



<WOMEN.4/STEM>

/Grad.Girls

# PLANNING YOUR FIRST (OR NEXT) CAREER MOVE

7 May 2026



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

# AGENDA

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- **Welcome, AOC, Housekeeping**
- **Speaker Introductions**
- **Speaker Presentations**
- **Panel Questions**
- **Q&A with Audience**
- **Closing Remarks**





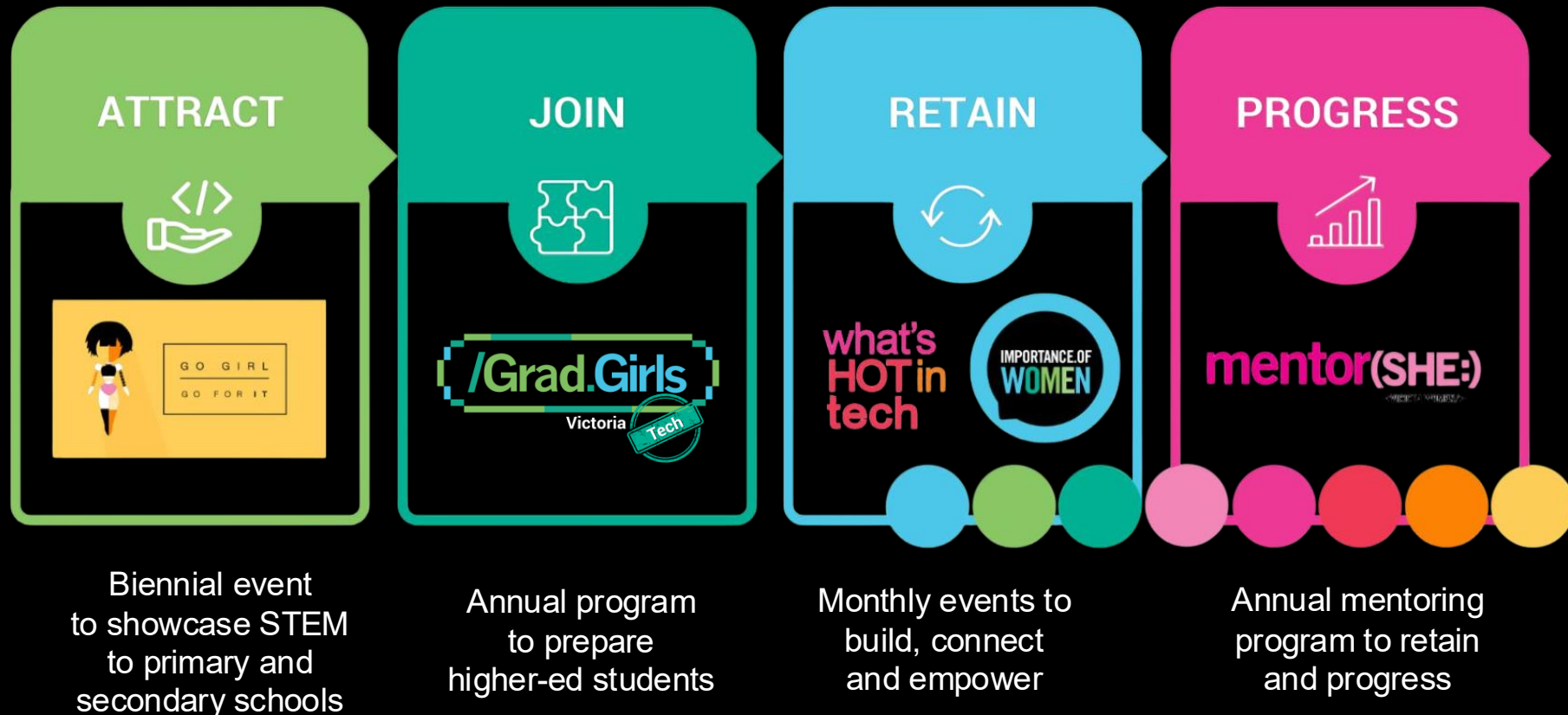
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# WHY THIS SESSION MATTERS

# ABOUT WOMEN 4 STEM

At Women 4 STEM, our vision is to champion and support women throughout their STEM careers by introducing practical and sustainable programs. These are tailored for the unique challenges faced by women in both urban and regional areas, providing them with the tools they need to thrive in their chosen fields.



