Janneke's story

My name is Janneke and I'm about to graduate from International Studies at Leiden University. After completing my BA, I will be focusing on sustainable clothing and textiles during an internship at the Social and Economic Council.

Over the past years I became increasingly interested in reducing my impact on the planet, especially because International Studies focuses strongly on global problems. There are so many ways in which we can improve the lives of people around the world such as by implementing sustainability practices. I would like to be part of this positive change. I was often unsure how to navigate the "sustainability scene", as a lot of the time I felt overwhelmed by the amount of information and strong opinions out there. These feelings were rather strong until last year, when I got introduced to the Sustainable Business Battle (SBB) and became part of the board.

The SBB is a consultancy competition for students in which they solve a sustainability challenge for companies. We hope to introduce companies to the creative ideas of students, while at the other hand inspiring students to enact positive change in their future careers. Both students and companies are often very driven to make sustainability happen, and there is a lot they can learn from each other. With this competition we want to show students and companies that they can make a difference in their own sphere of influence when they think creatively.

Due to corona, we ended up hosting an online panel discussion with inspiring professionals. For students wanting to incorporate sustainability in their life or (academic) career, one of our panelists gave the following advice: "Work in whatever field you want, but take your passion for sustainability with you". This goes to show that there is no "right" way to pursue a sustainable life or career; we can all make a contribution in the phase or position we find ourselves in. So don't be afraid if your way of incorporating sustainability seems a bit unconventional!