




**black hat**<sup>®</sup>  
ASIA 2020

OCTOBER 1-2, 2020  
BRIEFINGS

Making an Impact from India to the rest of the world by  
building and nurturing women Infosec community

Vandana Verma Sehgal


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Have you ever felt  
You are **one** among **1000** people?



Have you ever felt  
You needed a **mentor** and could not find **one**?

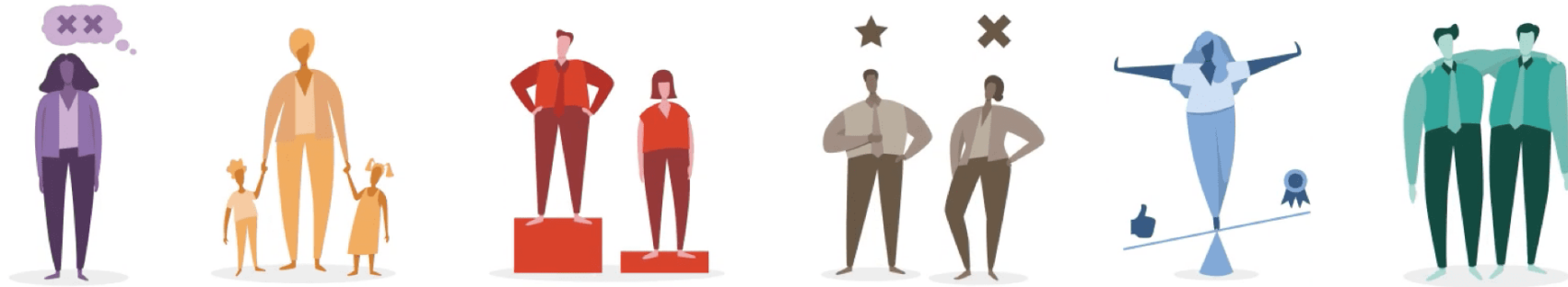


Have you ever felt  
You wanted to **talk** but hesitant in **speaking**?

# Lack of Role Models



# Unconscious Bias



# Space to Openly speak



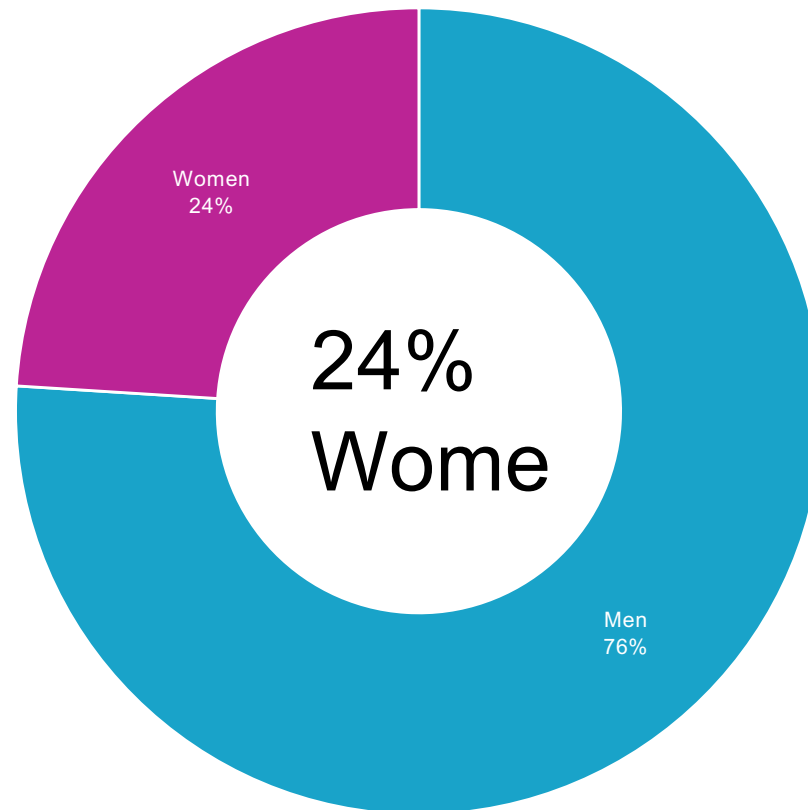
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# Social Commitments

10/10



# % of Women in Cyber Security



(ISC)<sup>2</sup> released Report - 2019

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# Motivation Behind Starting the Community



