



/Grad.Girls

**GROUP
MENTORING
GUIDE
2026**





Grad Girls Tech respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we gather - who have cared for this Country for countless generations. As we come together to learn, share, and create, we recognise that these lands have always been places of cultural exchange, ceremony, and storytelling. We are privileged to walk in the footsteps of the world's oldest continuous cultures



<WOMEN.4/STEM>

Founded in 2005, Women 4 STEM is a not-for-profit organisation that operates to increase the entry, retention, and progress of women in the STEM industries. Our vision is to actively promote and support women throughout their STEM careers, via a range of practical and sustainable initiatives.

Our programs are focused across all ages of women, from young schoolgirls and women at university, through to those already in the industry all the way to industry leaders. We have been recognised by the industry for its contribution and have been a past winner of the Tech Diversity Award for Champion of the Year.

Our services:



Go Girl, Go for IT is a fun, free 1-day technology conference for girls in years 5-12 across Australia showcasing what an exciting career in STEM can look like.

[Click here to learn more](#)



Grad Girls and Grad Girls Tech is a one year program for female-identifying tertiary education STEM students to discover and understand the available pathways.

[Click here to learn more](#)



mentor(SHE:) is an annual 1:1 mentoring program to support and progress women in STEM. Designed to also help build confidence, and provide networking opportunities.

[Click here to learn more](#)



IOW is a monthly speaker event series for our members and their guests, to meet inspiring leaders in STEM, and hear about their career journey and challenges.

[Click here to learn more](#)



What's Hot in Tech events deliver an evening of networking and round table discussion to connect with STEM leaders who are disrupting the way we live.

[Click here to learn more](#)



Welcome to Grad Girls Tech

🌟 Welcome Onboard Our Group Mentoring Journey!

Dear Mentors,

We are delighted to welcome you to the Group Mentors of the Grad Girls Tech Program!

This Mentoring Guide is here to support you as you work with your mentees and foster their growth.

Mentoring is about creating genuine connections that lead to meaningful development. Your commitment will have a powerful impact on each participant's personal and professional journey, and we're excited to walk alongside you in this transformative experience.



🚀 What to Expect

- **Confidential and Supportive:** Our mentoring relationships are built on trust, creating a safe space for open, honest conversations.
- **Empowering Connections:** You'll be joining a network of mentors and students who are committed to uplifting one another.
- **Goal Setting:** Work with your mentees to set realistic, achievable goals for their time in Grad Girls.
- **Regular Check-Ins:** You'll lead 6 group mentoring sessions, tracking progress, providing guidance, and addressing challenges.
- **Community Building:** Together, we'll nurture a collaborative and inspiring mentoring community.

Welcome to Grad Girls Tech


Spread the Excitement!

Help us spread the word! Share your involvement in Grad Girls Tech group mentoring on social media. It's a powerful way to encourage others to support diversity in tech.

Thank You for Being the Change

Your commitment reflects your dedication to mentoring, diversity, and the next generation of leaders in tech. With your support, we'll create a group mentoring experience that thrives on trust, growth, and shared success.

Here's to the journey ahead and the positive transformations that await!

If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach out to our team. I look forward to meeting you all throughout the program 

Warm Regards,
Krystle Northover

Grad Girls Tech Program Lead

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Hello, we're glad you're here!

Thank you for sharing your time and expertise as a mentor. Your support is vital to the Grad Girls Tech Program, helping students build confidence, grow their networks, and explore future careers in tech. We're delighted to have you on board.



What is group mentoring?

Group mentoring in the Grad Girls Tech Program is a mutually beneficial partnership where experienced tech professionals (mentors) guide and support a small group of students (mentees).

While the mentees take ownership of their own learning and career development, mentors provide expertise, encouragement, and constructive feedback to help them build confidence and explore pathways into tech.

Unlike one-to-one mentoring, group mentoring creates a shared space for discussion, learning, and peer support. This collaborative environment allows students to learn not only from their mentors, but also from each other, fostering a stronger sense of community and belonging.

