

CORPORATE SOCIAL  
RESPONSIBILITY ACTIVITIES OF  
**COVESTRO** IN ASIA-PACIFIC  
BETWEEN **2019** AND **2020**



#Fostering Sustainable Young Minds #Sowing the Seeds of Science  
#Fighting the pandemic on every front #We are 1 with our Communities



# Welcome to the APAC CSR Magazine!

Covestro is one of the leading global manufacturers of high-tech polymers with over 16,500 employees worldwide. Our products are used in a large range of applications aligning with modern human lives including automotive, construction, healthcare, electronics, sports and leisure and many more.

Because our materials are so ubiquitous, we can provide great leverage towards making a change for sustainability and enabling a Circular Economy, protecting our planet and its resources. This is a core aim of ours. It manifests through various means: from our research and development, our manufacturing processes all the way to our people and how we behave as individuals and as corporate citizen, interact with our communities and sow the seed of science, compassion and sustainability.

This magazine is meant to showcase how we approach all of that. It tells the stories of how and what we have contributed in our locations across APAC to sustainability and we hope you enjoy reading about it as we enjoy making the world a brighter place!

Dear Readers,

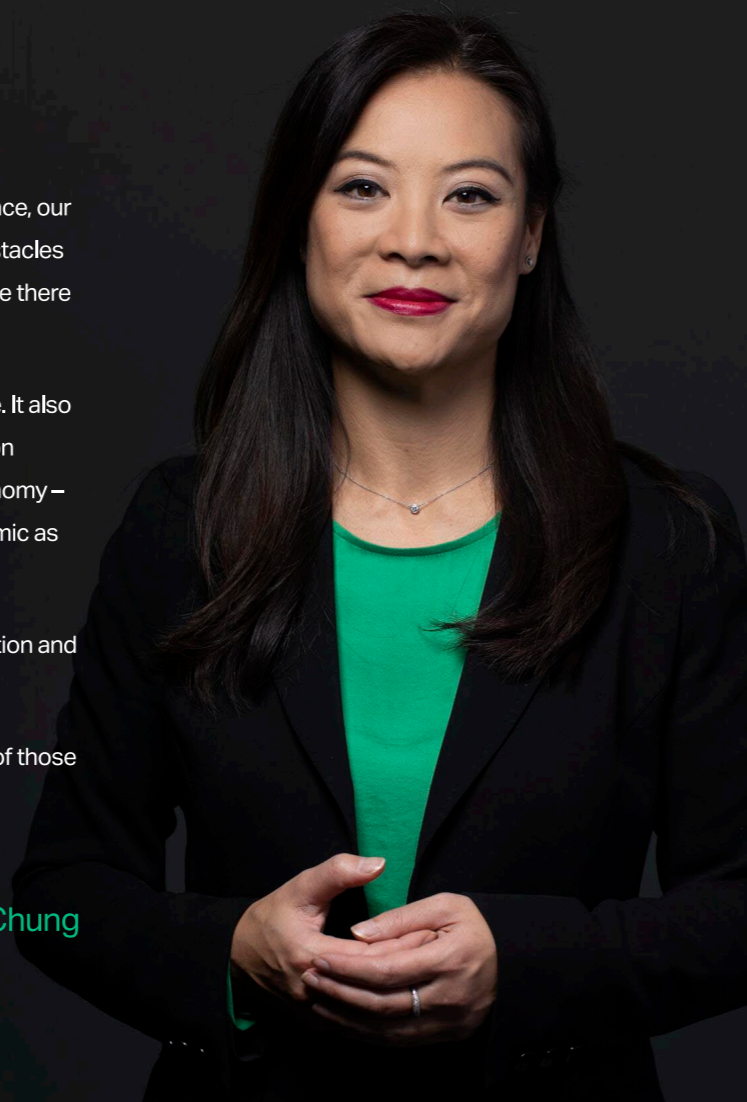
2020 was an immensely challenging year. It tested our endurance, our flexibility and made us push our boundaries and overcome obstacles in so many areas. If there is one key takeaway, to me it is: "Where there is passion, there is a way."

This proverbial saying applies not only to pandemics, of course. It also applies to the ingenious ways our colleagues in the APAC region spread the word about sustainability, science and circular economy – all the while benefitting society and fighting against the pandemic as well as for an ever more sustainable world.

I am touched by and appreciate their initiatives, stories, dedication and spirit.

I hope that while reading this magazine that showcases some of those initiatives, you will feel the same and feel inspired yourself.

Lynette Chung



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# Fostering Sustainable Young Minds

At Covestro, our vision is to become fully circular. On the path towards reaching circularity, a shift in our own patterns and mindset, awareness and collaboration will be key to leave the planet habitable for the next generations. At the same time this awareness and the education of the youth can be enormously important to give sustainability enough gravity in broad society to push for and push through with even the boldest ideas and solutions.

Realizing the importance of that, Covestro has been proactive in promoting the awareness of the need to protect our planet amongst the younger generation in the Asia-Pacific region through interactive activities like contests, training activities, family science camps, mobile apps, scientific experiments, workshops and much, much more.

By means of these activities, and acting in cooperation with local and regional NGOs, government bodies, universities and many other institutions, Covestro has reached thousands of young people to increase and broaden their awareness and understanding of not only science - but also how everyone of us could do our part in our daily life to create a better and more sustainable world Together.

On the next pages you'll find some of these stories.

# Training future sustainability ambassadors

Protecting our planet requires awareness and a sense of responsibility. To provide and foster that, Covestro in Hong Kong collaborates with the local WWF to educate the youth. The partners combine Covestro's knowledge about plastics and its proper treatment and recycling with WWF's wisdom of nature and the impact of human behavior on it. Together, they already brought hundreds of pupils and students to the WWF's nature reserves, making them ambassadors for a more sustainable world.

In the most recent program of 2019 and early 2020, the two partners turned about 100 students aged 15 to 30

into scientists conducting a marine microplastics survey. Their goal: to evaluate how much plastic pollution is to be found on Hong Kong's shores – and to educate the students along the way on how to treat the material and the environment more responsibly. They collected water samples, analyzed them and sent reports and samples to a local university for further in-depth analysis. Besides Covestro's chemical experts sharing their knowledge, on several occasions Covestro staff and their families joined the activities and joint forces with the students to make the world a brighter place together.



