STEAMpreneurs



How to use the template to create a **STEAMpreneurs** game

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1.KEY SCOPE OF THE GUIDEBOOK



The key scope of this **guidebook** is to empower students and educators to **co-create their own simulation serious games** in the form of print and play using an adaptable game template.

Through the use of this guidebook and template, educators will be able to create their own simulation games or to facilitate a collaborative co-creation together with students. These games will be based on real role models and the scope is to simulate the personal, societal and institutional challenges they faced (or are still facing) while pursuing studies and careers in ICT, STEM or entrepreneurship.

The simulation games created through this process offer the opportunity to participants to experience real-world gender biases, stereotypes, and challenges in the fields of STEM and ICT as well as entrepreneurship in the safe and controlled learning environment of a game. By stepping into the roles of the specific role models, players will recognize their own unconscious biases and feel empathy, actively engaging in problem solving, decision making and collaborative dialogue.

Beyond gameplay, the guidebook emphasizes the importance of reflection and debriefing as essential learning components. These will help participants transform the game experience into deeper understanding, critical thinking, and attitude change leading to the development of inclusive mindsets and motivating students (especially girls) to explore and pursue pathways in STEM, ICT and entrepreneurship.

This guidebook aims to provide an innovative, replicable and sustainable educational tool that can be used across formal and non-formal educational contexts, enabling educators to multiply their impact, share their creations and promote gender equality through experiential learning and co-creation .

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2. WHO THE GUIDEBOOK IS FOR



Educators in formal and non-formal education are the key audience of the specific guide book.

More specifically the guidebook is addressed to teachers, secondary educators, non-formal educators, youth workers, facilitators working in formal or non-formal educational contexts, science communicators etc working in schools, youth centers, extracurricular science related activities etc.

It provides educators with a practical and adaptable template to design, facilitate and implement co-creation workshops and game sessions of a simulation game promoting a gender- inclusive, gender-responsive and game-based learning approaches into their teaching practices.

Students (especially those in secondary education) are also an indirect target group both as players of the game or as contributors to the development of it. Through the use of the template, the students actively participate in researching or interviewing role models, designing challenges and solutions, collaborating with their peers and reflecting on real gender-based barriers or biases and institutional challenges for studying and or following a career path in STEM, ICT or entrepreneurship.

Other potential target groups include:

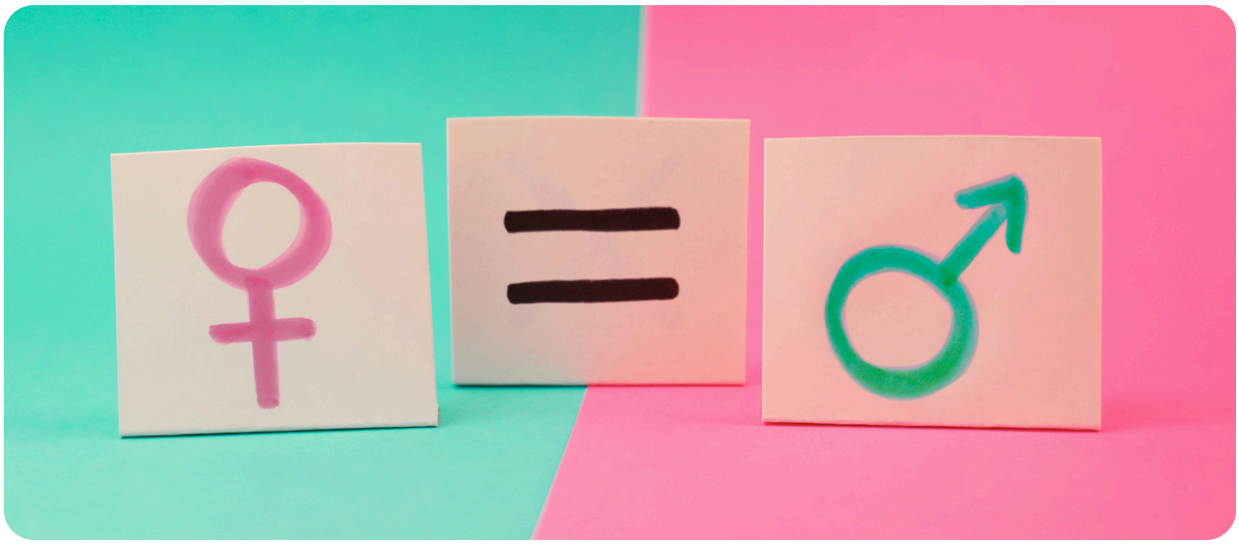
- Role models; who can contribute through their experiences and insights on how they dealt with gender-based challenges
- Parents; who can support reflection and dialogue beyond classroom
- Organizations working in the fields of gender-equality, digital education, green skills, and youth empowerment or entrepreneurship, may use the template as an educational or advocacy tool.

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3. GAME-BASED LEARNING FOR PROMOTING GENDER-EQUAL PEDAGOGY



Game-based learning has been widely recognized as an effective pedagogical approach that actively engages students and learners, supports deep understanding and promotes real-life reflections. It can be a powerful tool to address complex social issues such as gender-based barriers, unconscious bias, and stereotypes particularly in STEM, ICT and entrepreneurship.

Experiential learning theory emphasises learning through experience, reflection and active participation, rather than passive reception of information. According to Kolb's (1984), experiential learning cycle, learners gain knowledge through a process that includes concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract thinking and active experimentation. Simulation games align strongly with this learning cycle, as they immerse learners in realistic scenarios that require decision-making, problem solving and reflection.

Serious games, especially simulation games, allow learners to experiment with real-world challenges in a safe and controlled environment, where mistakes become learning opportunities rather than failures. Research shows that simulation games can increase engagement, motivation, and learning retention especially when addressing complex or sensitive topics such as social justice and gender-equality (Connolly et al., 2021)

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Print and play games in particular, offer additional educational opportunities. They are accessible, low-cost, adaptable to diverse contexts and groups of learners and can be easily modified to suit different learning objectives, age groups, cultural backgrounds and skills. Their tangible nature supports collaborative learning, discussion and face-to-face interaction, which are key elements in participatory and inclusive learning environments.

Role models play an important role in shaping student's aspirations and career choices, particularly in the field where gender-gaps and bias are still very strong. Exposure to diverse and relatable role models can challenge stereotypes, reduce unconscious biases, and increase students' belief that they can follow studies and careers in STEM, ICT, entrepreneurship or other fields (Lockwood, 2006). Especially within the context of STEAMpreneurs project, role models who have successfully navigated societal, institutional and personal barriers can be very impactful, since they provide concrete examples of strategies for overcoming those challenges (eg. gender stereotypes, lack of representation, implicit bias etc). Schinske et al (2016) underlines the fact that learning about role models' challenges rather than their successes enhances empathy, resilience and makes success seem more attainable.

By combining role models education with game-based learning and by placing learners in the position of the role models through simulation games, learners are encouraged to experience challenges from a first person perspective, reflect on gender inequalities, and recognize both conscious and unconscious biases that might influence their studies and careers. Additionally cooperative simulation games, which means games where players share goals, collaborate and succeed collectively, can foster inclusion, mutual respect and positive interactions. In the context of gender-inclusive education, cooperative games create a space for dialogue, empathy, and multiple perspectives while encouraging participation from all learners.

Since this guidebook focuses on the co-creation of the simulation games with the learners, there are extra benefits for them. Learners are actively engaged and involved in the designing of the game, researching or interviewing role models, defining challenges and proposing solutions. This way they become active agents in the learning process. Moreover, co-creation supports ownership, creativity, critical thinking and democratic participation while also allowing educators to better respond to learners' interests and lived experiences. Game co-creation has been shown to enhance motivation and deepen understanding, as students move beyond content consumption to knowledge production and participation (Bovil et. al., 2011)..

