

C2 Create & Collaborate:

Creating Careers for Women in
Technology and Technical
Industries

Introduction

The world of technology has long been known for its underrepresentation of women, with gender barriers posing significant challenges for women looking to pursue a career in the industry. But as we move forward into a more inclusive world, the need for diversity in tech has become increasingly clear - not only for individuals, but for the success of companies and the industry as a whole. Initiatives like the C2 Create & Collaborate Program are helping to bring about positive change to an evolving industry.

Created and conceived by Disruptors Co and funded by the National Careers Institute, C2 Create & Collaborate is designed to encourage women to engage with technical companies, regardless of their focus of study at university. The C2 program encourages women to imagine how their skill set may be of use to such companies and to support further development of women at these firms. As such, the C2 program is allowing women to imagine a different future for themselves, and for tech businesses.

This book provides an in-depth look at how the C2 Program was implemented and offers guidance for companies that wish to create similar initiatives in the future. You will find everything from the rationale behind the program to the processes involved, and the outcomes achieved. We hope that by sharing this information, we can embolden other companies to continue on inspiring the next generation, celebrate the invaluable contributions of women in tech, and create more inclusive workplaces across the board.

We believe that the C2 Program is just the beginning of a brighter, more diverse future for tech, and we're thrilled to be a part of it.

The Disruptors Co Team
DisruptorsCo.com

Contents

1 Background

Rationale	P. 4
Canvases	P. 5
Company partners	P. 14
Attracting participants	P. 16
Venue selection	P. 18
Digital engagement	P. 20
Hack schedule	P. 22

2 Event Summary

Overview	P. 26
Sydney - 30 May at UTS Start Ups	P. 27
Melbourne - 11 July at Foy's Arcade	P. 28
Sydney - 4 Aug at UTS Start Ups	P. 29
Melbourne - 6 Oct at Siemens HQ, Bayswater	P. 30
Sydney - 19 Oct at UTS Start Ups	P. 32
Virtual - 3 March hosted on TheAirWorks.....	P. 33

3 Feedback

From the students	P. 34
From the companies	P. 38

4 Next Steps

Recommendations	P. 40
Thank you	P. 41

5 Acknowledgements.....

P. 42

6 About Disruptors Co.

P. 43

Background

Rationale

Breaking down the barriers that have kept women from flourishing in traditionally male-dominated industries can be a daunting task. The C2 Create & Collaborate series aims to tackle this challenge head-on with the help of partnering technology-oriented companies. The program seeks to:

1. Co-create workforce diversification plans
2. Deepen participants' understanding of the industry
3. Build individual career pathways
4. Highlight the importance of increasing female representation in the industry.

While STEM education has long been championed as the solution to gender inequality in tech, the C2 Program recognises that STEM education graduates are not the only women who could contribute to the growth and innovation of technology and technical firms. It is essential to shift the mindsets of potential future employees, as well as within the tech sector itself.

The program brings together women-identifying students and graduates and immerses them in a series of half-day hackathons. Participants work in teams, co-creating workforce diversification plans and honing their understanding of the company partners for each hackathon. Crucially, they hear about the unique experiences and perspectives from leading women in tech, helping to illuminate their own career pathway.

With support from senior representatives at these partnering tech companies, each team delivers a pitch, proposing innovative solutions to real-world challenges.

The C2 Create & Collaborate Program is funded by the National Careers Institute's Partnership Grants program, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, and the Australian government. Skills and Employment provided funding for the development of the 'hack toolkit', research outputs, and accompanying materials.

C2 Create and Collaborate Program

Canvases

The C2 Careers Hack is based upon two canvas activities, built in groups at each hackathon. The first canvas is designed to facilitate team forming, while the second canvas is designed to support brainstorming and the development of a performative pitch. This structure reflects Bruce Tuckman's Stages of Group Development (1965).



To hit the ground running, teams first employ the power of the Profile Building Canvas. This canvas offers a shortcut to building a shared understanding of individual strengths and expertise, allowing group members to quickly appreciate their differences and affinities. In just one hour, teams develop a strong foundation to start building a tangible solution.

Working alongside tech companies of varying sizes and complexity, students then aim to challenge the status quo by co-creating strategies and pitches using the Problem Building Canvas. By inviting students to bring their diverse perspectives and fresh ideas to the table, we dare them to think big. By pushing the boundaries, they play a part in paving a way forward for a more inclusive and dynamic future in tech.

These canvases represent a shortcut to group development, as well as shared understanding (among team members), values communication (through solution development) and comprehension of business operations of the companies involved in each event. And they do all this within the very limited time format of the hack.

