

# CIC ROTTERDAM IMPACT REPORT 2023





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# DEAR READER,



On behalf of our CIC Rotterdam team, I'm pleased to present you with our 2023 Impact Report: a testament of our community's impact in the innovation ecosystem and their resilience in an ever-evolving world.

Looking back at 2023, many of our community members faced a challenging year. Access to funding and finding the right talent remained some of the top priorities for fast growing businesses on our campus. Despite the challenges our community faced, we've seen a continued determination to succeed and thrive.

In the spirit of resilience and a future-proof society, you will read stories of some of our members that show their resolve to keep innovating and building impactful businesses.

It's incredibly rewarding to work alongside leaders who have a clear vision on how to reshape our future for the better, beyond the Dutch borders.

As we think of ourselves as a European startup hub, we've attracted businesses seeking to expand their international reach and impact from Rotterdam, with 18% of our clients having international headquarters outside of The Netherlands.

Within the tech landscape, CIC Rotterdam maintains a robust cluster. Almost a quarter of our total client base specializes in areas such as artificial intelligence, IT, software, and hardware. Moreover, our clients created nearly 400 full-time jobs in 2023, a testament to the resilience and tenacity of our community members.

At least 20% of the businesses in our community are women-led, surpassing our goal with the Dutch Social and Economic Council (SER) for the second year in a row. We're continuing to foster an inclusive and diverse ecosystem that reflects the society we reside in. And we've only just begun!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our clients, community, and partners for being integral parts of this transformative journey. With enthusiasm, we anticipate continuing to make a positive and lasting impact on society.