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4. THE ANATOMY OF THE STEAMPRENEURS GAME

OBJECTIVE OF THE GAME

STEAMPRENEURS is a **cooperative game**. All players must work together to find the best ways to overcome all challenges in order to win.

To succeed, players must complete all challenges across **the 5 different life phases** of the Role Model within **5 rounds**.

PLAYERS NUMBER AND DURATION

For 3–6 players | Duration: 30–45 minutes

COMPONENTS

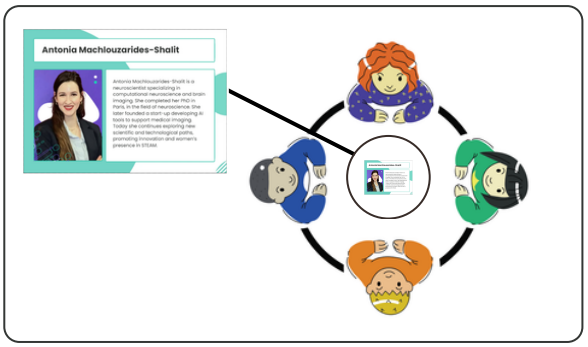
- 1 Role Model card with a short biography.
- 5 Life Phase cards of the Role Model. Each phase includes 2 challenges.
- 20 Solution cards for the challenges.
- 6 identical Guide cards showing the steps each player follows during their turn.
- 1 Solutions board showing the match between challenges of Phase cards and Solution cards. This is used only in the end of the game to check the results
- 1 token of Role model showing the role model
- 1 round tracker showing which round the game is.

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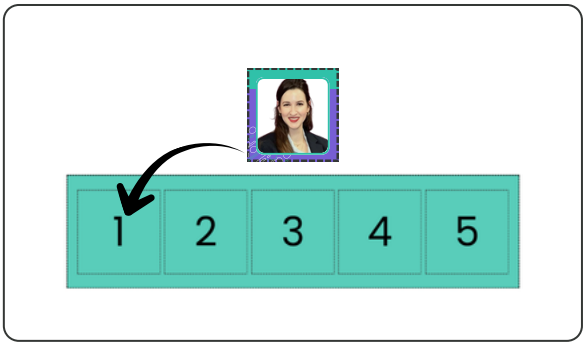
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GAME SETUP

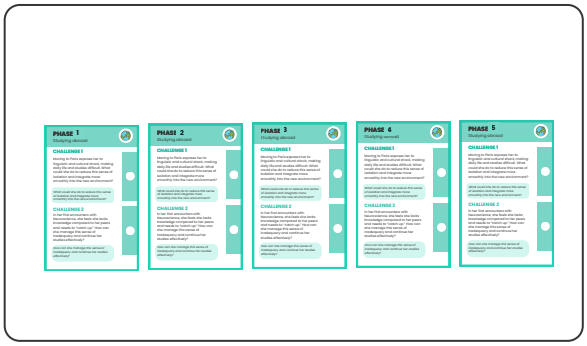
1. Place the main **Role Model card** in the center of the table.



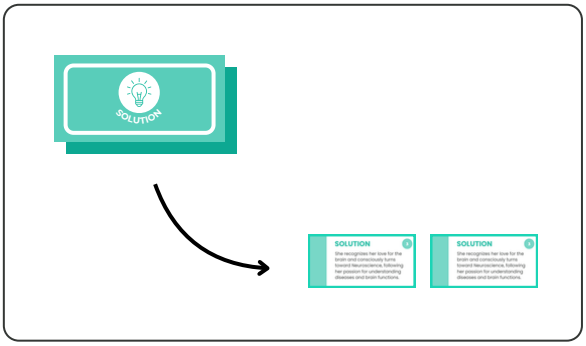
2. Next to the Role model card, place the **round tracker** and the **token of Role model** on the **number 1** of the round tracker



3. **All phase cards** are placed in the center of the table, next to each other. (first phase 1, then phase 2...)



4. From the **Solution cards deck, place 2 cards face up in the center of the table below the Phase cards.** The remaining cards form a face-down draw pile.



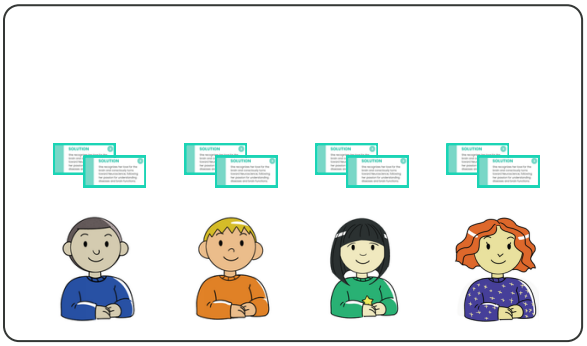
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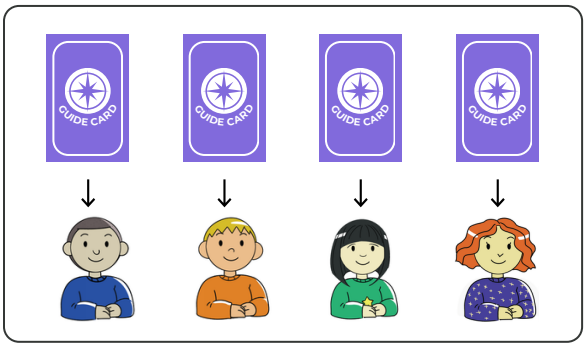
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GAME SETUP

5 Each player **draws 2 Solution cards** and places them in front of them.



6 Each player takes **1 Guide card** and keeps it nearby.





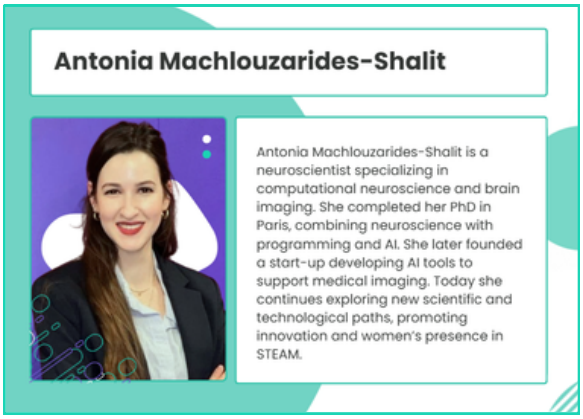
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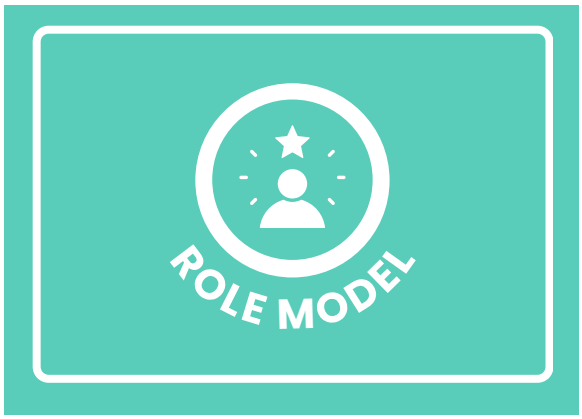
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CARD DESCRIPTIONS

ROLE MODEL CARD





Includes a portrait, the name of the Role Model and a short biography.

