



Press Release

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STEAM learning through play pioneers OKIDO & OjO launch first board game to teach coding skills to four-year-olds



(L-R) OKIDO joint founder Dr Sophie Dauvois & OjO founder Maha Khawaja with the Which Way? game

London-based STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts and maths) learning pioneers OKIDO and OjO, have joined forces to launch the first coding board game for four-year-olds.

[OKIDO](#), makers of Messy Goes to OKIDO CBeebies TV show and OKIDO arts and science magazine, and educational game and toy developer [OjO](#), are launching the Which Way? game as part of a joint [Kickstarter campaign](#) to raise £20,000.

Designed to make learning engaging and fun, the game, designed by OjO's product designer Petros Nicolaou, helps to teach four of the top coding skills to children aged 4-8 years using a magnetic, self-driving, toy car.

Suitable for home, classroom-based learning and clubs, it helps youngsters develop 'computational thinking' incorporating planning, problem solving, coding and testing skills – essential attributes for successful coders.

Currently it is believed to be the only game of its kind which is suitable for pre-school children. It is the brainchild of OjO founder and London Business School graduate Maha Khawaja, who started making STEAM educational games from her Shoreditch base after struggling to find something suitable to keep her four-year-old son occupied.

Khawaja said: “Apart from Lego, there was hardly any choice when it came to fun, educational STEAM games and toys and we know that children need and want to learn much earlier¹. So I started inventing my own and testing them with the harshest critics - children! The games and toys have to be fun and educational in equal measure and combine STEM subjects with the arts because creativity is key. By collaborating with OKIDO, we hope to help to inspire the next generation of innovators and inventors.

“Coding is the language of the future and the game makes it second nature for young kids to learn coding. It’s also affordable for parents and schools, unlike other coding toys, which can be expensive.”

The collaboration with former research scientist Dr Sophie Dauvois and artist Rachel Ortas, founders of Bethnal Green-based OKIDO, was a natural step, as OKIDO regularly holds STEAM-based activities, interactive experiments and live shows for youngsters throughout the capital. Its magazine features recycled paper, edible vegetable ink, boasts no plastic wrapping and offers young readers educational activities and a board game.

Dauvois, who has two PhDs, said: “Our readers and viewers are looking for educational, meaningful toys, combining learning and having fun. Board games are something we really believe in and it's rare to find an engaging STEAM toy that children will enjoy playing with again and again. This game will help to get young children interested in the scientific world around them using play, art and fun. You repeat the playing and learning every single time that you engage - we call it hidden learning.

“We started our magazine from a kitchen table in Brixton in 2007, after we struggled to find a suitable magazine for our son. It does away with stereotypes, fires up young imaginations and helps to spark a life-long love of art and science. OjO shares this same ethos and we are delighted to be working with them on the launch of the Which Way? game.”

OjO also works in partnership with The Science Museum, offering Mars Mission and Moon Friends Creativity kits and is currently setting up a New York base, which will trade via Amazon.

Khawaja believes children are capable of developing sophisticated, complex skills before they can read. Similar to the widely-held understanding that learning a language is easier for pre-school children, Khawaja says coding is no different. She’s also keen to encourage more young girls to engage in STEAM learning and become coders.

“Studies have shown² that very young children’s brains are more open to learning about new systems in a creative way,” says Khawaja. “Over the past few years we’ve seen a massive increase in the number of girls choosing STEM subjects, which is long overdue. Learning to code before you start school is essential for both boys and girls, as it helps to enhance the types of skills that will be needed to do the jobs available for the next generation of college leavers³.”

Investors have until May 28 before the funding window closes. Pledges start from just £15 up to packages costing £500 which feature a live OKIDO studio tour and workshop for 10 people. Limited copies of the WhichWay? game are available at a £40 early bird offer – 20 per cent off the usual £50

¹ See Research from [Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth](#)

² Reports from [Center of The Developing Child at Harvard University](#)

And [Yudhijit Bhattacharjee, National Geographic Report](#)

³ [Carl Frey & Michael Osborne, The Future Of Employment](#)

price. The cash injection will be used to develop a range of new toys and games to spark STEAM learning.

For more information about OjO and OKIDO visit <https://learnwithojo.com/> or www.okido.com

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Media contact: To access research and reports, watch the joint Okido and OjO Which Way? game videos and for images and logos [click here](#) for the Assets folder. For more information or to arrange an interview with Maha Khawaja or Sophie Dauvois please contact Cathy Kelly on 07704 130226 or email cathy@catherinekellypr.co.uk