The foundation of group mentoring is openness, mutual trust, respect, and a commitment to learning together.



How to make the most of Grad Girls mentoring

As mentors, you play a pivotal role in shaping the Grad Girls experience. Here's our advice to help you and your mentees get the most from the program:

Keep an open mind: every student's journey in tech is unique, and their goals may shift along the way.

Set expectations early: be clear with your group about how you'll work together during the sessions.

Offer constructive feedback: both encouragement and gentle guidance are invaluable to students finding their path.

Be patient: growth takes time, and sometimes the impact of your mentoring will show up well after the program ends.

See it as a two-way street: mentors often tell us they gain just as much as they give. What you put in will shape what you get out.



Join our community!

Follow us on Grad Girls and Women 4 STEM social channels or subscribe for regular communications featuring thought-provoking topics, and tips. Stay tuned for e-invitations to a list of events throughout the year such as webinars, networking events and other social events!

Grad Girls

[Instagram](#)

[Linkedin](#)

Women 4 STEM

[Instagram](#)

[Linkedin](#)



Group Mentoring Outline



Session 1: Introductions & Goal Setting

This first session is about building trust and rapport. Mentors and mentees introduce themselves, share their goals for the program, and set expectations for how they'll work together.



Session 2: Exploring Tech Pathways

Mentees learn about different career journeys in tech through mentor stories and discussion. This session highlights the diverse opportunities available and helps students broaden their perspective.



Session 3: Building Professional Skills

Focus on developing practical skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. Mentors provide guidance and real-world examples to help mentees connect these skills to future careers..



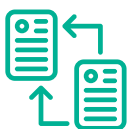
Session 4: Overcoming Challenges

This session explores common barriers for women in tech and strategies to navigate them. Mentors share personal experiences and support mentees in building resilience and confidence.



Session 5: Networking & Industry Insights

Mentors help mentees understand the importance of professional networking and how to build connections. This session may include practical activities like mock networking or discussing industry trends.



Session 6: Reflection & Next Steps

The final session is about celebrating achievements and looking ahead. Mentors and mentees reflect on progress, share key takeaways, and discuss next steps in mentees' tech journeys.

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**I can't express how
much I've gained
from my mentors –
it's been truly
transformative.**

”





MENTORING 'HOW TO' GUIDES

OBJECTIVES

- How to be an amazing mentor.
- How to maximise your mentees' experience.

How to be an amazing mentor

Take a minute to think about the best mentor you've ever had. Maybe it's your manager, a colleague, a parent or a friend. What made them stand out to you?

At some point in your life (and, if you're lucky, many times), you're going to find yourself playing the role of a mentor to someone, somewhere. It can be both exciting, and a little confusing but we're here to guide you through it.



A mentor's role is to provide guidance and support based on the needs of the mentee. Everyone is different so be ready to adjust your methods if necessary.



Listen

Patiently and actively listen without judgement. Always ask questions; never assume.



Lead By Example

Practice what you preach by sharing your goals and how you're challenging yourself.



Share your story

Don't be afraid to share your journey entirely with both the lessons learnt and successes.



Offer Feedback

It's key to provide constructive feedback in addition to advice and recommendations.



Be Present

Invest your time, keep in contact regularly and try to be as responsive as practicable.



Start Strong

Help your mentees by setting SMART objectives together from the beginning.

Maximise your mentees' experience

As a Grad Girls mentor, you have the chance to make a lasting impact. For many students, this will be their first connection with a tech professional - your guidance can help shape their confidence, career choices, and sense of belonging in the field.

Reflect on your own journey, including both the highs and the challenges. Sharing these stories will help your mentees see the many pathways into tech and encourage them to explore what's possible for their own future.



Suggest your mentees use the handy 'Maximise Your Mentee Experience' worksheet to get them started.

[Access Printable Worksheets](#)



Ask your mentees to bring their completed worksheet with them to your sessions and remember, preparation is the key



We'd love to hear your feedback and how we can keep improving the program. Keep an eye out for surveys from us throughout the year.