PHASE CARDS













Represent the 5 major life phases of the Role Model. Each card includes:

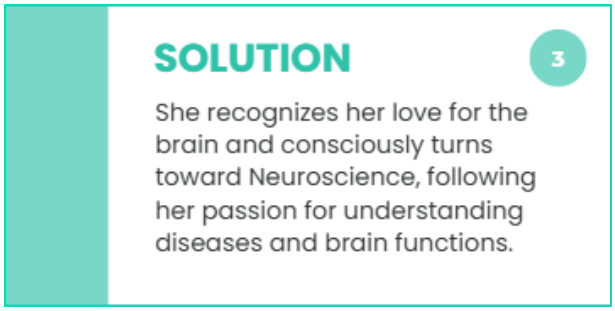
- the phase number and name,
- two challenges faced during that phase,
- a space next to each challenge to place a Solution card.

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CARD DESCRIPTIONS

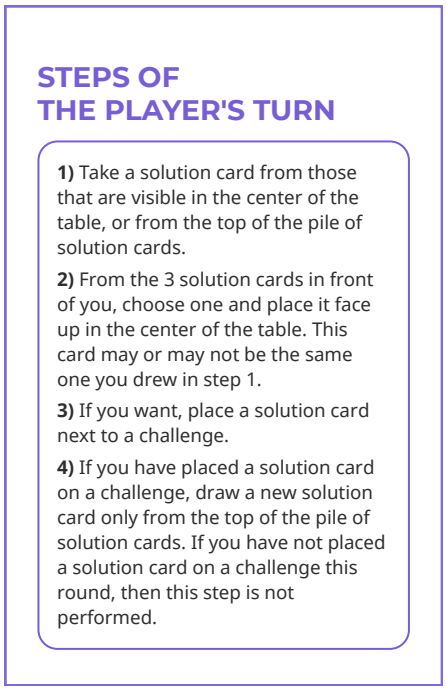
SOLUTION CARDS





Each Solution card contains a text description and a number corresponding to a specific challenge.
There may be two similar or identical Solution cards with the same number, but **only one Solution card** can be placed on each challenge during the game.

GUIDE CARD





A reference card that lists the steps a player follows during their turn.

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GAMEPLAY

The group of players chooses who will play first. That player takes the main Role Model card and reads the description aloud. This description is a short biography of the Role Model.

The same player then begins the first turn.

The goal of each player during their turn is to find the “Solution cards” that match the challenges of the “Phase cards” in the middle of the table. The goal of all players is to “solve” the challenges in each phase in the correct row (meaning phase 1, then phase 2 etc) until they solve all challenges. Players also cooperate with the others to share ideas for solutions on the next challenges.

On their turn, a player may place a solution card on one of the 2 challenges corresponding to the phase the game is currently in.

The “current phase card” is the one where solutions can be implemented now to its challenges. If both challenges are completed on the current phase card, then the next phase card in the sequence becomes the new current phase.

Players need to place **only one Solution card** on each challenge.

Before the first round begins, the first player takes the Phase 1 card and reads the challenges aloud. They then return the card to the center of the table. Afterward, either that same player or someone else can take the Phase 2 card to read it aloud as well. The goal is for all the phase cards to be read, so that everyone has a general idea of the challenges for which solutions must be found. Since, throughout the game, they will need to find solutions for these challenges one by one, following the order of the phases.

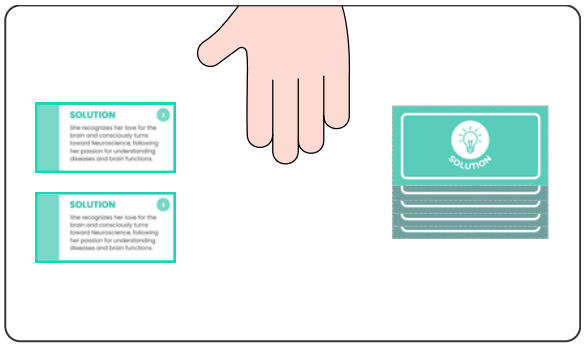
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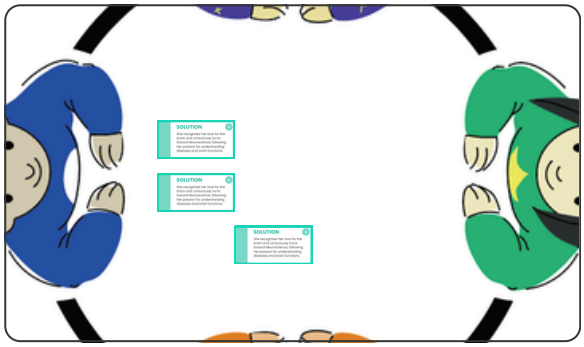
TURN STRUCTURE

Each player follows these **4 steps** during their turn:

1. Draw 1 Solution card either from the face-up cards in the center of the table or from the top of the draw pile.



2. Place 1 of the 3 Solution cards -that you now have in front of you- face up in the center of the table. This may be the same card drawn in Step 1 or another solution card.



3. If you have a Solution card that you believe matches a challenge on any Phase card (current phase card or not), you can:

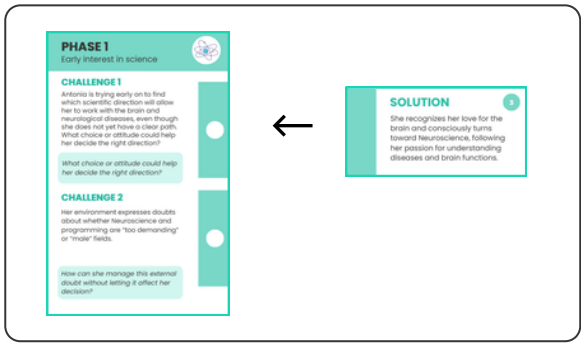
   - share the information with the players regarding the challenges for which you consider each solution to be suitable.



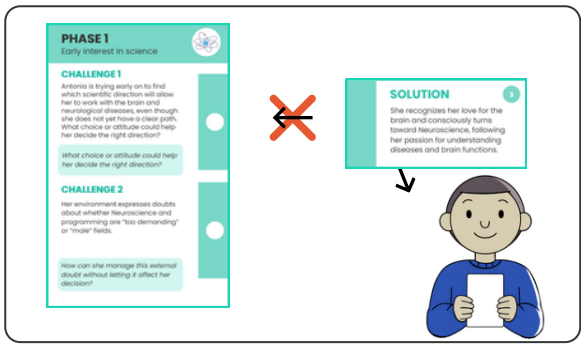
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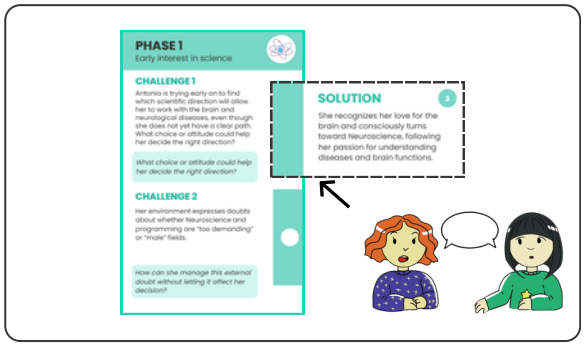
- If you believe you have a solution card for the current phase card, you can place it in the corresponding challenge slot of the Phase card.



