# Enspiral Dev Academy - It's incredibly important we make workplaces more accessible to people with diverse backgrounds, including parents

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Enspiral Dev Academy (EDA) started in 2013, and is a full immersion web development school, with campuses in Auckland and Wellington, and most recently online too. They are a team of 23 people, and their values of manaakitanga and aroha are not only embedded in their teachings, but lived through their organisation.

The organisation was started due to a huge lack of work ready tech talent. EDA found that the talent being produced through universities and polytechnics was not diverse at all, and that most tech professionals were "Pakeha men in suits", says Gina Stevens-Rembe, their former General Manager.

EDA's mission is to increase diversity in the tech sector, and make technology the biggest export of Aotearoa, whilst enabling New Zealanders to live exquisite livelihoods - and that their regions can become thriving bedrocks for tech innovation. By providing a context for rapid learning, and professional and personal development to people changing and starting careers, they want to improve the lives of all New Zealanders, and their mokopuna, and their mokopuna's mokopuna.

They aren't a large organisation with unlimited resources to spend, but the founders made sure that equality and doing good were part of the organisation from the beginning. Over time, they put things in place that didn't cost them much, but had and continue to have a huge impact on their people. It's as much about a welcoming behaviour and setting the right conditions, as it is about monetary incentives.

The organisation is very inclusive of parents, allowing people to bring their children to the office, inviting them to away

days, staying on marae where all ages are welcome, allowing their people to decide what hours they work and where from, and working around school hours or any other commitments they have. Their CEO and founder, Rohan Wakefield thinks "It's incredibly important we make workplaces more accessible to people with diverse backgrounds, including parents. Where the roles allow, our positions are part-time and flexible in hours, allowing people with caring duties to work around whānau responsibilities. We have made this a focus for roles across the organisation, including high-responsibility positions."

Gina started in the role after her first parental leave. "Starting a new role after parental leave can be daunting, but Rohan and the team at EDA have made me feel valued and appreciated from day one. Over time, as my capacity increased, so grew the responsibility of my role. I went from a project-manager position to General Manager over the course of 18 months. For me, it was important for my employer to acknowledge the complexities of raising a young family whilst continuing to consider me for leadership positions. One of my highlights over the time was being able to demonstrate to my team that having a high-responsibility role and a young family can be compatible."

They focus on their people feeling fulfilled by their work, and in order to support this they recently increased their annual leave to 25 days and sick & wellbeing leave to 10.

The conversations about power dynamics, emotional labour and equity are frequent at EDA. Whilst the existing dynamics of pay parity from the tech sector exist, the team are working hard to address these across the organisation.