“Covestro is a great partner for us, since we both have sustainability high on our agenda and think alike”

said Alex Wong,  
who leads WWF's educational programs in Hong Kong.





## Fostering diversity and inclusion through science

The promotion of science, diversity and inclusion is one of the key priorities at Covestro. For this purpose we have in 2014 started the "Covestro MagicMaterial School" science education activity across Taiwan. Ever since the start of the program, a total of 1,203 students and 263 volunteers have taken part – in 2019 alone there were 62 volunteers from Covestro and the National Taichung University of Education (NTCU) plus 278 teachers and students participating.

The latest round of the program consisted of two parts: In part one, hearing-impaired and mainstream students performed in the science play "A-chi's Hidden Secret", which showcased the concept of the circular economy. In part two, called "Little Material Magician Training", simple and safe experiments were conducted to help educate the students about science.

"Equality and inclusion should be incorporated across all walks of society. With the stage show in the Covestro MagicMaterial School science education activity, we intend to create an opportunity for students to learn more from each other by embracing their differences," said Michael Lee, Managing Director of Covestro Taiwan.

By participating in rehearsals of the science play, mainstream and hearing-impaired students experienced the true meaning of inclusion and

diversity as they learned how to interact with and learn from those with differences. "By taking part in the play, I want to show the world that mainstream students and those who are hearing-impaired can join hands and get together to perform a play through mutual contribution and learning from each other," said Pei-xuan Chen, a student from Fuan Elementary School.

The "Little Material Magician Training" activity intended to have pupils explore the magic of science. For example, hearing-impaired students worked as magicians to lead mainstream school students and other hearing-impaired children in making colorful lava lighting. Students were educated about the process of recycling and resizing materials, including how practical day-to-day products such as trendy sunglasses can actually be made out of carbonized rice straw and recycled polycarbonates.

Covestro Taiwan has long been committed to the provision of science education resources to the hearing-impaired to spread scientific knowledge for the benefit of a larger student population. The program proves that science, diversity and inclusion combined with curiosity can be a powerful driver – that the students during the program learned to communicate better via spoken and sign language is yet another proof of that. Through interactions and communication during the event, diversity and inclusion came to life.

## Science bridging generations



Cultivating children's interest in science while bringing families closer together – sounds like a challenge, but Covestro Taiwan did it with ease. Here's how: By way of an event series called "Grandparent-Grandchild Science Camp" conducted in various regions of Taiwan since 2019. With fun and easy food-related scientific experiments, Covestro sparked curiosity for science, inclusion and mutual respect across generations.

When opened for registration, the camp attracted more than a thousand applications and Covestro actually had to select a lucky 400, the eldest participant being 90 but as curious as his ten-year-old grandson.

During the events, the grandparents revealed that they are in fact chemists too, testing the right ingredients and mixtures when preparing food in the kitchen. Under the guidance of advisors like Professor Steve Hsu of the Department of Science Education and Application, a booklet specifically

developed for this purpose with contributions from volunteers of Covestro, the cross-generational pairs explored the science behind cooking pie or answered pressing questions like, why certain types of food float or sink in a hotpot - which is a very traditional dish in Taiwan.

The program sparked so much interest, it also received praise from the Taiwanese Minister of Education Dr. Jiunn-rong Yeh: "The closer grandparents and grandchildren are, the less discrimination and prejudice against the elderly. This activity does encourage the elderly to continue to learn and gives grandchildren a chance to partake in their grandparents' wisdom through science."

The next round of events is already in a state of planning, fitting neatly into the overall approach of Covestro Taiwan to combine science with diversity, equality and inclusion – be it for children, the hearing impaired, the elderly and many more. Together and with our activities, we are making the world a brighter, better place.



