

Sustainable Innovation 2014
Cities & Regions as Catalysts for Smart & Sustainable Innovation
19th International Conference
3rd and 4th November 2014
KADK
Copenhagen, Denmark
www.cfsd.org.uk



Photo: Martin Waalboer/Repair Café Netherlands Foundation

Martine Postma, Founder, Stichting Repair Café, Netherlands

Martine was born in 1970, is now 44 years old, studied Russian literature but never worked in that field. She was a journalist for a long time (starting 1994). First she worked as a news reader for national radio, then (1999-2006) she wrote about higher education policy for various magazines, then (2007) she switched to sustainability and environmental issues, with a special focus on waste reduction and prevention. She composed a guide for the local community in 2009, with practical tips on how to produce less waste in your daily life. It turned out that many of the tips were to do with repair. That's how the idea of the Repair Café came up.

Martine organised the first Repair Café in 2009, and it became a great success. Afterwards, people started approaching her with questions: could she advise them how they could do something like this in their own community? She then started the Repair Café Foundation (in 2010), thought up a project in which the foundation would provide local groups with information and help them to start their own Repair Café. Thus, she wanted to spread the concept over the Netherlands. She found funding for this work as a 3 year project, which started in 2011.

At the end of that year, 20 Dutch groups had started their own Repair Café and organised approximately one meeting every month. At the end of 2012, there were over 50 Dutch Repair Café groups, and the concept had been discovered by local groups in Belgium, Germany, the US, the UK, Canada, Brazil, Australia, France etc. At this moment (May 2014) there are over 200 local Repair Café groups in the Netherlands, over 100 in Belgium, about 75 in Germany, 10 in the UK, 10 in the US, 5 in Canada and even 1 in Australia. In total, there are over 400 groups worldwide. Numbers are growing every day.