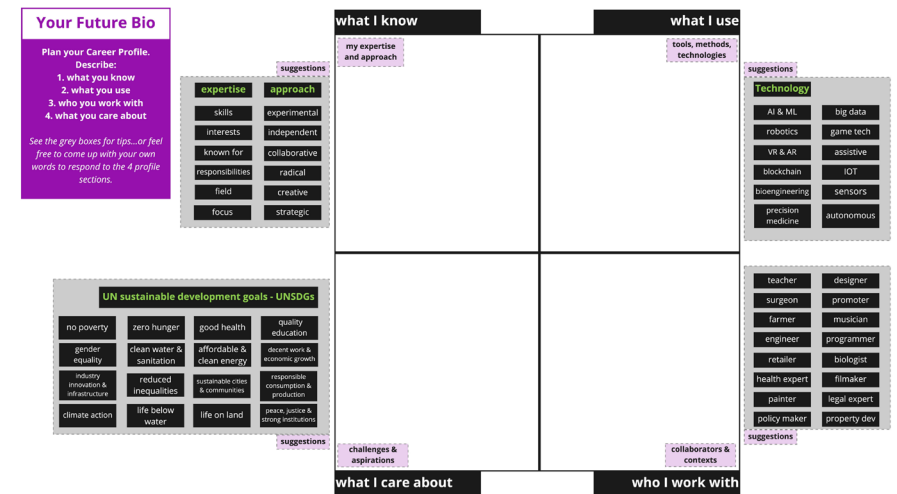
As a standardised format, the canvases allow for a simple comparison of different teams' solutions, and because they are presented in final pitches to partner companies, each team's solution pitch is easily understood by other teams - enhancing exposure to creative solutions.

Further details of each of the canvases is outlined below.

Profile Builder Canvas

The Profile Builder canvas invites participants to provide details about their skills and tools as well as identifying their values and the companies they admire. Not only does the canvas act like a mood board for participants, but it is also an effective networking tool that helps participants to connect while encouraging them to look beyond surface qualifications.

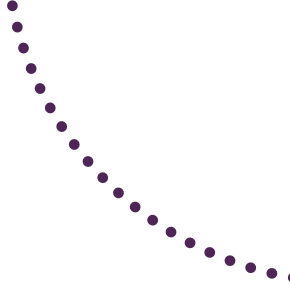
Developed by Professor Deb Polson, the canvas maps out the participant's strengths, such as confidence, critical thinking capabilities, community engagement and problem-solving interests. Within 15 minutes, team members can identify the skills and tools that may be relevant in preparing a solution and fashion their roles in team solution building.



To give students an idea of how to fill out the Profile Building canvas, Joanne Jacobs and Deb Polsen completed their own canvases which you will find on the following page. In the first quadrant, titled 'what I know', they describe their unique expertise and the approaches they use.

In the second quadrant, titled 'what I use', they list the tools, methodologies, and technologies they use in their work. The third quadrant, 'what I care about', helps to highlight their values and aspirations, while the fourth quadrant, 'who I work with', lists their current collaborators and people they would like to work with in the future.

And finally, there's an additional section that invites students to think about what inspires them in their day to day, regardless of their work setting.



Joanne Jacobs

what I know		what I use	
<p>my expertise and approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media Innovation facilitation Coding & Tech development Project management Agile Education 	<p>tools, methods, technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video storytelling Open source software Business canvases SCRUM, Agile business 4 Actions Framework 		
what I care about		who I work with	
<p>challenges & aspirations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing inequality Tiny homes Helping the next generation of women 	<p>collaborators & contexts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovators CSIRO Creatives Educators 		

what inspires me



Deb Polsen

what I know		what I use	
<p>my expertise and approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design & evaluation processes Entrepreneurship Strategic Collaborative Serious play Behaviours & interactions in digital environments, and how to transfer that to real places 	<p>tools, methods, technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game & simulation tech AI ML VR AR Storytelling, scenario & visualisation models Human factors & interaction design methods 		
what I care about		who I work with	
<p>challenges & aspirations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create community agency Reduced inequality Reducing consumption 	<p>collaborators & contexts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health experts Environment & materials scientists Museums & galleries 		

what inspires me

Solution Builder Canvas

The Solution Builder canvas is a framework designed to empower teams to tackle complex problems with diverse perspectives and expertise. The framework comprises two main elements: establishing distinct personas for each team member and helping teams define the scope of their solution.

Personas:

Teamwork is the name of the game here. By asking each team member to take on a specific role, the canvas empowers them to leverage their unique strengths and skill sets in a complimentary manner. Each team works autonomously to identify four distinct personas: the hacker, the humanitarian, the hipster, and the hustler. This process ensures that each person can contribute their expertise in a meaningful way while also creating a sense of ownership and accountability within the team.

Hacker

Builder, coder and digital genius. This person will build technical solutions to bridge the gap between networks and users. And in three sentences, they will deliver the solution to the all-important question of “How”?

Think: MacGyver of coding. Vint Cerf of the internet.

#Realist #Methodical



Hustler

Communicator and calculator. This person knows how to make complex ideas understandable and is resourceful with time, money and people. They test the market, find the right tools, keep everyone on target, and sell a pitch like a master.

Think: Sheryl Sandberg of strategy. Richard Branson of sales.

#Stories #Resourcefulness



Hipster

Designer, UX expert, and journey mapper.

This person wants whatever the hacker builds to be cool, sleek and customer friendly. They have the vision (always executed in the correct shade of blue).

Think: Coco Chanel of elegance. Steve Jobs of design.

#Visionary #Funk



Humanitarian

Humanitarians are people with lived experience and have insight into the problem areas on the front line. They think like a user. They want change and to find a way to work together for the better.

Think: Greta Thunberg of school strikes. Lasoo of truth.

#Inspirational #Engineer



Defining the scope

In addition to helping group members identify their respective roles, the Problem Solving canvas also assists teams in defining the scope of their solutions, breaking down complex problems into manageable, actionable components. This involves developing a clear understanding of tools and resources needed to build the solution, the first steps for establishing the solution and the metrics for success.

