

New pathway opens up for next generation of women in tech

Envato has embarked on a new approach to improving diversity and inclusion in the local tech sector, and one that could also help improve the pipeline of female developer talent in Australia.

The company's Apprentice Developer Program provides successful female applicants with a fully paid position in the company, where a dedicated mentor helps train them to become junior developers inside 12 months.

The grassroots program was conceived and developed in-house, and has just graduated its first two apprentices in late May with both going on to full-time employment as Junior Developers at Envato.

The program's second cohort commenced their training this week.

Mario Visic, the Developer Mentor who runs the program, said curriculum involved more than just classroom time. "Our approach has emphasised an immersive experience, giving our apprentices real tasks as part of our engineering teams while paired with a programming mentor. It means they're involved in everything from planning sessions, standups and retrospectives, and subsequently 'pair' programming with their allocated mentors."

"A large part of the role of developers at Envato is about solving problems and there can often be a huge gap between the theoretical view of the world and the practical," continued Visic. "So the goal of the immersive aspect is as much about learning to plan and communicate with the team as well as writing and supporting the code that is produced."

Envato's Chief People Officer Michelle Ridsdale said the program was already proving to be valuable. "Our focus has always been about hiring quality developers at every level, and we've previously found it a challenge to hire people quickly enough to fill the positions we have open, at a quality level we're happy with."

"This program is allowing us to take women who are passionate about embarking on a career in software development and raise their technical skills to a level where they are not just an asset to Envato, but to the sector more broadly."

Envato has always prided itself on being forward thinking when it comes to diversity in tech; the company was named the “Coolest Company for Women” by JobAdvisor in 2015 [and reports annually on its work to improve gender and pay equality across the business.](#)

The company’s technical workforce is made up of 17% female employees, up from just 11% in 2016, and a figure that looks set to grow in 2018 and beyond.

Sharon Vaughan, one of the inaugural graduates of the program, said her time at Envato has been a rewarding one. “I’ve been privileged enough to represent both women in tech and Envato across a number of settings over the last year and inevitably at these events, I find myself offering advice to those trying to get into tech and/or Envato.”

“It feels so rewarding, and gives me such a feeling of excitement, to wonder what adventure each person is about to embark on after our chat. I find this ‘pay it forward’ concept one of the most engaging characteristics of the developer world.”

The immersive approach offered by the apprentice program was one that Jaime Gunther, the other successful graduate, thrived in. “I am a person who learns best through doing and the great part of being an apprentice was that I was able to directly apply what I was learning in a real world setting. The problems we looked at were relevant to the team and company and being a part of that and helping is a great feeling.”

“The program has given me the confidence to transition to a junior developer role with the skills needed to become a productive member of the team.”

ABOUT ENVATO

Location: Headquarters in Melbourne, Australia. Team located around the world.

What Is Envato?

Founded in 2006, [Envato](#) is the world’s leading community for creative assets and creative people.

The network includes [Envato Market](#), [Envato Studio](#), [Envato Tuts+](#) and [Envato Elements](#).

A community of more than eight million people worldwide buy and sell creative assets on Envato Market with total community earnings exceeding \$500 million. Millions of students have taken video courses and free tutorials on the Envato Tuts+ education network and Envato Studio connects people with hand picked freelancers to

complete their creative projects. Envato Elements is a subscription service with thousands of ready-to-use graphic templates, fonts and assets available for unlimited download.



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