Best,

Joyce Kornet-Vreugdenhil  
**General Manager, CIC Rotterdam**



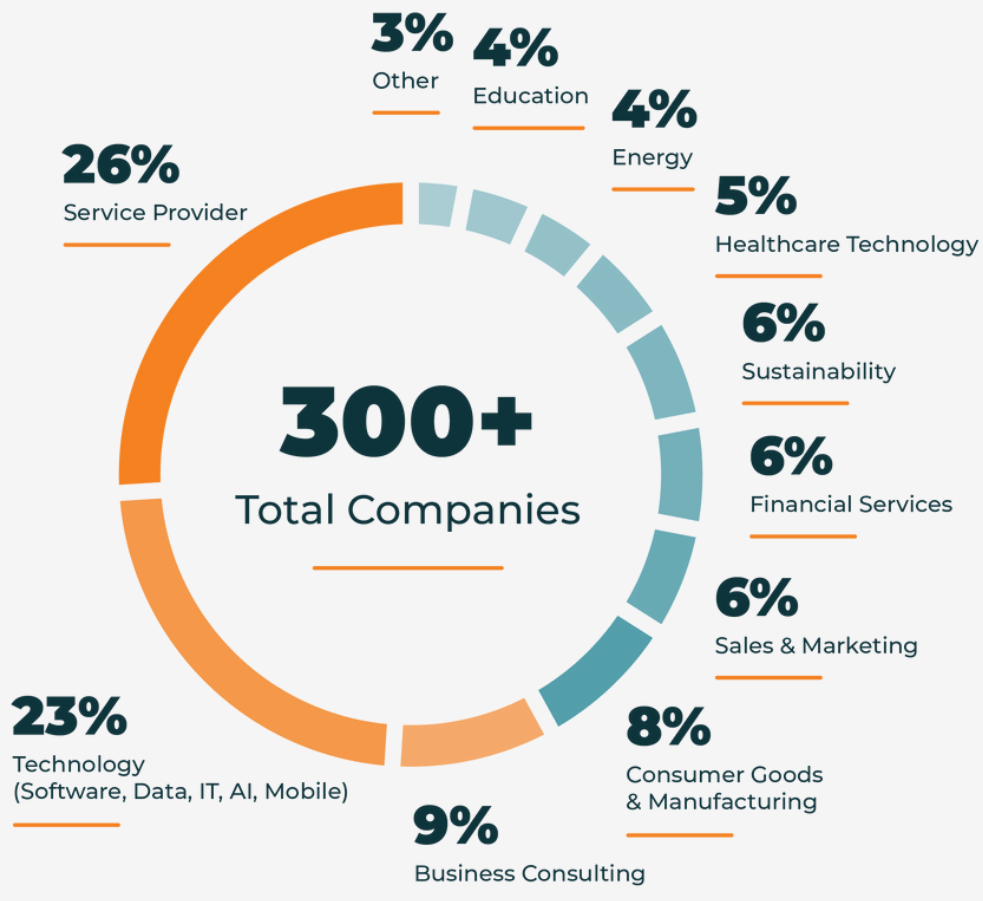
# DIVERSE INNOVATION LANDSCAPE

The diversity of companies at CIC Rotterdam not only enriches the collaborative nature of our community, but also fosters innovation and creativity. It encourages cross-pollination of ideas, facilitates networking opportunities, and promotes interdisciplinary collaborations.

At CIC Rotterdam, entrepreneurs have access to an innovation ecosystem in the heart of the city,

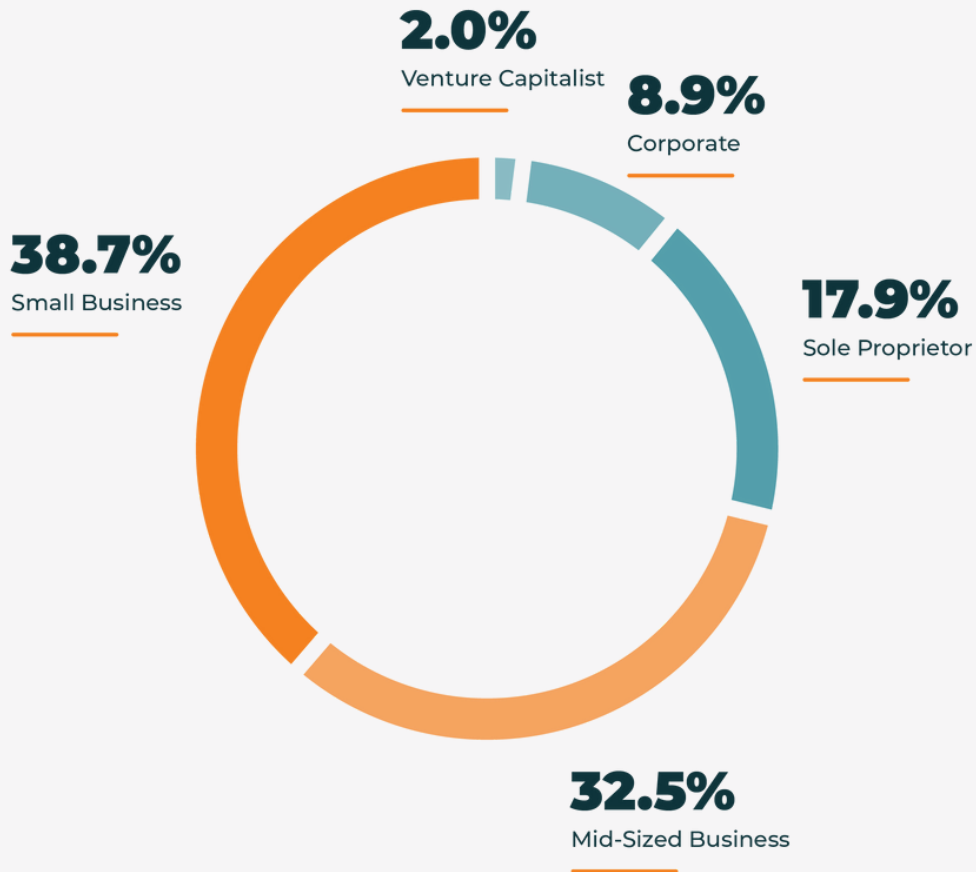
with 300+ companies made up of a wide range of industries. 2023 saw a large change in the distribution of client industries at CIC Rotterdam, with overwhelming growth in the number of service providers (26% compared to 14%). Other significant industries included business consulting (9%) and software (9%) companies.