# PROGRAM REMINDERS

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- **Student Comms team - via Discord or email**
- **Student Resources webpage**
- **If you've not completed your baseline survey yet, please complete asap**
- **Keep an eye out for our upcoming events**



# HOUSEKEEPING

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- **Cameras on if possible and mics on mute unless speaking**
- **Use the chat for questions - we'll address them in Q&A**
- **Drop a message in the chat if you experience any technical difficulties**
- **Closed captions are available - feel free to turn them on**
- **The session will be recorded - link shared after the event**
- **Feedback link will be available at end of session, and sent after session**



# ADD YOUR QUESTIONS

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**OPEN A WEB BROWSER,  
TYPE IN SLI.DO AND  
ENTER CODE: 1926765**





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# MEET OUR SPEAKERS

# ANNA FINDLAY



- Founder of Career AccelerateHER
- Career coach helping ambitious women step into \$200K+ roles without compromising authenticity
- Focuses on positioning, storytelling, and strengths-based personal branding to unlock career growth
- Former corporate “quiet achiever” who transitioned from a \$60K role to multiple 6-figure opportunities
- Experience across multiple industries; headhunted for roles and secured offers without applying



# LAURA MACKAY



- Founding Director at Align Talent (Melbourne), leading the technology recruitment practice
- 10+ years' experience in recruitment, reviewing thousands of CVs offering strong insight into what drives successful hires in tech
- Supports candidates with a consultative, people-first approach to stand out in competitive markets
- Volunteer Lead for Go Girl, Go for IT (Women 4 STEM), advocating for greater female representation in tech



# CAMILLA CLARKE



- 10+ years in early careers recruitment across the UK and Australia
- Began at Give a Grad a Go (London); later led graduate recruitment operations nationally
- Worked with tech startups through to global organisations
- Helps graduates land first roles through practical coaching and tailored support
- Passionate about opening doors into the tech industry for emerging talent





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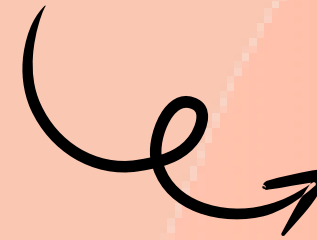
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**ANNA FINDLAY**

# Hi I'm Anna

## Women's Career Coach

- Changed Careers at 29
- Landed a \$100K role with no experience
- 7 Years in Tech & Design
- Headhunted for 3/4 of my 6-figure roles
- Landed 3 Job offers from only 1 application



***But that's not the whole story....***

*Here's what actually happened...*

***Early in my  
career, I felt  
like a total  
failure...***

- Went to university on a scholarship
- I graduated with top marks.
- Got to the job market, and nobody cared...
- I couldn't get a job in my field for over 2 years.
- Finally landed an entry-level role that paid \$42K per year.
- Stuck in missaligned roles, earning under \$60K
- Applying for jobs I could do in my sleep but not even getting a call back

# How I felt Starting my career





**IT WAS NOT GREAT**



**I HAD A CHOICE TO  
MAKE**

**Accept my**

**fate  
OR**

**Or make this the best comeback  
story ever. Crack this career thing,  
earn fantastic money, and never  
have to feel stuck like this again**



*I went all in on me..*

# *Fast forward...*



**DOING WORK  
I LOVED  
(SURROUNDED BY  
MY KIND OF PEOPLE)**



**BEING  
HEADHUNTED FOR  
MULTI-6-FIGURE  
ROLES**



**EARNING  
\$200K+**



**BOUGHT MY OWN  
HOME WHILE STILL  
TAKING MULTIPLE  
HOLIDAYS PER YEAR**

***I was able to achieve this even though:***

- I'm a socially awkward introvert
- I started with zero professional network when I moved to Australia
- I'm terrible at networking events
- I battle imposter syndrome
- I'm neurodivergent w/ an autoimmune disease & prone to burnout

*So whats my secret?*

# **What most people think it takes to land a job**

- **Ticking all the boxes on the Job Description**
- **3-5 years experience doing the same job**
- **Getting top marks in your degree**
- **Family Connections**
- **An ATS optimised CV**
- **Having all the right answers in the interview**

