

# DESIGNATHON WORKS

ANNUAL REPORT 2022 & PLANS FOR 2023

What if we all saw  
children as:



## Introduction

Designathon Works is an international foundation that empowers children (aged 8 - 12) around the world to design sustainable futures using simple technologies. We do that with a proven, collaborative design process, called 'Designathon'.

We see children as changemakers: engaged citizens, activists, scientists and inventors. Our methodology, lesson materials and network offer a pathway for children to further develop their capacity to take action for a world they want. Each Designathon topic is related to its participants' specific context, and is also nested within a bigger global challenge linked to one of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals, such as water scarcity, poverty, deforestation, or citizenship.

Designathon Works operates under the name: Stichting Designathon Works. In this report, we elaborate on the policies and activities of Designathon Works in 2022 and plans for 2023.

Kind regards,

Michele Ernsting, Maarten Nelissen, Emer Beamer Cronin & Roshan Paul

(The board of Designathon Works)

## The foundation

### 1.1. Organization

Stichting Designathon Works  
Address: Ms. van Riemsdijkweg 57, 1033 RC Amsterdam  
Phone: +31 (0)613787010  
Website: [www.designathonworks.com](http://www.designathonworks.com)  
Email: [info@designathon.nl](mailto:info@designathon.nl)  
Chamber of commerce: 60140615  
RSIN: 853781606  
Bank: NL77 TRIO 0197 9551 85

### 1.2. Board

In 2021 the board consisted of:

- Michele Ernsting: Chair Woman
- Maarten Nelissen: Treasurer
- Emer Beamer Cronin: Secretary, Founder of Designathon Works
- Roshan Paul: General Board Member

### 1.3. Remuneration

Board members do not receive any remuneration for their board activities, as stated in the articles of Association. Designathon Works has a moderate wage policy for the management team and freelancers and aims at salary levels and working conditions that match the responsibilities. Employees do not receive bonuses for the 13th month.

### 1.4. ANBI

The 'Belastingdienst' (Dutch Tax Authority) authorized Stichting Designathon Works with the ANBI status in January 2017. This means that Stichting Designathon Works is classified as 'Algemeen Nut beogende Instelling', meaning that the foundation is a non-profit, aiming to have as much impact as possible and holds a certain tax exemption status.

## Mission, vision and impact

### 2.1 Our dream...

What if we radically reimagined the way we see children? What if we saw children as changemakers, engaged humans, activists, scientists or inventors? What if EVERY child was offered a path to develop these abilities?

Designathon Works is a Dutch non-profit organization with the ultimate aim to enable 1 million children around the world to become changemakers for a better world and that society in turn includes children in co-designing the future.

### 2.2 How do we create the change we wish to see?



### 2.3 Our approach to enabling children: the Designathon method



We engage children in Designathons, design hackathons, where they tackle complex global problems (aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs), such as clean energy, clean water, waste and poverty.

The Designathon method is a structured and open-ended process where children (8-12 yrs) design, build and present their ideas.

Children gain knowledge on the various SDGs, gain 21st century skills (like creative thinking, global citizenship and technological literacy) and gain agency to take action. The methodology maps to learning objectives specified by:

- OECD’s Future of Education 2030 framework
- Unesco’s SDG’s Learning Objectives
- World Economic Forum’s Future of Jobs report



Designathons build the inner abilities of all children, regardless of their gender, race, class, skill-level or learning situation. We work with a diverse population of students, at least 50% of whom come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Some are growing up in the slums of Nairobi, some are newcomers in their first year in the Netherlands, and some are winners of the Shanghai Science Fair.

## 2.4 Impact & influence

Through SDG Challenges, we have demonstrated that education has the power to change the world! We can show the impact of our work on three levels:

Individual impact:

- Children gain 21st century competencies and agency to fulfill their personal ambitions and strengthen society
- Families who are influenced by their children’s enthusiasm, concern and conversations about the topics

Regional impact:

- Municipalities and organizations integrate children's perspectives, insights, and solutions on local issues into policy decisions
- Schools that adopt our method in the classroom also report a noticeable behavior change in their children

Global impact:

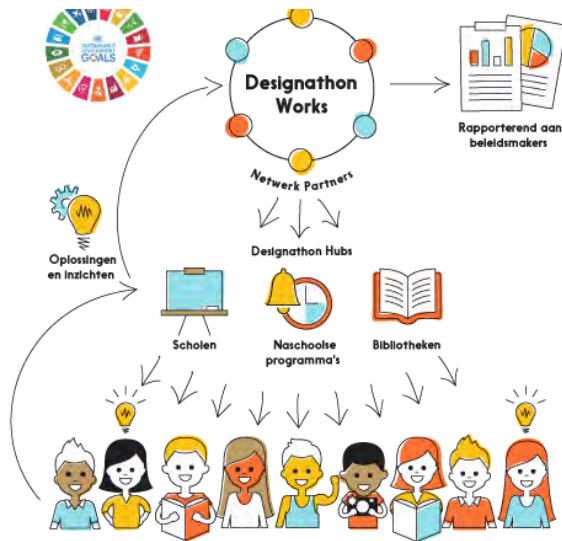
We change the world by influencing many stakeholders through our research reports. Please find an example of the latest Global Voices of the Next Generation via [this link](#).

- By deeply engaging communities, we create a virtuous cycle of impact!





➤ Amplifying impact globally, by networking locally



In each SDG-linked challenge we host, we strive to set up rich collaborations between our Network Partners and our sponsors: companies, social enterprises and NGOs. Together, all the actors in our ecosystem align to influence decision makers & policymakers, ensuring the voices of youth are heard on topics such as clean energy, water scarcity, inequality, and sustainable food systems.

Our impact numbers so far:

- 117.000 children reached, through school programs, workshops and Global Children's Designathon
- 700+ certified teachers/mentors
- 45 Global Children's Designathon countries
- 7 editions of the Global Children's Designathon event
- 6.900 children participated in Global Children's Designathon
- 4 published Global Children's Designathon reports - 'The Global Voices of the Next Generation'



Group photos from France, Ghana, Vietnam & Chile; from Global Children's Designathon

## Activities & projects 2022

### 3.1 Highlights of 2022

- Global Children's Designathon 2022



This year more than 2,400 children from 21 countries joined the Global Children's Designathon to design solutions around the topic of Ecosystem Restoration. The project highlights children's ability to envision and design a better future while calling for changemaker education, worldwide. You can watch the [videos](#) and read the report [here](#).

The launch of the Global Children's Designathon was on the 25th of January as part of the #LearningPlanet Festival and in conjunction with UNESCO's International Day for Education. We are proud to have the participation of [Marco Lambertini](#) the director of WWF and [Ayakha Melithafa](#) a young South African environmental activist.

To provide participants with an even richer experience, we launched the Global Learning & Exchange Week. This week consisted of multiple online sessions where children could exchange their ideas and get inspired by leading changemakers, climate activists and (design) experts.

- SAM&: Kids for Kids Challenge

More than 1,300 children from across the Netherlands joined the "Kids for Kids Challenge" commissioned by the foundation called "Sam& voor alle kinderen". The challenge invited children to develop more effective communication tools in an effort to inform those in poverty about their options for support. Oftentimes the most hard hit families are not aware that help is available. The children with the best ten concepts were invited to prototype and present their ideas to the expert jury on the 11th of June in Rotterdam. You can watch the aftermovie [here](#).



- Microsoft: Eating is Learning!



In the fall of 2022, the series of Eating is Learning! lessons took place in the Dutch municipality of Hollands Kroon. This teaching program was developed by Designathon Works in collaboration with Microsoft, JOGG and representatives of the municipality of Hollands Kroon. The lessons are in line with the local health policy in which diet-related health problems have been identified as a priority. The program focussed on empowering children as advocates for healthy eating, each school produced a range of ways to improve healthy and nutritional eating and did research in their

families as to what the obstacles were to eating more healthily on a structural basis.

➤ HEMA: (Re-)Design competition

The HEMA Design Competition has been held since 1983, and for the first time this year it included children. The competition's assignment was to redesign a (HEMA) product that is more practical, more beautiful, lasts longer, and thus contributes to living in a more beautiful world. The ideas of the two winning teams were part of Dutch Design Week in Eindhoven. One of the ideas was broadcast on [Dutch children's television](#) (in Dutch).



➤ Chocolonely Foundation: Education to Inspire



Designation Works is collaborating with Chocolonely Foundation and the Fawaka Foundation on the project called 'Education to Inspire'. The project's goal is to contribute to building sustainable and inclusive cocoa communities in the places where Tony Chocolonely sources its cocoa beans. In order to accomplish this goal, the co-created program facilitates the development of 21st-century-ready education for children and teachers in specific regions in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Additionally, an aim of the program is to highlight the child's voice and innovation skills towards their own communities. The children and teachers consider it a great opportunity to broaden their horizons. This first year has been a great success, resulting in other communities asking for the same program for the second year of the program.

