

A group of young people, both men and women, are standing and holding large, white, three-dimensional letters that spell out the word "ASHOKA". They are in a room with a light-colored wall and a red banner in the background. The image is overlaid with a dark blue gradient.

ASHOKA

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Ashoka Young Changemakers

YOUNG PEOPLE
LEADING MOVEMENTS
ACROSS THE GLOBE





All around us we see evidence that we now live in a world of accelerating change, volatility and hyper-connectivity. Yet, societies around the world continue to focus on an old idea that “success” for young people means being ready for a stable job. However, in a world defined by change, no one can afford to build a life around repetition. Instead, everyone must be a contributor, be an active player, and be a changemaker.

A changemaker is anyone who takes action to address a problem, activate others, and work towards solutions for the good of all. And for young people, finding one’s inner power to create change can lead to a lifetime of changemaking.

Society needs to redefine what success means so that every young person can grow up with this power. If everyone felt the confidence and capability to create positive change, we would live in a much more equitable, healthier, and happier world. In this historic moment, it is time for a big change, which requires a big movement. It’s time for the Everyone a Changemaker movement.

At the heart of this movement are the Ashoka Young Changemakers: a carefully selected network of young people who have found their power to create change for the good of all. Together, these changemakers are engaging their peers and communities in realizing a world where everyone is a changemaker.

Ashoka Young Changemakers selected have launched social initiatives, formed peer-led teams, and created solutions for the good of all while activating others to join in. Now, they are stepping up to shape a global conversation in redefining what it means to be a young person growing up in today’s world.

Ashoka Young Changemakers are Co-leaders of the Everyone a Changemaker Movement

Storytelling for change: Manat's journey

CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

Finding the confidence in herself at the age of 12, Manat is promoting confidence in young girls through storytelling. Growing up, she felt a pressure to abandon her love of math and science and lacked female role models in STEM. In response, she started Object, or objecting to female stereotypes. She convenes young girls and female role models to normalize the experiences of women in STEM. Through chats and workshops, participants engage in conversations about success and struggle, leadership and womanhood. Storytelling enables the young girls to learn from women while finding their inner power to lead.



As a syndicated young journalist herself, Manat values the impact of storytelling. That is why as an Ashoka Young Changemaker she is writing Op-Eds and blog posts about changemaking. Her work demystifies changemaking by illustrating early steps in the journey and sharing advice to other young changemakers. In response to COVID-19, she is also launching a vodcast (video podcast) to combat often dire mainstream news with stories of hope and optimism.

“*Ashoka Young Changemakers is such an awesome community! I have a great new group of friends that I can always brainstorm with and get advice from.*”

Becoming a national movement builder: Rafa's journey

JAKARTA, INDONESIA

As a gadget enthusiast, Rafa began to question what happens to trashed electronics and researched the topic for a class project in fifth grade. This research escalated into publishing a book about electronic waste, or e-waste, and then into a youth-led social venture—EwasteRJ. His team of young changemakers educates the public about recycling, coordinates an electronic recycling system, and partners with other non-profits to ramp up nation-wide recycling efforts and campaigns. Together, his team is creating a culture of mindful consumerism while activating other young people to step up and protect the planet.



As an Ashoka Young Changemaker, Rafa has co-led two Your Kids sessions, an engagement with parents to spark young changemaking, to share his story and what it means to grow up in this constantly changing world. Rafa's mother, a key ally in Rafa's journey, has joined Your Kids sessions with her son. Together, they created the first ever Parenting Changemaker Challenge at Ashoka to inspire parents to create a culture of changemaking in their families.

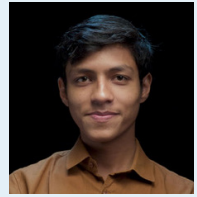
Outpacing problems with local solutions: Wasudev's journey

NAGPUR, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

Wasudev's rural community in India faces poverty and unemployment, which influences many young girls to drop out of school. To address this injustice, he collaborated with a friend in the garment industry and his mother to start Silaigram.

Silaigram provides sustainable livelihoods for young women in rural towns while combating environmental waste. Using upcycled cloth waste from garment factories and decor shops, the team offers women creative artisan jobs to craft sustainable, hand-made products such as bags, jholas, and kurtis.

Today, Wasudev partnered with a nearby city's Mayor's office to join their COVID-19 Response Team in a campaign called #TogetherWeCan. He is building a tech platform and verified communication channels to bring together changemakers across social, business, media, and government sectors to work collaboratively on relief efforts. To date, over 100 organizations, journalists, and philanthropists have engaged with the platform and have distributed over 100,000 food and hygiene kits. As the only young person on the team, Wasudev is redefining the role of young people to serve in local government. Back in his village, the women who are part of the Silaigram team have dedicated their time to producing cloth masks, which are donated to local first responders and essential workers.

