

*Hi all, my name is Elja van der Horst, I am 27 years old and I am a big fan of sailing. I was born in Delft, a small town in The Netherlands close to Rotterdam, and I have lived all over The Netherlands ever since. For the past three years I have worked as a primary school teacher. Even though I loved the job, I felt it was time for a change of my working environment. When I heard about the opportunity of becoming a fulltime sailing instructor at SMYC, I immediately felt this was the change I was looking for. For all of my life, I have been on and around the water. My parents, both sailors, took my brothers, sister and me with them in sailing boats ever since we were born. I couldn't wait until I was big enough to sail in my own optimist, just like my big brother and sister. That finally happened when I was 5 years old. After years of sailing lessons, and improving my own skills, I became a sailing instructor at 16 years old. Since then, I have been working as a (head) sailing instructor on a sailing school in Friesland, in the North of The Netherlands. Seeing the progress of students during the sailing lessons, in their sailing technique, but also in their fun while sailing, is something I still enjoy to the fullest. And of course I love sailing by myself in my free time! I always relax when being on the water, in the wind, clearing my head while sailing any place I want to go. I am extremely grateful that my parents introduced me to this beautiful sport, and it is one of my goals in life to introduce sailing to as many people as possible.*

*That is why I am so happy to be working at SMYC, because SMYC has great projects to give so many people the opportunity to learn and experience the fun and joy of sailing! You can find me on the water, on the dock or maybe in my office on every day except Wednesdays and Sundays. Hope to see you around!*