

# CHECKLIST 1

## Getting in touch with schools to deliver a My Skills My Life Session

- ❑ 1. Determine your objectives in running a My Skills My Life event.
- ❑ 2. Ensure you have the resources, the time and the support of your organisation.
- ❑ 3. Consider what type of event you want to run, and how you will apply My Skills My Life to that event.
- ❑ 4. Compile a list of local schools in your area.
- ❑ 5. Identify those schools that you would most like to target.
- ❑ 6. Consider if you already have the contacts with schools through your colleagues.
- ❑ 7. Identify key contacts who are most likely to support you within the schools.
- ❑ 8. Establish contact by letter, email, phone call, or a visit.
- ❑ 9. Consider inviting teachers for a preliminary visit.
- ❑ 10. Be clear about your offer and project so that teachers can see the benefits to their pupils and the school
- ❑ 11. Negotiate the best time for the event with the school to ensure their full engagement with you.
- ❑ 12. Be clear about your target audience.

# CHECKLIST 1

## Getting in touch with schools to deliver a My Skills My Life Session

### Preliminary work, in advance of contacting schools.

In advance of getting in touch with schools, it is important to ensure that you have a clear offer for the school and the resources to provide the session. You may wish to deliver a STEM\* careers talk to girls in the school using My Skills My Life resources, to run a full My Skills My Life event for girls, or to invite the girls and teachers/parents to an event within your company.

Schools are particularly welcoming to speakers who promote the importance of studying maths and sciences post 16.

The revised statutory [guidance on careers education](#) in schools, post September 2018, requires schools to identify a careers leader for their school, prepare a careers action plan and to engage with employers. Schools will be pleased to include your session in their careers action plans.

#### ❑ 1. Determine your objectives in running a My Skills My Life event.

Be clear about your objectives before you start- they may be some, or all, of these:

- To support your outreach activities;
- To showcase the female talent in your organisation;
- to advertise opportunities within your company;
- To support your local community to engage with employment and education opportunities;
- To address the skills gap;
- To address your organisation's Gender Pay Gap.

#### ❑ 2. Ensure you have the resources, the time and the support of your organisation.

Ensure that you have all the resources you need for this delivery, including role models (if available), and that you have the support of your colleagues.

Planning the event will take time from work, as will delivering it. Consider how long you will need to deliver the event and when you would be able to offer it. Will there be a possibility of a follow up session or work placements after the event?

You will need the support of your colleagues and your organisation, there can sometimes be some resistance to 'girls only' events or a concern that these may not be legal. Do look at the "Making the case for 'Girls Only' STEM events" to find out more and to be able to reassure your colleagues about the importance and the legality of this work.

\*STEM - Science, technology, maths and engineering

### ❑ 3. Consider what type of event you want to run, and how you will apply My Skills My Life to that event.

You may want to run a stand alone My Skills My Life session or you may wish to add a session to an existing outreach activity you are involved with. Take a look at how My Skills My Life works for some successful ideas from other organisations and remind yourself of the My Skills My Life key findings as you design your session.

## Making contact with schools

### ❑ 4. Compile a list of local schools in your area.

You may already have contact with local schools or you could use this link to identify local schools: <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>.

### ❑ 5. Identify those schools that you would most like to target.

The initial work in making the right contact at each school can be difficult but you are better to spend time building a deep relationship with one or two schools, rather than sending information to 'all' schools with little impact.

### ❑ 6. Consider if you already have the contacts with schools through your colleagues.

You may have employees who are parents, school governors, community or youth group leaders (i.e. the Girlguides, sports clubs, and science clubs) who can help make a personal introduction.

In practical terms it's easier for staff to coordinate with schools in their area and it's easier for young women to get to your site for activities or work experience if it is local to them.

### ❑ 7. Identify key contacts who are most likely to support you within the schools.

Identify the best person to speak to – the head teacher may be able to guide you to the right person or you can contact the chair of governors, the head of science or the careers leader. The careers leader should be the best contact.

