

Drees & Sommer Kids Show the Way – Not Just for their Parents

This weekend was a time to breathe the startup atmosphere and get creative. From 12 to 14 July, children of Drees & Sommer colleagues aged ten to seventeen worked on new business ideas. At the end of the creativity workshop, they presented their imaginative solutions in the Drees & Sommer Innovation Hub. They included an app with which friends can join together to avoid wasting food.



The Drees & Sommer Kids developed exciting ideas – just like real startups. © Christian Back

Our Young Talents Know Exactly What the Future Should Be Like: Sustainable and Digital

A total of 23 children of Drees & Sommer staff members worked together in small groups to create and present their business models for the future. They were mentored by experienced experts from the world of startups who gave them an introduction to creative methods such as *design thinking*.

The jury team, consisting of the startup coach Michael Heimrich, Dr. Peter Möhle (Partner at Drees & Sommer SE) and Sandra Brand (Head of Corporate Communications) at Drees & Sommer SE) had the difficult task of deciding the winning teams. ‘Something really special was created during this weekend. It was a colorful mixture of sustainable and easy learning, entertaining activities, and in the end the excitement and pride of the children and their parents,’ comments Michael Heimrich. Not only the jury but also the organizers, and last but not least the parents, were surprised and enthralled by the ideas that were created. The main focus was on subjects such as protecting the environment, preventing food waste, improving digital education, and also an idea which aimed to help people to spend less time on a cellphone and more time in real life. ‘We are delighted that the coming generation is even more consistent in following our existing sustainable values at Drees & Sommer. That is encouraging,’ says Dr. Peter Möhle.

The Winning Team Invents a Remedy to Avoid Wasting Food

The winning team selected by the jury gave itself the task of promoting consumer responsibility and thus minimizing the amount of food that is thrown away. It aims to support this goal by an app to be developed for this purpose. The user can look in the fridge, scan the products available and receive a suggested recipe. The special feature is a social component: if persons do not have enough food, they can use the app to network with friends, find out what food they still have, then meet up and cook together.

Drees & Sommer Innovation Center offers a place for creative thinking

A creative workspace has been created by the Drees & Sommer Innovation Hub in the company headquarters at Obere Waldplätze in Stuttgart-Vaihingen. Here, the international project management and consulting company with its headquarters in the German city of Stuttgart has converted an old bookbinding workshop into Drees & Sommer’s Innovation Center – a place where the company’s employees cooperate with startups, clients, business partners or in collaborative research projects to work freely on topics related to innovation. Drees & Sommer also operates innovation hubs in other locations with different focus areas such as smart commercial buildings and cities, building information modeling (BIM) or new office space concepts.

The event format was created by *Next Entrepreneurs*. Together with their team, the two founders Michael Aechtler, Head of Innovation Services at Drees & Sommer, and Roger Zimmerman regularly hold startup workshops with kids and school classes. Practical hints are provided by genuine startup founders. 'It is impressive again and again how simple and clear the children's ideas are – and how well they are thought out – even by children as young as ten. We can really learn from this generation,' says Michael Aechtler.

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