Team number:		Team members:	
Business unit(s) with less representation from women:		Challenges faced by the business unit(s):	
How might we solve a challenge of the company's business unit(s) with a women-led team?			
SOLUTION Describe your solution in 30 words or fewer	TOOLS / RESOURCES What equipment/services are needed to build your solution?	FIRST STEPS What is needed to get started with your solution?	METRICS FOR SUCCESS How will you measure performance of your solution?
HACKER TASKS	HUSTLER TASKS	HIPSTER TASKS	HUMANITARIAN TASKS
ASK What do you need from the company to help your idea(s) come to life?			

Throughout the process, industry professionals from partner companies offer ongoing support and feedback. This guidance can help teams refine their ideas, overcome challenges, create better solutions, and ultimately, the best pitch.

By adopting the Solution Builder canvas, teams can approach complex problems in a more agile and adaptive manner. They can harness the power of diverse perspectives and expertise to develop real-world solutions that are both practical and impactful.

We have included completed canvases from participants who took part in the C2 series.

Team number:		Team / Pathway program name:	
2		Female leadership: Solving the problem (ISPT)	
How might we attract more women to work at the company?			
SOLUTION Describe your solution in 30 words or fewer	TOOLS / RESOURCES What equipment/services are needed to support building your solution?	FIRST STEPS What is needed to get started with your solution?	METRICS FOR SUCCESS How will you measure performance of your solution?
How can we increase representation of women in leadership positions, to attract younger female applicants and empower/retain existing employees?	ML for job model IT teams to build apps / page	Partnerships with uni / internship opportunities Survey to wider audience - lower barriers Find / promote male champions	- Industry benchmarks - Satisfaction survey - Staff turn over rate
HACKER TASKS	HUSTLER TASKS	HIPSTER TASKS	HUMANITARIAN TASKS
Gather data from within the required field in the general public + within the company - Help with humanitarian side	Gather a team to build website / app Marketing and getting all CSR activities out to public	Gather info and data. Make the website + app more interactive and clear. Design the event process that can attract more young people getting to know the company	Reach out to uni / students Conduct surveys Tracking time line / impact
ASK What do you need from the company to help your idea(s) come to life?			

Team number:		Team / Pathway program name:	
6		Mileva AI (Salesforce)	
How might we attract more women to work at the company?			
SOLUTION Describe your solution in 30 words or fewer	TOOLS / RESOURCES What equipment/services are needed to support building your solution?	FIRST STEPS What is needed to get started with your solution?	METRICS FOR SUCCESS How will you measure performance of your solution?
To create projects that specifically require female expertise / cater to problems existing engineers face	Tech teams Product design team Marketing team AI experts	Define positions required + create team of AI experts that incl. female engineers from diverse backgrounds. Create system that allows employees to identify key issues they face in workplace, that improves the functionality of the AI. Grad programs to attract future engineers	% and frequency of Salesforce employers using Mileva. Reviews from customers The increase in women in engineering teams
HACKER TASKS	HUSTLER TASKS	HIPSTER TASKS	HUMANITARIAN TASKS
Add to existing technology and update the services available. Procuring more data to improve the AI	Identifying businesses that require these services and working with customers to see what works for them. Market it to the customers.	Redesigning what the AI looks like to users creating a brand around AI person that indicates how it differs from its previous form.	Grievance system - data from everyone re what could be improved. People with lived experience that can inform the improvement of the AI
ASK What do you need from the company to help your idea(s) come to life?			

Company partners

Company partners for the pilot C2 series were:

- ISPT
- Amazon (AWS)
- Salesforce
- Optus
- Aquent
- Siemens, and
- Encompass

Social entrepreneurship organisation, Vibewire, also participated as a host of a C2 event.

All companies engaged as partners had some issue of male dominance in the company and while some were actively seeking more women (either for their own firms, or in the case of Aquent, for the roles they were fulfilling as tech industry recruiters). All companies were interested in pursuing the ideas formed at C2 events, and some companies actively facilitated further development of ideas, and even sought to engage participants in recruitment drives.

To find the right company partners for our program, we relied heavily on the existing connections of our Program Lead, Joanne Jacobs. Joanne's relationships with technical companies proved to be a crucial asset in our search, and helped us to identify companies that were aligned with our mission and values.

In addition to Joanne's network, we relied on referrals from other companies and individuals who had worked with us in the past. Through this approach, we were able to identify a diverse group of company partners who were enthusiastic about collaborating with us on the program. Building a strong network of partners who shared our commitment to women in STEM was key to our success.

C2 Create and Collaborate Program

Navigating challenges and obstacles

Although we were ultimately successful in finding the right company partners for our program, it wasn't without its challenges. A key obstacle we faced was identifying senior members of staff who had the necessary time and availability to commit to the program. Although some companies were interested in partnering with the C2 program, busy schedules and competing priorities made it difficult to secure their participation.

Another challenge we faced was coordinating in-person events, which required a significant time commitment from all parties. We adopted a flexible and creative approach, such as allowing virtual judging by senior members of staff to participate in the program without being physically present.

When reaching out to companies, be sure to clearly communicate the benefits of the partnership and the value that the program can provide. Adapting to company partner needs by providing virtual participation options or providing alternative levels of commitment can help overcome these obstacles.



