



Where I work

Anne-Marie Imafidon

Photographed for *Nature* by Leonora Saunders.

Eat. Sleep. STEM. Repeat: these words on my T-shirt are the mantra of Stemettes, a UK-based outreach enterprise I co-founded in 2013 that encourages girls and young women to enter careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

I'm a computer scientist and have worked for firms including Goldman Sachs, Deutsche Bank and Hewlett-Packard. But I decided to launch this business because I wanted to have a wider impact. If I can inspire more girls to build something for themselves, that's even more important than me making another algorithm or widget.

I especially love events like the one pictured here, when I and 7 other 'Stemettes' spent the day with 200 girls between the ages of 15 and 19. We gathered at G-Research, a data and technology company in central London that hires people with PhDs to work with maths and algorithms. The girls spoke to the audience about things they're passionate about, and had mock interviews with company employees. This all builds confidence,

and you can tell when girls have a eureka moment. That's what we're there for.

We also run events with banks, energy companies and the UK National Health Service. The girls see that all sorts of people work at such places, including women like me. I don't have to be super corporate or change my hair or the way I speak to do my job. I'm wearing trainers. I can be authentic, and they can, too. We show the girls that you don't have to be a maths genius to work in tech. Digital literacy shouldn't be elitist.

Nearly everyone who signs up for our events, whether through school or individually, is female or non-binary. It's something we mandate – girls tend to be more open without a bunch of teenage boys around. Technology hasn't always had the positive impact on the world, the workforce or our daily lives that it could have. Maybe it's because we don't always have the right people in the room.

Anne-Marie Imafidon is the co-founder and chief executive of Stemettes in London, UK. **Interview by Chris Woolston.**