

REPAIR CAFES SPREADING WORLDWIDE TO REDUCE WASTE BY RECOVERING REPAIR EXPERTISE

The year 2020 started with 2056 [Repair Cafés working over 35 countries and associated in the international network](#). The Repair Café Foundation, that has created and supports this network, is based in Amsterdam, in the Netherlands.

[Repair Cafés are free meeting places](#) where visitors bring their broken items from home and together with volunteer specialists, they start making their repairs, through an ongoing learning process. In the Repair Café, visitors can find tools and materials to help making any repairs they need on clothes, furniture, electrical devices, bicycles, crockery, gadgets, toys, etc.

They also can find expert volunteers, with expertise in repairs in all sectors. Visitors who have nothing to fix can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee or can give a hand to someone else who is repairing.

The first Repair Cafe was created by the Dutch environmentalist Martine Postma in 2009 in Amsterdam to help produce less waste in the communities, fixing up and giving new life to used or non-working objects. The initiative was so successful that in 2011 Martine Postma launched the *Repair Café Foundation*, a non-profit organization focused on providing professional support to local groups in the Netherlands and other countries wishing to start their own Repair Café.

The Foundation is the engine behind the world-wide successful concept of Repair Café: *repair your own stuff together with handy people from your neighbourhood. This is good for the environment and for the social cohesion in your local community*. The Foundation aims to maintain and spread repair expertise, and to promote cohesion by bringing together neighbors from all social conditions and motivations. The work carried out by the Foundation has managed to promote the creation of 2056 Repair Cafés in 35 countries during ten years.

The Repair Cafés joining the Network are very different, because they are adapted to the contexts in which they operate, but have some important characteristics in common:

- they are social places where people can offer a concrete contribution to solve a global environmental problem. In modern societies we throw away vast amounts of stuff, even things which could get a new lease on life after a simple repair. Things repaired can be used longer, reducing the volume of raw materials and the energy



needed to make new products and reducing the CO2 emissions released by the related manufacturing processes. Some Repair Cafes, calculate the volume of waste they can recover, avoiding their end in public landfills, and the benefits they can bring to the environment. In all ongoing experiences, Repair Café helps change people's mindset and generates people's enthusiasm for a more sustainable society.

- They are places designed to recover the knowledge of repairing things. People have forgotten that they can repair things themselves or they no longer know how. Knowledge and skills to make repairs are rapidly lost in our modern societies, especially among the new generations. Volunteer repairers are experts in various fields, such as electricians, mechanics, tailors or carpenters, and offer their help free of charge to people who wish to repair their objects, but who do not know how. Other visitors can participate to watch and learn, but also to help others. In the Repair Cafés, a valuable practical knowledge is getting passed on and they show how much fun repairing objects can be, and how easy it often is.

The Repair Cafés, directly involving citizens, can give an important contribution to reduce the large quantities of waste generated in our societies. Together with many other ecological initiatives based on social participation, they not only contribute to the results of the Zero Waste movements in the various countries, but can also stimulate new policies and guidelines for large companies to reduce the rapid obsolescence of the products they place on the market. An article of the BBC magazine, for example, informs about a significant goal for the recycling movement: European Union recently approved a new [legislation requiring manufacturers to make appliances longer-lasting and to supply spare parts for machines for up to 10 years to consumers](#)

Since 2017, the Foundation is involved in collecting data about the results achieved by the Repair Cafés. For this purpose, the Foundation developed the [Repair Monitor](#), an online tool which volunteers can use to document what kind of products they repair in their Repair Cafés. This way it is possible to get insight in repairing of products used in our daily lives and improve the way how to restore them in good conditions again.

In October 2019 the ten-year anniversary of the Repair Cafés Network was celebrated with an international symposium at the Amsterdam Public Library. During the event, attended by hundreds of visitors, a Member of Dutch Parliament announced that Repair Café International Foundation will receive a subsidy on a yearly basis from the government for carrying out its core tasks.

The Repair Café International Foundation offers worldwide support to local groups that wish to organize their own Repair Café. [The website provides all the useful information](#) for groups interested in building a Repair Café in their community, with the requirement to be associated with the international network.

To know more

[Repair Café website](#)



[Repair Cafe house rules](#)

[Repair Café International in Facebook](#)

[Repair Monitor 2018](#)

[Article in sugru.com](#)

[Article in theguardian.com](#)

[Article in bbc.com](#)

[Article in peopleforplanet.it](#)

[Article in planetoscope.com](#)

[Article in reporterre.net](#)

[Article in consoglobe.com](#)

[Repair Café Deutschland in Facebook](#)

[Repair Café United Kingdom in Facebook](#)

[Repair Café France in Facebook](#)

[Repair Café in Wikipedia](#)



Do you have a talent for fixing things?

Sewing, small appliances, electrics, jewellery, toys & more

Seeking volunteers for our Repair Café on 7 Sept @ Eversden Village Hall