# Becoming a guardian of our planet



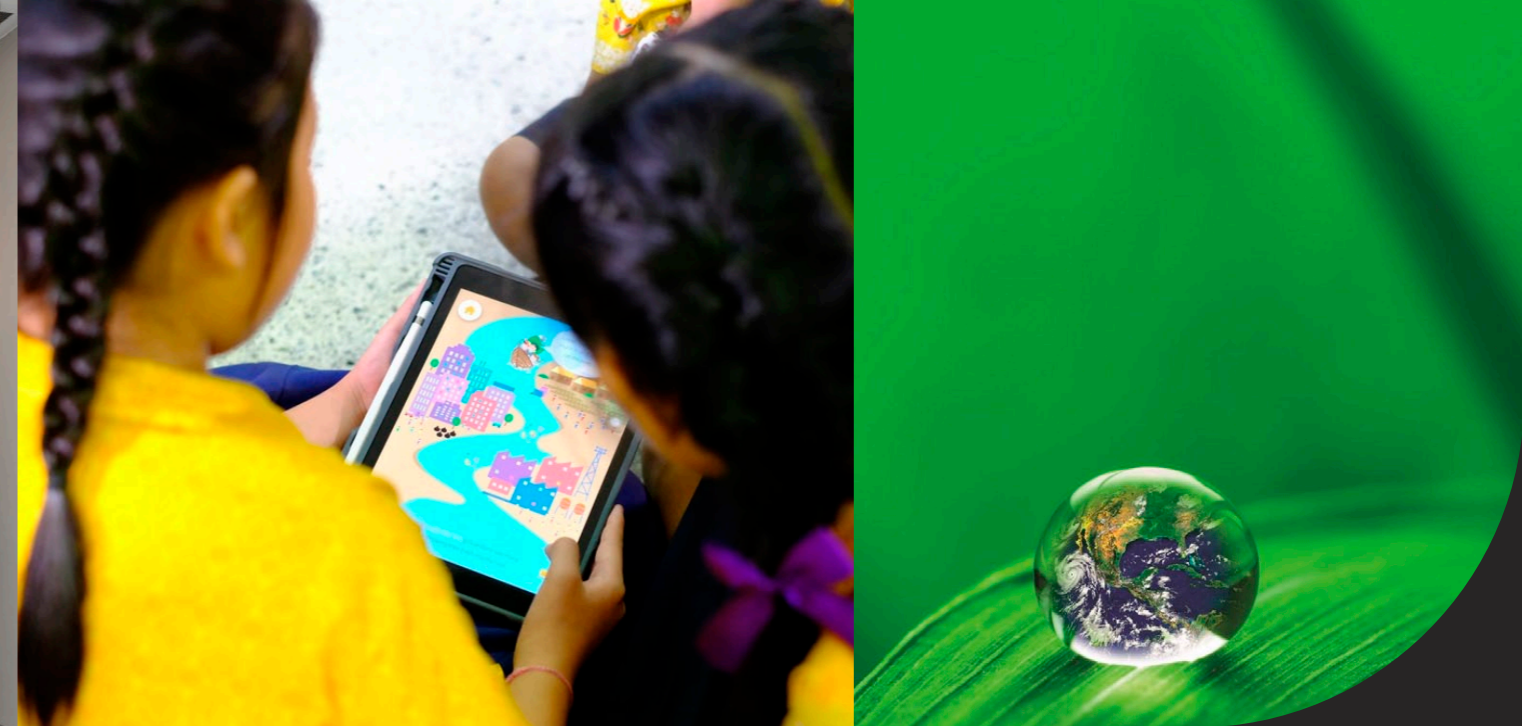
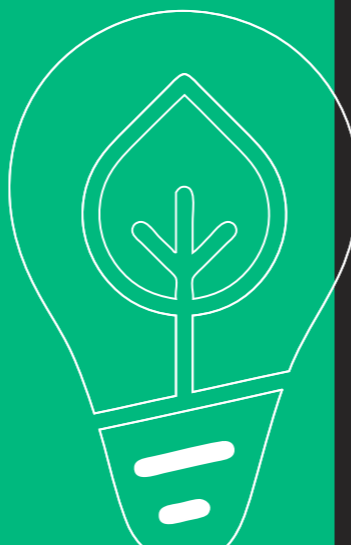
For years Covestro has been reaching out to educate children across the APAC region on the importance of protecting the environment. We do so because children play a vital role for a sustainable future. Therefore Covestro did and does promote the topic through a myriad of activities, from educational events with employees and their families and collaborations with the government and schools in Thailand, to collaborating with schools, museums and national parks in Taiwan, working with NGOs like the World Wildlife Fund, educating students in Hong Kong or collaborating with schools in Shanghai.

Part of these efforts turned to a comic book called "Bright Minds for a Brighter World. The Adventures of Young Guardians", illustrating the adverse effects of irresponsible littering to the environment and particularly the ocean in a playful and easy-to-understand way. It originated in Thailand in 2016, was adapted swiftly across the APAC region and was since then read by tens of thousands of children who participated in the various activities Covestro conducted.

Covestro then took that approach a step further and transformed the printed comic into an interactive app version first in Taiwan for World Ocean Day 2019, then later in Hong Kong, Thailand and Mainland China.

"Responsible waste management is one of the great challenges of our time," said Lynette Chung, Head of Sustainability at Covestro. "As a company, and as individuals, we must all be responsible for handling waste properly, treating it as a valuable raw material and helping guide the way to a more circular economy. By turning our comic book into a digital app full of interactions, we wanted to encourage younger generations to become ambassadors for sustainability by helping to promote a more sustainable life on our planet."

In the interactive application, the readers follow the adventures of three kids, called "Young Guardians". They witness and have to deal with the impacts of littering on animals and nature. The users help the guardians in different activities, like sorting waste



into the right trash bins or releasing a trapped dolphin, while learning more about responsible and sustainable behaviors, appropriate treatment of waste and concepts like "reduce, reuse and recycle". Anyone playing with the app shall be motivated to become a "young guardian" themselves. Kids can even record and share their own version of the story with their friends. The app furthermore offers features that help children learn some of the complicated terms with ease.

Besides using the app as an individual tool, Covestro also integrated it and its content into other activities. In Taiwan, for example, where the audio is narrated by popular musical actors like Katie Partlow and Henry Hsueh-Han Lu, the app became part of the existing educational projects with national parks and museums. In Thailand, Covestro collaborated with its partners in the education sector like the Faculty for Education on Sustainable Development of Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok to introduce and promote the application to elementary school pupils, even having a stage show of the adventures of the young guardians by the university students. In Hong Kong, the app was supposed to be

integrated into the educational activities the company had conducted with its local partner, the World Wildlife Fund, before COVID put the entire program on hold.

To avoid waste and become fully circular, it takes concerted efforts. The storybook-turned-app shows how one can attempt to bring a rather abstract topic like sustainability closer to children and make the next generation guardians of our planet. And Covestro's efforts did not stop there: the second episode of the book has been published in 2021 to continue to encourage children to learn more about circular economy in a fun way.





## Chemistry? Real-life magic!

### Cultivating a 'safety-first mindset' at schools

Involving neighbours around its sites goes a long way at Covestro. Through various means the company reaches out to adjacent communities to connect, interact and be approachable beyond its own sites. Close to the company's largest site in Caojing Shanghai, China, Covestro for nearly a decade shares insights into topics like chemistry and safety with students from Zhelin school, invites them to the company's premises like the APAC Innovation Center (PRDC) and does a lot more.

Just one of many examples and activities: In 2020, eight Covestro volunteers together with the 'Safe Kids Worldwide' Organization went to Zhelin school and conducted an interactive class about safety at home and during commute. Safe Kids Worldwide conducts numerous such events all around the world to help families and communities to keep children safe and injury-free. The partners together showed the 40 students, aged 8 to 12, things like how to cross the road safely, how to wear a helmet properly and how to spot and avoid hazards in buildings and at home.

To not make it too hard to digest and remember, the topics were taught in the form of games, and important messages were put into easy-to-remember formulas like "Stop, Look, then Cross".

