

BottleChallenge press brief

In one sentence

BottleChallenge is a free mobile app and web platform that helps people find water refill points worldwide and rewards them for choosing reusable bottles over single-use plastic.

The problem

The world produces over 500 billion single-use plastic bottles every year. Most are used for a few minutes and take hundreds of years to break down. The global plastic recycling rate has never exceeded 10 percent. The rest ends up in soil, rivers and oceans. Microplastics have been detected in drinking water, human lungs and the blood of newborns.

Recycling is necessary but insufficient. It addresses the problem after it has already occurred. The only truly effective solution is prevention: stopping plastic waste from being created in the first place.

The solution

BottleChallenge makes it easy and rewarding to choose a reusable bottle over a single-use one. The app shows users the nearest place where they can refill for free, confirms the visit via NFC or QR code, awards points and lets users exchange those points for cultural and lifestyle experiences. The barrier to entry is near zero. The reward is immediate. The habit, once formed, tends to last.

How it works

Users open the app, find a nearby refill point on the map and visit the location. They hold their phone to an NFC tag or scan a QR code to confirm the refill. The visit is recorded instantly. They earn EcoDrops points which can be redeemed for museum tickets, cinema and theatre visits, concert and event tickets, and hotel discounts. Every refill is logged, every impact is visible.

The network

57,000+ refill points across 95 countries, including cafés, restaurants, hotels, public drinking fountains, offices and cultural institutions. Partner venues join for free, receive an NFC tag and a door sticker, and gain a profile on the map showing their measurable environmental impact, ready to share on social media and in their own marketing.

What makes BottleChallenge different

Prevention, not management Most environmental initiatives deal with plastic after it has been produced. BottleChallenge prevents it from being produced at all. Every refill is a bottle that was never bought, never manufactured and never disposed of.

Real rewards, not just a good feeling Users earn EcoDrops points redeemable for genuine experiences: museum tickets, cinema and theatre, concerts, hotel discounts. The reward is immediate and tangible, which is what drives lasting habit change.

NFC verification Refills are confirmed by holding a phone to an NFC tag at the partner location. This ensures every logged refill is a real, physical event. Combined with geolocation verification and time-interval checks, the system is resistant to abuse.

Blockchain-verified impact data Every NFC event is recorded and written to a public blockchain via the Eco-In platform, also operated by BrainGreen Foundation. Each token represents exactly one kilogram of plastic prevented, with a precise timestamp and location. The data is immutable, independently verifiable and audit-ready.

ESG and CSRD compliance Through the Teams module, companies can engage their employees in the programme and receive aggregated, anonymised impact data for sustainability reporting. The data maps directly onto ESRS E5 and GRI indicators for waste management. Eco-In tokens provide an auditable chain of evidence from physical event to ESG report, meeting the requirements of the EU Green Claims Directive and CSRD.

Gamification designed behaviourally The EcoDrops system is built around three mechanisms that drive lasting behaviour change: immediacy of reward, reduction of friction and social visibility. Rankings, group challenges and personal impact counters make the behaviour visible and identity-forming.

100% nonprofit and ad-free BottleChallenge is operated by BrainGreen Foundation, a registered nonprofit based in Warsaw, Poland. The project has no investors, no advertising and no commercial interests. It is funded entirely through Teams subscriptions, Eco-In tokens and voluntary donations. Every euro goes into infrastructure, not profit.

Built by volunteers The entire project, from research and design through development to partner outreach, has been built by a team of 35+ volunteers over nearly three years. This includes developers, analysts, psychologists, sociologists, project managers and field coordinators.

Crowdsourced and self-maintaining Users can add new refill points directly in the app and earn points for doing so. They can also report incorrect or non-functioning locations. The network maintains and grows itself.

The Teams module

Companies can enrol their employees in BottleChallenge. Each employee links their account to their employer. Their refills are aggregated anonymously at the company level. The company dashboard shows total refills, kilograms of plastic prevented and CO2 emissions avoided. Data can be exported for ESG and CSR reports. Internal leaderboards and challenges build team culture around shared environmental goals.

Starter plan: free for up to 10 members. Paid plans for business from €99 per month.