# Support for Women



<https://www.genderavenger.com/>

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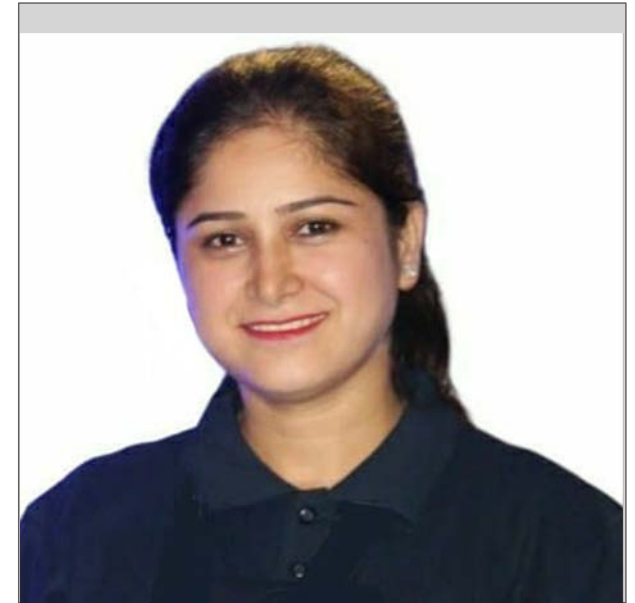


# What Is This Talk About?

# About Me

Vandana Verma Sehgal

- ❖ President -InfosecGirls
- ❖ OWASP Global Board of Director
- ❖ Award-winning Cybersecurity Professional
- ❖ Keynote Speaker, Inclusion Advocate



Personal interests

Reading Books, Teaching, Cooking and Travelling



<https://emworkshop.co/blog/2018/3/8/we-rise-by-lifting-others>

# About



Infosec**Girls**

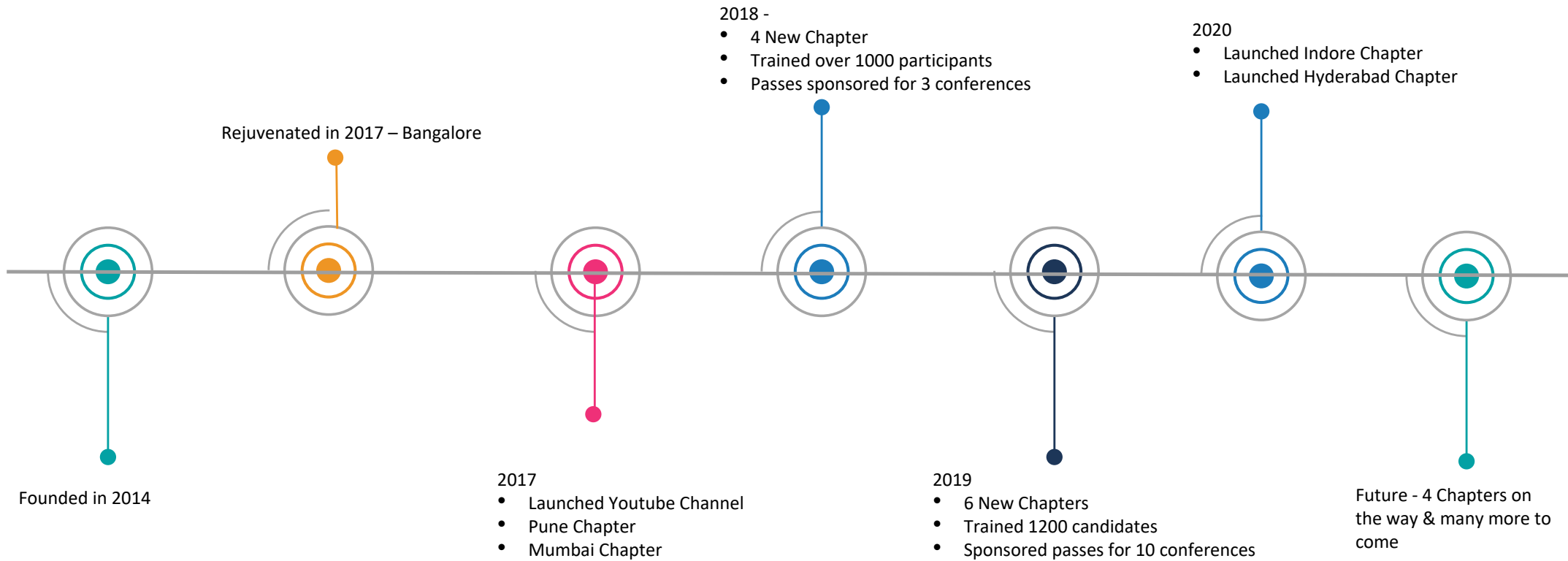
# Real Life Impact and People Benefit

- ❖ 20+ Jobs
- ❖ 10+ first time speakers on global Conferences
- ❖ 200+ women mentored in InfoSec (One to One)