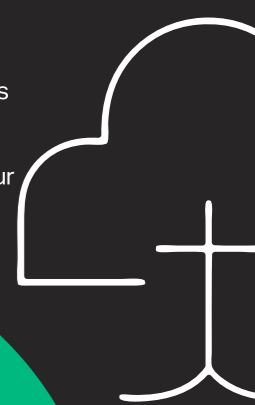


A little bit of science, an ounce of county fair, a pound of creativity and Do-it-yourself tinkering attitude and a lot of creative 'in-between': those are the ingredients of the "Maker Faire" – a concept that celebrates making and creating things of different kinds and shapes, appealing to the craftsman in all of us. The concept seems to have fallen on fertile ground, since ever since the first fair was conducted in San Francisco in 2006, over 200 fairs have been conducted all around the world. In 2020, such an event was conducted in Shanghai as well. A chance Covestro took!

Chemistry and Covestro's own spirit were a great fit to the concept of Maker Faire, so the company had its own booth at the fair, dubbed "MagicMaterial school". Over the course of two days volunteers from the company offered 8 sessions and 16 small chemical experiments to the numerous curious little and big visitors. The visitors thereby got a glimpse into and

hands-on experience with the world of chemistry, discovering what real-life magic looks like and hopefully eager to follow the road of science in their futures.

At the same time Covestro also conveyed the importance of conserving the environment and treating wastes, particularly plastic waste, appropriately. With the help of the marine litter storybook you read all about on pages 8 and 9 of this booklet, the visitors discovered why it takes everybody's awareness and dedication to protect our planet.





## Waste is not waste



Not all waste is waste. Actually there doesn't have to be any waste at all. All of it can be reused and recycled. These are thoughts quite new and unfamiliar to a lot of people. To change that, Covestro Thailand works with children, staff and communities near its plants.

We invited 150 children from 3 schools near the Map Ta Phut plant in eastern Thailand to a Sustainability Kids Camp in order to promote that concept, explain the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (UNSDGs) and advocate sustainable behaviors. This shall not only make the kids aware of the value of waste and particularly plastic waste, but also help them understand humanity's contribution to climate change and how to mitigate it.

The kids were guided through the day by staff from Covestro Thailand and taught about awareness and concepts on how to use resources wisely – like the “3R” concept which emphasizes ‘Reuse, Reduce and Recycle’ as well as how to respect people and the planet with “edu-taining” activities. The comic book “Bright Minds for a Brighter World” (which we introduced on pages 8 and 9 in this booklet) that tells the tale of a group of young guardians accomplishing several adventures to save the environment was

handed out to all the participants to further arouse their interest and foster their understanding towards proper waste management.

Furthermore, it can be said without a doubt that some kids were literally able to see clearer afterwards! Because as part of this Kids Camp activity, children with bad eyesight received proper eyeglasses telling a story of their own: The frames of these eyeglasses were in fact the result of another waste collection and recycling activity of Covestro Thailand (read all about it on page 27). They were produced from recycled Covestro polycarbonate combined with material from collected and recycled PET bottles, to be precise. A first hand example for proper re-use of waste.

Combining fun and hands-on activities is important in children's education. Focusing on recycling as an overarching topic is supposed to equip the next generation with a more deeply ingrained awareness to treat the environment responsibly and help protect our planet.



## Time for business at school!

When it comes to soft skills and business acumen, it's never too early to make the first experiences. In Japan, Covestro encourages and fosters just that in a collaboration with the Oki High school, which is located in the Shimane Prefecture, Japan. Every year, students there set out to contribute to a initiative called “Geopark Research”, that makes students from the high school research on pressing topics of the Oki Islands, like how to tackle demographic change, how to promote locally grown products across the country or how to increase tourism in the area.

They present their results once per year to businesses and universities. So when it was time in 2020, Covestro Japan send 11



delegates from the business world to do the (unfortunately only virtual) sparring, give feedback and input on the presented ideas, to evaluate presentation skills and to foster student's problem-solving and critical thinking skills. By doing so, the students experienced first hand what to expect in job life and what a good idea needs from business' perspective to come to life.

The high school students cherish the chance to present their research in front of Covestro employees at the Covestro Innovation Center in Amagasaki.



## Finding chemistry in daily life

To inspire children and spark their interest in chemistry, Covestro participated in the “Manabi no fes” (Festival of Learning) event in Japan – in the Tokyo museum of science, no less! Around 1,800 elementary school kids and their parents came to enjoy workshops held by a total of 37 companies from various industries.

Covestro was active with science workshops featuring live chemical experiments for the little soon-to-be scientists. One experiment included making polyurethane foam, one of Covestro's core materials that can become either rigid foam for insulating buildings or fridges or soft foam for car seats, sofas and alike. Covestro used the chance during the fully

booked workshops to convey the wonders of science, explain the material and its use and how such material science contributes to saving energy or ensuring convenience.

The participating elementary school kids also got further giveaways made by Covestro-chemistry, like a hologram card. By explaining the importance of materials and chemistry and making it palpable, the company hopes to maintain interest of the next generations in science and the chemical industry. It actively promotes this through such educational activities and aims at creating awareness and generating knowledge in order to help enhance the interest of the younger generations in science and to improve the long-term viability of the industry.



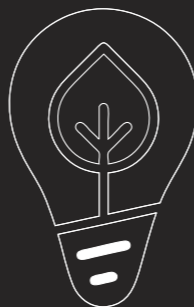
# Sowing the Seeds of Science

In order to become fully circular and carbon neutral, it will need a lot of innovation. Whether we want to generate and run whatever we do only with renewable energy, adjust manufacturing processes for everything we produce, decide on how we transport people and goods from A to B without burning fossil fuel, how we are to heat and cool our buildings and so much more.

We can identify the areas we need to tackle to stop climate change. But it's already clear we can't solve all the challenges we face with the technology available today. So it will need innovation, and bright minds to come up with them.

This is what Covestro fosters when involving pupils and engaging students in contests, competitions, educational sessions, games and more: sparking interest in natural sciences to encourage the inventors of the future.

Here are some of their stories.



## Green chemistry in Taiwan's high schools

In order to promote the concept of sustainable, green chemistry and attract ideas for it, Covestro Taiwan in 2020 sponsored a "High School Green Chemistry Creativity Competition" which was jointly hosted by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Environmental Protection Administration (EPA). High school students across Taiwan were asked to team up to participate – for the glory and to win entry tickets to an overseas green chemistry forum.