## CIC ROTTERDAM INDUSTRY DIVISION



At the forefront of our community are the entrepreneurs and innovators. Sole proprietors and small businesses make up 56.6% of our community. We're also proud to host a number of mid-sized and corporate businesses, along with venture capitalists.

CIC ROTTERDAM BUSINESS TYPE DIVISION



# MOREAPP:

## DIGITIZING WORKFLOWS, EMPOWERING INDUSTRIES

MoreApp, a SaaS company, spearheads digital transformation by streamlining operations and reducing paper usage for companies globally. Rooted in the vision of optimizing workflows, MoreApp caters to diverse industries, facilitating a seamless transition to digital processes.

The inception of MoreApp stemmed from a pivotal challenge faced by the founder's father—a need for offline, configurable apps within greenhouses. It required configurable forms that could integrate with the ERP system, however when data needed to be transferred to the ERP, they had to manually retype and organize the photos, leading to significant time and paper wastage.

This dilemma sparked the idea for an offline, configurable App that seamlessly integrated with existing systems. Hence, MoreApp was launched, initially catering to the agriculture sector. However, recognizing the potential for broader impact, MoreApp expanded its scope to field service operations across industries such as construction, installation, facility services, security, automotive, healthcare and more.

**“Traditionally, managing paperwork involves collecting, signing, and returning documents—quite an inefficient process. With MoreApp, we digitize and automate these tasks, helping users save time and transportation costs.”**

MoreApp's journey has been marked by evolving challenges—from refining software quality to navigating cultural and legal complexities as they expanded globally. Balancing innovation with stability, MoreApp prioritizes user feedback and sustainability, fostering continuous growth and improvement.

Despite evolving challenges, they had huge success in 2023, launching the new App with 2,000 customers and 30,000 users.

“Releasing a completely standalone product is easier than one used daily or every minute, presenting a significant challenge. It required a lot of upfront work and updating for so many users without losing information. However, it was successful, and we're incredibly proud of our team for achieving this milestone.”

Operating without external funding, MoreApp emphasizes sustainable growth, focusing on positive cash flow, and reinvesting profits to enhance products and expand their team. By listening to customers and investing in local markets, MoreApp sustains steady annual revenue growth, laying a solid foundation for future expansion.

Beyond business success, MoreApp is committed to environmental sustainability and social responsibility. By reducing paper usage and optimizing transportation, MoreApp contributes to environmental conservation while actively supporting global initiatives. Pursuing B Corp certification underscores MoreApp's dedication to making a positive impact on society and the planet.

