The purpose of the organisation?

The goal behind Change the Code is to bridge the gender gap in STEM fields. The team at CTC is dedicated towards providing exposure to girls at a young age and encourage them to pursue subjects related to science, technology and engineering. We want female students to gain scientific/technical skills, receive mentorship and guidance and become a part of a strong positive encouraging network.

Progress to date?

Change the Code has been up and running since 2019. We spent the first few months building our teams, getting funding, getting mentors, building a curriculum before actually reaching out to students.

Till now we have recruited and trained 20 tech instructors, conducted 4 workshops, in 3 countries for over 100 girls with age ranging 10 years to 24 years. With every workshop that we conduct, we tackle new problems and find solutions to make the process more streamlined and effective in order to make maximum impact.

Plans for the future?

Change the Code is rapidly expanding across the globe. With the pandemic we saw an opportunity to expand to various different locations without needing to be physically present. While we have teams based in India and Bangladesh locally, the executive body is able to oversee all activities in all locations in real time. In the coming months we want to focus on developing more curriculum to improve the technical skills and exposure of our students. We also want to collect data to conduct research on which of our best practices work better than the others in order to continue doing what we do well and improve what we don't. Finally, we want to reach as many girls and women as possible and provide them skills alongside mentorship and support to learn, grow and achieve their dreams.

How the scholar can assist?

A scholar can wear multiple hats and contribute immensely towards our cause.

A first year scholar focused on research can understand the working model we have in place and conduct research on any aspect of it that he or she might appeal to. Some examples are:
(i) why girls choose non-science based careers (ii) how females contribute to a workplace
(iii) impact made my online mode of teaching vs offline in class teaching   (iv) how much time it takes for students to grasp STEM concepts vs non STEM concepts   (v) how many lessons are needed to truly get a girl interested in technology   (vi) which course curriculum is more appealing and why (vii) prevalence of STEM subjects in socially disadvantaged societies
This is merely scratching the surface. There is a plethora or research opportunities in the field all of which can be extremely intriguing as well as add value to CTC and other organisations with similar goals.   A second year scholar focused on leadership can help start their own local chapters of CTC. They can recruit new members (volunteers from local schools and universities) or work together to build their team. A lot of work goes into a successful workshop: (i) building teams (ii) building curriculum (they can choose to use our preexisting curriculum or build new based on their research findings) (iii) marketing to students, subsequent communication, etc. (iv) design posters, material for social media campaigns (v)

training instructors to teach the curriculum   (vi) looking for suitable chief guest/mentors   (vii) managing the meeting real time (breakout rooms, etc.)   (viii) raising funds if required   (ix) collaborating with local NGOs, schools, universities to deliver workshop, build network, find mentors and mentees

Activities, outcomes and benefits?

Apart from the above, activities can include: - Daily tasks like sprint meetings (agile team, working style),   - First few days to identify role and responsibility within the team, make a plan of tangible weekly goals   - Weekly catchup with us or representative of Laidlaw foundation   - Writing emails to schools, NGOs, students, guest speakers, etc, cold calling, sending calendar invites   - Designing graphics/posters for social media campaigns, certificates for participating students   - Designing presentation slides for the curriculum delivery - Training teaching instructors (try to make teaching style, methodology uniform across different cohorts)

Any leadership / team work experience will teach you how to: - Manage a team   - Delegate work   - Learn to listen, have empathy   - Dealing with conflict   - Social skills, emotional intelligence   - Problem solving - Organisation skills, being methodical, adhering to timelines

What skills are needed to do the placement successfully and any logistical issues?

Any student passionate about the cause and driven towards making an impact can be places successfully in the program. Having technical skills may be a plus but is definitely not a pre requisite for being placed. Anyone who is proactive, takes initiative, is a team player and has a good work ethic will be a good fit for the program.

What support the scholars will receive from you and your co-workers?

All of us at Change the Code are extremely excited about the collaboration and would be ready to help in any and every way possible.   We are available for daily/weekly catchups. We can help the scholars work out a plan of action in the first few days for the remainder of the summer. We can be mentors and can help them navigate situations with their other teammates better. We can share our curriculum with the scholars, share are best practices, teaching tips. We can also loan our instructors in case technical expertise is needed to design curriculum as well as teach it.   We would like to provide support in any which way the scholars or the Laidlaw foundation needs from us.