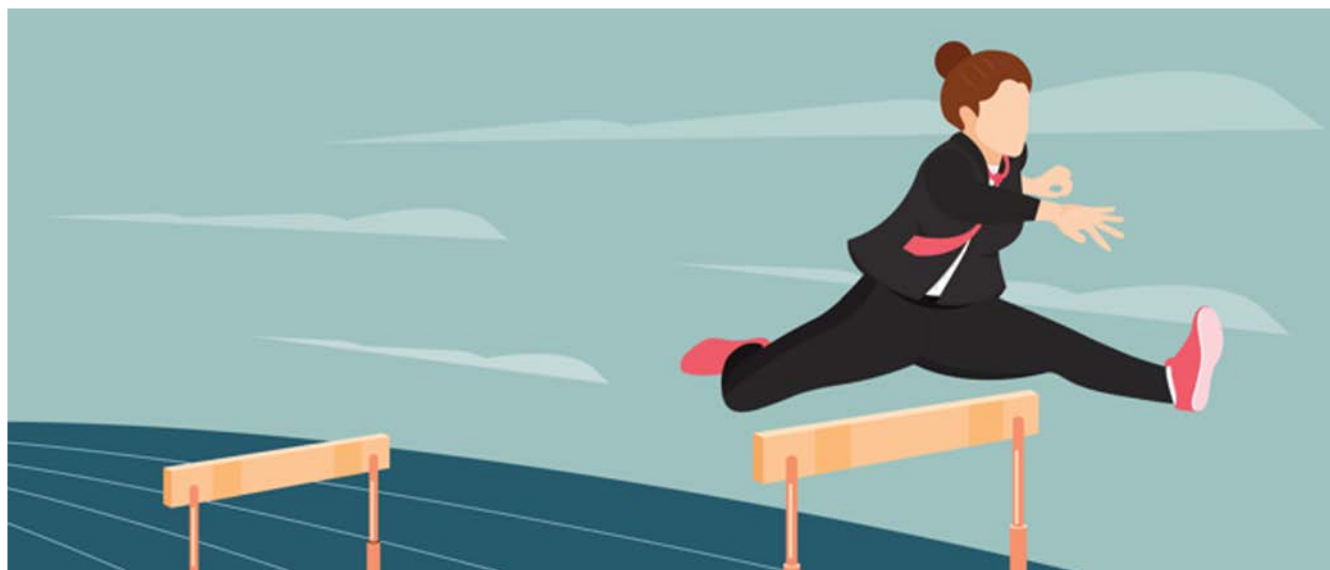




# Community Journey



# Challenges Faced



# Gathering People

- ❖ Sparking Initial Interest
- ❖ The family balancing
- ❖ Less number of women in security



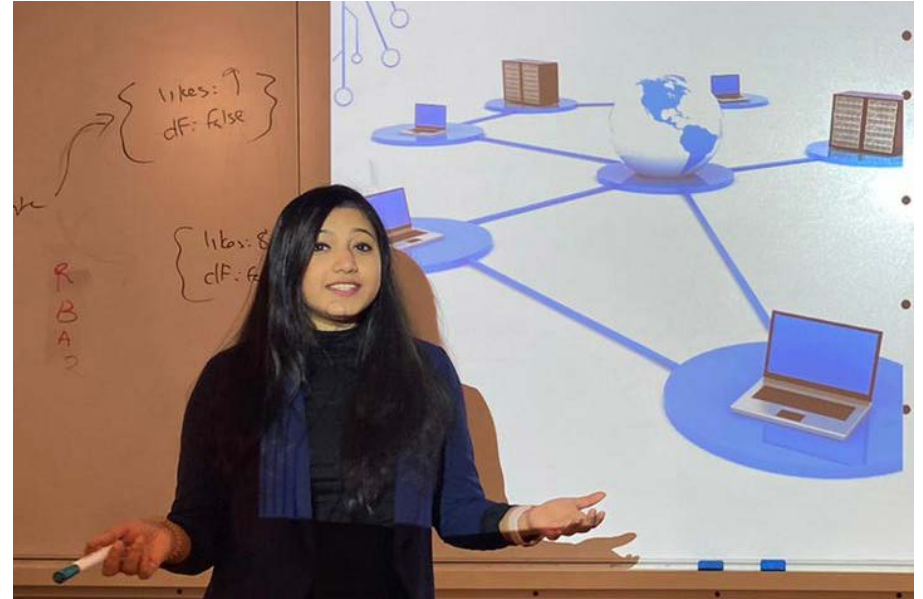
# Place to Gather

- ❖ Finding the venue
- ❖ Facilities at the venue
- ❖ Sustainable location for all the participants



