



# A future full of inspiration, creativity, & collaboration

Manual





# Foreword

Welcome to AdoptIDee! We're thrilled to have you on board because this project is guaranteed to energize and inspire you. AdoptIDee is a fantastic initiative where education and local entrepreneurs team up to boost the creativity and innovative power of children. After successful editions in Groningen, Meppel, and Enschede, it's now your region's turn!

We've created this guide to walk you through the project step by step.

If you still have questions, feel free to reach out to us at [info@adoptidee.nl](mailto:info@adoptidee.nl). We're happy to help.

## Funded by the European Union

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## Vision

We believe the future lies in collaboration between education and the business world. By challenging children at a young age and involving them in real-world problems, they develop essential skills such as creative thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving. Entrepreneurs enrich education by acting as inspiring role models and bringing their world closer to children. Together, we're creating a generation ready for the future: innovative, independent, and resilient in a rapidly changing world.

## Mission

AdoptIDee brings primary school children and entrepreneurs together to tackle business challenges in a playful and creative way. Entrepreneurs help children discover and develop their talents, while benefiting from fresh, innovative solutions to complex problems. Together, we are building a future full of inspiration, creativity, and collaboration.



# Why AdoptIDee?

# 1



## Stimulating Creativity

Professor Dr. Paul Iske (Maastricht University, Institute of Brilliant Failures) introduced the term 'Creativity Index' in 2005. He believes that creativity is the foundation of healthy and effective innovation, which is essential for a company's continued development. According to him, creativity is determined by the number of times you laugh in a day and the number of questions you ask in a day.

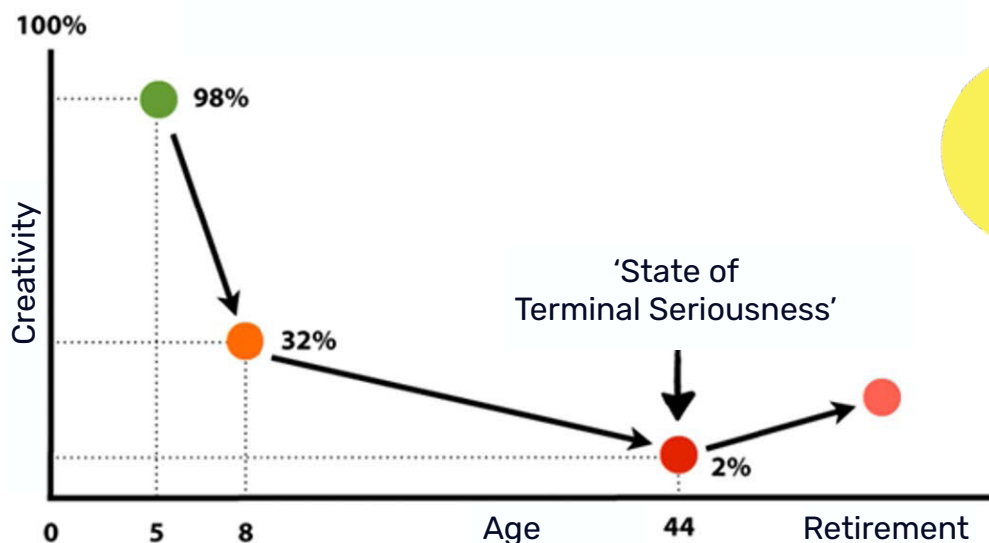
His research shows that children aged 0 to 5 are the most creative. They have no boundaries, are endlessly enthusiastic, highly curious, and focused on having fun and playing. Isn't that fantastic? Especially considering that the same research reveals adults aged 35 to 50 are the least creative, with creativity hitting rock bottom at age 44, when many suffer from Terminal Seriousness. At this stage, people think more in terms of problems: What will this cost? How long will this take? In short, resistance—an absolute killer of creativity.

AdoptIDee is here to combat this state of Terminal Seriousness.



