The Future of Work Lab
Pilot Program Briefing Note

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THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Emerging Leaders Lab: Women in STEM

The Problem

Academic research has identified that women studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) have the highest rate of attrition following the completion of their degree. This phenomenon is referred to as 'the leaky STEM pipeline'. With an estimated 75 per cent of the fastest growing occupations requiring strong STEM skills, it is more important than ever that we support young women in STEM industries and encourage their leadership in the sector.

Our Solution

The Future of Work Lab in partnership with the University of Melbourne is seeking to address this rising rate of attrition amongst women in STEM. Linking tertiary students with young industry professionals, the Future of Work Lab's leadership program will be the first initiative at the university to bring together women across STEM faculties for leadership training, networking, and mentoring.

Using an evidence-based approach, the program aims to support individual career development and broader organisational change. Research suggests that connecting female students and professionals of a similar age and career trajectory could strengthen the STEM pipeline and increase workforce retention rates. Leadership programs provide women in STEM an inclusive and supportive environment in which participants can explore their career options whilst expanding their professional network.

Outcomes

By connecting students with industry professionals, our program aims to promote the importance of a gender-inclusive and equitable STEM workforce. We hope to encourage students to pursue STEM careers following the completion of their degrees and inspire industry professionals to purse leadership positions within their STEM industries.

Our Team

Kate Dangar is a fellow with the Future of Work Lab who has been researching the effects of leadership programs on women within the STEM industry. With the help of Leah Ruppanner, Sophie Squires, and Lia Acosta, the Future of Work Lab has created this program using an evidence-based approach. This program has been funded by the Victorian Government.