

Vodacom's #CodeLikeAGirl 2023 workshop to empower 600 girls with ICT skills

The first instalment of Vodacom's #CodeLikeAGirl programme for 2023 has been announced. The four-day workshop, designed to teach young women critical ICT skills, takes place from 27 to 30 March 2023, targeting 600 girls to join. Sessions are held across Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, and North West provinces.



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The #CodeLikeAGirl programme is aimed at closing the gender gap in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields by inspiring more girls to explore careers that involve coding. Since its inception, Vodacom has trained over 4,000 girls through this programme, helping them unlock their passion for coding.

Often referred to as the jobs of the future, it is vital that more girls enter STEM fields and play a role in driving innovation, social well-being, inclusive growth, and sustainable development. In South Africa, fewer than 13% of female graduates leave university with STEM qualifications. Even more concerning, of the small percentage of female STEM graduates globally, only [40%](#) continue to work in their field of study.

Njabulo Mashigo, human resources director for Vodacom South Africa, says:

“We still see women being largely excluded from participating in STEM and ICT fields. Women are still faced with culturally-based hurdles such as gender norms and stereotypes, as well as lower pay and limited opportunity for promotion. Programmes like #CodeLikeAGirl play an important role in providing girls with access to role models in these fields and nurturing their confidence in STEM.”



Vodacom calls for applicants furthering studies in STEM fields

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But closing the gender gap is not only a question of equality and fairness. There are also several business [benefits](#) to a diverse workplace with women bringing a unique perspective and problem-solving approaches that can lead to greater innovation. [Research](#) showed diverse workplaces experience a 59% increase in creativity and innovation, 37% better assessment of customer interest and demand, and 41% more revenue from teams with greater gender equality.

The four-day workshop focuses primarily on Microsoft MakeCode content, showing different ways of transforming ideas into solutions and instructions which a computer can understand. In addition to languages like Html, CSS, JavaScript, and UX and UI, #CodeLikeAGirl introduces participants to mentors in the field, helping participants to build important life skills and grow their interest into a passion.

“The continued success of this programme is a testament to the appetite the girls of South Africa have to learn and join the digital future. #CodeLikeAGirl gives them the confidence and skills they need to succeed and help us close the gender gap, building a digital, inclusive, and sustainable future for South Africa and the world,” concludes Mashigo.

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