

RESEARCH CLINIC

General information

Supervisor:	Roos Kolkman and Tessa Dool (alumni and unplastic.me), Dr. Thijs Bosker
Title of clinic:	UnPlastic Education: developing educational material to increase awareness about plastic waste and pollution.
Number of students:	4-6
Major (<i>if applicable and approved by the Major Convener</i>):	Any
(Pre)requisites (<i>if applicable</i>):	A passion for education and reducing the impact of plastic pollution on the environment!

Research context

How can we get children to change their behavior, and reduce plastic pollution? Can educating kids actually be a way to reduce plastic pollution in communities? How can we integrate the education on plastic pollution within the already existing school curriculums? How to reach schools and students in countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia or the Philippines, as these are major contributors to plastic pollution? And what are effective ways to get students aware of the situation and excited to make a change in their communities? These are some of the questions we address as a group of motivated alumni and students at UnPlastic. As most of you know plastic pollution is an issue of global concern. On an annual basis over 8 billion kg of plastic enter our oceans. In addition, microplastics (pieces of plastic <5mm) are omnipresent in the environment. It is especially important to educate children on this topic: how children and young people are parented, educated, socialized, and supported by various institutions and services has major repercussions for their development into adulthood and their behaviour as adults. Therefore, UnPlastic Education aims to empower young people through the power of knowledge, to inspire positive behavioural change.

Students' tasks and activities

As a student of UnPlastic's research clinic, you will deliver teacher guides, powerpoints, and activities to use during workshops that will be taught at high schools. Other deliverables can include videos, blog posts, podcasts, or other media to raise awareness about plastic pollution: the only requirement is to use proper scientific research and to inform young individuals. You can also help set up a citizen science project pilot that will be launched among high school students at the end of the year, or help set up our outreach program to reach high schools in order to teach our workshops there. A passion to create awareness on plastic pollution is key, even if you don't yet know all the details about it. Besides being able to do proper research and write well, skills such as social media marketing, or creative/web/app design/, or video making will also be very beneficial.

In your application, highlight your skills and how you think it can help UnPlastic Education, and what you would like to focus on at UnPlastic. In the end, our deliverables need to provide materials for both teachers and students. They need to motivate participants, they need to be fun, but they also need to get them thinking about their community and themselves. We are looking forward to your ideas and creativity on these topics.

The research clinic will run over the period September-December, during semester one of LUC. It will be very educational for you, for the students you get to teach, and also very fun as you work in a great team!