Women account for less than 24% of the IT workforce in Australia and only 1 in 10 enrolments to Australian Universities for IT based degrees are girls. How then, can we as educators claim the we are delivering High Impact Teaching in the field of digital technologies? Although there is a large focus on overlaying the digital technologies curriculum over the more traditional teaching streams, to support students’ learning, problem-solving, critical-thinking, creativity and collaboration abilities; it would seem that the current methods are ignoring the huge gap and the gender bias currently in the industry.

By 2020, Australia is predicted to need 700,000 skilled ICT workers to meet demand. Roles suggested to be most impacted by automation and machine learning, are also those that have highest proportion of female workers. We would like to provide attendees with some real-life anecdotes about what it is like for women in this industry and consequently what it could be like for the girls we are educating if we don’t make a change.

Code Like a Girl is an award-winning Melbourne-born social enterprise driving change in the tech community; inspiring new generations of girls to acquire coding as a skill through workshops and events. We would like to give attendees some insight into how we engage young girls in Computer Science and how we keep them coming back. We want to share our proven model for success in this area including:

- The importance of providing girls with inspirational female role models
- Not only teach girls computational thinking and coding skills but we put a great emphasis on empowering young girls to feel confident in the area of technology
- Providing and encouraging opportunities to collaborate with like-minded girls
- Inclusion of both ‘online’ and ‘offline’ activities to encourage resilience and problem solving

We would also like to invite attendees to try out some of the activities which we have found to be most well received by students in our workshops.