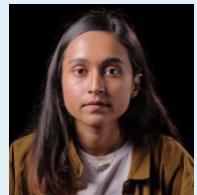


“ With Ashoka, I improved the skill of empathy which helped me to connect better with my peers and people of my community. This also helped me to face the challenges and the obstacles I've come across.”

A Co-leader on the rise: Tanha's journey

DHAKA, BANGLADESH

Tanha is bridging the gap between mainstream society and the transgender community by democratizing access to economic opportunities. There are nearly one million people who identify as transgender in Bangladesh. Many have been abandoned by their families, ostracized by the media, and denied basic human rights because of their non-binary identity. Witnessing neighbors forced to beg to earn a living, Tanha recognized from a young age a stark inequality that was perpetuated by widespread stigma. In response, she founded TransEnd, a venture that supports those who identify as transgender to gain financial and social freedom. Her team encourages a discourse to break social stigma and stereotypes while finding local solutions for equality, such as managing a platform to share job opportunities.



Tanha believes that consciously developing empathy from a young age is critical for changemaking as empathy enables her to connect across communities. Today, she is dedicating her life to building a more equitable world, a world without marginalization. As an Ashoka Young Changemaker, Tanha is eager to play a leading role in redefining what growing up means across Bangladesh.

Changemakers leading us forward: Vitor's journey

SANTA CATARINA, BRAZIL

By day, Vitor leading a social venture to protect the biodiversity of southern Brazil. By night, he is changing the way young people grow up across his state of Santa Catarina. Vitor founded Plantando o Futuro, or Planting the Future, to bring young people together to carry out environmental projects across the state, such as planting trees and conservation education.



Vitor, along with other Ashoka Young Changemakers in Brazil, is spreading the Everyone a Changemaker Movement in a time of uncertainty. He holds conversations with several schools across his region to encourage other students to start their own changemaker journeys. He shares the LeadYoung stories of his peers, other Brazilian changemakers, and invites students to take concrete action. During the COVID-19 crisis, Vitor provides practical examples of what other young changemakers in Ashoka's network are doing to inspire action.

Collectively, all of the Ashoka Young Changemakers in Brazil are collaborating to produce short videos for social media with a message of change and hope. By promoting wellbeing, tips for how to take care of others, and ideas to spark change in communities across the country, Brazil's team of Ashoka Young Changemakers are inviting people of all ages to step up and take action for the good of all.

“Joining a network of Ashoka Young Changemakers is a great happiness and privilege. We can be with inspired people, providing a feeling of belonging, understanding that we are not alone in the fight for causes that we believe to be an essential factor to continue the work.”

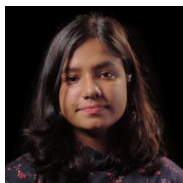


Ashoka Young Changemakers:

A GLOBAL VIEW

Ashoka Young Changemakers are selected for their ability to activate other young people to find their power as changemakers. Read more about the youth-led initiatives and solutions they launched to address social issues around the world.

Learn more about Ashoka Young Changemakers elected in 2019 and 2020.



AHONA | Bangladesh

Recognizing the intersectionality of education, gender, and the environment, Ahona built a platform called One Action Foundation to spark and support youth-led campaigns, workshops, and trainings around these social issues across her city.



ANGELA | Indonesia

Angela founded Dare to Lead to inspire young people to see themselves as leaders. Angela and her team organize activities for young people to discover their inner power, such as a leadership boot camp, a young researcher club, and social awareness trainings.



ANUGREH | India

Anugreh founded HYBRID IDEAS, the first design company for assistive technology in India for different disabilities including deafness and autism. His team also launched Hybrid Labs, a workspace for students to practice design thinking and contribute to the development of assistive technology.



APOORVI | India

Apoorvi recognized a lack of awareness and a dearth of mental health professionals in Government Schools and, in turn, started The Happiness Project. The Happiness Project assesses students' mental health through a happiness quotient that informs school-wide activities to normalize wellbeing.

**BASHAR | *Bangladesh***

To combat global warming, Bashar is encouraging young people to become green-warriors. He and his friends launched GREEN, a venture that hosts educational sessions and volunteer opportunities to change mindsets around environmental protection and the urgency of the climate crisis.