Attracting student participants

Designed to promote gender diversity in technical roles, our goal was to attract women-identifying university students and graduates who were interested or simply curious about pursuing a career in STEM related fields. To achieve this goal, we implemented a multifaceted approach that involved:

- Reaching out to university teaching staff, media departments, and various student bodies with aligning interests, all who had regular interaction with students.
- Creating messaging that emphasised the value of the program, whereby student-facing educators would influence young women to apply.
- Engaging with community pages on social media platforms, such as university forums, startup groups, and tech-based communities.
- Leveraging the networks of the technical companies involved and connecting with participants who had previously shown interest in the program.



In addition to creating engaging messaging, participants were offered a chance to develop their problem-solving abilities and discover ways to collaborate with women-led teams. Moreover, participants were incentivised by the opportunity to work alongside senior staff members from leading tech companies, and the chance to win \$100 gift cards for delivering the best pitch. Following the event, further mentoring and/or internship opportunities were also offered, dependent on each company partner involved.

One of the key lessons we learned from our experience was the importance of aligning program dates with students from various universities. Since universities operate on different academic calendars, including trimesters and semesters, it was essential to consider differences in session start dates, study breaks, and exam periods. We also discovered that timing played a significant role, with afternoon sessions starting at 1 pm being preferred over morning sessions at 9 am.

The C2 outreach efforts primarily relied upon email lists, social media sharing, and word-of-mouth, without any paid advertising. As a result, it was crucial to emphasise the importance of encouraging both university staff and students to help promote and spread the word; and keeping track of those who did act on our requests, so as to inform future event planning.

While the process of collating email addresses from university staff was time-consuming - particularly at the beginning of the series - building an email list proved an invaluable asset for attracting students and graduates throughout the program. It is, however, recommended to use a third-party email tracker like MailChimp to gain insights into the audience's engagement, such as open and click-tracking rates.



Venue selection

“Location, location, location.”

As we searched for the perfect space to host a STEM careers hack for university students, we had a vision: we knew that a well designed space could help spark creative and innovative mindsets. But most importantly, we needed a venue that would inspire and excite students about the future of technology.

This meant finding a place that was trendy, in a technology or innovation hub, open plan to support collaboration, spacious enough to accommodate attendees, and easily accessible via public transport. Additionally, we prioritised the need for strong wifi, excellent screen facilities, and on-site amplification to ensure both face-to-face and online participants felt connected and engaged throughout the session.

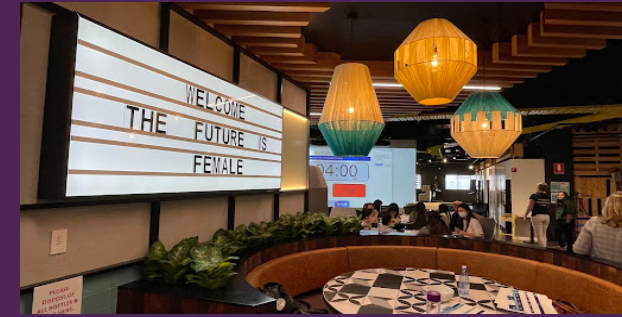
Disruptors Co. partnered with the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) and Vibewire to deliver the C2 program. This partnership allowed us access to their venues while also reducing respective room hire costs.

The UTS Startups Hub offered

- An extremely convenient location
- Accessibility
- A vibrant, memorable and inspiring atmosphere
- Open space for collaboration
- Optimal audiovisual equipment to boost interaction and engagement

ISPT, one of our many generous company partners, hosted both Melbourne events at one of their own venues, Foy’s Arcade, in the city’s CBD. A multi-functional space where innovative design meets the latest in technology and data visualisation, Foy’s Arcade was an inviting and immersive venue that encouraged students to learn, discover and collaborate, while experiencing the inside of a leading technology company.

C2 Create and Collaborate Program



We were fortunate enough to rely on Joanne’s existing relationships to secure venues, helping us to keep costs to a minimum.

While the average cost of room hire in a university is currently around \$1500 for half a day, our recommendation is to partner with a student association or body that is able to secure a venue within a university through sponsorship. Alternatively, consider hosting the event at a technology company’s facility. This option can be a major draw for students, as it provides them with access to industry experts, cutting-edge technology, and the opportunity to experience the inside of a leading tech company firsthand.

However, we note that company offices or facilities should be accessible via public transport, and preferably they should be located within a city or regional centre. We found the logistics of scheduling a C2 event in a company office that was located outside the city centre, and that was isolated from public transport, was particularly costly and onerous from an administrative perspective. Such venues present an array of challenges, from insurance and safety management, to presentation and equipment issues.

Nevertheless, where all insurance, safety, accessibility, travel, space and audiovisual equipment requirements can be met, partnering with a technology company for venue selection can add significant value to the event and enhance the overall experience for students.

Digital engagement

To enable greater participation in the final C2 event, we organised a virtual hackathon that allowed students from regional and interstate universities to join. While this decision opened up new possibilities, it also presented a new set of challenges. With the transition from an in-person event to a virtual one, we had to think carefully about the delivery of the event.