What's meant by "green chemistry", one might wonder? Well, chemistry is all around us. In almost every product close to us, and in almost every aspect in our daily lives it plays a crucial role. Without it, modern life would look much different – try to take everything electronic or any means of transportation out of our lives to get a notion of what it might feel like. The flipside of the coin: Chemistry often needs lots of energy, uses sometimes hazardous and mostly fossil-based raw materials that can be challenging to handle and sometimes create waste that up until now isn't always properly managed and can become a burden for the environment.

Now, what if one could eliminate the use and generation of dangerous substances in chemical processes? What if we could reuse and recycle everything? What if we could switch entirely from fossil-based to renewable raw materials? And what if we could somehow improve the manufacturing

process so it consumes much less energy? These were among the questions the 528 students in 240 teams from Taiwan set out to answer. And not by coincidence, those are also questions that Covestro pursues as part of its vision "to become fully circular".

"Sustainable development and circularity are part of our company's DNA," said Michael Lee, Managing Director of Covestro Taiwan. "We're proud to work on these topics together with creative young people and strong partners from the government here in Taiwan."

There were 28 award winning ideas in total. The Tainan First Senior High School took home the Covestro-sponsored award with their project "At Your Fingertips - Exploring the Reaction Rate of a Ninhydrin Fingerprint Developer". Ninhydrin is widely used for the collection of fingerprints at a crime scene. It is a chemical powder sprayed on suspicious surfaces, where it reacts with residues like amino acids from the fingers and turns bright purple. Through their research they reduced the amount of chemical needed, plus made the reaction itself more efficient: where it formerly took 10 minutes at 60°C to see the fingerprints, it now takes 8 minutes at 35°C.

A great example of ideas for the future from scientists of the future – and Covestro Taiwan right in the middle, making sure that young minds already consider sustainability while they trod the paths of their lives.







## At the drawing board for future cities

To show that science can be both entertaining as well as purposeful and to motivate the youth to embark on the path of science, Covestro is going various ways. In Shanghai, China, the company worked together with either its long-term partner Tongji University or with several chemical industry associations in several contests to motivate students to come up with ideas on sustainable urban development and contribute to making their hometown more sustainable, be entrepreneurial and creative.

The UN projects that 68% of the world's population will be living in urban areas by 2050. That means a staggering 2.5 billion additional people will populate urban areas, with the majority of this increase happening in Asia and Africa. This poses a huge challenge, from infrastructure to resource consumption to waste generation, but it also means an enormous opportunity for sustainable cities, developed from the start with a low ecological impact

in mind: regenerative, liveable, smart, resilient and characterized by circular material flows and new ways of sustainable value creation. Topics that require smart material solutions, like those from Covestro.

To get ever more sustainable urban areas with smart materials, it needs brainpower and unconventional ideas. And that is what Covestro wanted to tap into with its "Future Cities Competition" when it was first conducted in 2019. All part of the company's 'Future Cities initiative', a global call for open discussion on urban development and a platform for implementing Covestro's purpose to make the world a brighter place.

"At Covestro, we believe that our materials play a vital role in creating liveable, circular, and resilient cities that lessen the impact on our environment. This is why Covestro spares no effort to drive innovation for sustainable urban development," said Dr. Michael

Schmidt, Head of Innovation APAC and Dean of the Covestro-Tongji Innovation Academy: "Engaging and inspiring the next generation to contribute to this is important to us. This is why Covestro is actively reaching out to them and providing a platform where they can share their vision of Future Cities."

The first ever "Future Cities Competition" was jointly hosted by Covestro and long-term partner Tongji University at Covestro's Polymer Research and Development Center (PRDC) in Shanghai in August 2019. The task of the about 40 students was to build a prototype of whatever would help a future city to be sustainable. To generate ideas they took out to the streets to conduct a qualitative survey with residents on what a perfect city would look like and saw what the Urban Planning Exhibition Center already has in mind for the future development of Shanghai.

Together with the impressions of material solutions of Covestro they gathered from within the PRDC, they then made up for their prototypes. Built from various provided materials ranging from LEGO bricks to handcraft material, the winning group came up, built and pitched the idea for an 'Intelligent city farm', spanning several floors and enabling farming in dense urban areas. Apart from receiving an award, the winning team was also invited to attend K Fair 2019, the plastics trade fair in Düsseldorf, Germany in October 2019, and visit Covestro's headquarters in Leverkusen.

## Putting chemistry to good use

Besides working directly with universities, Covestro also engages with peers and federations to jointly work on an ever more sustainable world. The China Petrochemical Industry Federation is one of them. In 2019 and 2020, the partners conducted a "Green Chemical Engineering, Innovation and Entrepreneurial Contest" which aimed at

exactly what its name says, i.e. to motivate students and young professionals to be curious to find new colorful ways and be courageous enough to pursue them, or, as the organizers put it "Create a better future with chemical engineering".

It was open for not just students but anyone from undergraduate to graduate, to young science or chemical industry workers who had a team of at least three people together, and – most importantly – great ideas could make it through the rigorous selection process.

In the 2019 edition, for example, over a course of 6 months of selection, only 53 out of initially 259 teams from 27 provinces and cities in mainland China were selected to participate in the event, out of which 7 made it to the final round.

As an official partner of the competition, Covestro experts were sitting in the juries and the company itself put up five of the "challenge topics" that the participants could hand in ideas for, including digitalization, energy efficiency improvement and circular economy.

For the winners, these contests meant prizes, prestige, trips to affiliated partners to exchange and build a relevant network, sponsored office space in a materials innovations center in Shanghai, and access to facilities for small-scale testings. For Covestro, these contests meant sitting at the table when the future of the chemical industry, a more sustainable and circular one, is decided and advocated.