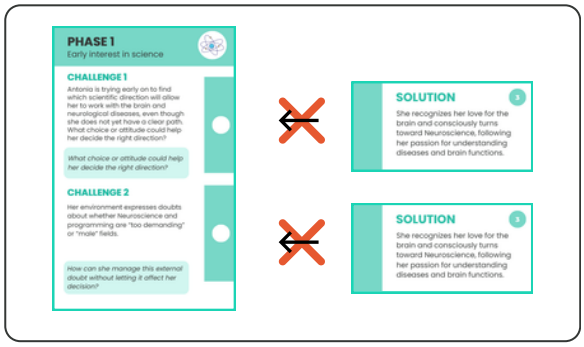
- If you believe you have a solution card for a phase card that is not the current phase card, you keep the card in front of you until the right moment arrives to play it in the appropriate challenge.



- If you are ready to play a card for a challenge in the current phase card, you can ask the other players whether they think they have a better solution card for that specific challenge. You can then decide whether or not to play your card.



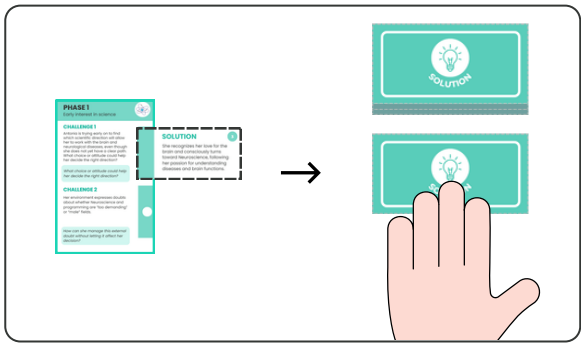
- You may choose not to play any cards if you feel that none of them fit the challenges presented on the current phase card.



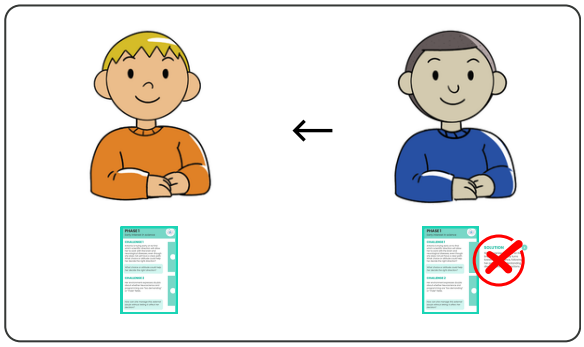
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4. If you placed a Solution card on a challenge, draw 1 new Solution card from the draw pile (not from the middle of the table).



- If you did not place a Solution card on a challenge, you don't draw any card and the turn passes to the next player on the left.



It is important to remember that players should put the solutions to the challenges starting from Phase 1 towards to Phase 5. For example, they can not place a solution in a challenge of phase 4 before they have solved the challenges of Phase 1-3.

Players may talk freely, show their cards, and discuss strategies at all times, since the game is cooperative.

After all players have concluded their round and the turn of the first player comes again, then they must move the token with the role model by one step. For example, from number 1 to number 2.

If the draw pile runs out, players draw Solution cards only from the center of the table.



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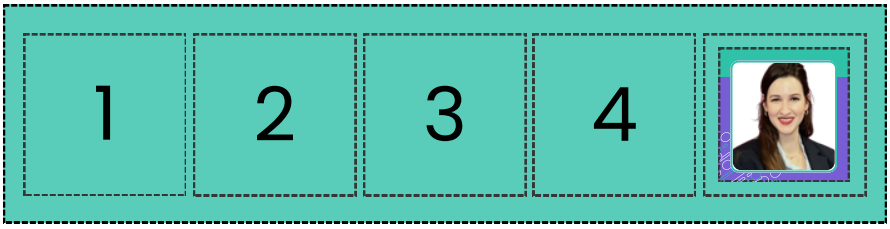
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END OF THE GAME

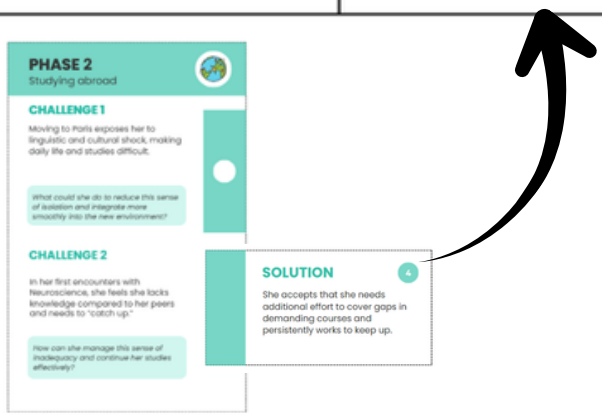
When the token with the role model is on the **number 5** at the tracker board, the game enters its **final round**.

After the final round, players take **Solutions board** and verify whether the numbers next to the challenges match the numbers on the placed Solution cards.

If all challenges have the correct Solution cards, **the players win the game.**



CHALLNEGES	SOLUTIONS
PHASE 1	
Challenge 1	3
Challenge 2	5
PHASE 2	
Challenge 1	11
Challenge 2	4



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HOW DO PLAYERS WIN THE GAME?

If all challenges have the correct Solution cards, **the players win the game.**
If players have completed correctly over 8 challenges they have partially won the game.
If players have less than 8 challenges matching the correct solutions they lose the game.

EASIER GAME VARIANT 1

Players may choose to play with some Phase cards showing the numbers of solution cards next to the challenges, making it easier to identify correct solutions. So you can write the numbers of the solutions next to the corresponding challenges. It would be better to write it with a pencil so that it can be easily erased in a next game that you might want to play without the numbers from the solutions.

For example:

- The first Phase may show numbers,
- the next three may not,
- and the final one may show numbers again.

This variant is recommended for first-time players who want to learn the game mechanics before playing the full, more challenging version.

EASIER GAME VARIANT 2

Players may choose to play with 4 phases instead of 5. In this case, you must remove the Phase 5 card and the solution cards that correspond to it. (You can easily see which cards correspond to Phase 5 by looking at the solution table). This version could also be the standard one, if it is decided during the research for a role model to create 4 phases.

MORE DIFFICULT GAME VARIANT

Players may choose to play with 6 phases instead of 5. This version can only be played if 6 phases have been created for the role model.

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5. CO-CREATING A SIMULATION GAME

IN A NUTSHELL

A

Co-Creating with Learners

Initiating students into the joy of co-creation

1.Set a safe and respectful learning environment
2.Introduce the game
3.Adjust the difficulty level of the game
4.Support students in cooperative playing and learning
5.Manage group dynamics
6.Reflect on the game experience

B

Suggested co-creation workflows

Tips for guiding the co-creation process

1. Define the co-creation target
2.Shape groups to co-create game components
3.Review the game outcome

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C **Role model's choice & Identification of information useful for the game**
While co-creating

1.Choose a role model and request consent to turn her life into a game
2.Identify key life phases
3.Identify challenges
4.Identify solutions
5.Reflect on gender and societal stereotypes

D **Step-by-step use of the card templates**
Practicalities of the game

1.Before Starting: Ensure all necessary material has been collected
2.Print the empty templates
3.Fill in the card templates
4.Review the game cards
5.Edit the cards and the other game components
6.Play-test!
7.Finalize

E **Step-by-step use of the card templates**
Consolidating learning

1. Introducing debriefing to students
2. Identify key moments worth discussing
3.Co-create debriefing questions
4.Choose a debriefing format and roles

CO-CREATING WITH LEARNERS

Co-creating simulation games with learners is a participatory learning process that places learners at the centre of knowledge production. Rather than acting only as players and final users of the game, learners become the designers, researchers, and storytellers which leads them to deeply engage with gender equality issues, role models' experiences, and problem solving strategies. Moreover the co-creation process strengthens ownership of learning, supports inclusion and fosters meaningful dialogue, while allowing educators to act as facilitators and mentors.