## Creativity Index

Number of times you laugh x the number of questions you ask





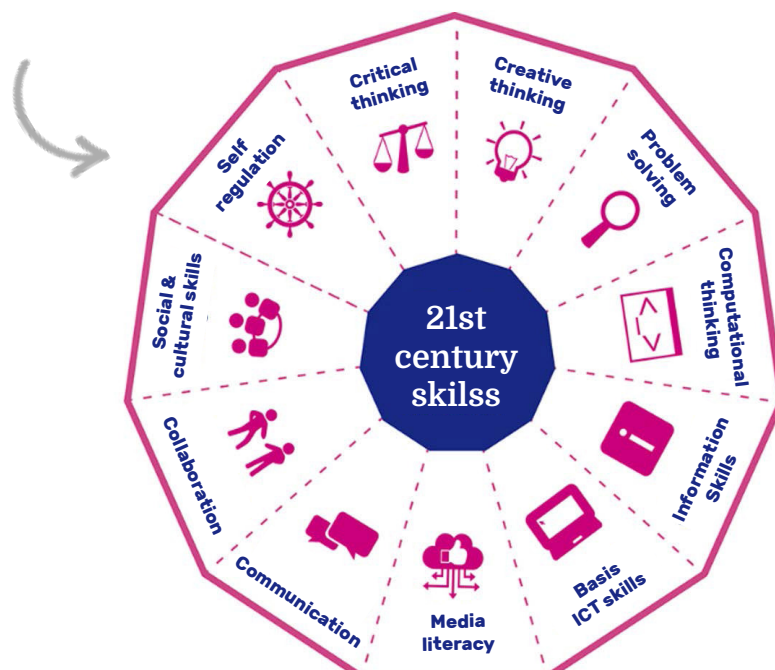
## Preparing for the Future

In our information society, learning no longer happens solely in the classroom. Learning is a lifelong process that takes place everywhere, especially outside of school. With all the technology and knowledge available today, children need to learn how to navigate our complex world from an early age. This is why we increasingly talk about the so-called 21st-century skills. These skills are essential for thriving in the society of the future. These include digital literacy, collaboration, problem-solving, and creatively using technology. They also learn 'executive skills' such as planning, organizing, and reflecting. All of this while having fun and working together to build something special!

**“According to one estimate, 65% of children entering grade school will ultimately work in jobs that don’t exist today, putting creativity, initiative and adaptability at a premium”**  
– World Economic Forum

# 2

At AdoptIDee, we give primary school children the opportunity to actively think alongside entrepreneurs and collaborate on creative solutions to real-world problems. The children get a unique behind-the-scenes look at companies, learning how entrepreneurs work, solve problems, and how different roles within a team collaborate. They gain a better understanding that creating a product or service often involves a whole process. And because they are naturally skilled with technology—think tablets, smartphones, and other smart devices—they often have a unique perspective on problems. They come up with ideas that adults might not think of right away. This makes their role at AdoptIDee incredibly valuable!







### Digital Literacy and Regional Cohesion

At AdoptIDee, everything revolves around digital skills and technology. Children are introduced to these in a playful way from a young age. Why? Because technology plays a significant role in nearly every career today. By collaborating with local businesses, children learn how digital skills are applied in practice, bringing classroom theory to life in the real world.

This approach offers several additional benefits:

- **Boosting innovation:** Entrepreneurs benefit from the fresh ideas of children, who think outside the box, contributing to creative solutions for business challenges. At the same time, teachers enrich their lessons with new insights, enhancing innovation not only in business but also in the classroom.
- **Future workforce:** By exposing children to innovative companies early on, they develop critical skills and interests that prepare them for the future job market. This ensures the region has a well-educated and engaged workforce in the long term.
- **Retaining regional talent:** Children discover the exciting businesses in their area and the career opportunities available. For entrepreneurs, this is a chance to inspire young talent and strengthen regional ties, helping to retain future talent within the region.