**THOM BOKELAAR**  
CEO MOREAPP

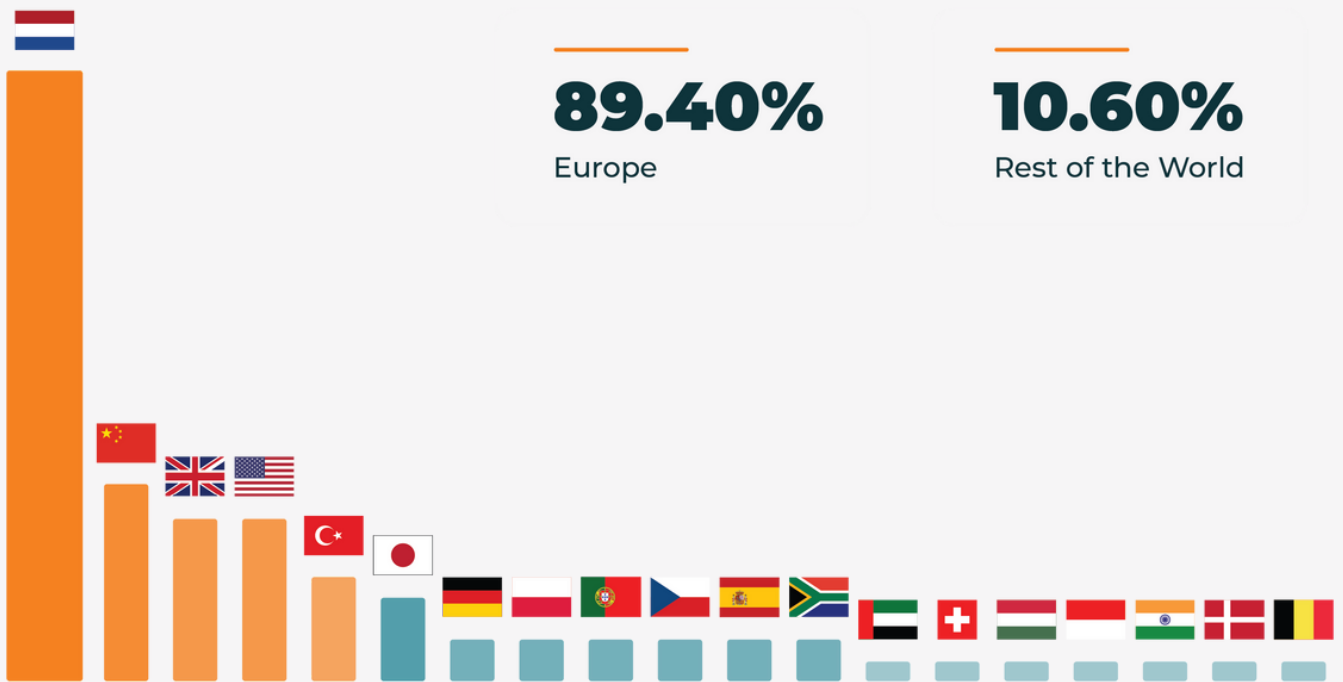


# GLOBAL REACH - INTERNATIONAL FOOTPRINT

With 89.40% of our members headquartered in Europe, our diverse network spans continents, fostering collaboration and innovation on an international scale. Notably, 18% of our community is actively conducting business beyond the borders of the Netherlands, exemplifying our commitment to global connectivity.

Leading the charge are our clients with headquarters in China, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These powerhouses are setting the standard for international growth, and CIC Rotterdam is proud to play a part in their continued success.

## CIC ROTTERDAM CLIENTS HEADQUARTERS





# BATAZIA:

## EMPOWERING AFRICAN LANGUAGES THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

"In Africa, smartphones have revolutionized communication, connectivity, and access to information, bypassing traditional infrastructure like landlines."

In the heart of Africa's linguistic diversity, Batazia emerged as a beacon of change, driven by the personal experiences of its founders and a deep-rooted mission to democratize language access. Batazia's story began with a personal experience... Barbara's and her sister Ndipabonga's first day at school, where they were confronted with the challenge of learning in a language entirely new to them—English. The journey of Batazia began with core founder Barbara Gwanmesia's poignant realization of the language limitations on self-publishing platforms, triggering memories of her own struggles with foreign languages during her early education. Together with her sister Ndipabonga, they embarked on a quest to bridge the language gap prevalent in African educational systems. Thus, Batazia was born, with a vision to universalize access to knowledge for Africa - through language.

**"Ultimately, our vision is to create a content platform that hosts a vast array of books and learning materials that can be consumed in multiple African languages, making knowledge accessible to everyone."**

Targeting individuals and organizations seeking to enhance access to education, literature, and product experiences for African communities, Batazia set out to change the landscape by localizing content into African languages. Unlike conventional language models that prioritize high-resource languages, "Batazia's technology stands out from conventional models due to its Afrocentric focus on addressing the linguistic complexities specific to African languages," employing innovative AI and NLP techniques to overcome data scarcity challenges and ensure accurate translations.

However, the road wasn't without its challenges. Data scarcity, linguistic diversity, and technological infrastructure limitations posed significant obstacles. To address these, Batazia implemented strategies such as efficient training methods, synthetic data, and partnerships with local communities and NGOs.

The year 2023 marked a significant milestone for Batazia as they secured their first investment rounds, enabling further development of their technology and team expansion.

