

PRESS RELEASE

Science event for girls in Brussels is a record year

Brussels, 29 November 2014: For the fifth year in a row, greenlight for girls, an international non-profit dedicated to inspiring girls to pursue science studies & careers, held its annual signature event at the International School of Brussels, also its headquarter city. Since its inception, greenlight for girls has grown exponentially in geography and reach as it has conducted more than 75 events across 5 continents engaging 1.200 volunteers worldwide – and now reached more than 10,000 students. This event in Brussels marks the anniversary of the very first greenlight for girls' event to bring role models in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) backgrounds to conduct hands-on, interactive workshops to show the fun in learning science. This event (which uses the hashtag #g4gDayBrussels) has set a few records this year: the fastest "sold-out" event, the highest number of volunteers, 100% inspiring events as judged by the students, highest social media reach and youngest speaker & workshop leaders.

The greenlight for girls days invite girls, ages 11 to 15 years old from local and international schools in the area (and also reaches as far as the Netherlands border), to come together for a full day of science fun. This year, 210 girls participated from 39 schools; the event is conducted in three languages – English, French and Dutch. The event is offered free to the participants. The expenses of the event, such as food, materials & labcoats, are generously donated by organisations and individuals who feel strongly about the mission of the organisation. These organisations work with greenlight for girls, often in various locations around the world, to help promote STEM subjects & careers to girls of all ages. For g4g day Brussels 2014, these sponsor organisations included Cisco, Procter & Gamble, Solvay, Baxter and our event host location – the International School of Brussels. In addition, workshops were conducted by workshop leaders (who also donated their time, materials and equipment) from Microsoft, Microsoft Innovation Center, Imperial College, EPIC, CEER with media support from RadioX who conducted interviews and shows throughout the day with the participants & workshop leaders.

This year, the registration reached the maximum volume within a few short days – which leads the organisation to look at increasing the participation opportunity for our future events. The event brought together 105 volunteers across a variety of professional backgrounds and careers, the largest number yet. The event's project manager, Jelena Lucin, tells more about the results of the event, "We measure and analyse the results to not only see how we can improve for the next one, but also to see our impact of inspiring the students to continue their STEM studies and begin to think of their future. The results are astounding. For the first time ever, every single workshop we offered has been

identified as inspiring and meaningful for the girls. For the first time ever, the girls identified their most inspiring role models to include young girls their own age. The event introduced special girls we know who have created their own app, such as Jackie who is 12 years old and presented her project, and girls who have created their own businesses already before the age of 16.”

The younger role-models were also key members of the team: previous g4g participants, then g4g interns, created and conducted several workshops on their own. Now “older” but still in high school and passionate about showing their knowledge in science enthralled the participants with a variety of subjects from creating a necklace holding your own DNA to showing the linkage between sports and science to creating the chemistry behind bath bombs. The biggest hit of the event was our Physics Fun Lab, conducted by university physicists and scientists who travelled from Imperial College in London, aimed specifically to increase the take-up of girls in Physics studies in the last years of High School.

“The story of greenlight for girls began with one email asking if there was a need to encourage girls in STEM careers,” explains Melissa Rancourt, g4g Founder and Chairman, “the result brought us to today – over a thousand role models volunteering their time to do exactly this – help to encourage and inspire girls around the world and it is working. Our favourite moment is after the event when we start getting contacted (immediately) by the girls, their parents & their schools letting us know exactly how this event has influenced their desire for learning science and eventually their decisions towards university studies and their professional path.”

With the most recent comments from parents, it is clear why the g4g team enjoys these moments the most.

- ∞ “Thank YOU for this amazing day and event which you prepared for our girls - so impressive and inspiring! It was wonderful to see how our 11 year old came home, took out her little g4g notebook and spent over 1 hour with GREAT enthusiasm explaining all the experiments and learnings she had collected during the day - like a little Einstein!”
- ∞ “It’s only been a few days but look at the ripple effect..... Santa had a new request so there will now be electronics kits under the tree for Christmas and tomato ketchup is now coming out of the bottle faster in our house.”
- ∞ “My daughter was busy doing experiments ALL DAY on Sunday”
- ∞ “My daughter has been doing further research on non- Newtonian liquids today - wow! ”
- ∞ “Thanks for the coding links – they loved these workshops. Books and apps on coding are now on the list for Sinterklaas”

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