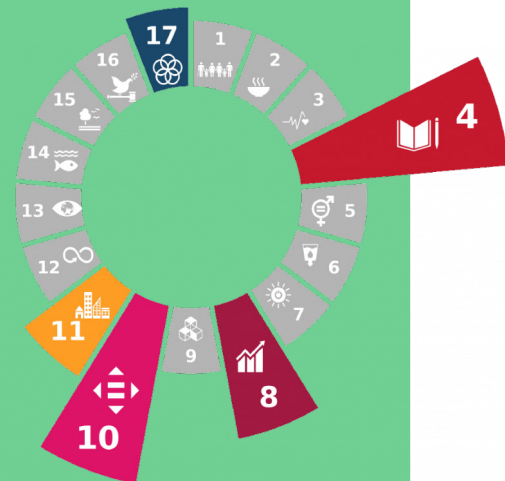
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### Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 goals established by the United Nations to make the world a better place by 2030. AdoptIDee is committed to contributing to these goals as well. That's why we involve children early on in these global objectives, raising their awareness of the role they can play. Our impact is measured by MAEX, and we focus on the following SDGs:

- **SDG 4: Quality Education** – We provide children with engaging and meaningful education, tailored to the skills needed for the future.
- **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth** – By involving children in the business world, we help them develop a work ethic from an early age.
- **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities** – Everyone is welcome to participate, regardless of background. We make no distinctions!
- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities** – We build the foundation for a strong connection between education, business, and the community.
- **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals** – Together with schools, businesses, and governments, we create sustainable impact.



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# What do we aim to achieve with AdoptIDee?

- **Fun and Collaboration for All Ages**  
Children, entrepreneurs, and teachers work together, learn from one another, and experience the project as a creative, playful encounter that strengthens collaboration within the region.
- **Early Introduction to Entrepreneurship:**  
Children explore the world of business and entrepreneurship in a playful way, inspiring them and preparing them for their future in the job market.
- **Developing Innovation and Digital Skills**  
Entrepreneurs benefit from the fresh ideas of children, while these young participants gain valuable 21st-century skills, such as digital and creative problem-solving abilities.
- **Inclusive and Accessible for Everyone:**  
The project offers all participants, regardless of background, the opportunity to join and contribute to a shared learning experience.

## Examples from Previous Editions

During earlier editions of AdoptIDee, children came up with creative solutions to various business challenges. Here are some examples of the challenges they tackled:



**Plus:** "How can we use 'new possibilities' to help customers find their groceries faster and more easily in the supermarket of the future?"



**Johma:** "Design a trendy, unique flavor for a Johma salad."



**LEF:** "How can a high school better prepare you for making a career choice?"



**Gemeente Losser:** "Come up with a way to repurpose unused or broken household devices that might otherwise be thrown away."

These challenges gave children the opportunity to unleash their creativity, and the companies were inspired by their fresh and innovative ideas. Once again, it was amazing to witness the wonderful interaction between the business world and the younger generation during this edition!

# Ingredients & Steps

AdoptIDee consists of various steps, allowing plenty of room for creativity and input from teachers and students. However, before you can begin, the basic conditions must be in place.

## The four essential ingredients for a successful AdoptIDee edition:

1. **Funding:** Ensure there is sufficient financial support, for example, through NPO funds or municipal contributions.
2. **A Local Leader:** An enthusiastic and visible individual who serves as the driving force behind the edition in the region. Someone who exudes joy, passion, and quality.
3. **Motivated Teachers:** Teachers eager to get started with AdoptIDee. We are supported by teachers with prior experience who are happy to share their knowledge with colleagues in a new region.
4. **Engaged Entrepreneurs:** Entrepreneurs willing to invest time and energy. Entrepreneurs with young children are often highly motivated to contribute.

With these ingredients, you have the perfect foundation to make your AdoptIDee a success!





# 1 Opening

## Purpose of the Opening

The opening marks the official start of the AdoptIDee edition. Ideally, we choose a location that is accessible to everyone, ensuring visibility and integration within the community. During the opening, teachers and entrepreneurs meet for the first time, establishing the foundation for their collaboration throughout the project. This gathering is specifically tailored for these groups, allowing them to get to know each other and exchange contact details as a starting point for the next steps.