Looking ahead to 2024, Batazia aims to enhance its translation functionality, particularly focusing on document translation, while expanding the number of supported languages. Through partnerships with language service providers, educational organizations, and tech companies, Batazia seeks to broaden its reach and impact, envisioning a content platform hosting a vast array of materials in multiple African languages.

"Our main goal for 2024 is to enhance the translation functionality of our platform, particularly focusing on document translation."

Batazia's journey has been bolstered by its base at CIC, providing essential resources, networking opportunities, and a supportive community of entrepreneurs. CIC's focus on supporting female-owned businesses in the space has been particularly meaningful as a female-founded company. Reflecting on transformative innovations, Batazia sees the smartphone ecosystem as a beacon of progress, revolutionizing communication, connectivity, and access to information across Africa.

"In the ever-evolving landscape of technology and language, Batazia stands as a testament to the power of innovation and the enduring quest to break down barriers and empower communities through language access."

**BENGYELLA GWANMESIA**  
EXECUTIVE BATAZIA





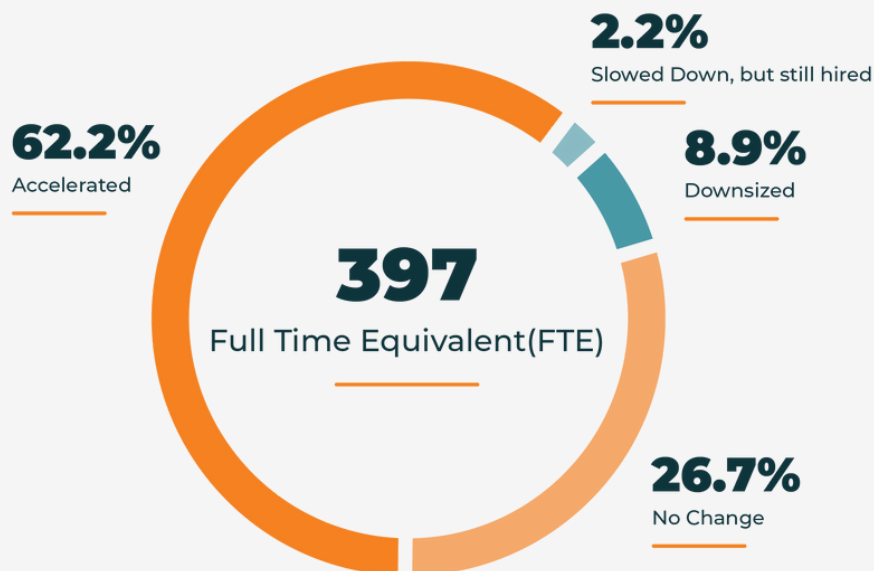
# FUELING JOB GROWTH

The creation of jobs is paramount to the vitality and success of local economies. A recent report found that startups and scaleups in Rotterdam and the Hague alone collectively employ 49,000 people, making a significant contribution to the local job market.

In 2023, companies at CIC Rotterdam created an impressive 397 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs, demonstrating the significant contribution our community is making to the local Rotterdam innovation ecosystem. Overall, CIC Rotterdam businesses in 2023 performed well on average, with the majority of our clients (62.2%) accelerating their business performance. Only 8.9% of companies at CIC downsized in 2023, further highlighting the resilience of companies located here.

## How was your Business Performance in 2023?

Impact Report 2023



Raising capital is vital for small to medium sized businesses and entrepreneurs as it fuels growth, drives innovation, mitigates risks, and fosters resilience. We're proud to share that in 2023, companies at CIC raised €12.6 million.

# DEEP BREATH:

## REVOLUTIONIZING ICU CARE WITH AI

Deep Breath is a pioneering force in critical healthcare, driven by its innovative AI-based decision support system for optimizing mechanical lung ventilation in the intensive care units (ICU). Deep Breath was born from a deep understanding of the challenges faced by clinicians in interpreting vast amounts of data generated by mechanical lung ventilators. As patients arrive in ICUs, often unconscious and reliant on mechanical ventilation, clinicians must make critical treatment decisions amidst time pressure and complex data interpretation.