We knew that virtual events can fail to replicate the same level of interaction and engagement students experience in a classroom setting. To overcome this, we needed to find a platform that was both user-friendly and interactive and, above all, reliable. Our primary objective was to create an event that would be just as engaging and memorable as our in-person hackathons. To achieve this, we:

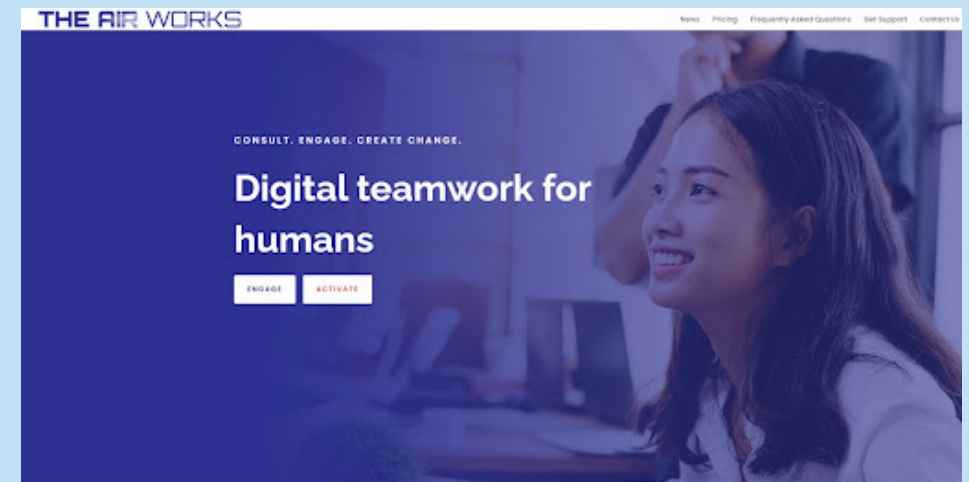
- Repeated the process of finding teaching staff from universities outside of Melbourne and Sydney.
- Selected TheAir.Works as our hosting platform, a custom-designed hackathon platform integrated with WordPress.
- Updated event details and registration forms.
- Created team rooms with access to the main plenary room, a section for mentor support, and Profile Building and Problem Solving canvases.
- Created a mentor greenroom where mentors could view respective canvases, monitor participants' progress, and respond to their support requests.
- Adopted a less-is-more approach to navigation that was straightforward and intuitive for both students and mentors.

To prepare everyone involved for the event, we arranged an event site run-through with staff from Disruptors Co, company partners, and mentors. Registered participants received emails with login details and an event run sheet. A step-by-step guide on how to complete the Profile Building and Problem Solving Canvases was pre-recorded on StreamYard, in addition to creating a slide deck for the day's presentation.

C2 Create and Collaborate Program

Gearing up for the career hackathon, the Disruptors Co team was in full-swing planning mode. Fortunately, our company page was already conveniently hosted on the WordPress platform, making it an obvious choice. We knew that it was reliable and efficient while also being integrated with TheAir.Works, a virtual hosting platform previously built in-house. Lastly, we considered the convenience of linking our Google Suite documents (Profile Builder and Problem Solving canvases) to each team page, meaning that mentors and facilitators could monitor student progress in real-time.

To reach out to potential students, we utilised social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. We did not use any paid advertising and found that our reach to university students was often limited. As such, we found that directly contacting university teaching staff was the most effective. This proved that sometimes, the old-fashioned way can be the best way.



For any future companies looking to take up the C2 Programs, other virtual hosting programs that we recommend include the following:

- MS Teams and SharePoint integration is the strongest and most user-friendly choice, offering collaboration tools, video conferencing and separate team rooms and documents.
- Zoom, which offers some collaboration online and could be used in conjunction with Google Suite.
- Miro, which offers collaboration tools and video conferencing.

Hack Schedule

The schedule for each C2 event was consistent. While we initially imagined full day events, participant feedback indicated a preference for half-day events that offered busy students convenience and flexibility. Further, we found that companies were more likely to become involved if they only had to commit to half a day of involvement.

We devised the following schedule to optimise engagement between company representatives and the participants as well as to sustain the momentum of the events.



Stage 1: Welcome

15 minutes: Arrival of registered participants with teams formed.

10 minutes: Welcome to country and introduction.



Stage 2: Bootcamp

10 minutes: The partner company/ companies reveal the pitch, outlining the areas where women are most needed in their business and/or projects that they'd like to see addressed by the career hack's teams.

10 minutes: Workshop coordinator outlines how to build a personal career profile.

10 minutes: The program leader outlines the solution builder canvas and how the teams can work to fill them in.



Stage 3: Design

100 minutes: The teams ideate and develop their canvases.

20 minutes: The teams build their pitch and practice presenting their pitch, they are assisted by mentors from the partner companies and other facilitators.



Stage 4: Pitch

50 minutes: Each team pitches their solution to the room and the judging panel, they have 4 min and will also receive 1 – 2 min of feedback from the judges.

10 minutes: Judges confer to decide on the winning team and runner-up team.



While the half-day schedule was the most effective format for the C2 events, variations are possible. As the program develops, full day events could be considered to allow for deeper engagement with partner companies and additional opportunities for learning and networking.

Additionally, company tours or interviews/panels at events could be incorporated to provide participants with a more comprehensive understanding of the industry and career paths available to them. These variations would offer exciting new possibilities for the program and its participants.



C2 Create and Collaborate Program



Stage 5: Conclusion

At the end of each C2 career hack event, we completed various post-event administrative tasks to ensure that future events ran smoothly and effectively, while also showcasing the value of the program to all involved.