## Who Attends?

- Teachers
- Entrepreneurs
- School Principals
- Policymakers, Aldermen, Mayors
- Sponsors and other stakeholders who support AdoptIDee

## What Will We Do?

1. Arrival with Coffee (15 minutes)
2. Welcome Speech by the AdoptIDee regional leader (3 minutes)
3. Opening Speech by an alderman or other prominent guest (5 minutes)
4. Keynote Speaker to elaborate on and inspire around the theme (30 minutes)
5. Pairing Companies with Teachers: Each class is matched with a company (10 minutes)
6. Introduction: Teachers and entrepreneurs get to know each other and exchange contact details over snacks and drinks (60 minutes)

## What Does AdoptIDee Provide?

- Standard templates for invitations and the program
- A script and program for the opening
- Keynote speaker
- Presentations and materials for the opening (e.g., pairing teachers and entrepreneurs in a “bingo” format)
- Privacy statement template (to be signed by parents/guardians of the children)
- Representation from the foundation

## What Do the Project Partners Arrange?

- Inviting participants (e.g., aldermen, teachers, entrepreneurs)
- Organizing a suitable location for the opening
- Providing catering



## 2 Further Acquainted



### Purpose of the Further Acquainted Phase

During this step, the teacher and entrepreneur meet in person at the company's location. This is an important moment, as it gives the teacher a clear understanding of what the company does and how it operates. The entrepreneur provides a tour and shares insights about the daily activities. Together, they formulate a problem statement that will later be presented to the children. The entrepreneur explains the challenge from their perspective, while the teacher translates it into a task that is understandable for students aged 10 to 12.

### Who Attends?

- Teachers
- Entrepreneurs

### What Will We Do?

1. Teacher visits the company for a tour
2. The entrepreneur explains the problem statement.
3. Together, they translate the problem statement into a task that is suitable for the students.

### What Does AdoptIDee Provide?

- Format and Explanation for Formulating a Problem Statement
- Examples of Problem Statements from Previous Editions as Inspiration

### What Do the Project Partners Arrange?

- Scheduling an Appointment Between Teacher and Entrepreneur
- Formulating the Final Problem Statement Together



# 3 Company Visit



## Purpose of the Company Visit

"It's all about context." In this step, the children visit the entrepreneur they are working with during the project. This is their first opportunity to get acquainted with the company and learn about the problem statement they will tackle. The visit takes place at the entrepreneur's location, so the children can experience the business from the inside. During a tour and an explanation of the company's activities – such as what the business does, how it operates, and who it serves – the children gain a clear understanding of the environment in which the problem statement exists. This helps them come up with relevant and creative solutions. Moreover, it is an inspiring and educational moment as the children see how a business operates in practice and how various roles and processes come together.

## Who Attends?

- Teachers
- Entrepreneurs
- Children

## What Will We Do?

1. Introduction: The entrepreneur introduces themselves to the class and shares their life story (10 minutes).
2. Company Tour (30 minutes): The children get an inside look at the company and see the different departments and tasks.
3. Explanation of the Problem Statement (20 minutes): The entrepreneur explains the problem statement, provides context, and discusses why this challenge is important for the company.
4. Time for Questions from the Children (20 minutes): The children can ask questions and learn more about the company and the problem statement.

## Tips

- Is the group too large? Then you can divide the children into smaller groups that take turns participating in different parts of the program (e.g., explanation of the sector, fun activity, company tour).
- Ensure the focus remains on the problem statement and prevent too many distractions, such as limiting candy and snacks.

## What Does AdoptIDee Provide?

- A guide for an 'Effective Company Visit' with practical instructions and tips

## What Do the Project Partners Arrange?

- Scheduling a date for the tour, aligned with the project timeline

# 4

## Children Working in the Classroom

### Purpose of this step

During four sessions, the children will work on developing a solution for the problem statement they received during the company visit. They will use the design thinking method to guide their process. The ultimate goal is to create a compelling pitch in which they present their solution, along with a creative representation of their “super idea.” This representation can take various forms, such as posters, prototypes, models, or other projects. The pitch will then be presented to the entrepreneur.