# *What it actually takes:*

**Skills x Proof x Visibility x Audacity**



**Most people  
put all their  
focus here**



**The two pillars that  
actually unlock your  
career**

# Skills

- **Understand your strengths and what you naturally do well**
- **Find roles that align with those strengths**
- **Do your research (Desktop + Speak to people in the roles)**
- **Ensure you have 80% of the key skills.**
- **Plug any gaps working as close to the industry as possible**

**Your most valuable skills are usually the thing that feels easy to you but hard to other people**

# How I built my skills

- Researched roles that aligned with my strengths
- Picked a few options
- Spoke to people doing the job to understand it
- Identified key skills
- Took on industry-aligned short courses, working with live clients to up-skill

# Proof

- De-risk yourself as a hire to show you've done this in practice before. Not just in theory
- Internships, personal projects, volunteer work, create opportunities in your current job, reach out to local businesses etc

# How I built my Proof

- Real client projects from my courses with real client outcomes
- Joined 3 hackathons (and won one of them)
- Re-framed my previous experience in the language of my new career direction so they understood how it translated
- Approached the head of marketing where I worked to do some live projects with our website (convinced my boss it would help with his KPI's)
- Documented everything, took photos, got testimonials
- Updated my CV & built case studies
- Negotiated a title change for the work I did on the company website

# Visability

- Who knows you for this work?
- Networking conversations
- Personal Brand etc
- Reaching out to peers & the hiring manager when applying to jobs

# How I built my Visability

- Went to networking events & made awkward small talk
- Figured out networking events were not for me
- Added every single Designer & Developer in Melbourne on LinkedIn (Over 2000 people)
- Reached out to jr's and people who recently pivoted to ask how they did it
- Set up 5+ conversations a week
- Worked my way up to speaking to hiring managers
- Made it about them, not just me
- Never asked for a job, only asked about their experience or the key skills they were looking for if they had a job going

# Audacity

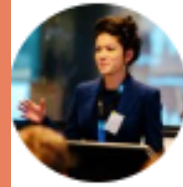
**The biggest  
unlock in your  
career**

- Do I back myself 100%
- What am I prepared to do that others are not to get different/ better results
- Am I playing it safe or staying in my comfort zone?

# The role of Audacity

Assistant  
Commissioner  
AKA the BIG  
BOSS

The message  
that landed  
me my  
breakthrough  
role



M [redacted] (She/Her) · 1st  
Chief Operating Officer @Cureety | Transforming the future of oncology  
care into reality today - Person-Centred Precision Care, Proactive,...

OCT 4, 2019



Anna Findlay - Career Coach (She/Her) · 4:30 PM

Hi Misha,

I saw you are looking to expand your HCD team across the  
country. I would be interested in having a conversation  
about the types of skills and people you are looking for in  
Melbourne. Would you be open to a phone conversation?

I look forward to hearing from you and have an awesome  
weekend 😊



M [redacted] (She/Her) · 5:41 PM

Hi Anna, of course, more than happy to have a phone  
conversation. My mobile is [redacted] if you'd like to give  
me a call. Misha

**THREE  
WEEKS  
LATER...**

**Well, technically... 12 weeks later**



M [redacted] in (She/Her) • 5:15 PM

Do you have a cv ? :)

We might have some work now available



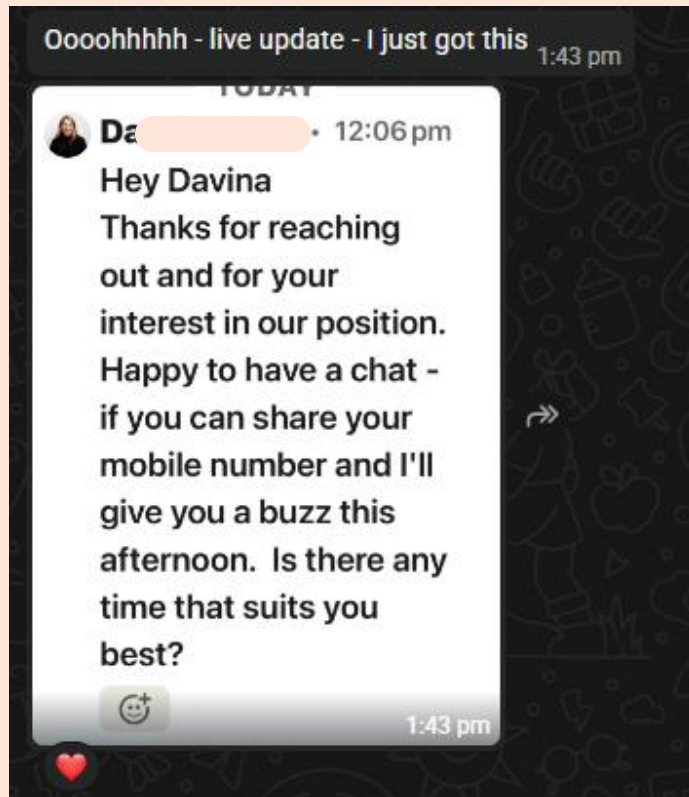
# Skills x Proof x Visibility x Audacity