1. Post-event report: One of the key tasks was the creation of a post-event report, which included a summary of the event, details of the pitches, photos of the teams and winners, and a pitch video. The report was shared with the partner company to showcase the impact of the program and demonstrate the value of their involvement.
2. Participant surveys: We sent out surveys to all participants following the event to gather feedback on what worked well and what could be improved for future events. This feedback was used to make adjustments to the program to ensure it continued to meet the needs of participants.
3. Certificates: To recognise the teams' hard work and achievements, we provided student participation certificates, winner certificates, and honourable mention certificates.
4. Winning team prize: As an incentive, the winning team was awarded a \$100 gift card, and the opportunity for further mentoring with each company partner that was involved.
5. Thank you email: We sent a thank you email to hack participants and company partners to express our appreciation for their contribution and dedication to the program.



Event Summary

Overview

The Career Hack events took place in both Sydney and Melbourne, with a final event being delivered virtually. The C2 series brought together a diverse group of participants: current tertiary students, recent graduates, and passionate young women with an interest in STEM. Against the backdrop of an industry where women have historically been underrepresented, this program aims to help young women imagine careers within Australia's leading technology firms - no matter what their area of study.

Our company partners - Aquent, Amazon (AWS), ISPT Super Property, Optus, Salesforce, Siemens, Vibewire and Encompass Corporation - were instrumental in providing a landscape of the problems to be solved, and guiding teams towards innovative solutions. Students also heard from senior members of staff, and their personal, unique and often unconventional career paths.

Throughout the half-day events, partnering companies offered their encouragement and mentorship to the budding tech talent, helping teams of 4 to 5 refine their solution and create the most compelling pitch possible.

At the end of the session, each team pitched their solutions to a panel of expert judges who revelled in the difficult task of choosing the winning teams. The judges provided feedback to everyone, ensuring that all participants walked away from the events with invaluable knowledge and insights.

C2 Create and Collaborate Program

Hack 1: Sydney - 30 May at UTS Start Ups



Company:

ISPT Super Property

Team's Pitches:

- Team 1: ISPT Case Competition
- Team 2: Women on Fire
- Team 3: Sustainable Pathways
- Team 4: Breaking Down Barriers
- Team 5: Work With Your Future Self
- Team 6: iCalendar for Women's Health
- Team 7: Grow With ISPT



Judging panel:

Kate Mathewson and Jay Norden from ISPT, and Deb Polsen from RMIT.

Additional mentors included Raj Mishra from ISPT, Dr Jenni Hagedorn from USYD, Eliza Wong from Vibewire, and Joanne Jacobs, Gavin Heaton, Lenore Johnston and Laura McDonald from Disruptors Co.

Result:

Bridgette Shore, Liangyu Zhong, and Emilia Coll from Team 5 won with their pitch titled "Work With Your Future Self". They each received a \$100 gift card and the opportunity to apply for an internship with ISPT Super Property and further mentoring.

26
Attendents

74
Registrations

7
Teams

Hack 2: Melbourne - 11 July at Foy's Arcade



Company:

Amazon (AWS) & ISPT Super Property

Team's Pitches:

Team 1: No barriers (ISPT)

Team 2: Female leadership: Solving the problem (ISPT)

Team 3: Making Impossible Possible - Bootcamp (AWS)

Team 4: Job portals rethought: For women, by women (AWS)

Team 5: Platform for women by women (ISPT)

Team 6: Solving problems from home (AWS)

Team 7: Decision tree (AWS)

Team 8: STEM careers beginning in high school (AWS)

Team 9: A culture brand to attract women to all companies (ISPT)

Team 10: Step Up workshop series (ISPT).

Judging panel:

Matt Greensmith from AWS, Dani Dalby from ISPT and Deb Polsen from RMIT.

Additional mentors included Isheetta Sinha, Vibha Pant and Ash Krishnanand from AWS, Jay Norden, Nicole Ward and Kate Mathewson from ISPT and Joanne Jacobs from Disruptors Co.

Result:

Chloe, Roselyn, Trinh & Kusum from team 2 were the ISPT winners with their pitch "Female leadership: Solving the problem".

Team members were invited to apply for ISPT internships which also included the opportunity to receive further mentoring.

Divya, Ruth, Arina & Eva from team 6 won the AWS pitch with their solution titled "Solving problems from home". They also received the opportunity for further mentoring with AWS.

All members from both winning teams received a \$100 gift card.

43

Attendents

124

Registrations

10

Teams

C2 Create and Collaborate Program

Hack 3: Sydney - 4 Aug at UTS Start Ups



Company:

Optus & Salesforce

Team's Pitches:

Team 1: What Better Looks Like (Salesforce)

Team 2: Making Optus Elevate and Yes Women visible (Optus)

Team 3: Mileva AI (Salesforce)

Team 4: STEM Pathway Workshops for Students (Optus)



Judging panel:

Wendy Zveglic from Salesforce, Mark Potter and Genevieve McLean from Optus and Deb Polsen from RMIT.

Additional mentors included Jeethu Bobby, Swathi Sethia, Isobel Fraser and Senali de Mel from Optus, Amy Badger from Salesforce, Joanne Jacobs, Gavin Heaton, Lenore Johnston and Laura McDonald from Disruptors Co.

Results:

Alycia, Melissa, Akshaya from Team 3 won with their pitch titled "Mileva AI" and each received a \$100 gift card and an Optus goodie bag. An honourable mention went to Team 2 for their pitch "Making Optus Elevate and Yes Women visible".

