

MyMachine Slovakia Coordinator: Žofia Teplická



What is your mission in MyMachine?

I work for the Carpathian Foundation in Slovakia, which encourages people and communities to change their own lives and the region and country they are part of.

MyMachine fits into this mission very well. It teaches children and young people that they should not only be consumers but can be co-creators in everything that is around us. MyMachine shows them that we all have the power to make a change.

Why is MyMachine important to you?

Next to what I mentioned earlier, I also see an improvement in the communication skills of the participating students.

They are obliged to communicate with other children that are not from their school or city. College students have to speak with both young kids about the ideas and the secondary level students about building a prototype. They realise the different wording needed between those ages. Sometimes university students contact suppliers themselves. They learn a lot from that experience. Students in MyMachine learn how to say things, send an email or dress for a formal meeting. Another important skill is teamwork. Teachers in Slovakia focus on individual accomplishments. However, in real life, we work in teams and report to someone higher in the hierarchy. MyMachine mixes students from different study fields, for example, engineer and design students. Most of the time, they have never experienced that before. They are learning from each other. Students experience self-responsibility for the project.

What advice would you give to your 7-year-old self?

I would have given it some thought, but I would say that it is okay to feel fear, but you can make it and handle the situation. As a child, I feared the dark and being alone. Although things have changed over time, I learned that you can live even with your biggest fears and still handle the situation. I am trying to teach my kids that it is normal to be afraid of strange and unknown things, but you have to be brave and dare to be independent. If you imagine the worst-case scenario and know how to deal with it, you can deal with everything. Fear is not something you should be ashamed of.

3 SHORT FACTS

What is your favourite dream machine so far?

The never-ending ice cream machine.

How do you describe yourself in 3 words?

I am chatty, messy and a problem solver.

Favourite place for thinking?

I like to think in the car while driving.