

# ENCOURAGING GIRLS TO CHOOSE STEM & BUSINESS PATHS

INSPIRE AMBITION. EXPAND HORIZONS. INVITE WOMEN IN.

Young women often opt out of STEM and business not because they lack ability, but because they lack visibility, encouragement, and clear routes in.

Educators can actively open these doors.

## Make STEM & Business Feel Relevant to Their Lives

Link STEM to real problems your students care about, e.g. health, climate, design, transport, community solutions.

Show how business skills fuel creative careers through leadership, entrepreneurship or social initiatives.

**Why it works?** When STEM and business are linked to real issues, they activate purpose and personal meaning, two factors shown to strongly increase girls' interest, confidence, and long-term career motivation.



## Present Career Pathways Early and Clearly

Break big fields into approachable roles.

Use simple “career maps” showing steps from school → training → job → advancement.

Invite alumnae or early-career women to describe their actual day-to-day work.

**Why it works?** Clear pathways replace uncertainty with confidence. Understanding the steps into STEM or business makes these fields feel achievable, not intimidating.



## Don't wait for participation, actively invite it

Directly encourage young women to join STEM or entrepreneurship clubs, robotics teams, hackathons. Use direct, specific invitations e.g. “You'd be great at this - want to try?”. Offer open days and “try-it sessions”.

**Why it works?** Invitation breaks the common hesitation barriers.



## Build Identity, Not Just Skills

Use statements that connect performance to identity:

- “You're thinking like an engineer.”
- “That's how analysts approach problems.”

Celebrate curiosity, independence, and resilience as STEM/business traits and provide visible recognition as badges or micro-credentials.

**Why it works?** Identity-building is essential: people pursue careers where they feel they belong.

## Counter Stereotypes with Real Stories

Highlight diverse women in science, engineering, finance, and entrepreneurship. Bring in women from local companies to talk about their journey and missteps—not just achievements.

## Make ambition safe and celebrated

Praise bold questions, proposals, and risk-taking. Offer low-stakes competitions where trying, failing, and iterating is recognised.

## Link women to networks and opportunities

Pair students with mentors from academia, firms, or women associations. Share STEM/business internships, scholarships, mobility options and create peer groups where young women collaborate and support each other.

**Why it works?** When ambition is celebrated, stereotypes are challenged, and networks are accessible, young women gain the confidence to pursue bold goals in STEM and business.