Searching the school website can often give you a guide to which staff you should speak to – but social media and local networks are also ways to find the names of the people who will be able to help.

### ❑ 8. Establish contact by letter, email, phone call, or a visit.

Once you've identified the best person to speak to and when, don't be afraid to reach out directly by phone or letter. Email is easier to ignore. A personal contact is much better for a first chat that can then be followed up in writing - see 'Sample letter to engage with schools'.

School staff are very busy and you may need to be patient or to try different approaches to engage them.

## ❑ 9. Consider inviting teachers for a preliminary visit.

Invite your key contacts to learn more about your business – see if you can set a time to show them round and discuss how you can work together to encourage women and girls into STEM education and careers.

Do consider running a briefing or an event for teachers in advance of the one you intend to offer pupils. This can support the teachers to understand the opportunities available to young women in your organisation and enable them to actively promote the activity to their female pupils. These types of activities are covered under CPD (continuing professional development) and are welcomed by schools.

## ❑ 10. Be clear about your offer and project so that teachers can see the benefits to their pupils and the school

Think about the benefits to the students, and to the school, as well as the outcomes for your organisation.

Your My Skills My Life session could;

- Support careers guidance within the school
- Support a particular part of the curriculum
- Promote post 16 participation with STEM subjects. You could check the schools achievement data.

Impress upon the school that your organisation is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes the participation of girls in the workforce.

Explain that the session will support girls to see the benefits of a STEM career and to understand the importance of studying maths and sciences post 16. This session will offer an opportunity to challenge the stereotypes and myths around careers in the STEM sector.

Consider what you wish to deliver, and how, so that you can discuss if this is practical with the teacher.

## ❑ 11. Negotiate the best time for the event with the school to ensure their full engagement with you.

- The beginning of the academic year is not a good time for schools - You can find school term times on local council websites and school websites.
- Exam periods should be avoided as well.
- Find out if schools are having a careers week or preparing students to choose options – these are times when you should be welcome. Ask the school for a list of careers events and open evenings that you may be able to support.
- The school will have a careers plan on their website. Discuss this with the teacher to see where you can fit your session and how it can support their plan.
- Select a national event to tie in with your activity - National Women in Engineering Day; National Apprenticeship week; International Women’s Day.

- Targeting evening activities in schools is sometimes easier and more effective – WISE members say that it is sometimes hard for schools to allocate enough time during the school day. Evening activities such as parents’ evenings or careers events have the advantage of an already-present audience of girls to speak to about opportunities.
- Forward plan for next year at the same time. Schools like to plan events well in advance and could programme you in for the following year. You may need to be patient and to fit in with their calendar.
- Schools will need some time to give parents’ notice and to seek approval from parents if a visit outside school is involved. This can be up to 6 weeks so plan well ahead.

## □ 12. Be clear about your target audience.

With the help of the teacher, identify which students will benefit most from your session.

- My Skills My Life works best with an all-female audience, male pupils may find this session difficult.  
It is quite legal to run a female only event to encourage applications from under-represented groups. This is called positive action – look at Making the case for ‘Girls Only’ STEM events resource.
- If you only have pupils who already express interest in STEM, you may miss out on potentially talented pupils who have, due to misinformation, already dismissed this option as not for them.
- You may need to check that the pupils who are due to attend are likely to achieve the right GCSE grades for the opportunities you are promoting.
- Decide how many pupils you will be comfortable with for the activity.

## Remember - My Skills My Life can be delivered in a range of different situations, not just schools.

- Look at examples of WISE member organisations who have already applied My Skills My Life to a range of outreach activities. How My Skills My Life works in real life.
- Look to girls-only organisations and activities such as Girlguides and ask if they would like you to present a session.
- If there is a STEM event or activity near you, ask if you can present a session or have a stand at the event.
- Speak with local colleges, Universities and training providers. They will all be pleased to have support to increase female recruitment onto their STEM programmes.