/Grad.Girls



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**THE JOURNEY
IS THE
REWARD!**

STEP 1



PLANNING YOUR FIRST SESSION

OBJECTIVES

- Planning your first session
- Establishing your relationship
- Guiding principles for group mentoring

Planning Your First Session

As a Grad Girls Tech mentor, you set the tone for a successful mentoring experience. The first session is your chance to establish trust, clarify expectations, and create a welcoming space where your mentees feel comfortable engaging.



Check out the Mentee First Meeting Checklist for things to include when you first reach out

The Commitment

- There are six group mentoring sessions in total.
- **You are expected to attend and host all sessions.**
- Students are required to attend at least three sessions to meet graduation criteria – your consistency helps them stay engaged and on track.

Communication

- Day-to-day communications with students are supported by the Discord Coordinators, who share reminders, answer FAQs, and keep everyone connected.
- Your role is to guide the mentoring sessions themselves, leading discussions and providing clarity when needed.

Location & Format

- All sessions are delivered virtually - via Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, etc.
- Be prepared to host the call, moderate discussion, and ensure everyone feels included.
- Test your tech beforehand to ensure a smooth experience.

Support & Guidance

- You are not alone in this. The Mentor Coordinators are your key contacts throughout the group mentoring. They will guide you, answer questions, and step in if any issues or concerns arise.

Planning Your First Session

Set Expectations Together

Your mentees will engage more when they feel ownership. Invite them to share what they want to gain from mentoring and what support they expect from the group. You might ask:

- “What do you hope to get out of Grad Girls mentoring?”
- “What would make these sessions valuable for you?”
- “What would help you feel most supported?”

This is also your chance to share your expectations - such as being prepared, engaging respectfully, and contributing to discussions.

Inclusivity Reminder

- Group mentoring only works when every voice is heard. You set the tone.
- Encourage quieter mentees by asking gentle, open-ended questions.
- Balance airtime if one or two students dominate the conversation.
- Be mindful of cultural and personality differences in communication styles.
- Model inclusive, gender-neutral language.
- Be intentional about creating space for students with different lived experiences, comfort levels and ways of thinking to participate safely.
- Acknowledge that not everyone will feel ready to share deeply at the start - reassure them that it's okay to ease in.

Next Steps

- End the first session with a clear next step to keep momentum and show mentees that this is an ongoing journey. For example:
- Ask each mentee to identify one short-term goal to work on before Session 2.
- Suggest they bring a career-related question or tech topic for next session.
- Encourage reflection: “Think about a time you overcame a challenge – we’ll share and discuss in our next session.”

Suggested Flow / Agenda (*Optional but Helpful*)

Having a loose structure helps you feel confident and gives your mentees clarity. Here's a simple flow you can adapt:

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Icebreaker Activity
3. Set Expectations
4. Exploring Aspirations
5. Wrap-Up & Next Steps

Establishing Your Relationship

Your first session is about building trust and setting the foundation for a supportive group environment. Many mentors find it easier to begin with an informal discussion before moving into goal-setting or career planning.

Here are some conversation starters to help you build rapport and set the tone:

Building Rapport



- What are your mentees currently studying or exploring in tech?
- What inspired them to join the Grad Girls Tech Program?
- What are they passionate about outside of study or work?
- Fun icebreaker: If they could re-live their life as an animal, what would they be and why?

Exploring Goals & Motivations



- Where do your mentees see themselves in 12 months? In five years?
- What skills or experiences do they want to gain from Grad Girls Tech?
- Who inspires them in tech, and why?
- What challenges do they anticipate, and what support would help them?



Tip: You don't need to cover everything in the first session - let the conversation flow naturally and leave space for curiosity and follow-up questions.

Guiding Principles for Group Mentoring

As a mentor, you set the tone for your group. These quick guidelines are here to help you create a safe, supportive, and engaging mentoring experience for your mentees

Best Practices

- Listen actively and encourage every voice in the group.
- Share your experiences openly – including challenges as well as successes.
- Keep discussions professional, respectful, and supportive.
- Protect confidentiality and create a safe, inclusive space for mentees.
- Guide mentees to discover their own answers, rather than providing them all yourself.
- Set expectations and ground rules early to build trust.
- Balance voices so quieter mentees feel included.
- Share practical, actionable advice mentees can use straight away.
- Celebrate small wins as well as big achievements.