- Send that intro message to the hiring manager
- + the polite follow-up message if they don't reply
- Pitch that side project to your boss
- Ask for that introduction
- 90% of people won't get back to you
- That's ok... You only need one, yes

***What Audacity is Unlocking for my  
clients***

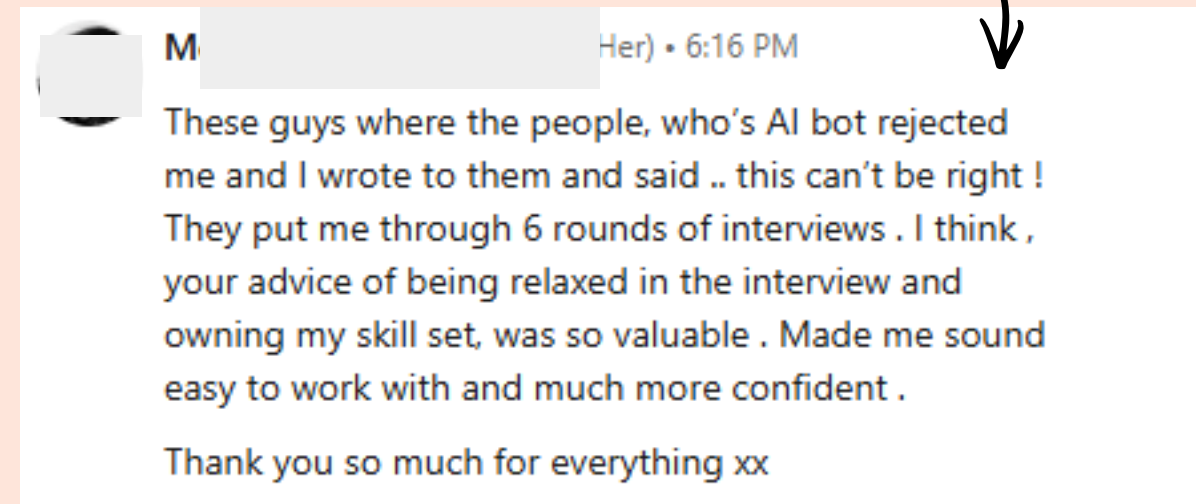


**She sent an email positioning herself as the obvious hire; the CEO asked to meet her the next day**



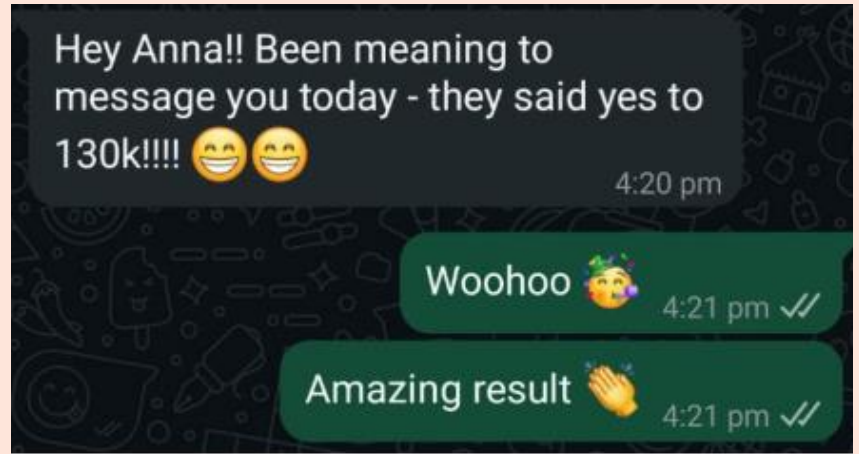
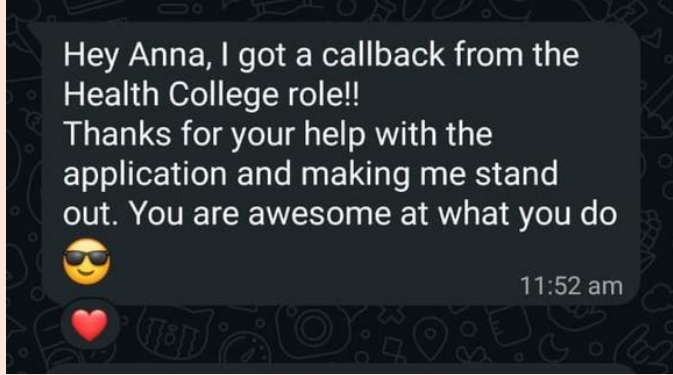
**Messaged the hiring manager and skipped the line straight into an interview**

