

## Press release

8 August 2011

### **The Think Big youth programme gives the go-ahead for the 100th project – “Kiezfest der Kulturen” (Intercultural neighbourhood festival)**

Maryam leaves the “Servicestelle Jugendbeteiligung” (service centre for youth participation), one of the Think Big project partners in Berlin, with a beaming smile on her face. This is because the 24-year old has just been given the green light for a project that should help to bring the people in Kreuzberg, Berlin closer together: with the help of her friends, this young adult is going to organise a “summer festival of encounters”. The young organisation team is planning on using the money from Think Big in a very targeted manner: for hip-hop workshops, shows and multicultural food and drink. The “Kiezfest der Kulturen” is the 100th project of Think Big, a programme launched by Telefónica Germany and the Deutsche Kinder- und Jugendstiftung (DKJS).

“Many different cultures come face to face here in Kreuzberg. However, most of the individual groups keep to themselves, they never do anything together”, explained Maryam. “There are mothers and daughters here who sit in their apartments all day long and hardly ever go out. We want to change that.”

Projects like Maryam’s are the central idea behind the Think Big programme, “Mein Kiez. Meine Idee” (My neighbourhood. My idea). Young people between 14 and 25 receive professional and financial support, in order to assist them in actively shaping their environments. And the creativity of the participants appears to know no limits.

“If you take a look at [o2thinkbig.de](http://o2thinkbig.de), you will see just how much creativity and seriousness are involved when new projects are being developed”, says Dr. Heike Kahl, Managing Director of the DKJS. “The subjects that young people have to deal with regularly range from bullying and intolerance to social commitment towards younger or weaker people.”

“The ideas are as different as the experiences of the young people. But that is what makes this programme so exciting”, added René Schuster, CEO of Telefónica Germany and the initiator of Think Big. “I think we, the adults, need to admit that we often underestimate young people and the potential they offer. Think Big impressively shows

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just what they are capable of. We are therefore already looking forward to the next ideas to be submitted.”

Think Big is a long-term programme, which will hopefully reach up to 50,000 young people by 2015. In addition to personal advice, each approved project receives 400 euros.

Further information and the conditions for participation can be found at [www.o2thinkbig.de](http://www.o2thinkbig.de).

**Think Big** is a social programme set up by Telefónica Europe. It was developed in collaboration with the Fundación Telefónica and builds on the latter’s globally recognised expertise in social and cultural issues. The Fundación Telefónica was founded in Spain in 1998 with the goal of creating sustainable structures for social and cultural projects at all companies in the Telefónica Group. Many Telefónica employees have already taken part in the trust’s Proniño programme, which supports schooling and training for more than 163,000 children in South America. In Germany, Think Big 2010 was organised in partnership with the DKJS and the prominent support of Kool Savas. It gave young people interested in media the chance to develop their own ideas for music videos to accompany the new Kool Savas song. At the same time, the Media College on Tour visited around 27 selected youth centres throughout Germany.

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