# CHECKLIST 2

## Guidance on finding and supporting role models

- ❑ 1. Identify role models in your own organisation.
- ❑ 2. Encourage and support potential role models to take on this important role.
- ❑ 3. Consider working with likeminded organisations to identify role models (and share resources).
- ❑ 4. Ensure your role models reflect a diverse group of people both in terms of culture and background, as well as pathways and careers.
- ❑ 5. Role models 'drop out' so book plenty.
- ❑ 6. Find out about your role model, their personality traits, the type of person and their role.
- ❑ 7. Give the role models plenty of information to encourage them to attend.
- ❑ 8. Ensure they are supported by colleagues in your organisation.
- ❑ 9. Build up a network of role models for use at future events.
- ❑ 10. Consider working with other organisations to share resources and 'spread the word'. Developing links with other local organisations who are also working to recruit more women into STEM can offer considerable benefits
- ❑ 11. Prepare your role models in advance of the session.
- ❑ 12. Ask role models to 'bring a show and tell item'.
- ❑ 13. Provide a short briefing

# CHECKLIST 2

## Guidance on finding and supporting role models

### Finding role models

Talks by STEM role models are one of the best ways for women and girls to see themselves working in a STEM role.

**There is a clear link between role models and an increased passion for science, technology, engineering and maths subjects, with more interest in careers in these fields, and greater self-confidence**

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A mix of women from different areas of the business is a good idea, as well as those who have achieved their positions through a variety of different pathways. It is important to try to include a range of role models from different backgrounds and cultures, and whilst we encourage you to have plenty of female role models, you may have some men who will make great role models and be able to inspire girls to consider their roles. Do include your apprentices and trainees.

It is not essential that the role models have completed My Skills My Life training but it is important that they are passionate about their roles and speak positively about their work.

#### □ 1. Identify role models in your own organisation.

Work with managers and HR to identify potential role models from your organisation.

Your first port of call will be those people who have undertaken My Skills My Life training but this is not essential. You may already have STEM ambassadors who will want to be involved.

In addition, passionate people who are committed to encouraging girls to consider STEM careers should be included.

Make use of, or develop, a women's network to encourage role models.

You may need to convince some of your colleagues about the importance and legality of running a 'Making the case for Girls Only STEM events'.

#### □ 2. Encourage and support potential role models to take on this important role.

Speak to women in your organisation about being role models to encourage other women and girls coming into the business.

- Be clear about your expectations of them.
- Explain the benefits they will provide to young people and for your company.
- Explain the benefits to themselves in terms of confidence building, developing speaking skills etc.

Warning - Do understand that singling out women and girls for “special treatment” can be unwelcome as well. Women and girls sometimes don’t want to be treated as special and you should respect their position.

You may need to develop confidence and communications skills in your role models in advance of their participating in events.

### ❑ 3. Consider working with likeminded organisations to identify role models (and share resources).

Work with WISE – we can help identify role models via our social media channels. Once trained you can have access to the LinkedIn page for deliverers. You may find it useful to post information about sessions that you are planning, there are other individuals trained that may be able to assist or support you in sessions as co-deliverers or even role models!

Contact the STEM Learning ambassador programme.

Discuss your project with other local employers and ask if they have role models who would like to join your session.

Work with local Universities, colleges and training providers to identify and include their role models.

Contact women’s networks and ask for their support.

Contact professional organisations such as ICE, IET and ask if their role models can support you.

There may be interesting local projects which you could research to identify positive female role models.

### ❑ 4. Ensure your role models reflect a diverse group of people both in terms of culture and background, as well as pathways and careers.

Try to offer as wider range of role models as possible.

As well as a range of careers, levels and roles, consider-

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Culture
- Background
- Pathways – graduate or apprentice

and do try to reflect the diversity of the girls you are aiming the session at.

Role models do not need to have experience of My Skills My Life, just passion and positivity.

It is important to have plenty of female role models present, but you may have some men who will make great role models and be able to inspire girls to consider their roles. Do make use of them.