"Deep Breath is a monitoring and decision support system for clinicians in intensive care units, aimed at enabling data-driven treatment decisions for each patient. We started in 2020, with a core team experienced in machine learning and a desire to apply it to improve healthcare outcomes."

Deep Breath targets respiratory physicians and researchers, offering tailored modules for real-time clinical decision support and retrospective data analysis. By streamlining data processing tasks, Deep Breath enhances efficiency and productivity for both groups, ultimately improving patient care and research outcomes.

"In the high-stakes environment of the ICU, where decisions often mean the difference between life and death, speed and efficiency are paramount."

The system's rapid data processing capabilities as well as user-friendly interface set it apart in the AI-based decision support landscape. Prioritizing user experience, Deep Breath ensures seamless integration into clinicians' workflow, addressing common adoption barriers seen in healthcare.

The highlight of 2023 was Deep Breath's successful relocation and incorporation in the Netherlands, marking a significant milestone in their expansion plans. Engaging with hospitals and receiving positive feedback reinforced their confidence in the local ecosystem.

**"Our main goal for 2024 is to validate our algorithms. We are currently focused on this crucial stage of validation, which will pave the way for further approvals and advancements."**

Their vision extends globally, with a focus on the US market to impact healthcare decision-making and outcomes. Innovation like Deep Breath has the potential to transform healthcare by enhancing patient care, reducing medical resource shortages, and making healthcare more accessible and affordable worldwide. Through their dedication and innovation, Deep Breath pioneers a new era in ICU care, driven by data and empowered by AI.



**DARIA KOZLOVA**

CO-FOUNDER DEEP BREATH

# DIVERSITY IN THE SPACE

Diversity in all its forms has been a key focus of CIC Rotterdam since we were founded more than seven years ago.

In 2016, we signed a contract with the Social and Economic Council to commit to house more than **20% of female entrepreneurs** in our community by 2025. We were delighted when we hit this target in the summer of 2022, and have continued this commitment into 2023, housing 62 female-owned companies in our space.



In addition to focussing on supporting female-owned businesses in our space, we provide funding for a number of female-led foundations including Female Ventures and Voice of All Women. By supporting female entrepreneurs, we hope to address head on the current inequalities facing women across the Netherlands and more broadly.



# BUILDING LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Recognizing the significance of fostering ties with local vendors and businesses, we are dedicated to forging strong partnerships within the Rotterdam community. Through collaborative events, networking opportunities, and various initiatives, we proudly engage in mutually beneficial endeavors to stimulate economic growth in the region. By nurturing these relationships, we contribute to a prosperous future for all in Rotterdam.



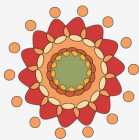
## RECHTSTREEX

RechtstreeX is a Rotterdam-based initiative connecting local farmers directly with city consumers.



## GIRAFFE

Giraffe Coffee Roasters, based in Rotterdam, is renowned for its premium, sustainably sourced coffee beans from around the world.



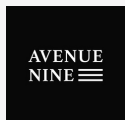
## SMAAK

sMAak, a student-led social enterprise, was founded 8 years ago with a mission to support immigrant integration through food.



## FLOATING FARM

Floating Farm is the first floating farm in the world. Fresh dairy products are produced here daily in a sustainable, circular and animal-friendly way.



## AVENUE NINE

Avenue Nine is more than just a food vendor; they specialize in serving a unique blend of experiences, delivering the vibrant flavors of the Caribbean.