**Reached out to the hiring manager and turned an AI bot rejection into a job offer**





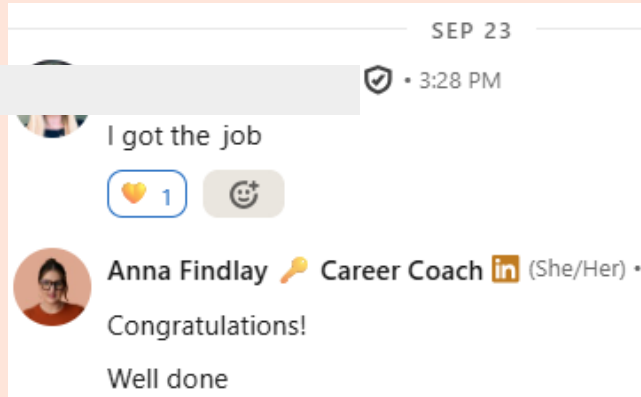
Fuk Me they just called to counter offer without a second interview



M [redacted] (She/Her) • 3:08 AM  
Sounds good Anna. Thank you.

BTW -- I focused on my "signature narrative" and revised my resume accordingly. This week I have had:

- \*5 -- 1st round interviews with 5 companies
- \*3 -- 2nd round interviews with 2 companies
- \*And I have an offer after 4 rounds of interviews with a company that I need to respond to by Mon 4/13.



If you take  
one thing  
away today  
let it be this

“

**SUCCESS**

is the child

• *of* •

**AUDACITY**

”

# Want to chat? Find me on LinkedIn

GitHub Intrepid IBM DanMurphy PEPA ANZ tpg Telstra GHD Academy Bupa BUNNINGS ZURICH Service NSW

**FOLLOW**

## HOW I LANDED MY \$200K DREAM JOB

AS A LATE DIAGNOSED, NEURODIVERGENT WOMAN

LINK IN MY FEATURED SECTION

**Anna Findlay - Career Coach** ✓ She/Her

I help High-Performing ADHD Women Monetize their "Busy" Brain to Build \$250K+ Careers & Businesses | Ex Bupa Strategist (AuDHD + Dyslexic) - Introvert AF

Greater Melbourne Area · [Contact info](#)

40,100 followers · 500+ connections





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**LAURA MACKAY**

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What really happens on the other side of  
your application

AlignTalent

# The Challenge Today

TECH, THE MARKET, AND WHERE GRADS FIT

A market full of demand. An entry point that's changed

**~1 million - Australians working in tech**

**312,000 - more needed by 2030**

**24% fewer - grad-level job postings**

**AI skills: 2x - fastest growing demand**

# What Happens After You Hit Send?



**Your application enters a system before it reaches a human**

A futuristic, white and blue robot is seated at a desk, holding a pen over a document. The robot has a humanoid form with visible internal mechanical structures and glowing blue accents. The background is a dark, gradient blue.