# Speakers

- ❖ Preconceived notions
- ❖ Lack of awareness
- ❖ Apprehensions about speaking



# Audience

- ❖ Less Outreach
- ❖ Just relying on word of mouth for publicity
- ❖ Relying on one social media



# Sustainability

- ❖ Failures along the journey
- ❖ Survival in the longer run
- ❖ Staying motivated



Acceptance!!



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# Acceptance

❖ People started trusting the cause

❖ Believing in us



### Hacking their way to cyber-success

Parthi Shashi @firingsgroup.com

It was an interesting idea in a Hollywood film - a data analyst with a major firm based in Ahmedabad did not find the prosecution or salary like prospects and decided to quit. Before doing so, he worked overtime for two months and made a backdoor in the firm's server. Two months after he left the firm, a major cyber-attack took place when the majority of the firm's data was wiped out from servers. Nobody suspected the analyst who had left the job.

"But it was when we were looking for - we not only found the data breach and resolved, but also managed to link the incident with the person in question," said Parvi Malwani, an Ahmedabad-based firm working with a Mumbai-based firm as a security analyst. "In the final year of my computer engineering, my Facebook profile was hacked. The incident put me on the track to pursue IT security."

It's back of doors and more.

**Updates**

**A Tribe Of Women Cyber Security Experts Is Growing In Gujarat**

Parvi Malwani

While Hollywood films and public perception has made 'hackers' cool, the cyber and data security field has a minimum representation of women. NCSH (National Cyber Security Helpline) in 2018 mentioned that there was 52% rise in overall cybercrimes where crime against women formed a significant part.

Prof Debprasad Halder, a cyber-based cyber law expert and victim counselor, said that after frauds, crimes against women are second most prevalent cybercrimes. "Over the years, these cases have increased. While most cases have increased, conviction rates are still poor," she said. In such a scenario, can better awareness and experts offer a counterbalancing force?

It was this idea with which the monthly-based Vandana Verma had founded Inspire Girls, educating the women in cyber security and connecting them. Gujarat chapter head Neeraj Shahriya said that in overall cyber-attacks, 50% are against women.

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**Pages**

### NAMMA WOMEN

Globally, there is growing awareness that women's contributions in STEM, short for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, have been overlooked. Nearly 200 years ago, the first person to be what we now technically call a coder was a woman - English mathematician Ada Lovelace.

Vandana began her career 14 years ago, developing skills to understand sophisticated attack vectors and building defences. "The job requires you to find vulnerabilities within the system and execute exploits before a malicious systems using a virtualisation software and virtual machines on top of it," she says.

Vandana is part of a number of platforms that focus on cybersecurity: IBM WISE (Women in Security Excellence), OWASP (Open Web Application Security Project), where she is on the global board of directors, InfoSecGirls, WoSec (Women of Security), and Null.

Her favourite female hacker is Katie Mousouris, the pink-haired founder of Luta Security. Katie is a bug bounty hunter and vulnerability disclosure expert whom Vandana met at the Blackhat event in the US about two years ago.

Divya John, a white-hat hacker at Flipkart, says maintaining security guardrails around emerging products and features is challenging. "Not every aspect of security can be covered by automation and tooling. Some level of human intervention and analysis is required for every design and architecture. Innovating and executing customised designs on a recognition didn't come easily. "I had to prove myself at every step," she says. "But there is a cultural shift and many misconceptions have been broken. We need more role models."

I had to prove myself at every step. But there's a cultural shift now, and we need more role models. Vandana Verma is a security architect, OWASP, IBM WISE, and InfoSecGirls.

### Bug report: The female hackers keeping your WFH systems safe

Cybersecurity Pros Bookmark An Important Moment For Women In IT

Shiba Phadnis @firingsgroup.com

Vandana Verma hacks to make things safer, flagging system vulnerabilities that black hat hackers are always looking to exploit. With a large part of the country's organised workforce logging in from home, her work, especially understanding how smartly criminals devise attacks, has assumed more importance and urgency.