## DELI BENTO

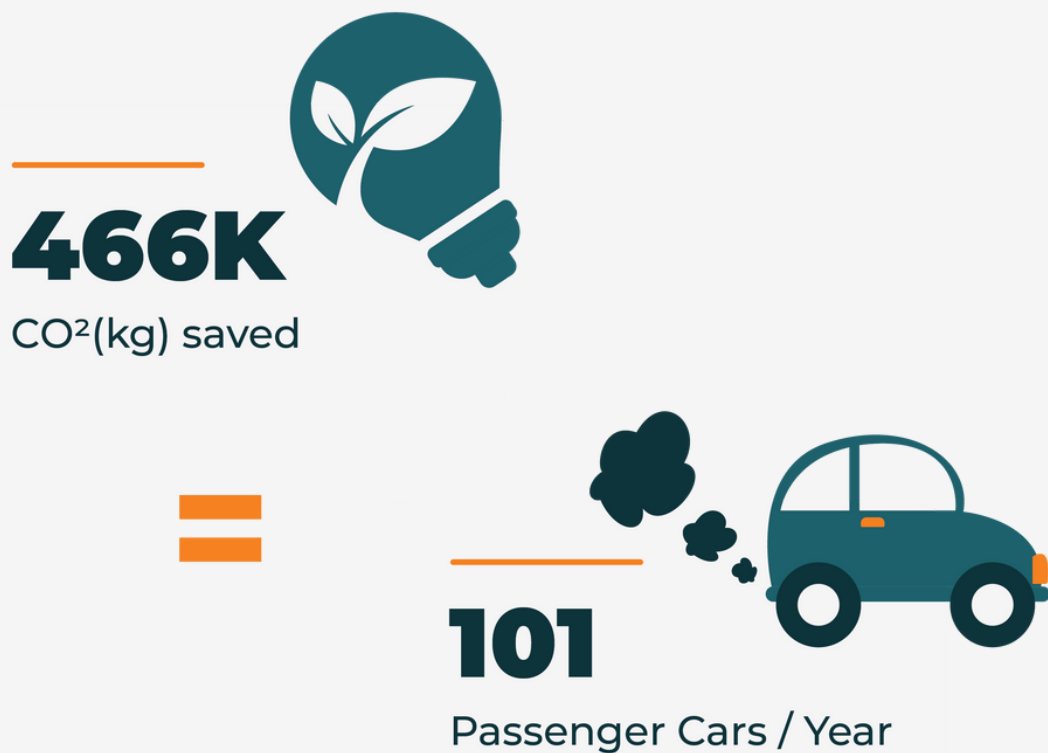
Deli Bento is a small Japanese food company rooted in the traditions of Hokkaido, Japan, inspired by the cherished recipes passed down from family.

# SUSTAINABILITY

At CIC Rotterdam, our goal is clear: achieve climate neutrality by 2025. Through mindful product procurement and guiding our clients towards greater sustainability awareness and knowledge, we strive to reduce our environmental footprint and contribute positively to our surroundings.

## ENERGY

CIC Rotterdam partners with Pure Energy, the Netherlands' greenest supplier, using 100% locally sourced renewable energy. By opting for wind (98%) and solar (2%) power over fossil fuels like natural gas and coal, we've slashed 466,201kg of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2023. That's akin to the emissions of about 101 passenger cars for a year. Our commitment to sustainability drives us toward a greener tomorrow.