**CHANDANI | *India***

Chandani's venture, KINDNESS: THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE OF LOVE, aims to change her community's attitude towards stray animals. She protects stray animals through education and medical interventions, which includes vaccination and deworming stray dogs while providing fresh food and water.

**CHRISTIAN | *United States***

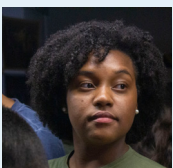
Christian started Custodian Service Initiative (CSI) to promote interconnectedness, dignity, and respect by recognizing the vital role of custodial staff. By enabling other students to lead, they've created school-wide programs to promote energy conservation, recycling, and ongoing appreciation of staff.

**DISHA | *India***

Before the age of two, Disha founded two ventures to achieve gender parity through financial literacy and mentorship. Combating the gender wealth gap, Disha enables young girls with a new mindset and skillset to achieve financial independence.

**DOLA – *Bangladesh***

With her initiative End Child Marriage, Dola addresses the root causes of child marriage in her community. Her team challenges parents' perceptions about the role of women in today's society through workshops and street plays with local schools.

**ISABELLE | *Brazil***

To combat racial and gender inequalities in Brazil, Isabelle created Projecto Meninas Negras (Black Girls Project) to support young girls becoming leaders and global citizens. The organization focuses on the academic, professional, and cultural development of young black women, and supporting them in reaching their potential.

**KAAJAL | India**

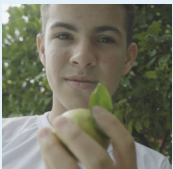
To promote self-care, Kaajal started Liberate: My OCD Fighter, an app that offers affordable, at-home wellbeing services for young people. Through vetted exercises, the tool offers users an interactive space to improve their mental health beyond a therapist's office.

**KATIE | United States**

Building on a lifetime of organizing, Katie co-leads Future Coalition, a venture that connects and equips youth-led advocacy organizations. This platform helps young changemakers launch social campaigns that disrupt change from gun violence to the climate crisis.

**LAYA | UNITED STATES**

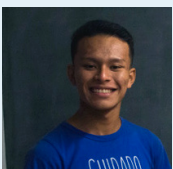
Demonstrating the power of technology as a tool for social change, Laya and her friend co-designed an affordable and lifesaving system to monitor flooding in Texas. The system, called HydroAlert, only costs \$50 and can warn people of flooding through text alerts.

**LUAN | Brazil**

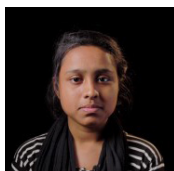
Luan aims to reduce hunger and combat deforestation in the Northeastern region of Brazil. His venture, CASA, is a group of young people distributing necessary goods in the wake of natural disasters, leading beautification projects, and reducing hunger through reforestation efforts.

**LUÍSA | Brazil**

Tackling the socio-environmental imbalances that damage the Amazonian ecosystem, Luísa leads preservation projects in Brazil. Building a youth-led movement to protect the Amazon's biodiversity, her team conducts environmental trainings in schools and advocates against environmental destruction to the national government.

**LUIZ HENRIQUE | Brazil**

Realizing the lack of youth participation in civil society, Henrique created a youth department in his local government to preserve local culture and environment. Today, he represents and advocates on behalf of his Extractive Reserve (RESEX), a protected natural area of 20,000 people living across 20 different communities.



MAIMUNA | Bangladesh

Maimuna creates safe spaces for young girls in her community through dialogues and seminars while inviting boys into the conversation about gender equality. Her venture, Swapnotory Foundation, also hosts conversations with parents work to broaden their horizon on their daughters' futures.



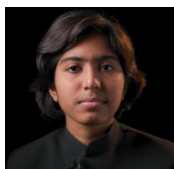
MANAT | United States

Manat helps young girls find their power through storytelling and community building. She started Object (as in "objecting to female stereotypes"), a platform that uses experienced women's stories and experiential workshops to instill and boost confidence in young women.



MIDRIA | Brazil

Midria and her friends launched Slam USPerifa to spark a slam poetry culture at their university to challenge the exclusionary culture of higher education in Brazil. Through poetry and storytelling, performers and public events dismantle symbolic and physical barriers between university education and the public.



MIRIAM | Bangladesh

With 'Fighters of Bangladesh' Miriam created a platform for young people to be changemakers. By engaging girls in rural areas, Miriam's team provides opportunities and a supportive community, helping them recognize their changemaking power at a young age.



NAISARGIK | India

Naisargik leads both Project Shakti & Yuva Utkal, Baisargik, a pair of initiatives that aim to standardize innovative agricultural practices to mitigate cancer risks by treating water that is contaminated by mining.