➤ Municipality of Amsterdam: Ambassadors of Amsterdam

In collaboration with Ambassadeurs van Amsterdam and the municipality of Amsterdam, we developed a leadership program, Ambassadeurs van Amsterdam Jr, for young Amsterdammers to gain insight into how their talent can contribute to a social issue in their neighborhood or the city. The program was carried out during the months of fall with 70 children in Amsterdam South East.



➤ Erasmus+: Food rescue



Food Rescue is an Erasmus+ project launched in February 2022 and aims to promote climate education as an essential part of the global response to climate change. We have conducted surveys in Austria, Cyprus, Greece, France and The Netherlands in collaboration with our partners, and are currently designing a curriculum on food waste as a conceptual context that combines Maker Education and Youth Participation. You can find the survey results [here](#) and visit the

[project website](#).



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## ➤ Youth Council

Our longstanding wish came true - we now have a youth council! The aim of the council is to test the leadership and strategic decisions of Designathon Works with the young people themselves. It consists of young changemakers under the age of 16. The members help facilitate a designathon program, test new workshop themes and are given a unique opportunity to join a growing community of youth organizations around the world and serve as Designathon Works ambassadors at global events.



## Partnerships & spotlights 2022

### 4.1 Partnerships

In 2022 we worked with the following partners:

#### ➤ Patagonia

Once again Patagonia supported our Global Children's Designathon and therefore the next generation of climate activists.

#### ➤ Bugaboo

This year again, Bugaboo supported our Global Children's Designathon and played a big role in the Global Learning & Exchange Week by hosting the session on prototyping by one of the Bugaboo employees.

#### ➤ ASML Foundation

Decided to support our Global Children's Designathon for 3 years, the first edition being held in 2022.

#### ➤ Chocolonely Foundation

Supported the Global Children's Designathon for the last four years in a row. In 2022 we rolled out a larger education program in the cocoa communities. This two-year program will focus on capacity building for children and teachers in cocoa communities in Ivory Coast and Ghana.

#### ➤ Climate Race to Zero

Supported us for the first time in the Global Children's Designathon, it being part of a bigger program around the COP in Glasgow.

#### ➤ Openbare Bibliotheek Amsterdam (Public Library of Amsterdam)

As part of a consortium of organizations in the city who empower children with making and creative skills, Designathon provided a 6 week series of lessons to children from Amsterdam New West where a number of migrant communities live. The children designed and presented their working prototypes to the city council and other experts. The theme was How can we facilitate adults to play more.

- Samen voor alle kinderen

A consortium consisting of 4 national youth support organizations, Stichting Jarige Job, Stichting Leergeld, Fonds Kinderhulp and Jeugdfonds Sport & Cultuur, commissioned us to set up a challenge where children in classrooms across the Netherlands to design solutions to ensure their target groups knows about the supports available to them and children living in poverty.

- Microsoft

Commissioned us to roll out a program in the municipality of Hollands Kroon in order to enhance healthy eating habits, digital literacy and 21st century skills as described in the previous section.

- Food Rescue:

Erasmus + funded project where we will be designing a curriculum to prevent Food Waste with other partners in 5 European countries.

- HEMA

This project called a 'ReDesign Competition Kids' is now part of their new sustainable strategy. The project had three phases. First we started with simple, creative sustainable assignments that the children could do at home and then upload their results. Subsequently, a number of children were selected and invited to participate in a day-long workshop for finalists. A selection of two of the best ideas were exhibited during the Dutch Design Week in Eindhoven in the HEMA shop. The shop front was transformed into an exhibition of the children's designs for a whole month.

## 4.2 Spotlights

- Designathon Works was featured in the Catalyst 2030 report "Pathways to Transforming Education":

<https://catalyst2030.net/resources/pathways-to-transforming-education-proven-solutions-from-social-entrepreneurs/>

- The finalist of the HEMA design competition were featured in "Jeugdjournaal" (a Dutch National News station):

<https://jeugdjournaal.nl/artikel/2450120-nagellak-met-lange-kwast-evie-en-juune-winnen-uitvinding-wedstrijd.html>

- The Global Children's Designathon was featured in one of the big Dutch Newspapers "Telegraaf":

<https://www.telegraaf.nl/nieuws/1320153320/duurzame-uitvindingen-voor-kleintjes-kinderen-denken-zonder-obstakels>