Vandana is a security architect, OWASP, IBM WISE, and a member of an inspired community of female ethical hackers and cybersecurity researchers, who, like women in most industries, are challenging stereotypes. "When I started out, cybersecurity was not seen as a career option, especially for women. When I told my mother I work as an information security professional, for a moment, she thought I was a security guard," says Vandana.

Percentage of women in Indian IT sector has steadily increased, so has percentage of women in cybersecurity.

Arjunima Saha, an ethical hacker at Robert Bosch Engineering and Business Solutions, looks for security gaps in embedded systems of automobiles. With growing in

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# How Infosec Girls Contribute?



# Meetups

- ❖ Sharing technical knowledge
- ❖ Connect over lunches post conferences
- ❖ Collaboration on ideas

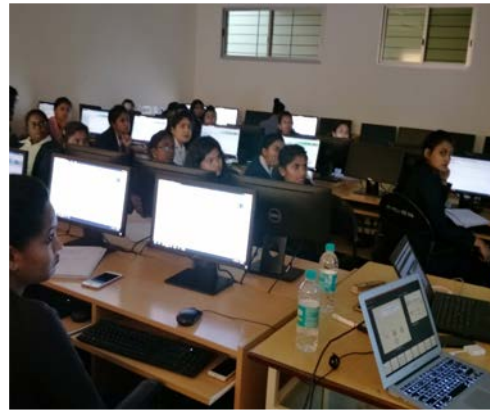


# Virtual Meetups

- ❖ Connecting virtually to have global audience
- ❖ Bridge to connect with global speakers

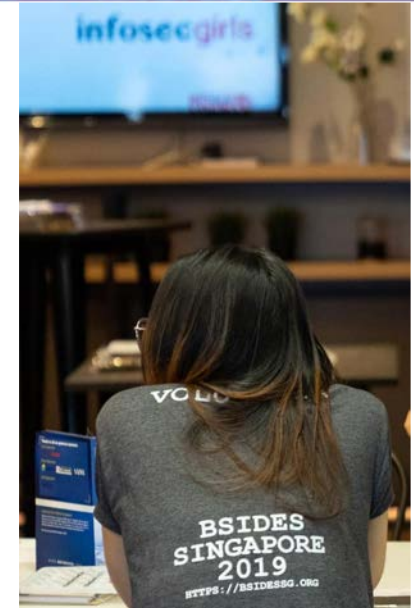


# Connect with Schools, Colleges or Universities



# Diversity Scholarship

- ❖ Sponsoring the conference passes
- ❖ Sponsoring the travel
- ❖ Delivering free trainings
- ❖ Joining hands with other communities and organizations



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# Free Trainings/Workshops



<https://www.proschoolonline.com/blog/skillvatra-the-inquisitive-case-of-skill-gap-in-india>

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# Free Trainings/Workshops



Workshop on Web Application Hacking in Kerala - 2019



Workshop on Python with Security - 2020



Training at OWASP Seaside - 2020



Workshop in Mumbai (Offensive Security) - 2018





# Training

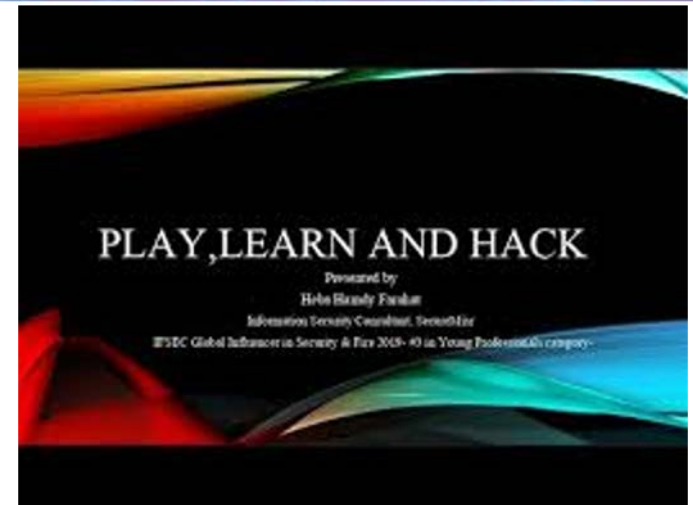
Here is the link for the Web Application Hacking training for the people to get started with their Application Security Journey

**Training URL:**

<https://infosecgirls.gitbook.io/infosecgirls-training/>

# Supporting Capture the Flags (CTF's)

- ❖ Team Matric CTF – Symbiosis University
- ❖ Cairo University Egypt
- ❖ Sec Army CTF for Juniors