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STEP 1: SETTING A SAFE AND RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Since the game addresses sensitive topics such as gender bias, stereotypes, gender-based barriers etc, it is essential to establish clear rules for respectful dialogue and collaboration within the learners group. Educators should encourage active listening, openness to different perspectives and a non- judgmental atmosphere ensuring that all learners feel safe to express their ideas, views and emotions.

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STEP 2 : INTRODUCING THE GAME TO LEARNERS

Before starting the co-creation process it is strongly recommended to introduce the game to the learners and play an existing version of it (the prototype created based on the template). Experiencing the game as players helps students understand the structure, objectives and gameplay of the game. Then it is easier for them to research or interview the role models on the fundamental topics (eg. challenges in different phases of the life cycle) as well as filling the template with the appropriate information. For playing the game, it is recommended to divide the learners into small groups between 3-6 players (preferably 5-6) and have a print and play version of the game for each group. For example if the classroom has 25 students, learners can shape 5 groups of 5 players and there is a need for 5 print and play games.

STEP 3 : ADJUST THE DIFFICULTY LEVEL OF THE GAME

Before playing the game, it is important for the educator to adjust the difficulty level of the game according to learners' age, experience and familiarity with the game or the game-based learning concept. There are specific instructions on how the educator can adapt the game and make it easier on the rules of the game. Some examples are to reveal the numbers of solution cards that match some or all challenges, select less phase cards with challenges to complete or change the winning condition.

STEP 4 : SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN COOPERATIVE PLAYING AND LEARNING

As the game is a cooperative game, educators should emphasize on shared goals and collective success rather than individual accomplishments. Learners should be encouraged to communicate openly, exchange ideas, and support each other in identifying solutions, reinforcing a sense of teamwork rather than competition. Some specific examples for supporting cooperative playing include:

Ask learners to read aloud the Role model short biography on the role model card (as indicated in the rules of the game)

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- Ask learners to read aloud and share with the others the challenges of their Life Phase cards as well as solution cards. This will enable them to think not only about their challenges and solutions but also how they can play to help other learners face their challenges.
- Encourage learners to re-share information from their cards during the game to ensure that they cooperate towards winning the game (solving all challenges, not only the challenges in front of them).
- Reinforce positive cooperation by acknowledging moments of collaboration such as learners discussion on best solution for specific challenges
- Redirect competitive tendencies by reminding that the game is cooperative and for winning it players should solve all challenges not only the challenges in their Life phase cards.

STEP 5 : MANAGING GROUP DYNAMICS

During gameplay, educators should observe interactions between learners and intervene only when necessary to ensure balanced participation or prevent exclusion. Strategic questions can be used to empower all learners to participate and promote equality in participation. Some specific examples for managing group dynamics include:

- Invite quieter learners to share their thoughts by addressing them directly but supportively eg. Would you like to share what you think about this challenge?
- Encourage dominant participants to pause and listen eg. Let's hear a voice that hasn't been heard yet? It might have an important input.
- Suggest short pauses in the game to reflect on group decision making, especially when disagreements arise eg. Let's take 1 minute to think about the different perspectives
- Reframe disagreements as learning opportunities by focusing on the reasoning behind the different choices rather than on the right and wrong.

STEP 6 : REFLECTING ON THE GAME EXPERIENCE

After the gameplay, it is recommended that the educator introduces a short reflection session. This would help learners to articulate what they experienced, how they felt, and what they learned. Moreover this reflection would create a bridge between the gameplay session and the co-creation phase, helping learners to identify the important components of the game and the research or design they need to do.

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SUGGESTED CO-CREATION WORKFLOWS

There is no single way to co-create a game. Educators are encouraged to choose a workflow that best fits the skills and experience of their learners, the learning objectives, the time constraints, group size or age of learners. Below the educators can find some suggestions of workflows for co-creation which are not restrictive.

STEP 1 : DEFINING THE CO-CREATION TARGET

At the beginning of the co-creation phase, the educator together with the learners should agree on the key scope of the outcome. Some examples are:

- One game created collaboratively by all learners (the whole classroom); In this case the learners will be divided into smaller groups who would work as specific partners of the game. For example one group would work on the biography of the role model, another group on phase 1 card challenges and solutions, another group would work on phase 3 card challenges and solutions etc.
- One game created per small team, each based on a different role model. In this case it is recommended the learners to take one role per person. For example one learner to work on the role model biography card, another learner on the phase 1 challenges and solutions, another learner on the phase 2 challenges and solutions etc.
- Two games created by two teams. In this case it is recommended to shape teams of 2-3 persons to work on specific cards in each team.

STEP 2 : SHAPING GROUPS TO CO-CREATE COMPONENTS OF THE GAME

As mentioned above learners can shape smaller groups to create specific components of the game. It follows some examples of division of roles:

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- Example 1: School classroom with 21 students; Students can be divided in 7 groups of 3 students each one. The 6 groups will work on one phase from the life of role model including the challenges of the specific phase and the solutions. 1 group will work on the short bio of the role model, the design of the token of the role model.
- Example 2: Non-formal educational class of 10 students. 1 student can work on the role model biography while the other 9 students can be divided in teams of 1-2 persons and work on the 6 phase cards and the solution cards.
- Example 3: Youth learners workshop with 6 participants. All learners together will work on the short bio while each one will work on one of the 6 specific life phases cards with the challenges and the solution cards.
- Example 4: Small group of students or youth learners of 4 persons. They can work all together with the short biography card of the role model and be divided afterwards in 2 groups of 2 persons and work on half of the life phases cards with the challenges and related solution cards (eg. 1 group will work on phases 1-3, while the other group on phases 4-6).

There are also other ways of shaping smaller groups with different roles. For example you can have a research group, a group working only on the challenges, a group working only on the solutions, a group working only on the graphics or a group working only on testing. However it is suggested to work mainly on one phase with specific challenges and their solutions so that learners in smaller groups have an overview of their task and final outcome. Moreover this way learners can work in parallel and won't have to wait until a group has finalised its result to start their role.

STEP 3 : ACCESSING AND REVIEWING THE GAME OUTCOME

Once the game(s) has been created, it is important to evaluate the outcome. Possible approaches on this include:

- Playing the game to test it: All learners or a small group of learners play the created game and reflects on its strengths and weaknesses
- Peer review: If there are more than one games created, different groups of learners can play each other's games and provide feedback
- Educator facilitated review: The educator can see the challenges designed and solutions given and discuss these with the learners focusing on the learning objectives, inclusivity, clarity of challenges and solutions etc. Some examples of questions can be: Do the challenges reflect the role model's experience? Are the solutions meaningful and diverse? How can the game be adapted in another audience?

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HOW TO CHOOSE A ROLE MODEL

Before starting creating the game based on the game template, the most important step is to select an appropriate role model. Since the game is a simulation game, the role model's story will shape the narrative, the challenges, and the learning outcomes related to gender equality, inclusion, studies and careers pathways in STEM, ICT, and entrepreneurship. A well chosen role model would allow learners to engage with authentic experiences, recognize structural, societal and personal barriers and explore strategies for overcoming challenges.