Avoid

- Dominate the conversation – mentoring is a dialogue, not a lecture.
- Give opinions in a way that may make mentees feel judged.
- Share confidential information outside the group.
- Assume all mentees have the same background, confidence, or access to opportunities.
- Treat mentoring as evaluation – it's about encouragement and growth.
- Cancel last minute without notice – consistency builds trust.
- Overpromise on the time or support you can realistically give.
- Drift too far off topic – keep stories relevant to tech and career development.
- Compare mentees to each other – focus on individual growth.



Remember: your role isn't to have all the answers - it's to guide, encourage, and create a space where mentees feel safe to explore their own pathways in tech.

“



**My mentoring journey
has been profoundly
enriching, and the
knowledge I've
acquired is
immeasurable.**

”

STEP 2



SETTING OBJECTIVES TOGETHER

OBJECTIVES

- SMART objectives
- Turning goals into action

Setting SMART Objectives

Goal setting is a powerful way for your mentees to start shaping the career they want. By setting goals, they give themselves a target to aim for and a pathway to measure progress. As a mentor, you can guide them through the SMART framework to make their goals clear, realistic, and motivating.

- S Specific**
Goals should be clear and focused, so mentees know exactly what they're working towards. Mentee example: *"I want to improve my public speaking"* rather than *"I want to get better at communication"*.
- M Measurable**
Progress should be trackable, helping mentees stay motivated as they move closer to their target. Mentee example: *"I will deliver two class presentations with confidence"*.
- A Attainable**
Goals should challenge mentees and feel ambitious, while still being realistic for their current stage. Mentee example: *"I want to apply for three tech-related internships this year"*.
- R Relevant**
Connected to their personal interests and career direction. Mentee example: *"I want to build a LinkedIn profile that highlights my tech projects"*. Whilst *"I want to master baking bread"* may be a great personal hobby, but it doesn't directly support their tech career goals.
- T Time-Bound**
Goals should have a deadline to create urgency and keep them on track. Mentee example: *"I will attend at least one networking event before the end of this semester"*.

Example SMART Goal: *"I will complete an online Python course and add it to my LinkedIn profile by the end of this semester."*

Turning Goals into Action

Thinking about where you want to be in the future is the first step in mapping out the actions that will get you there. As a mentor, you can guide your mentees to break down their ambitions into manageable steps. Linking each action item back to the SMART framework makes it easier to measure progress and celebrate achievements along the way.

Remind them that you are a resource - you can help clarify what they want to achieve, explore realistic options, and identify practical steps forward.

Encourage your mentees to:



Try a Mindfulness Activity to get clarity on their goals.



Complete the Goals and Actions worksheet to capture their objectives and the actions needed to achieve them.



Use the Session Notes template together to document goals, action items, and progress throughout the program.

“

**SAY YES, AND
FIGURE IT
OUT AFTER!**

STEP 3



PROGRESS TRACKING

OBJECTIVES

- Tracking progress towards objectives.
- Useful model for agenda planning.

Progress tracking

Preparation is key to making mentoring sessions meaningful. Encourage your mentees to come prepared - this helps them get the most from each session and enables you to provide focused guidance.

To support this, we've provided templates and forms that mentees can use to:

- Reflect on their goals and challenges before sessions.
- Capture notes and action items during discussions.
- Track progress across all six mentoring sessions.

While setting an agenda can be useful, it doesn't need to be rigid - some of the best conversations happen organically. Use the tools provided in a way that works best for you and your mentees. Remember to revisit notes regularly so mentees can see how far they've come - it's a great way to build confidence and momentum.