## A firm foundation for a brighter future

Education in science and scientific research is one of the keys to an individual's and a country's economic and social development. With the project 'Brighter World Lab, Covestro in India started in 2017 to foster exactly that: to give access to and promote scientific reasoning among underprivileged children, help teachers to raise interest in the topic, thus cultivating a new generation of analytical thinkers and scientists. In collaboration with the ARCH foundation, which helps companies to realize their ambitions in terms of CSR, the team in India built a total of 50 laboratories in

various locations by the end of 2020, with a focus set on mathematics and science.

Apart from setting up the hardware, i.e. well equipped science labs, the partners also developed the software: a series of programs and experiential activities that ensured the consistent and good quality of education that would help students relate their textbook knowledge to the real world and spark their curiosity and creativity all the more.



## Labs as hardware, four main activities as software

These activities namely included a 'Teachers' Training Program', a 'Science Quiz' to foster teamwork among students and foster their investigative spirits, a 'Science Club' with do-it-yourself experiments, all culminating into a three-day 'Eureka Science Fest'.

Both the teachers and students involved benefitted from these programs. The teachers by learning new pedagogical

methods and having a platform for sharing their experiences and best practices. The students by getting hands-on and out-of-classroom experience in science, teamworking with others and being curious. With over 34,000 students and 76 teachers involved thus far, Covestro India has surely taken a step ahead in increasing interest in science among underprivileged students and making their world a brighter place.



# Fighting the pandemic on every front



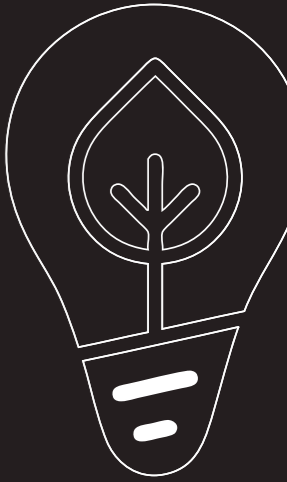
When the coronavirus started spreading, entire countries and regions went into lockdown and underwent unprecedented measures and hardships to curb the spread.

Medical staff at the frontlines, employees, partners along the value chain – almost everyone and every area of our lives and Covestro's business and network were affected.

But among the crisis on personal and business level, among the suffering, grief and loss was also hope. Around the world people helped each other, their communities and companies to weather this storm. From adapting to new ways of working to voluntary work to donations and other ingenious means: individuals, companies and the public sector were coming together to fight the crisis shoulder-to-shoulder.

For Covestro, it has long been part of the company's corporate DNA to reach out and support communities, people in need and each other in good times and in challenging times. So when the Coronavirus hit the world with unprecedented force, the company mobilized resources at its locations across the APAC region and acted fast: to protect its employees, support frontline workers and help neighboring communities and municipalities fight against the virus.

Here are a few highlights showing how that happened.



## A beacon of hope in Mainland China

In Mainland China, the virus hit during the Spring Festival in early 2020. A traditional holiday and a time that is usually spent with families and loved ones. Covestro in Mainland China firstly gathered an emergency response team that worked tirelessly throughout the holidays, tracked the development of the pandemic and made sure employees were safe and healthy. Distribution of masks to staff, work-from-home arrangements and psychological assistance were among the actions Covestro took immediately.

For colleagues living or visiting family in the epicenter of the virus outbreak in Wuhan, Covestro contacted and comforted them immediately. At the same time the company donated 150,000 pairs of protective goggles to hospitals in the city and surrounding areas to support frontline medical workers.

"Our first priority was to keep every employee safe and healthy. I was particularly impressed by our production employees who ensured continuous and reliable production even throughout the peaks of the pandemic, as well as everyone that sacrificed their holidays to help the company and colleagues in this time of crisis. We clearly showed that Covestro and its staff is a beacon of light and hope in times of dire crisis," said Holly Lei, President of Covestro China.

## Supporting frontline medical staff in Hong Kong

When the coronavirus spread across the globe, Hong Kong sealed its borders from the outside world. Nevertheless the city suffered several outbreaks, putting medical staff at the frontlines under high pressure and increased risk to their safety. Medical equipment was in high demand, and the supply wasn't catching up right away. Luckily, an area for which Covestro both provides materials and had contacts to customers it could refer to.

The company therefore didn't hesitate to get in touch with its Taiwanese customer Megasafe, a manufacturer of medical-grade protective goggles, from which the Hong Kong hospital authority procured 65,000 goggles right away.

On top of these, the company also donated another 5,000, reaching a total of 70,000 goggles.

"As a good corporate citizen and as human beings living in this city, we saw it as our duty to help in times of need," said Samir Hifri, Managing Director of Covestro Hong Kong. "We were happy that we were able to make the right connection and hope it helps the heroes fighting in the front lines at the hospitals to keep us all safe and healthy."



## Taiwan: An Island weathering the storm

Just a few hundred kilometers east of Hong Kong, the island of Taiwan imposed strict measures once the coronavirus started spreading. Thanks to these and the vigilance and discipline of the local population, the virus was under control for the most part. However, the demand of medical equipment exceeded the supplies by far here as well. Covestro in Taiwan therefore also joined hands with local customer Megasafe to donate a total of 20,000 goggles to the Taiwan Center for Disease Control and medical institutions across the country.

"We had been paying a lot of attention on developments around the globe and within Taiwan," said Michael Lee, Managing Director of Covestro Taiwan. "We at Covestro Taiwan admired the courage and tireless work of our medical workers. We wanted to help where we could by staying alert, adhering to any measures, working from home, not travelling and focusing on hygiene, and as a company also by donating and making contributions for the protection of our frontline staff."



## Standing together when times got rough in India

On the Indian subcontinent the virus ravaged particularly mercilessly. With footage of overwhelmed hospitals and limited oxygen supply spreading across the world, Covestro in India did what it could to protect staff and help surrounding communities. Particularly hard hit were poor, rural and migrant communities – so Covestro India donated to government funds and NGOs – money that went, for example, into groceries and sanitation kits to underprivileged workers or survival packages with daily essentials and protective gear for at least a month.

Elsewhere in India, Maharashtra on the country's west coast is the state most severely affected to date, accounting for the majority of recorded cases and deaths in the country. Zooming into the state's capital Mumbai, designated COVID hospitals in the city were and are overloaded by patients while facing an extreme shortage of equipment. It is important to protect them and the medical staff, so they can continue to help and heal the sick, while at the same time hospitals remain an area of safety and do not turn into superspreader locations.