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The role model should be relevant to the age group, educational level and interests of learners. They are more likely to engage deeply when they can identify with the role model's background, motivations and challenges. The selection process should also promote diversity and representation, including women and individuals from underrepresented or marginalised groups in STEM, ICT and entrepreneurship. Diversity helps challenge stereotypes and broadens learners' perceptions. It is recommended to consider role models with diverse:

- Educational pathways (academic, vocational education, non-linear)
- Socioeconomic or cultural backgrounds
- Professional roles and sectors
- Career stages or pivots

It is also important to consider not only the achievements of the role models but also the challenges, barriers and setbacks they faced along their way. For the purposes of the simulation game, it is essential that the role model's story includes challenges related to

- Gender bias or stereotypes
- Institutional or societal barriers
- Personal turning points, doubts or failures

Stories that include challenges and resilience help learners to develop empathy, realistic expectations about studies and careers pathways, making success feel attainable
Moreover the role model should align with the educational goals of the game for gender- inclusiveness in STEM, ICT or entrepreneurship. So the role models should have followed studies or career paths relevant to STEM, ICT or entrepreneurship or in some way to be connected to these fields.
Finally it is recommended to involve current role models directly through interviews, podcasting or guest talks to enrich the co-creation process and increase learners' sense of connection, responsibility and ownership. If possible, learners can actively participate in choosing the role model. This can be done through research activities, brainstorming sessions, and group discussions where learners propose and justify the potential candidates. This would increase even more the learners motivation and ownership while encouraging them to develop their research and critical thinking skills.
It is important to underline that educators should approach the selection of role models with respect to their stories, avoiding simplification, stereotyping and glorification. Challenges related to inequality should be framed in ways that promote understanding, breaking of stereotypes and empowering learners. The goal is not to find and present the "perfect" role models but to offer realistic, inspiring narratives that encourage learners to reflect on their aspiration and potential pathways.

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REQUEST FOR CONSENT

After choosing the role model, the next step is to ask for permission.

-If the role model is alive you should contact the person and ask for her permission in order to turn her story into a game, as well as to use her photo in the game process. Explaining the context and the goals of the game will be helpful during this communication. You can use this consent form during this process.

-If you choose a role model that has died, using public information that is available and given that the purpose is educational, could be enough in most cases. However, it is strongly recommended that you consult your country's relevant laws.Another option in that case, is to be inspired by a real person and create a fictional role-model persona for the game.



IDENTIFYING KEY LIFE PHASES, CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Identifying key challenges within the life phases of the role model and the solution- empowerment they followed, is one of the key steps for creating a meaningful simulation game. During this step learners and educators should translate complex life experiences into structured game components that promote gender-inclusivity, breaking of stereotypes and realization of unconscious biases. The goal is to select representative moments and reflect on key obstacles and decisions which were turning points related to gender equality, education, career development and personal life.

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STEP 1 : IDENTIFYING KEY LIFE PHASES

Some examples of life phases that focus on decisions that mattered related to the topics of gender- inclusiveness, breaking of stereotypes etc in ICT, STEM and entrepreneurship, migh include:

- School years: Learners and educators can research the early interests of the role model. If there were any type of stereotype for their aspiration in studies and if there was encouragement or discouragement from teachers family, peers, society etc
- Upper secondary education or VET education (if this is the case): choosing a study path and following it through might have challenges that you don't expect but you have to overcome. Learners and educators can search on whether there were any specific gender expectations or obstacles or even personal unconscious biases.
- University studies: Learners and educators can examine if the role model met challenges due to male-dominated fields or lack of representation, if there was academic pressure due to the gender factors or even confidence issues and unconscious biases.
- Postgraduate studies (Master's or PhD): Learners and educators might explore if there were any obstacles during postgraduate studies (if there were any) due to societal expectations of having a family or a good job or less workload etc
- Early career stage: This is another important phase since as a first job the role model might have experienced challenges due to the workplace culture, or hiring-promotion bias or even self-driven imposter syndrome.
- Entrepreneurship or Leadership roles: Learners and educators can research on challenges regarding starting a business or having a leadership role eg. limited access to funding due to gender-stereotypes, men-dominated networks, credibility etc.
- Family (if this is the case): learners can explore how family and motherhood might develop new challenges to the role model for a short or long period of time.

These are only some examples of phases and they might not reflect the life of any role model. They are not restrictive and can be extended in any way it is prosperous for the development of the game and reach of learning objectives. Educators and learners are encouraged to select 4 to 6 key phases according to their research that best represent the role model's journey and align with the learning objective of the game.

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STEP 2 : IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES WITHIN EACH LIFE PHASE

This step is actually in parallel with step 1, since the process of selection of key life phases should also take into account the challenges within them. Challenges should reflect realistic barriers or dilemmas of the role models. They might relate to:

- Gender stereotypes and bias (eg. discouragement from teachers in pursuing STEM studies)
- Institutional barriers (eg. lack of role models and mentors in the field of ICT)
- Societal expectations (eg. pressure to prioritize their family and children over their career)
- Personal barriers (eg. lack of confidence that they can succeed in this fields)

It is important to remember that the game includes two challenges in each life phase and two potential "solutions" in each of them. So educators and learners should choose wisely how they will break down the life phases and challenges within them.

STEP 3 : IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS

This step is also interconnected with step 1 and step 2. Solutions represent the actions, skills, support systems, or decisions that helped the role model overcome challenges and move forward. Solutions can include:

- Seeking mentors or role models
- Developing new skills
- Advocating for themselves or others
- Building confidence and resilience
- A supportive family member or teacher

Learners should be encouraged to find two solutions per challenge (based on the game template) to highlight the importance of complex systems that support studies and careers pathways. This will allow also learners to explore alternative strategies and discuss them during the gameplay and debriefing

STEP 4 : REFLECTION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Identifying life phases, challenges and solutions is not only a design activity but also a learning experience itself. Through this process, learners will reflect on how gender, education, society and personal life intersect and how different strategies can influence the final outcome. Moreover learners will engage deeply with the role model's story and gain real insights on how they can shape their pathways either in STEM, ICT and entrepreneurship or any other field.

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STEP BY STEP USE OF THE TEMPLATES OF CARDS

In this section educators can find a practical step-by-step guide to use on how to fill the templates of cards with learners to create a complete print and play simulation game. The aim is to move from the initial research stage with the life phases of the role model and identification of challenges and solutions to a playable set of cards.

STEP 1 : BEFORE STARTING

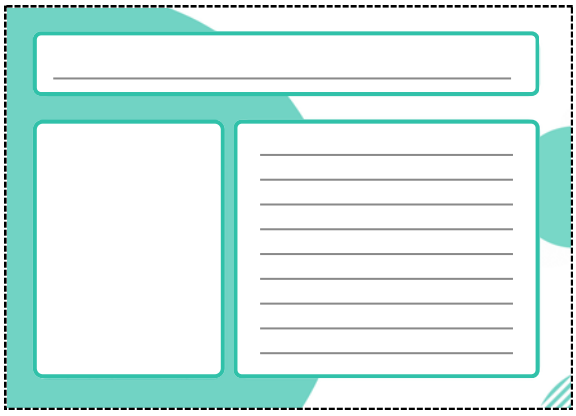
Before printing and start filling in the templates of cards, the educators should make sure they have:

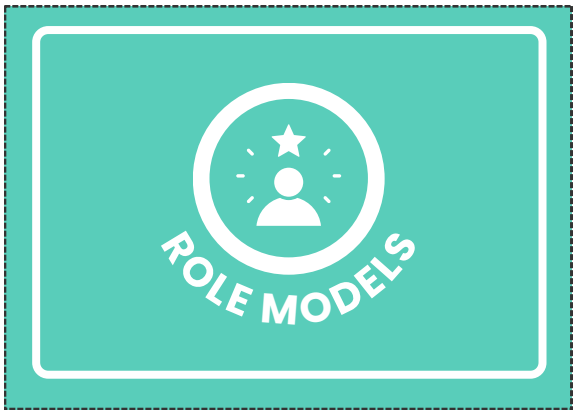
- Selected a role model
- Have enough material about it either through desk research or interview or any other way
- If possible have already worked with learners on ideas of the potential 6 life phases and the challenges and solutions within them (this can also be done at this stage following the steps described above and directly filling the templates of each card)

STEP 2 : PRINTING THE EMPTY TEMPLATES

Based on the workflow you have chosen to work with the learners there will be larger or smaller teams for filling the cards templates. In the specific package with the cards templates there are exactly the cards you will need if you create the game exactly as indicated in the guide. So there is:

1. 1 **Role Model card** template





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2 6 **Life Phase cards** of the Role Model templates (You can remove the last phase card if you are playing the standard variant, or the last 2 cards if you are playing the easy variant.)