NIBRASUL | Bangladesh

Nibrasul through 'Dreamunteers' brings communities together to design their own solutions for building sustainable and self-reliant environments. His team is particularly interested in eliminating the urban-rural divide of economic development through local, rural innovation.

**RADHIKA | India**

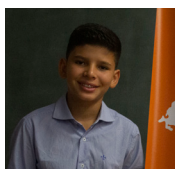
Radhika launched The Second Chance Project to spread awareness about the urgency for organ donations in India. Through creative interventions such as street plays and organ donation aprons, Radhika's team offers easy-to-implement methods for education and awareness around organ donation.

**RAFA | Indonesia**

RJ is leading Indonesia's electronic waste movement to normalize recycling and sustainable consumption. With his venture, EwasteRJ, RJ and his team building out education opportunities and a national recycling system to eliminate e-waste.

**RERE | Indonesia**

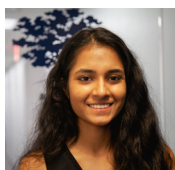
Rere opened a "multiliteracy" center to encourage not only a culture of reading and writing, but changemaking through making positive and authentic content more mainstream. Rumah Baca Mc Ganz offers a space for dozens of children in her community to be storytellers and life-long learners.

**RHENAN | Brazil**

Rhenan's team is focused on revitalization of rivers in his region to combat dangerous river pollution. While organizing young people and adults in community clean-ups and outreach campaigns, Rhenan plans to build an ecological park for environmental protection and community beautification.

**RISKI | Indonesia**

Riski and his friends are on a mission to revolutionize social activities to better both the environment and their community. Together, they are transforming abandoned spaces into community beautification projects and providing economic opportunities for low income families.

**RIYA | United States**

Riya and her team of peers co-lead Wavve Incubator to incubate and accelerate Gen-Z driven solutions addressing the world's biggest problems. The business-to-business platform provides mentorship, resources, funding, and partnerships to help teens launch their own social ventures.

**SANJANA | India**

Sanjana's organization, RutuChakra, has a mission to educate on menstrual hygiene and celebrate womanhood. RutuChakra challenges cultural practices and taboos against women's menstruation by providing educational resources, trainings, and facilities for women of all ages to practice safe menstrual hygiene.

**SANJIDUL | Bangladesh**

Sanjidul created platform for young people to experience and practice local problem solving and create self-reliant communities. He launched Upokul Welfare Association – a network of young people working alongside their neighborhoods to designs sustainable solutions for their own challenges.

**SHOAIBUR | Bangladesh**

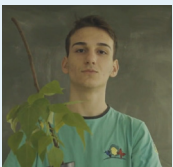
Shoaibur and his team at Agri-Science Society bolsters farmers by co-creating solutions for environmental conservation. His team has conducted multiple workshops to shift the outlook of farmers and young people towards the importance of sustainable agriculture and rural development.

**TAZREEN | Bangladesh**

Tazreen, and her peers launched REVIVAL, Bangladesh's first youth-led mental health initiative, aims to shift mindsets around mental health through visual and written storytelling. The team distributes stories and runs art campaigns to provoke candid conversations around mental health.

**VICTOR | United States**

Victor co-founded InnovaYouth to promote research, collaboration, and communication skills among young people. Though workshops, conferences, podcasts, and an innovation blog, his team challenges students to tackle real-world issues in their communities with a changemaker mindset.

**VITOR | Brazil**

Vitor leads Plantando o Futuro, a group of young environmentalists who organize environmental preservation projects across Southern Brazil. The team hosts environmental education activities and community beautification activities with students to spark their interest for changemaking and the environment.

Ashoka Young Changemakers are a carefully selected network of young people who have found their power to create change for the good of all, and who are engaging their peers and the entire society in realizing a world where everyone is a changemaker. If you or someone you know fits this description, consider joining our community of young leaders.

What are we looking for? We're looking for young people who have:

- ✓ deeply empathized with a problem and from that understanding developed your own original idea for addressing it.
- ✓ built a team around this idea. You lead by helping others lead as well and find their power as changemakers.
- ✓ helped improve people's lives and the environment around them. You are always committed to the good of all.

Most importantly, we're looking for co-leaders in the global "Everyone a Changemaker" Movement.

- ✓ You want to help others change their worlds. You've spread changemaking among your peers and you will help co-lead the global movement to give everyone the power you have found.

Find out more about Ashoka Young Changemakers & how you can get involved at: ashoka.org/program/ashoka-young-changemakers