14

Attendents

53

Registrations

4

Teams



Hack 4: Melbourne - 6 Oct at Foy's Arcade



Company:

Siemens

Team's Pitches:

- Team 1: Growth, leadership and empowerment
- Team 2: Women Power
- Team 3: 2-Day Hackathon
- Team 4: Collaboration with existing community outreach programs
- Team 5: Recruit and retain
- Team 6: Supporting equality in the workplace
- Team 7: Future unlimited!
- Team 8: Be who you want to be!
- Team 9: The Siemens morning tea
- Team 10: Redesigning the user interface

Judging panel:

Bhawna Jagasia and Kirsty Tascas from Siemens, and Deb Polsen from RMIT.

Additional mentors included Joanne Jacobs from Disruptors Co

Result:

Yaqi, Theresa, Jaime, Chloe & Yuying from team 7 won with their pitch titled "Future Unlimited" and each received a \$100 gift card. The winners were put in contact with the Siemens team for Careers Advice. All participants were sent opportunities to apply for the Siemens Graduate Program. Honourable mentions were also given to team 3 for their pitch '2-Day Hackathon' and team 9 for their pitch 'The Siemens morning tea'.

47
Attendents

232
Registrations

10
Teams



Hack 5: Sydney - 19 Oct at UTS Start Ups



Company:

Aquent

Co-host:

Vibewire

Team's Pitches:

Team 1: AnnoChat

Team 2: Power-Up!

Team 3: Digital Twin

Team 4: Disrupting bias

Team 5: You can't be what you can't see



Judging panel:

Karen Monjo, Ashlea Garfield and Lisa Tahu from Aquent, Deb Polsen from RMIT.

Additional mentors included Eliza Wong from Vibewire, and Joanne Jacobs, Gavin Heaton and Lenore Johnston from Disruptors Co.

Result:

Tammy Ward, Meghana Reddy and Maja Jovanovic from Team 5 won with their pitch titled "You can't be what you can't see". They each received a \$100 gift card and the opportunity to attend career advice sessions with Aquent.

15

Attendents

69

Registrations

5

Teams

Hack 6: Virtual Event - 3 Mar



Company:

Encompass Corporation

Co-host:

Vibewire

Team's Pitches:

Team 1: Enhance career development

Team 2: Re-create your recreation

Team 3: HERnship: Empowering Women in KYC Internship

Team 4: Women helping each other

Judging panel:

Joanne Jacobs, Netally Castilho (Encompass) and Eliza Wong (Vibewire).

Additional mentors included Shannon Bourke and Lenore Johnston from Disruptors Co.

Result:

Christal, Rebecca and Rachael from team 2 were the winners with their pitch 'Re-create your creation'. Each team member won a \$100 gift card and were put in contact with Rachelle Maulawin (DevOps Engineer at Encompass) for future mentoring.

12

Attendents

63

Registrations

4

Teams

Feedback from the students

Following each career hack, we asked participants who attended and the partner companies to provide feedback on their experience.

Would you recommend C2 to other women?
27 responses



“What a way to kick off the morning! Around two weeks ago, Alycia Wolf, Angy Melissa Medina Berrio and I won Best Pitch at the #C2CareerHackathon hosted by Joanne & Deb.

Our winning solution MelivaAI (inspired by Salesforce’s EinsteinAI) addressed the issue of bringing in more women into the technology space. Today we spent our morning at the gorgeous #salesforce tower (I could go on about the view), interacting with some inspiring women like Rowena Westphalen & Jennifer McLaughlin in Solution Engineering. It was particularly interesting to hear how people from all walks of life and varied backgrounds found their space in tech. This opportunity would not have been possible without the enthusiasm and support of Wendy Zveglic!

And finally, a huge thank you to the entire #c2 team for giving us girls a confidence boost and stepping stone for our careers!”

- Akshaya Parthasarathy, Data Addict | NLP Researcher | Lifelong Learner



C2 Create and Collaborate Program

“

Gaining insights about unconventional career paths and not always being dependent on what your current area of study is. Realising how transferable skills can still be useful in technical industries.”

- Freya, Tarindhi and Tiana, Hack 5 at UTS Start Ups, 19 October 2022

“

The event highlighted the importance of gender equality in workplace and how women need to build confidence. The advice provided by the organisers and panelists were very useful for me as they spoke from experience.”

- Meghana, Hack 5 at UTS Start Ups, 19 October 2022

“

Empowering women is so much needed in this world and I absolutely loved the power words and support I got from the mentors.”

- Melissa, Hack 3 at UTS Start Ups, 4 Aug 2022

“

I loved the Q&A Portion when the activity ended where we discussed the working environment for women at tech companies to manage expectations. Also hearing speaker insights about working at a tech company and managing a career

- Marjo, Hack 6 (virtual event), 3 March 2023





"I thoroughly enjoyed the event - it really allowed me to think creatively and work collaboratively with other ambitious, like-minded women. I also learnt a lot about Encompass and about how machine learning and AI can help others.

I also would like to say a huge thank you to you for inspiring me to pursue my entrepreneurial journey. Since our last conversion after last year's C2 event, I have been working with my team to establish a Medical AI start-up based in Melbourne."

