

### **Google Women TechMakers Retreat 2017**

Earlier last year on November, 2015 I participated in the Europe, Middle East and Africa Women TechMakers competition. Honestly, I never wanted to participate but then my good friend convinced me to, so I decided to participate. So the requirement for participation was to fill an online form, submit your school transcripts, get referees to write good things about you and the most difficult part was writing 4 essays on different topics which were outlined.

So I did all this and submitted my application.

On February, 2017 I got an email from Google informing me that I had passed the first part of the application and I had to do an interview via Hangouts - which I did too. Then at the end of that week I received another email saying that I was among one of the winners from the 3 continents.

The program comes with 3 things/benefits: a scholarship, a retreat to a selected google office and an opportunity to join the Women TechMakers community. For more information about the scholarship visit this site:

<https://www.womentechmakers.com/scholars>

The retreat for this year happened in the London Google offices in the UK from 18th - 21st June. The purpose of the 2017 Scholars' Retreat was to:

- provide the space for the scholars to meet each other and start being intentional and articulate about the skills they want to grow in the coming year
- create a support network for scholars by introducing them to and facilitating sessions with Google mentors, University Programs/Student Specialists, Google engineers
- introduce them to key concepts to help them develop their profile as a leader in their community
- familiarize them with Google products and culture

During the retreat, we had the chance of meeting the different engineers in the office who were working on different projects such as Google Home, Google maps, Google search and etc. We also had a session by the hiring and recruiting team on how to tackle the google interview, writing CV and the whole interviewing process by Google.

And finally we were given the responsibility of starting an initiative that will promote/encourage girls to join STEM fields and Google will assist us on this.

The retreat was a good experience for me because I managed to meet new people, build my network and also get to visit a Google office.

I would encourage everyone to apply when the applications open this year.