## Team and board updates

### 5.1 New colleagues

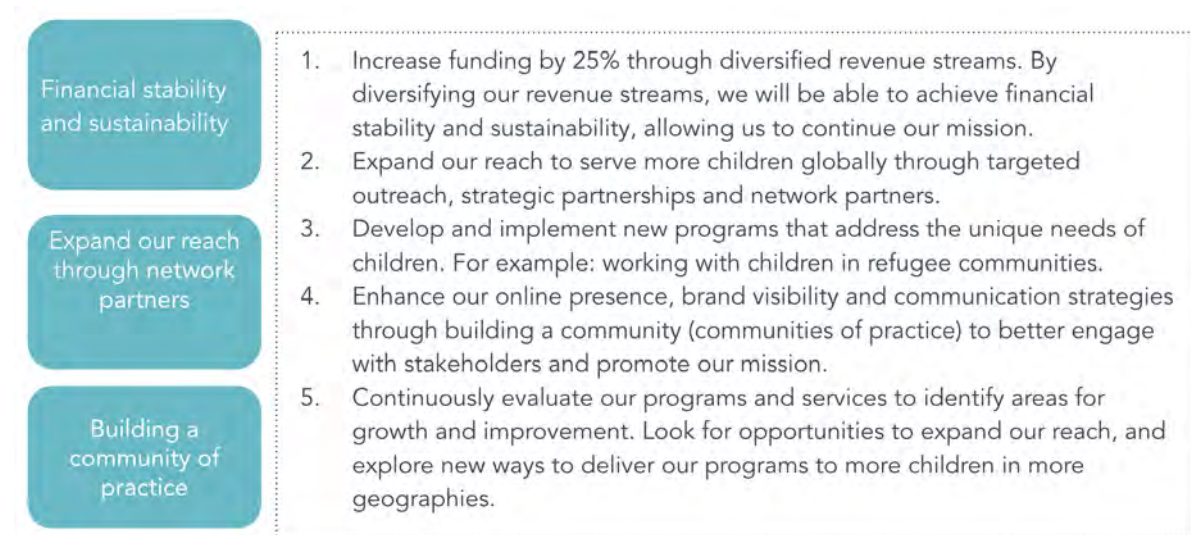
In 2022, Anne Sallaerts decided to step down as Managing Director. We have been very lucky to get Vithika Yadav on board with all her experience. Anne and Vithika will transition their leadership early 2023.



## Plans for 2023

Looking ahead, we work towards scaling our impact through network partners, diversified funding streams and building a community of practice.

Along with the ongoing focus on climate action, food rescue, waste management, biodiversity, water, an additional thematic priority would be to focus on bridging the digital divide and working with children from marginalized communities.



In 2023, we will be scaling the reach of our work through:

➤ Business development / diversified funding streams

Focus will be on building the commission and sponsored work portfolio further as well as looking at institutional funding and product based approach to test monetization models. This will be done through:

- Pursuing grant opportunities from institutional funders, corporations, individuals and government agencies.
- Exploring and developing fee-based services such as summer camps, or professional development courses for educators / schools, companies and policy makers.
- Exploring business accelerator opportunities to help develop skills and ideas towards sustainable revenue generation.
- Hosting fundraising events - galas, auctions, and charity walks to raise money for our organization.
- Exploring the potential for licensing and royalty agreements to generate revenue.

➤ Impact tracking

We will invest in improvement of our method and tools for development and impact tracking through:

- The development of our method and tools will be highly influenced by the demand of our partnerships, network partners and education systems.
- Tracking impact in order to 'prove' our method and convince our partners to join forces.
- Conduct research and gather input to identify the unique needs of the children across all geographic regions.

➤ Network partner acquisition

Our network partners (NWP) are organizations that have a wealth of knowledge and capacity in their region and have a large network of community based organizations. They have a similar DNA to Designathon Works. We will invest in network partner acquisition by:

- Vetting and onboarding of new NWPs.
- Mission alignment on SDGs.
- Exploring ways to help NWPs develop their business development practices to further scale their activities.
- Develop a targeted project with relevant partner organizations to reach underrepresented populations, like refugee children.
- Work with partners to develop and disseminate innovative & tailored educational content focussing on 21st century-skills, knowledge and agency.
- Learn about children's perspectives as important stakeholders.

➤ Engagement strategy:

We will invest in improving our online presence, brand visibility and community engagement strategy by:

- Leveraging existing network partners in 45 plus countries that can be a great way to build a community and set up a community of practice.
- Using existing engagement strategy, develop a shared vision and a comprehensive communications plan with network partners that includes social media, email, and other channels to engage with stakeholders and promote our mission.
- Enhance our social presence (including website) with compelling content, video, and other multimedia to showcase our work and impact.
- Content development: thought leadership, white papers