The Eco-In platform

Eco-In is a separate platform by BrainGreen Foundation that tokenises verified plastic prevention events on a public blockchain. One Eco-In token equals one kilogram of plastic prevented. Each token is unique, single-use and cannot be reassigned or resold. Companies acquire tokens as documented proof of their environmental contribution, ready for ESG reports and CSRD filings. The token burn mechanism is irreversible, eliminating double-counting and greenwashing risk.

More at eco-in.org

Key figures

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Refill points worldwide | 57,000+ |
| Countries | 95 |
| Active users | 50,000+ |
| Bottles saved | 1,000,000+ |
| Plastic saved per refill | 24g |
| CO2 saved per refill | 82g |
| Volunteers who built the project | 35+ |
| Founded | 2022, Warsaw, Poland |

Timeline

2022 Project founded by BrainGreen Foundation in Warsaw, Poland. Initial concept development and team formation.

2023 to 2024 An early web version of BottleChallenge was operational, serving as a live research environment. The team conducted extensive behavioural research, sociological analysis and user studies to understand what drives lasting habit change, what motivates partner venues to join, and what reward mechanisms are most effective. Findings directly shaped the architecture of the final product.

2025 Continued research alongside full-scale development of the web platform and native mobile apps, carried out by a team of 35+ volunteers including developers, analysts, psychologists, sociologists, project managers and field coordinators.

Early 2026 Closed testing, beta releases and final refinements across all platform components.

March 2026 Official launch of the full web platform at bottlechallenge.org, featuring the refill map, NFC and QR scanning, EcoDrops wallet, partner dashboards, reward shop, impact tracking and full GDPR compliance.

April 2026 Native Android app launched on Google Play.

May 2026 Native iOS app launched on the App Store. The refill point network already spans all continents, with 57,000+ locations across 95 countries.

June 2026 Major update to the Teams module, expanding corporate sustainability features and ESG reporting capabilities.

Now Active scaling phase: growing the partner venue network, expanding the reward partner programme and building the user community worldwide.

How the project is funded

BottleChallenge is free for individual users and always will be. No ads, no tracking, no hidden fees. This is possible because the project has three sources of revenue, none of which depend on monetising users.

Teams subscriptions Companies that use the Teams module to engage their employees and track collective environmental impact pay a monthly subscription. Plans start at €99 per month. This is the primary source of revenue and funds the infrastructure, development and day-to-day operations of the entire platform.

Eco-In tokens Companies that need verified, audit-ready plastic prevention data for ESG reports and CSRD filings can acquire Eco-In tokens through the Eco-In platform. Each token represents one kilogram of plastic prevented, recorded on a public blockchain. This provides companies with documented proof of environmental impact and funds further development of the verification system.

Crowdfunding Voluntary donations from individuals and organisations who believe in the mission and want to help the project grow. No reward, no return, just the knowledge that the infrastructure exists and keeps expanding.

None of these revenue streams involve advertising, data sales or investor returns. Every euro is reinvested into keeping the platform running, expanding the refill point network, developing new features and staying completely free for the people who use it every day.

The organisation

BottleChallenge is a project of BrainGreen Foundation (Fundacja BrainGreen), a registered nonprofit organisation based in Warsaw, Poland. The foundation has no shareholders, pays no dividends and generates no profit. All revenue from Teams subscription plans is reinvested into the project.

KRS: 0000964547 NIP: 5252903313 Plac Konstytucji 4/17, 00-552 Warsaw, Poland

Quotable statements

"We don't just show people where to find water. We reward them for choosing reuse over waste. That is what makes BottleChallenge different from any other refill map." - BottleChallenge Team

"Every refill means one less plastic bottle entering the environment. When you multiply that by thousands of users every day, the impact becomes real and measurable. That is exactly what we set out to build." - BottleChallenge Team

"Sustainability should be rewarding, not just responsible. People should not have to choose between convenience and doing the right thing. BottleChallenge makes the right choice the easier one." - BottleChallenge Team

Download the app

App Store: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/bottlechallenge-water-refill/id6760599802>

Google Play: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.braingreen.bottlechallenge>

Press contact

press@bottlechallenge.org +48 883 453 475

BrainGreen Foundation
Plac Konstytucji 4/17,
00-552 Warsaw, Poland

bottlechallenge.org

braingreen.org

eco-in.org