Do include your apprentices and trainees, they will be closest in age to the audience and will be easy for the girls to relate to. Women well into their high level career can be too ‘distant’ for the girls to identify with.



**❑ 5. Role models ‘drop out’ so book plenty.**

Remember that the role models have day jobs and other responsibilities and they may have to ‘drop out’ at short notice. Do book plenty of role models, we suggest one role model to 5-8 pupils and parents.

**❑ 6. Find out about your role model, their personality traits, the type of person and their role.**

Ask them to complete the ‘A day in the life’ form.

Support them to complete the My Skills My Life quiz and identify their personality types.

This will allow you to become familiar with the role models and to include them fully in the session.

**❑ 7. Give the role models plenty of information to encourage them to attend.**

Having made the case for the session and confirmed the importance of role models, do ensure your role models have all the information they need to commit to your session. A copy of the role model brief and the programme will give them an idea of what you are expecting them to do, as well as practical information such as time and location.

**❑ 8. Ensure they are supported by colleagues in your organisation.**

Women focused activities can cause resentment amongst male colleagues, particularly if women are getting all the “interesting” roles. Tread carefully and make sure everyone understands that bringing more women and girls into the organisation isn’t about pushing anybody out – it’s about building a stronger business and making sure women and girls get the same access to opportunities as men.

Use the information in 'Making the case for 'girls only' STEM events' to support your discussions and gain support.

**❑ 9. Build up a network of role models for use at future events.**

You could develop a formal or informal women in STEM network within your organisation or with other organisations.

As well as providing role models for future events this will provide support for existing role models.

Keep in touch with your role models after the event.

Direct them to My Skills My Life training and the STEM ambassadors network.

**❑ 10. Consider working with other organisations to share resources and ‘spread the word’. Developing links with other local organisations who are also working to recruit more women into STEM can offer considerable benefits**

Opportunity to share resources and reduce the load.

Enabling more coverage of events and schools in region.

Opportunity to develop cross organisational mentoring and networks.

Wider range of role models and less demand on individuals.

Opportunity to try different approaches and share good practice on what works well.

Consider developing a local consortium and including other supporting organisations i.e. LEPs, local council, colleges and universities, as well as Education Business Partnerships, the Careers & Enterprise Company, and STEM Learning.

## Preparing your role models for the My Skills My Life session

### □ 11. Prepare your role models in advance of the session.

It is not essential that your role models have been trained in My Skills My Life delivery but do prepare them for the session. You can do this by e-mail and/or over the phone.

Send a copy of the role model brief and the programme to each of your role models.

Ask them to do the My Skills My Life Quiz in advance.

You could also send a link to the Top tips for careers events.

Ask them to complete the 'A day in the life' form and return it to you in advance of the session. Familiarise yourself with their responses in advance so that you can make use of the information about them and their roles.

Do be mindful that role models have a 'day job' and that must come first. They will also have other time commitments and may have to 'drop out' at short notice. Do book plenty of role models, we suggest one role model to 5-8 pupils and parents.

### □ 12. Ask role models to 'bring a show and tell item'.

Encourage the role models to bring along a 'show and tell item' that relates to their work. This will help them to engage girls' interest, and support the conversation. This may be a photograph or drawing, a tool or example of a product.

### □ 13. Provide a short briefing

Include a half hour brief before your session for you to meet with your role models.

Run through the programme and confirm you will guide them through the session.

Make sure your role models are comfortable and confident in what they want to say and what the aims of the discussion are.

Encourage role models to talk in their own words rather than giving them prepared speeches. An informal, friendly and personal approach is much more effective, especially with a younger audience.

Ensure your role models talk about the type of people that they are, their interests etc. so that the girls can identify with them.