In order to protect the frontline medical staff – doctors, nurses, technicians and many more – Covestro India therefore donated, for example, 300 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits to the Belapur General Hospital and another 740 to Thane municipal hospital just north of Mumbai – both COVID-19 designated hospitals with facilities for tracking, tracing, testing, isolation and treatment of COVID patients. Perfectly in line with the guidelines of the Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, these kits included an overall with a cap, a pair of shoe covers, an N-95 mask, protective goggles, a face shield, a pair of nitrile gloves and a biohazard waste bag.

And it didn't stop there: from safety kits for police personnel to an acute care unit for another hospital to supporting the government hospital of Panruti in the Cuddalore district with a much needed ventilator – Covestro India continues to support the fight against COVID at various fronts.



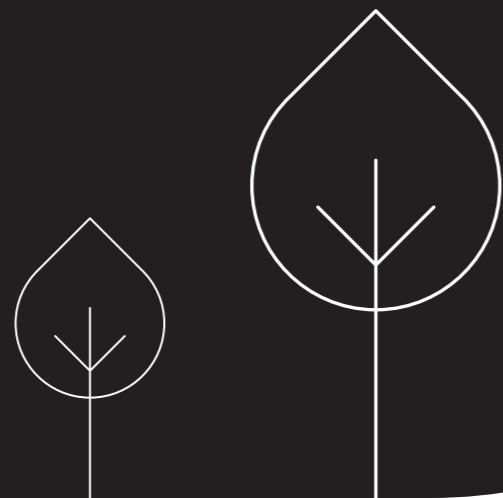
# We are 1 with our Communities

When it comes to sustainability and being a responsible corporate citizen, working together with communities close to our sites, offices and locations in general is paramount to Covestro.

Whether that involves helping, supporting, volunteering or educating, even if we exhaust ourselves at times: Covestro approaches the topic from various ends.

This can mean involving staff to collect bottles for recycling while promoting the topic at a large-scale industry conference in China. It can mean encouraging corporate volunteers to work with nearby schools on waste collection, even recycling such waste into useful products as it happened in Thailand. Or it might involve charity running or helping farmers and rural communities to meet basic needs in India.

As diverse and colorful as Covestro is are its activities when it comes to CSR and community outreach. Read in this last chapter of this magazine how such outreach works across various countries in Asia Pacific.



## Waste is value

Plastics are an indispensable part of modern life. One of their key features, their durability and literal indestructibility, contributes to sustainability on the one hand, but on the other can become a disadvantage when the material is disposed improperly. To avoid that, Covestro has always been proactive in the promotion of the true value and proper treatment of plastics.

In mainland China, for example, the company involved its employees during the 10th China Petroleum and Chemical Conference in 2019. They collected over 3,000 single-use bottles in a series of events, on a family day or in programs with schools. The collected plastic bottles were recycled and put into good use for a second life, e.g. they were made into the cover and a pen for a notebook for 2020 for staff, or made into cardholders or repurposed for Christmas ornaments on the Christmas Tree in the office of Covestro in Shanghai, China. Environmental awareness meets innovation meets creativity, a great formula to find solutions for the challenges of the 21st century.

In one of the events, participants were encouraged to collect bottles and deposit them into an earth-shaped

to learn about the concept of "reduce, reuse and recycle", core steps for every one of us to remember when we think of waste in general and plastic waste in particular.

Covestro also advocates for this topic on the big stage. Holly Lei, President of Covestro China, promoted it in a speech about the sustainable economic development of the chemical industry in Mainland China during the event.

"As an international corporation, we at Covestro are keen to contribute our professional expertise and collaborate with our partners along the value chain to promote the sustainable economic development of the Chinese petroleum and chemical industry as well as to contribute to a greener world," she said. "We can all do our part also as individuals and help contribute to environmental protection by collecting used plastics instead of simply disposing them."

Individual contributions are vital to become fully circular. Making sustainable behaviors a habit is key.



## Bright future, Better vision.



On World Environment Day 2019, Covestro in Thailand kicked-off the campaign "Brighter Future, Better Vision". Core of the campaign were the concepts of "waste-to-value" and "reduce, reuse, recycle". Employees, local management as well as teachers and pupils from the nearby Wat Ta Kuan school collected plastic waste at and around the company's manufacturing site Map Ta Phut. They specifically aimed for used PET bottles which helped some children to see clear again, as we will read below.

By doing so, "Brighter Future, Better Vision" aimed at creating awareness among employees and communities around the Map Ta Phut plant for recycling plastic, reducing plastic waste and demonstrating how plastic waste can become useful again.

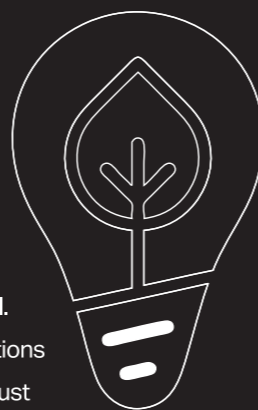
On the launch day, Dr. Juergen Meyn, then Managing Director of Covestro Thailand and Site Manager Map Ta Phut, shared his thoughts about the importance of managing plastic waste in an effective way: "Covestro believes that this campaign will be another step on the path towards reducing plastic waste and treating it as the valuable material that it still is. We also want to



encourage greater engagement at a national level. Lastly we want to make sure that the next generations on this planet inherit a bright world. For that, we must become fully circular," he said.

While the participants collected PET bottles around Covestro's Map Ta Phut site, Covestro also encouraged sharing knowledge about effective plastic waste management with the participants as well as the children at the Wat Ta Kuan School. All that was done to raise awareness, enhance involvement with communities to take more serious action in reducing plastic waste, and to foster a mindset of treating the environment with responsibility.

The collected plastic bottles were recycled and mixed with polycarbonate material to produce proper eyeglasses. These glasses have been donated and the story behind them has been shared with students in schools and in specifically developed "Kid's camps" (see page 12!) to get the maximum out of the campaign. The glasses thereby became a tool for education – and helped some children in need to see clear again!