# How Recruiters Use AI

CV Screening/Ranking

Passive Sourcing

Job Ad Writing

Video Interview Analysis

# AI is a tool

## How you use it is the difference

**Use it for this**

**Framing Your Experience**

**Researching Companies**

**Interview Prep**

**Finding Your Gaps**

**Don't use it for this**

**Your Cover Letter**

**Rewriting Your CV**

**Take-Home Assessments**

**Replacing Your Voice**

# What Makes a Recruiter Call





# Stop applying blindly Start getting found

1

Use AI to build your target  
org list

2

Get visible to those organisations  
before you apply

3

Make your LinkedIn findable  
right now

# AlignTalent



## Phone

0487 468 224



## Email

[laura@aligntalent.com.au](mailto:laura@aligntalent.com.au)



## Website

[www.aligntalent.com.au](http://www.aligntalent.com.au)



Connect with me on LinkedIn





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**CAMILLA CLARKE**

<WOMEN.4/STEM>

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# The grad recruiter perspective

# Who are we?

We are a recruitment agency (free service for you) that specialises in graduate and junior job opportunities since 2009.

Connecting you to businesses looking for graduate expertise across start-ups to multinational organisations.

Our consultants have placed over 6000 grads globally and provide hands on support throughout your job search.

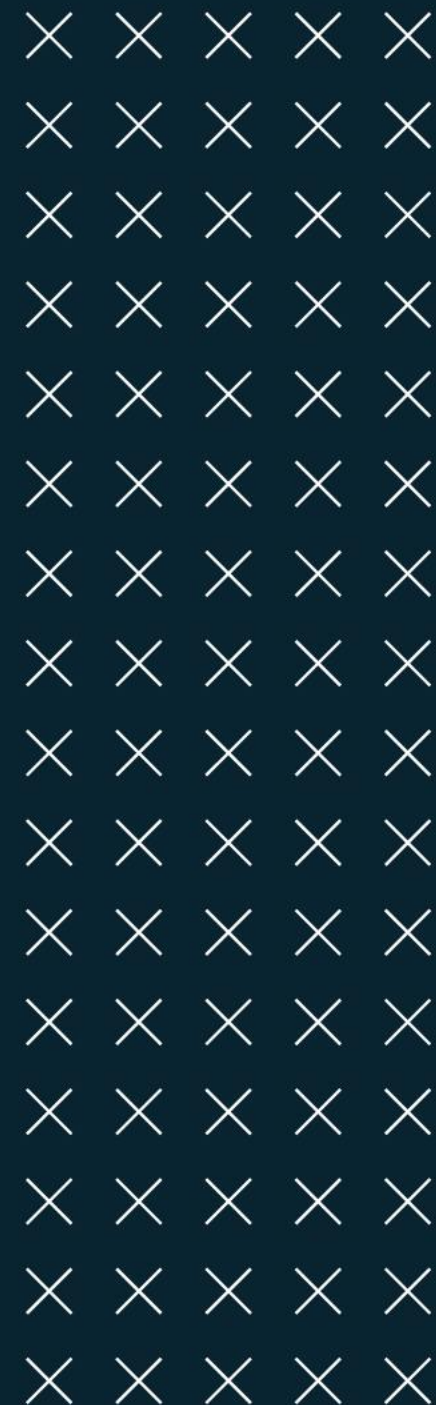


**Camilla Clarke**

Managing Director



# Market Insights



**01**

**Human skills are increasingly important**

84% of businesses are experiencing skills shortages

**02**

**Early career roles are on the up in early 2026**

After the drop last year, there's a modest rebound

**03**

**Tech companies want grad talent!**

Future consumers, fresh energy, question the status quo

# Stand out in the market **TODAY**

**01**

AI tools are your friend – use them wisely

**03**

All experience is relevant

**02**

Select your tech skills carefully

**04**

Tailor, tailor, tailor  
and bring the  
human side

**05**

Keep adding to your  
toolkit





Ready to find your **grad role?**





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# Q&A

# ADD YOUR QUESTIONS

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TYPE IN SLI.DO AND  
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# CONNECT WITH US

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**VIC Email:** [students.gradgirlstech@women4stem.com.au](mailto:students.gradgirlstech@women4stem.com.au)

**SYD Email:** [students.gradgirlssyd@women4stem.com.au](mailto:students.gradgirlssyd@women4stem.com.au)

**BRIS Email:** [students.gradgirlsbris@women4stem.com.au](mailto:students.gradgirlsbris@women4stem.com.au)

**Discord:** [Grad Girls server](#)

**LinkedIn:** [Grad Girls - Women 4 STEM](#)

**Instagram:** [@gradgirlsau](#)



# POST EVENT SURVEY

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THANK YOU  
FOR JOINING US!