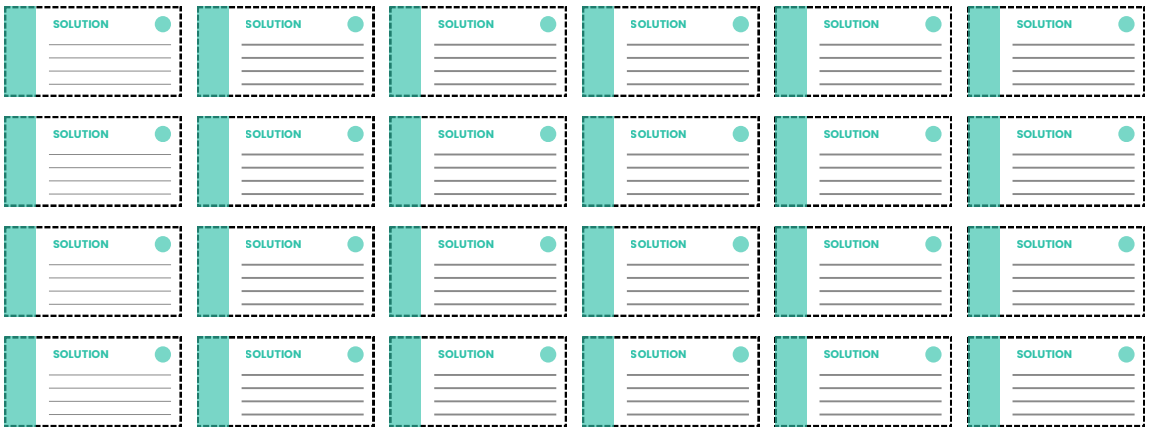




3 24 **Solution cards** templates (You can remove the last 4 solution cards if you are playing the standard variant, or the last 8 cards if you are playing the easy variant.)







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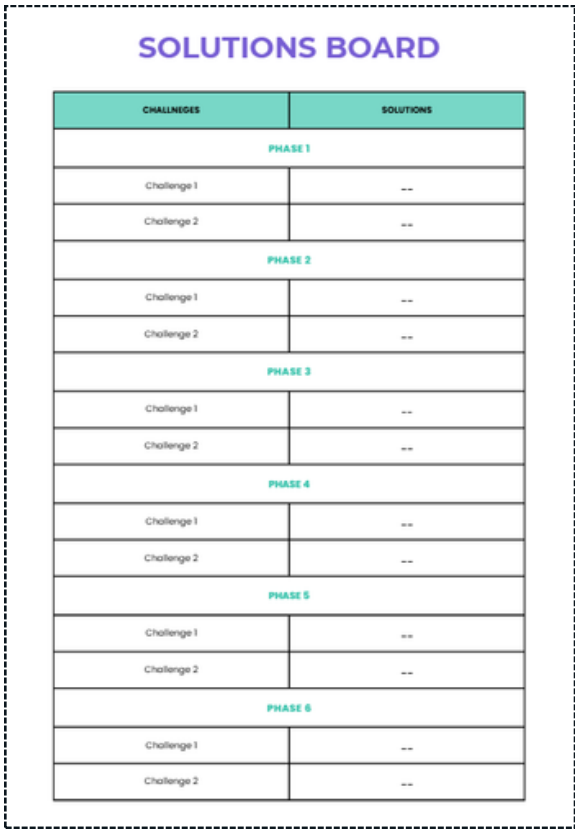
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4 6 identical **Guide cards** showing the steps each player follows during their turn (you will not need this at this phase).



5 1 **Solutions board** template



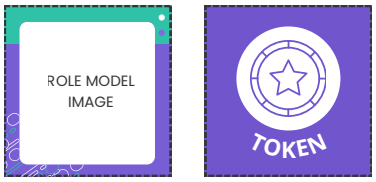
SOLUTIONS BOARD

CHALLNEGES	SOLUTIONS
PHASE 1	
Challenge 1	--
Challenge 2	--
PHASE 2	
Challenge 1	--
Challenge 2	--
PHASE 3	
Challenge 1	--
Challenge 2	--
PHASE 4	
Challenge 1	--
Challenge 2	--
PHASE 5	
Challenge 1	--
Challenge 2	--
PHASE 6	
Challenge 1	--
Challenge 2	--

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6 1 **token of Role model** template



7 1 **round tracker** template



The templates include both the front and back sides of the card. The front side (the one with the lines) is the one you should fill with the information needed for the role model. If you are planning to create 1 game then you should print the template 1 time. If you are planning to use the template as a draft and afterwards to work on a new print for the final game you can print it 2 times. You can also work the final edition of the game in canva through this link.

You can create a copy of the original template and work directly on the new document.

We suggest educators not to cut and glue at this phase the cards but give them first to learners to fill them and afterwards, learners can cut and glue them to make the final cards.

STEP 3 : FILLING THE CARDS TEMPLATES

Based on the workflow you have chosen to work with the learners there will be larger or smaller teams filling the cards templates. As mentioned earlier you can work on the cards by hand or you can work directly through laptops in canva application. It follows instructions on what is needed in each card template to be filled.

ROLE MODEL CARD TEMPLATE

Learners should fill the Role model name in the first box. In the box on their left hand they should find and glue an image of the role model or draw it by hand (or if you are making it in canva application you can also upload the photo there). In the box on their right hand they can write a short biography of the role model.

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TIPS:

- Keep the biography inspiring but realistic and avoid having a hero narrative
- Do not reveal specific challenges and solutions within it so as players be able to discover them themselves
- Use inclusive language and accessible based on the learners age group

LIFE PHASE CARDS OF THE ROLE MODEL TEMPLATES

Learners should fill the number of phase (which should be chronologically) eg. phase 1 for school phase, phase 2 for studies etc. Then they should insert a title of the phase. We have already given some non restrictive examples of titles of phases. Learners can also draw in the circle on the upper side of the card a symbol for this phase to be easier to recognize without reading it.

It follows the most important part of the card with the 2 challenges. Underneath the titles challenge 1 and challenge 2 learners should write the challenges. As already mentioned in each challenge learners should describe a barrier, obstacle, bias or dilemma in 2-3 lines.

TIPS:

- It is important for each challenge to be specific and not general and reflect on the learning objectives of the game.
- Avoid reinforcing stereotypes or presenting barriers as inevitable if this is not the case.
- Frame challenges as opportunities for growth

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If you want to make the game easier (or at least for the first rounds) you can also write in the circle next to each challenge the number of the solution cards. You can also do it with pencil so you can erase it latter on

SOLUTION CARDS TEMPLATES

Learners should fill the number of the solution in the circle and write the solution within 2-3 lines. You should create 2 solution cards per 1 challenge.