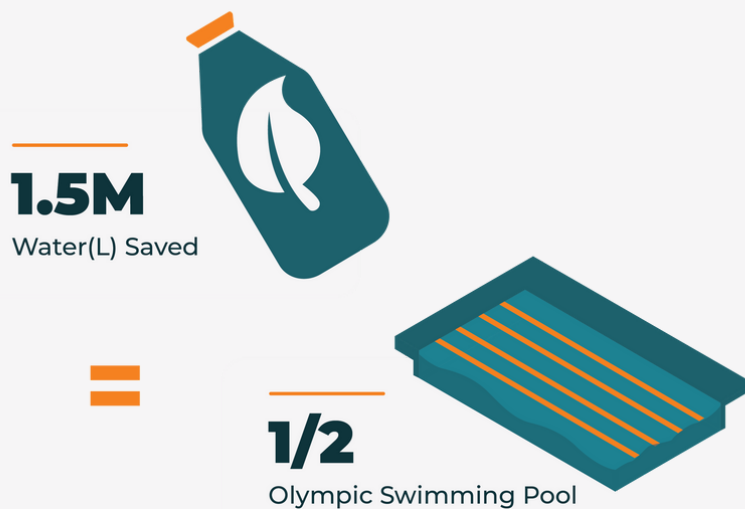






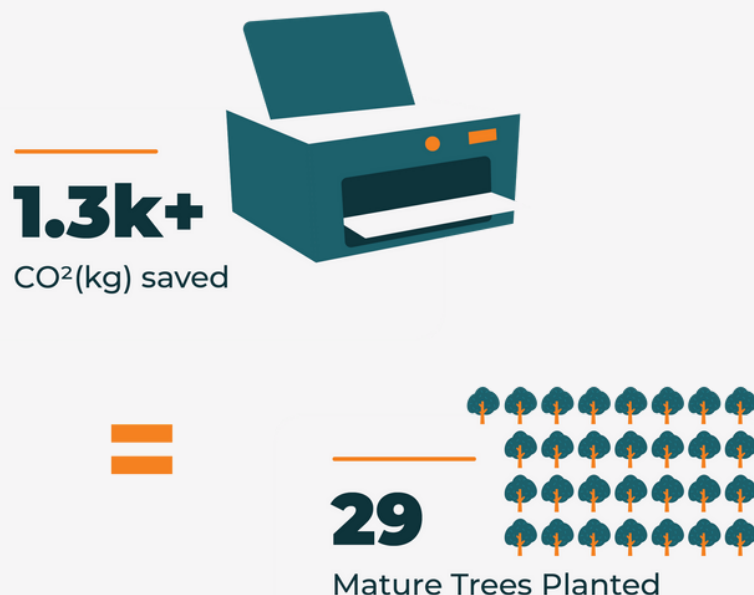
## PLANT BASED MILK

We offer soy and oat milk as plant-based substitutes for dairy milk in four of our kitchens. In 2023, this initiative resulted in a reduction of approximately 2184kg of CO2 emissions and conserved around 1,560,000 litres of water compared to providing only dairy milk. To put it in perspective, the water saved could fill over half of an Olympic-sized swimming pool.



## PAPER

We exclusively utilize Viking A4 copy & print paper bearing the EU Ecolabel certification. By opting for eco-print paper over standard A4 paper, CIC managed to reduce CO2 emissions by approximately 1,312.5kgs in 2023. This reduction is nearly equivalent to the emissions of a round-trip flight across the US. Additionally, our switch saved approximately 525,000 litres of water in 2023, further contributing to our sustainable practices.

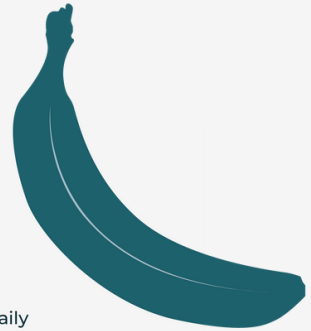


# FUN FACTS

CICers consume 197 bananas daily, equating to 51,220 bananas per year. Did you know bananas are our second biggest spending in our kitchen offering?



Banana kilometers: If each banana were laid end to end horizontally, they would span a distance equivalent to roughly half the circumference of the earth at the equator!



**197**  
Consumed Daily

**51,220**  
Consumed Yearly

**2°**  
Kitchen Spending

We've partnered with Giraffe Coffee Roastery to offer offer a blend exclusive to CIC. This one-of-a-kind bean promises a truly unforgettable coffee experience. By choosing this blend, we support sustainable coffee practices through ethical sourcing and a reduced carbon footprint.

With approximately 1,333 cups of coffee made daily across 10 machines, each machine fuels around 133 cups per day, ensuring your workplace stays energized and productive throughout the week!

**Giraffe**  
COFFEE ROASTERS



**1,333**  
Consumed Daily

**346,780**  
Consumed Yearly



**CIC ROTTERDAM | STATIONSPLEIN 45, 4TH FLOOR | 3013 AK ROTTERDAM**

**CALL US ON: +31 (0) 10 808 00 13 | [CIC.COM/ROTTERDAM](https://www.cic.com/rotterdam)**