### Who Attends?

- Teachers
- Children



### What Will We Do?

The children work step by step in the classroom to develop their “super idea.” Each session focuses on a specific part of the process:

1. Session 1: Brainstorming  
The children come up with as many ideas as possible to solve the problem statement.
2. Session 2: Filtering ideas  
The best ideas are gathered, and ultimately, one idea is chosen to be developed into the super idea.
3. Session 3: Developing the super idea  
The selected idea is further developed and prepared for presentation.
4. Session 4: Preparing the pitch  
The children learn how to best present their idea and create a creative pitch.
5. During these four sessions, the children are supported with teaching materials and digital content specifically designed to guide them through each step of the process.

### What Does AdoptIDee Provide?

- Teacher’s letter explaining the project.
- Digital teaching materials for each step:
  - o Session 1: “How to brainstorm effectively?”
  - o Session 2: “How to select the best idea and turn it into a super idea?”
  - o Session 3: “How to further develop your super idea?”
  - o Session 4: “How to create a convincing pitch?”
- Medals for the winning ideas.
- Aanpasbaar lesmateriaal dat als basis kan dienen voor elke school. Leerkrachten kunnen het gebruiken zoals het is, of aanpassen naar hun eigen stijl en werkwijze.

### What Do the Project Partners Arrange?

- Enthusiastic children eager to engage in creative activities.
- Motivated teachers who effectively guide the students.
- Engaged entrepreneurs curious about the children’s ideas and open to new perspectives.





# 5

## Entrepreneur in the Classroom

### Purpose of this step

At AdoptIDee, it is essential that children's ideas are taken seriously and that the entrepreneur genuinely considers implementing their suggestions. During this step, the children present their developed ideas to the entrepreneur, who then takes the time to ask questions and provide valuable feedback. This moment ensures that the children have a meaningful learning experience and understand that their contributions are truly appreciated.

### Who Attends?

- Teachers
- Entrepreneurs
- Children

### What Will We Do?

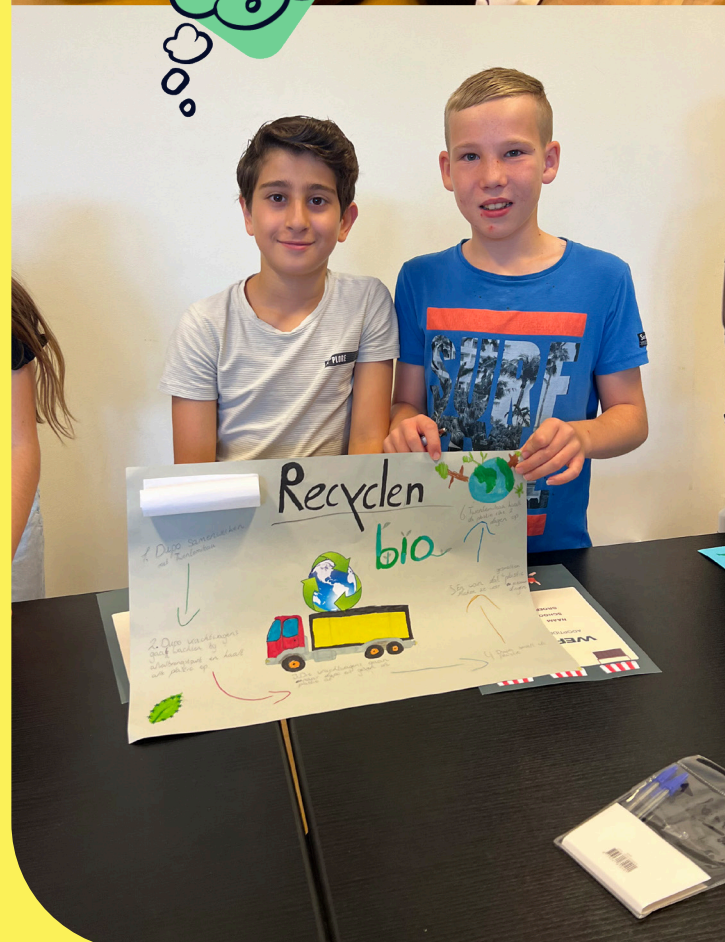
This step takes place in the familiar environment of the classroom. The children present their pitch and share their super idea with the entrepreneur. The entrepreneur listens attentively, asks questions, and provides feedback on each idea using 'tips and strengths.' After the presentations, all children receive a Certificate of Pride as a token of appreciation for their efforts. This certificate is filled out, signed, and personally handed to the children by the entrepreneur.