# CHECKLIST 3

## Preparing for the event

- ❑ 1. Plan your session.
- ❑ 2. When the school has committed to work with you, ensure you provide all the information they require in a timely manner.
- ❑ 3. Discuss safety with the school so that you are aware of your responsibilities.
- ❑ 4. Confirm that the teacher will be responsible for managing behaviour.
- ❑ 5. Support the school to market the event.
- ❑ 6. Provide schools with parental consent forms to be completed for every girl.
- ❑ 7. Find out in advance about your audience.
- ❑ 8. Let the school know what resources you need on the day.
- ❑ 9. Reflect on your My Skills My Life training.
- ❑ 10. Prepare and brief role models or prepare case studies.
- ❑ 11. Consider any additional information you could take along.
- ❑ 12. Think about extensions and future activities.
- ❑ 13. Gather data to follow up after the event.
- ❑ 14. Enjoy the event and let us know how it went.

# CHECKLIST 3

## Preparing for the event

Once you have made the contact with the school and they have accepted your offer, you need to prepare the session so that you can feel confident to deliver it.

Individuals that have already delivered My Skills My Life sessions to date have described it as “fun”, “inspiring” and “rewarding”, although we do realise it can be quite daunting at first. Build a relationship with your main contact, make sure you are prepared, and arrive there in good time. If you are still nervous, consider delivering the first couple of events with a partner or someone who has run a session before.

If you are using role models, it is your job to brief them and support them, they may be nervous too. The information below will help you to do this.

Investing time in preparation and planning will develop your confidence, ensure the smooth running of your session and provide a set of resources to use for future events.

### □ 1. Plan your session.

Make use of the resources in the resource library and prepare a session plan. Consider how long you have, where you will run the event and at what time, and who is available to support you. You may want to work in a pair with a colleague the first time.

Discuss with the teacher what they would like, and what resources are available. The additional information form in the resource library gives a list of questions to ask.

Use the resources to develop your session, identify what you will need on the day and to prepare a programme to pass out to the school and the role models (if you are using them). Discuss the programme with the teacher, they will be the best person to support you to ensure your activity is effective.

A sample programme is available here. This is useful for the school and for the role models.

Remember to make use of the My Skills My Life Key Messages as you develop and then deliver your session.

You will find the Top tips for careers events helpful as you start to think about delivering your session.

### □ 2. When the school has committed to work with you, ensure you provide all the information they require in a timely manner.

Keep in touch with the school and ensure that they know exactly what you will need on the day. The programme and additional information form are useful for this.

It is important that you are clear on what you are delivering and you know what they are expecting.

### ❑ 3. Discuss safety with the school so that you are aware of your responsibilities.

If you are delivering at the school, you will need to comply with their safeguarding and visitor policies.

The school will be familiar with their own safety policies and if the event is in your workplace, then make use of the expertise of your HR teams. It is the school's duty to ensure that their students and staff are not put at risk and they have clear policies in place to enable them to do that. You should be aware that it is also **your legal responsibility to keep yourself safe and not to endanger others.**

**Safeguarding** - Ask about the school's 'Safeguarding policy and procedures' – they will have a visitors' brief. An overview of Safeguarding duty is available [here](#).

**Health and Safety** – discuss Health and Safety with the school. Consider all activities and whether there may be any risks. A Risk Assessment should be completed by the school if the event is at the school. If the event is in your workplace, the school will need a Risk Assessment from your organisation. Your HR team should be able to support you with this.

If you intend to carry out a practical activity, or your role models are, you will need to discuss with the school any health and safety implications.

A blank Risk Assessment Form is available [here](#) but both schools and employers will have their own versions.

**IMPORTANT:** You should have a completed copy of the **Risk Assessment** with you at the event, it should include the **named First Aider and how to contact them. The schools usually deal with this, but have it on your list to query.**

### ❑ 4. Confirm that the teacher will be responsible for managing behaviour.

Facilitators often express concern regarding the management of the behaviour of pupils – “Who’s responsibility is this and how will I be able to deal with difficult students?”

The teacher should be with you at all times, and will be responsible for the behaviour of the girls. We usually find that the girls are so engaged with the session that poor behaviour is unlikely. You can check on classroom management with the teacher – ask ‘will the teacher be present throughout?’ (The answer should be ‘yes’).