Suggest the mentees use the Mentee Preparation template to outline what they want to cover in sessions



Use the Meeting Notes template to set agenda items with your mentees



Assess your progress by using the handy Assessing Your Objectives worksheet

“



Each session unfolds a wealth of knowledge, making this mentorship an invaluable chapter in my student development.

”



STEP 4

WRAPPING UP AND REFLECTIONS

OBJECTIVES

- Reflect on Goals
- Group Sharing & Insights
- Mentor Reflections
- Next Steps & Staying Connected
- Celebration & Close

This final session is designed to help recognise collective growth as well as individual progress.

Wrapping up

As the Grad Girls Tech mentoring journey comes to a close, your role is to guide your group through reflection and celebration. Unlike 1:1 mentoring, this is a structured group program - so wrapping up is about recognising collective growth as well as individual progress.

It's important to note: while the mentoring stream concludes here, mentees still have one more program event to attend before graduation. Your session is about closing the mentoring experience, not the Grad Girls Tech program as a whole.

In your final session, we recommend covering the following:

Reflect on Goals

Revisit the SMART objectives your mentees set earlier in the program. Help them identify the progress they've made, the challenges they've overcome, and the key takeaways they'll carry forward.

Group Sharing & Insights

Encourage mentees to share their highlights and learning moments. Peer recognition can be powerful - invite them to celebrate each other's contributions and growth.

- My proudest achievement in Grad Girls Tech mentoring sessions is...
- One skill or insight I'll carry forward is...
- One challenge I overcame during the program was...
- The next step I want to take in my tech journey is...

Mentor Reflections

Take a moment to share your observations about the group's journey. Offering your perspective and final words of advice will leave mentees with encouragement and direction.

Wrapping up

Next Steps & Staying Connected

Remind students that while the mentoring sessions have ended, the Grad Girls P Tech program continues until graduation. Encourage them to stay engaged on Discord, attend the final event, and carry forward their mentoring takeaways into the rest of the program.

Celebration & Close

End the mentoring session on a positive note by recognising the group's achievements, thanking them for their commitment, and celebrating the time you've shared.

Quick Closing Script (optional):

"This is our final mentoring session, but your Grad Girls Tech journey isn't finished yet - you still have one more event before graduation. Take what you've learned here into that final experience, and keep building on the confidence and connections you've gained. Well done, and thank you for being part of this mentoring stream."



A positive, strong close leaves a lasting impression. Encourage mentees to stay connected with peers, mentors, and the wider Grad Girls community as they move forward.

THANK YOU

On behalf of the Grad Girls Tech Program team, thank you for your time, energy, and dedication. Your commitment has helped shape the confidence, skills, and aspirations of the next generation of women in tech. The impact of your mentoring extends far beyond these sessions – and we are truly grateful to have you as part of the Grad Girls community.

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**THE BEST
WAY TO
PREDICT THE
FUTURE IS TO
CREATE IT!**



BONUS PRINTABLE RESOURCES

OBJECTIVES

- Professional Development Vision Board.
- 7-Day Reflection Challenge.
- 30-Days of Gratitude.
- Habit Tracker.
- Mindfulness Activity.
- Planners: 90-Day, Monthly, Weekly & Daily.
- Notes and Brainstorming Template.
- To-Do List.

Extra Resources to Support Your Mentees

As a mentor, you may find that your mentees need extra structure or prompts to help them reflect, plan, and take action between sessions. To support this, we've created a set of printable resources you can introduce or share with them as needed. Note: You don't need to use every resource - choose the ones that best suit your group's needs and the goals your mentees are working on.

Click on the button below to access a range of printable worksheets:

- Professional Development Vision Board.
- 7-Day Reflection Challenge.
- 30-Days of Gratitude.
- Habit Tracker.
- Mindfulness Activity.
- Planners: 90-Day, Monthly, Weekly & Daily.
- Notes and Brainstorming Templates.
- To-Do List.

[Access Printable Worksheets](#)



**When we
support each
other, AMAZING
things happen!**



Welcome to our exclusive community of supportive members who are taking their personal and professional development to the next level!

Want to chat?

mentors.gradgirls@women4stem.com.au