### What Does AdoptIDee Provide?

- Certificates of Pride that entrepreneurs can fill out, sign, and hand out to the children.

### What Do the Project Partners Arrange?

- Scheduling a date for the entrepreneur to visit the class, fitting within the project timeline.



# 6 AdoptIDee Final Day

## Purpose of the Final Day

The final day is the highlight of the project, where everything comes together in a dynamic marketplace. On this day, the children present their solutions to a wide audience, which is actively invited. This audience consists of family, friends, and other interested parties. The day begins with a joint kickoff for all participating children, teachers, entrepreneurs, and representatives from the municipality and AdoptIDee. Each class has a booth, together with their entrepreneur, where the creative super ideas of the children are presented.

During the marketplace, the children can pitch their ideas in an accessible way and tell visitors what they have come up with. They also receive tasks, so they not only visit their own booth but also explore the other booths of entrepreneurs and children. To stimulate interaction, the children receive a task sheet that allows them to actively ask questions and share tips and feedback with each other. The marketplace takes place in an accessible building, preferably with a theater setup. This is important because AdoptIDee aims to play a connecting role between residents, education, and businesses in the region.

## Who Attends?

- Teachers
- Entrepreneurs
- Children
- Family, friends, and acquaintances
- All other interested parties

## What Will We Do?

The final day lasts a maximum of 1.5 hours to keep the attention span and impressions manageable. It is an intensive day with the following components:

1. Gathering in a central space, such as a theater room (20 minutes).
2. Plenary kick-off with a host and an act (20 minutes).
3. Marketplace where the children present their ideas (50 minutes).
4. Receiving a goody bag for the children and departure (10 minutes).

## What Does AdoptIDee Provide?

- Script for the Final Day
- Moderator
- Booking the act for the plenary kick-off
- Planning for the layout of the marketplace
- Floor plan of the stands upon entry
- Information boards for each entrepreneur about their challenge
- Task booklets for the children
- Digital invitations for the final day
- Contact with local media through press releases and networks

## What Do the Project Partners Arrange?

- Audiovisual resources per class (e.g. laptops)
- Workpieces and files for the market stalls
- Entrepreneurs provide PR or marketing materials for their stand





# Communication and PR – AdoptIDee with a Bang

At AdoptIDee, we believe it is important that the efforts of everyone who contributes to the project are visible. Therefore, communication and PR are essential components of our initiative. We respect all privacy rights and ensure that everyone is clear about what these rights entail. As a foundation, we can provide a GDPR (or AVG) statement that parents can sign.

For Communication & PR, we can facilitate the following:

- Drafting articles that we can share via social media or that can be distributed by involved organizations (such as schools and entrepreneurs).
- Taking photos of each step in the process to capture memorable moments.
- Producing an aftermovie that showcases the highlights of the project.
- Providing clear instructions for all involved parties.



## Funding

Participation in AdoptIDee incurs costs, so it's important to secure funding. There are various sources available:

### 1. NPO Funds from the Dutch Government

A total of €8.5 billion is available for addressing learning delays in children caused by the COVID-19 crisis. The Ministry of Education encourages interventions that tackle these issues and has listed them on a menu card. AdoptIDee falls under category D: Development of executive functions in students. As a result, AdoptIDee can be funded through NPO funds.

### 2. (NPO-)Contribution from the Municipality

Since AdoptIDee actively builds connections between local businesses and local education, it aligns well with the political agenda of municipal governments. It is often a realization of plans outlined in the Municipal Agreement. As a result, municipalities are typically willing to fund editions of AdoptIDee. Therefore, it is important to involve a local alderman or mayor in the project from the outset.