- Gwenyth, Hack 6 (virtual event),

3 March 2023



From the companies

“Amazing experience yesterday to be alongside Danielle Dalby Kate Mathewson and Nicole Ward on behalf of ISPT as a co-sponsor of the second session of ‘C2 Career Hack’ for young women.

The sessions are led by the incomparable duo of Joanne Jacobs of Disruptors Co and Deb Polson of RMIT University and all about empowering, mentoring and providing advice on career pathways for Young Females into traditional male dominated Stem Roles.

So good for ISPT to see the value in co sponsoring such events given its particularly critical for ensuring that future roles within the company in sectors like Finance, Funds Management, Property Investment and Property Development are shown that Females can succeed and thrive in such roles not only within our company as Dani, Kate and Nicole have all done, but also the Industry as a whole.”

- Jay Norden, Manager-New Business Partnerships, Retail Services ISPT



“It was my absolute pleasure in mentoring and listening to young and lovely uni girls at the UTS hackathon today.

The participants deliberated on the topics given to them and shared their ideas as to how corporate power houses like Optus and Salesforce can attract women candidates into their fold and leverage on their unique skill sets to deliver better products to end customers.”

- Swathi Sethia, DevOps Engineer at Optus



C2 Create and Collaborate Program

“

The day saw the student attendees create solutions around how new digital environments can empower women in the workforce. The day was a huge success and we saw some great creative thinking in plotting pathways and solutions for STEM careers for women and female-identifying students involving apps, the metaverse, AI and VR to name a few!”

- Aquent Australia

“

It’s clear to us that more work needs to be done. Not just in teaching skills and capabilities to young women, but also in changing attitudes and creating opportunities. Armed with the skills, ambition and confidence to create their dream STEM careers, we’re looking forward to seeing what the next generation of female students can achieve.”

- Hazel Thurlow, ISPT Group Executive, People & Culture



Next Steps

Recommendations for future C2 events

To empower women in their pursuit of technology careers, we have aimed to create a program that will support and guide them along the way. However, to ensure the success of this program, there are a few key things that need to be considered beforehand. These include securing funding, identifying the departments to target, organising a pilot event, and entering into a community for support and feedback. Specifically, these steps involve:

Securing funding: This will cover the costs associated with running the program, including venue hire, catering, travel, and staffing. Additionally, subscriptions to tools like MS Teams, SharePoint, and WordPress will be needed to facilitate smooth communication and project management. With funding of around \$60,000 - \$70,000, the program could be run for two days per week with other staff members involved. This would allow for six events per year.

Determining which departments to target for the series: It is important to identify the right audience for the program, whether they are studying, graduated, or job-seeking.

Organising a pilot event on the chosen platform with the toolkit: This will involve developing a community and testing the program's efficacy in a smaller setting.

Entering into a community for discussion of the c2 process: This will provide support for C2 operators and allow for the exchange of feedback and ideas.

Providing feedback of experiences to the community: As the program progresses, it will be important to provide feedback to the community and to be open to their suggestions for improvement. Disruptors Co is committed to supporting any organisation that is interested in running a C2 Series.

C2 Create and Collaborate Program

Thank you

We are thrilled to have been given the opportunity to launch the C2 Create & Collaborate pilot series, which was made possible by the National Careers Institute's funding. The success of this program has allowed us to develop a comprehensive toolkit that provides all the necessary resources for running successful events. Looking forward, we are excited to continue expanding and improving the program in the years to come, with the goal of making a meaningful impact on the careers of young women.

We are especially proud to share that the C2 program has already led to the employment of a data analyst at ISPT who previously pursued university studies outside of data analysis. It is an honour for us to have played a part in shaping this individual's career path, and we are eager to witness the positive impact of this program on more participants in the future. This success story serves as a testament to the value and effectiveness of the C2 program in empowering and equipping young women with the skills and confidence needed to excel in their chosen fields.



Acknowledgement

Company partners:

Amazon (AWS):

Matt Greensmith, Isheeta Sinha, Vibha Pant and Aishwarya Krishnan.

Aquent:

Karen Monjo, Ashlea Garfield and Lisa Tahu.

Encompass Corporation:

Netally Castilho and Rachelle Maulawin.

ISPT:

Jay Norden, Nicole Ward, Kate Mathewson and Dani Dalby.

Optus:

Genevieve McLean, Mark Potter, Jeethu Bobby, Swathi Sethia, Justine Repeti, Isobel Fraser and Wendy Chung.

Salesforce:

Amy Badger and Wendy Zveglic.

Siemens:

Bhawna Jagasia and Kirsty Tascas.

Vibewire:

Gavin Heaton and Eliza Wong.

Sponsors: RMIT, UTS and Vibewire.

Special thanks: Professor Deb Polson, Disruptors Co, UTS Start Ups and the team at ISPT for kindly providing our Melbourne venue, Foy's Arcade.

C2 Create and Collaborate Program

About Disruptors Co.

Disruptors Co unlocks innovation for changing times. As a leader in digital innovation, we specialise in market-focused innovation, digital marketing strategies, digital solution development, hackathons and design jams. We equip individuals and teams with the skills and expertise to innovate better and faster.

Disruptors is taking the learnings from the C2 series into the City of Sydney BIP. We are also conducting innovation facilitation services for Optus and CSIRO.



Gavin Heaton
CO-CEO



Joanne Jacobs
CO-CEO

PDF version available on

disruptorsco.com/case-studies/c2