## Touching lives, changing lives

Getting in touch with the surrounding communities, helping, supporting, volunteering and sometimes exhausting oneself for the good of society and people in need – that is what Covestro in India pursues via various means. What the colleagues show there is a role model for how diverse such community outreach can be: it might include helping farmers to ensure they can live a better life. It can mean caring for basic needs of poor communities and ensuring they have access to clean water. Or it means that colleagues run and thereby donate to and support an NGO that fosters the education of children. But let's take it slowly and look at one at a time:

## Improving the livelihoods of farmers – one tree at a time

Together with the local NGO Green Yatra, which translates into "Green Journey", Covestro planted 3000 fruit-bearing trees in village communities in the outskirts of Mumbai. This on the one hand certainly helps the environment. On the other hand the trees planted carry coconut or other fruits that enable farmers to feed themselves and others, generating an additional source of income, thereby revitalizing local farming and avoiding the long, emission-heavy transport of such crops. This project is necessary because quite often, farmers in the outskirts of megacities in India can't live as well off their fields as they can from day labor in the city, because the land is either not fertile or there is insufficient rainfall or lack of irrigation. The result is that fertile land lies idle and farmers quit the fields to do daytime labor. By planting resilient trees in the proper locations and additionally sharing knowledge on plantation and farming methods, Covestro and Green Yatra ensured that 35 villages and about 1000 people were able to live from such crops and took up farming again.



## Meet basic needs to ensure a brighter future

While improving livelihoods close to Mumbai in the west of India, the company does the same in a different fashion in villages in the southeast. For millions of the more than 250 million people living in these states, access to clean water is a huge issue. Any less than the usual heavy rain in winter months can cause depleting groundwater, draughts and desperation already. Lack of infrastructure and regulations on economized and efficient use of water as well as industrial use of it add to that. With an average income of just below 450 USD per month, even less in rural areas, people have to nevertheless sometimes spend up to 150 USD to buy water from private companies that deliver it in tanks. An unbearable situation which the government now tackles, together with partners from the private sector, NGOs and whoever wants to help.

In 2019, Covestro jumped in and aimed to alleviate the scarcity: Close to the (for India) small coastal city of Cuddalore, in a village called Sonakanchavadi, Covestro, together with the NGO SEESHA (short for 'Samiti (say: committee) for Education, Environment, Social and Health Action) renovated overhead water tanks and installed water pumps for existing wells to address the water requirement needs of the villagers.

Senthil Kumar D.M. said: "At Covestro, we believe in achieving sustainable economic growth without harming our planet and people while improving the quality of life for current and future inhabitants. For this, the protection and preservation of water is of very high importance. With the efforts we undertook in Sonakanchavadi, villagers can focus on improving their lives further instead of worrying about one of the most basic needs."

With the water supply secured for years to come, the 175 families in Sonakanchavadi are looking into a brighter future.

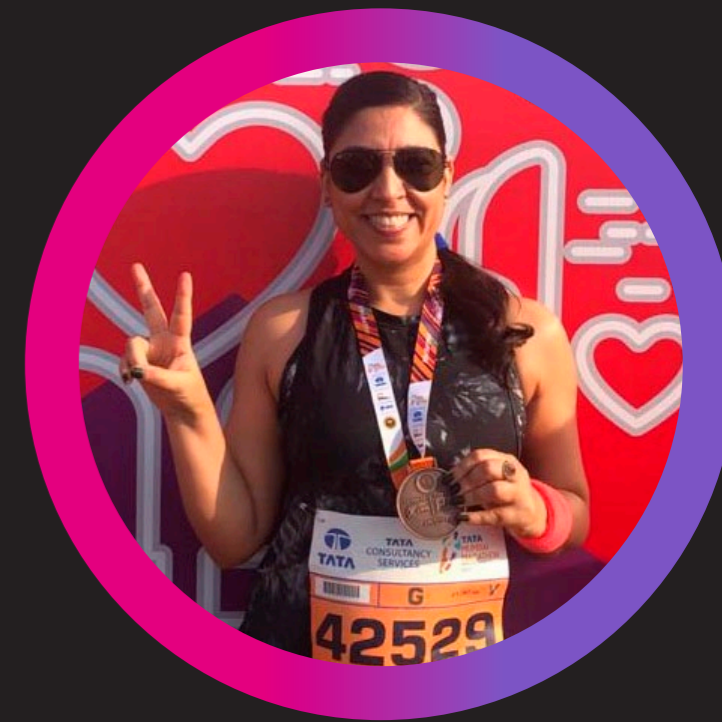


## You run, they learn

While chasing the goal to improve the livelihoods of farmers in rural areas, Covestro India's staff exhausted themselves also in the name of education: In the annual Tata Mumbai Marathon (TMM) in 2020, 25 athletes of the company contributed with every kilometer they logged to a youth education project.

For 15 years, the TMM has been bringing together people from all walks of life and has become an event that shatters charity records as if they were nothing. In 2020 alone 291 NGOs, 204 corporations and 14,000 runners raised 4.5 Million USD even before the race day. Count additional events on that day in and you get a staggering number of 55,000 participants.

Among that crowd were 25 athletes from Covestro India. If it wasn't for a quota, it could've been more: the number of willing volunteers was much higher. Together with the local NGO 'Smile Foundation' they dedicated every



kilometer they ran to the cause of education and health of underprivileged children and their families.

Covestro athlete Avinash Bagdi said: "Regardless of your speed, a marathon can humble you quickly. At around 13 km when I realized how discomforting it is to run with aching legs and I felt tired. But I kept reminding myself that discomfort is inevitable and temporary; but what one achieves is forever. It made me feel that I am stronger than I ever imagined and this experience has helped me look at myself differently since then. I hope that we can instill such feeling also in the children we help with this initiative."

Circularity, sustainability, "We are 1" or "Pushing Boundaries": those are all not just slogans at Covestro, but lived reality. Something that every employee tries to manifest in their approach towards life, and a spirit they carry into the communities surrounding the company, to make a difference together.





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