TIPS:

- As already mentioned solutions can include skills, support mechanisms, actions such as advocacy, seeking allies, negotiation, change of mindset etc
- Avoid making all solutions individual eg. She worked very hard. Try to include diverse solutions and strategies that learners can also seek for eg. mentorship, supportive teacher, peer allies etc)
- Make the solutions specific so it is not a big dilemma on which phase of the role model this solution came in place.

SOLUTIONS' BOARD TEMPLATE

After having all the challenges and solutions in place, learners can fill the Solutions' board which illustrates the correct solutions for each challenge within each phase of life of the role model. It is the card that the players will take on their hands at the end of the game to see the results. The only thing learners should fill in the board is the numbers of solution cards (indicated in the circles on top right of the solution cards) in the corresponding phase and challenge.

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TOKEN OF ROLE MODEL TEMPLATE

Learners can use the template to draw the role model on it (or glue a photo, provided there is relevant consent)

STEP 4 : REVIEWING THE GAME'S CARDS

After creating the text of all the cards, educators and learners can take some time to review the cards and come up with any mistakes, inaccuracies, phrases that can be misunderstood etc. Peer reviewing is an excellent way to review the cards. Learners can take filled templates created by another learner or team of learners and review them. Educators can also be the reviewer after the end of the previous step but this way there will be a bigger gap between creating and play-testing the game.

STEP 5 : FINAL EDITING OF CARDS AND COMPONENTS OF THE GAME BEFORE TESTING



As it was mentioned above the print and play templates of the game include a front and back side of each card. So in this final step before testing the game learners under the instructions of the educator should glue the correct back and forth sides of each card in order to prepare the card decks of the game. Learners can cut around the dotted outline of the cards, match the two sides of each card and glue them together so as to make it one card.

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STEP 6 : PLAY-TESTING

Playtesting is an important step to ensure that the game reaches its goals and there are no inconsistencies in the game-play. Depending on the workflow educators and learners have chosen to work with, they can test the game. For example if the whole classroom has developed one game then they can have a small team of 3-6 learners to test it while the others are watching and observing for any issues during the game. If the learners have created two or more games within different teams then each team can play-test the game of the other team. During playtesting learners can check issues such as:



- Are there any challenges that are not clear for the players or not age-appropriate?
- Are solutions matching effortless and without misconceptions with the challenges?
- Are there any challenges too hard or too easy to find the solutions
- Is there enough discussion and cooperation between the players?
- Are decisions made collectively or only one player tends to decide for everything?
- Do all players feel they have a meaningful role in solving the challenges?
- Does the game encourage the players' questioning of gender roles?
- Are players challenged to rethink gender stereotypes and obstacles posed by society or personal unconscious biases about STEM ICT or entrepreneurship studies and careers?

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- Does the time stressure (of specific number of rounds to resolve the challenges) create constructive tension without stress
- Do any phases feel less relevant or less engaging than others?
- Is the game neither too easy nor too difficult to win?
- Does the game naturally lead into a debriefing discussion?
- After playing can players articulate what they learned, especially in terms of gender stereotypes, gender-inclusiveness, strategies to overcome challenges etc?
- Do learners recognize strategies for overcoming barriers that they can utilize beyond the game?
- Are learners able to link the role model's experiences to their own educational or career aspirations?

STEP 7 : FINALISATION

At this step learners together with the educators will make any adjustments necessary to accommodate the feedback from the playtesting session. This can include re-writting some challenges or solutions to be more clear and concise, re-work on a specific life phase of a role model to find another more relevant to the game or to find more relevant challenges and solutions, writing the text of the cards online in canva application for an easier to print and play outcome (so they don't have to re-write everything if they need more copies of the game) etc .

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DEVELOPING A DEBRIEFING PLAN

Debriefing is a critical phase of the simulation game experience. While playing the game creates engagement and direct involvement from learners, it is during debriefing that learning is consolidated and meaningful dialogue emerges. A well designed debriefing plan will empower learners to reflect on their experiences, recognize gender biases or structural barriers they are currently facing and connect the role's model journey to their own educational and career aspirations.

CO-CREATING A DEBRIEFING PLAN WITH THE LEARNERS:

- Encourages active engagement with the learning objectives of the game
- Makes reflection more relevant and meaningful
- Empower learners to shape how sensitive topics will be discussed
- Supports emotional safety and trust



STEP 1 : INTRODUCING WHAT IS DEBRIEFING

Before starting developing the plan it is recommended that the educators explain clearly to the learners (based on their age and skills) what is debriefing and what they should plan together. They can also utilize this opportunity to agree on shared rules and values that create a safe environment for the debriefing process such as rules of respectful listening and speaking, resolution of disagreements, confidentiality etc.

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STEP 2 : IDENTIFYING KEY MOMENTS WORTH DISCUSSING DURING DEBRIEFING

During this step educators can invite learners to discuss important moments during the game that are worth further discussion. Some examples can be moments that they felt challenging, unfair or confusing (eg. a non-supportive family environment around the role model), or decisions that sparked disagreement (eg. to learn a new language and seek studies and career opportunities in a country with less gender-based biases), or phases of the role model's life that felt very relevant (eg. school years). Educators can make questions to learners to let them think about these moments such as "Which challenge do you think deserves more discussion?", "Are you thinking of utilizing any of the solutions as a strategy for your challenges?", "Which life phase stayed with you the most?"

STEP 3 : CO-CREATING DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

The educator and the learners can work together to formulate based on the previous step outcomes, debriefing questions. Depending on the size of class, learners can also work in smaller groups (eg. 2-3 members) to propose 2-3 questions related to the learning objectives of the game (eg. gender-inclusiveness, stereotypes and biases etc). The final debriefing plan can include questions from all the groups touching different aspects. Some examples of questions for debriefing educators and learners can come out are:



- Which challenge felt most unexpected and why?
- Which challenge was more difficult and why?
- How did you feel when facing this X challenge?
- Did any situation feel unfair or frustrating and why?
- Which challenges reflect gender biases or stereotypes in our country?
- What strategies would you choose to overcome this barrier?
- Which challenges were personal, societal or structural?
- What institutions or society can do differently?

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STEP 4 : CHOOSING A DEBRIEFING FORMAT AND ROLES

Learners and educators can discuss also whether the format of the debriefing would be an educator facilitating the discussion through questions or if they can follow another format. For example they can choose debriefing to be done in small groups or even pairs or learners to write their reflections based on the questions, or even role-play. Learners can also exchange roles with the educator eg. they can become the discussion facilitator or be the ones who keep notes. This way educators remain responsible for safeguarding the process of debriefing but allow learners to actively shape the discussion.

Important notice:Debriefing should always be safe, respectful and inclusive allowing learners to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of judgement. So before starting the debriefing educators should remind learners to:

- Be respectful for each other
- Encourage listening without interrupting
- Validate diverse viewpoints
- Remember there is no right or wrong

APPLICATION TO DIFFERENT ROLE MODELS

ROLE MODEL	RESOURCES	GOOGLE SHEET INCLUDING INFORMATION	CARDS (MADE WITH CANVA)
ANTONIA MACHLOUZARIDES-SHALIT	SHESPEAKS: E24 | ΑΝΤΩΝΙΑ ΜΑΧΛΟΥΖΑΡΙΔΗΣ - SHALIT		https://www.canva.com/design/DAG7DtG2q40/csIZQjBWlybdIJwlruCWkg/edit?utm_content=DAG7DtG2q40&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton
LINK TO A TEMPLATE SO YOU CAN CUT IT OUT, ASSEMBLE IT, AND WRITE IN THE INFORMATION BY HAND.		HTTPS://WWW.CANVA.COM/DESIGN/DAHALD7KYH8/D_IDJ5KXGTXFHBWJI0EC2G/EDIT	

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