a campaign or an app. They present their prototype and finally, the winner's idea will be implemented in real life. We try to come up with a program that is challenging and fun, but also educational and will inspire as many people as possible. The program runs in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, the UK, and Nepal and we plan to branch out all over the world.

What ideas did the children have? A good example of one project was the 'trash bird', which is a drone that flies at night to pick up single-use plastics that are lying on the street. The drone brings it to a garbage bin, and, when it is full, you get a notification so that you can empty it. It flies at night so that people won't think it's fun to throw single-use plastics at it and it's powered by solar energy. So yeah, I would say for a 9 and a 10-year-old child this is pretty innovative and very well done.

Are the parents involved in the program? The children come home and are excited to show their great ideas. Over the dinner table, they convince their parents to use less plastic in the household. This is a great side effect. When you're working with children, you are also working with their parents.

What do you think we all can do to fight plastic pollution on a large scale? Well, the first thing that comes to mind is really action at all levels, big and small. If you are an enterprise, you can take responsibility to innovate and motivate your customers to choose more sustainable options. Buyers can buy more responsibly. It can also go on investment opportunities and start-ups that are working for these calls. On all levels, action is needed. On the positive side, a lot of good things are already happening. Every generation can bring change and should be part of the solution, especially children, because they are so inventive and so creative. That's the first message that we want to spread to the world: Please engage every generation in this topic!