We have put together some Q&A to reduce your concerns.

### ❑ 5. Support the school to market the event.

The school will need to promote the session to girls and parents. Think about producing a promotional flyer for your event. You can use the samples provided to prepare a flyer for the event that the school can circulate and put on noticeboards.

Provide the school with a programme for your event.

### ❑ 6. Provide schools with parental consent forms to be completed for every girl.

The school will need to ensure that they have parental consent for each pupil to attend the event. You can offer schools the parental consent form, or they may prefer to use their own.

You only need to have the school confirm that they have consent for every girl to participate, and be careful to identify if any are excluded from photographic permission.

Do ensure that, where the form is provided by you, that these are collected and checked, and that you ensure any photographs are taken only with consent. The teachers will support you with this.

### ❑ **7. Find out in advance about your audience.**

Do ask the school to let you know if any students have:

- A disability
- Special access needs
- Dietary requirement
- Any religious considerations

And make sure you consider these in your planning. The teacher will support you with this.

It is also useful to know your audience in terms of age and ability, ask their teacher.

It may be helpful to discuss how your talk fits into the curriculum and if there is anything the teacher would like included. They may be working on a project that fits with your talk and you could incorporate this.

### ❑ **8. Let the school know what resources you need on the day.**

Think about what you need in advance, use the Additional Information to help you.

Let the school know in advance if you need a projector or laptop, a whiteboard, flipchart and stand etc.

Think about the layout of the room and ask for it to be set up in advance with small group tables or lecture theatre style to suit your session.

You can ask the teachers to ensure girls bring some paper and a pen (but do take some spares!).

Check items off on your session plan as you prepare.

### ❑ **9. Reflect on your My Skills My Life training.**

Familiarise yourself with how unconscious bias can affect the take up of these activities by schools and pupils, and what you can do to overcome this.

### ❑ **10. Prepare and brief role models (See Checklist- finding an supporting your role models) or prepare case studies.**

Brief your role models in advance, this can be done by e-mail and/or over the phone.

Send a copy of the role model brief and the programme to each of your role models.

Ask them to do the My Skills My Life Quiz in advance. Ask them to bring a 'show and tell' item.

You could also send a link to the Top tips for careers events

Ask them to complete the Day in the Life form and familiarise yourself with it in advance so that you can make use of the information about them and their roles.

If you are intending to use case studies, prepare in advance.

Print out copies of the case studies and make sure that you are familiar with them so that you can speak knowledgeably about each one with the girls.

### **□ 11. Consider any additional information you could take along.**

If you have material available that outlines the benefits of STEM careers, especially if it includes salary and career options, or that provides additional information about your company and contacts do take this along with you.

Your session should be only part of a series of interventions to support them to consider STEM careers. Girls, and their parents, will welcome signposts to where to go next.

### **□ 12. Think about extensions and future activities.**

People Like Me research found that 'one off interventions do not work – a series of interventions is required'. Consider what you could offer as a follow on activity and if this event could be replicated for other students in successive years.

Decide in advance what you can offer as a follow up activity:

- Another event
- Work experience
- Support to complete applications
- A named contact at your organisation

Provide this information on the day.

### **□ 13. Gather data to follow up after the event.**

With permission and subject to data regulations, record the details of the girls, teachers and parents who are involved in your session so you can contact them again in the future with other opportunities – make sure to get parental consent using the relevant form or through the school.

Try to monitor if your outreach activity has an impact over the long term – are more girls from these schools taking STEM subjects, have they applied for STEM courses/ apprenticeships/employment.

### **□ 14. Enjoy the event and let us know how it went.**

Relax and enjoy delivering the event.

And afterwards, start to think about where you can run the next session.

Do let WISE know how your session went, and who attended. We are hoping to target 200,000 girls over the next 5 years – please help us to reach that target.

And you are key to helping us do this. Add this information to your online profile.