# Recruitments /Job Search

- ❖ Help in finding the jobs
- ❖ Mentorship for the freshers or college students to get a job
- ❖ Career Guidance



Pic Courtesy: amandakassner

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# Testimonials

"It was really an amazing experience to learn and explore various topic at infosecgirls. By the connecting with the infosec people we get to learn and get inspired from each other's. Infosec girl also gave me a platform to come forward and share my knowledge to the audience, which help me to overcome my stage fear. And the best thing about infosecgirls is they are started sharing knowledge from very basic level to advance level. So, that college student or a newbie to this community can learn from very basic level.

Thanks to the Vandana Verma for helping this community to grow and connecting us with an amazing people.

Also, Thanks to our Mumbai lead Ashwini Varadkar for arranging the meet every month."



-Jasmin Shaikh

# Testimonials

"It was really the connecting Infosec girl audience, with they are starting student or a

Thanks to the an amazing! Also, Thanks



-Jasmin Shai

"Dedicated to all Infosec girls team,

What an amazing visualisation, preparing and implementation for making the Lockdown memorable learning experience.

Each one of us are / will be better with one feather of learning up our sleeves than what we were earlier.

Speakers come in front chose and give their domain excellence thorough knowledge fare.

The objective is really wonderful got to learn a lot. The commitment and passion from all the speakers is mind-blowing also the innovative ideas and communication strategy social for woman.

The hard work behind this success can be seen worth unity of team.

Lastly the zeal to learn and teach everyone by our whole team of members is commendable for me this has become a techno family.

I would do whatever I can do for enhancing this team ahead to the sky. I got a platform to share knowledge for all techno girls as well."



Infosec girls. By each other's. to the Infosec girls is that college

ing us with every month."

# Testimonials

"It was really the connecting point for an Infosec girl and a wider audience, where they are starting as a student or a

Thanks to them for an amazing experience! Also, Thanks



-Jasmin Shai

"Dedicated to all Infosec girls to help them grow. What an amazing visualisation, a memorable learning experience

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"I came to know about the InfosecGirls from my Business Partner. She introduced me to the InfosecGirls community. I still remembered the first InfosecGirls meeting that I attended. I can't forget the warmth and the vibe I got in my first interaction with the community.

There were talks on various topics the same day, OSINT Open Source Intelligence, A Day of The SOC analyst, and Red Team and Blue Team. I was amazed with the varieties of the topics covered in the meet. This community accepts anyone irrespective of the age group or knowledge of the subject. You will find College Students, Working Professionals and Entrepreneurs part of this esteem group. I gelled with them so effortlessly the first day itself as if I was knowing all of them for a long time.

There is no ending since my first InfosecGirls Meet to acquire the knowledge about cyber security. Information Security is a continuously evolving field and a much happening field. InfosecGirls community is a bridge for me to connect to the latest happenings in the cybersecurity world. It is my privilege to be part of the group."



Manisha Chougule  
Director, DigiSec360

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interaction with the community.

"InfosecGirls

A place where you learn & grow,

A platform where every girl makes you feel special and helps you bring out the best in you.

Here, ideas are nurtured,

freshers are welcomed,

the experienced helps through their experiences.

A highly motivated team.

Great initiative by Vandana Verma

Well managed Mumbai Chapter by Ashwini Varadkar"



-Shifa Cyclewala|

Open Source Intelligence, A Day of  
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A place where you learn & grow,

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It helped me to brush up my knowledge and also meet elite hacker girls...

Improvements are always better just be up to date...

And come up with latest talks and knowledge.

🥰🥰🥰 otherwise the initiate of Infosec girls is very good.. and give strength to girl power then they can do anything.



-Hina Raval

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# Testimonials

"About the wonderful community came to know from my Kavita ma'am. Who told me about this energetic group.

Infosec girl Mumbai concept was very excited to me. All girls will give a blaster knowledge of concept to enhance everyone idea .

First meet was took place Infosec girls Mumbai it was excited. Marvellous experience was there on that day. We all had got new knowledge as well as motivation about new ideas and lots of technology. All the speakers had done outstanding work. Learner was engrossed to listen something new as well as special. All are waiting for next infosec girls "meetup" in Mumbai.

Afterwards two section of infosec girls Mumbai took place.

Combined OWASP Mumbai & InfoSec Girls Meetup was excellent idea. New technology going to know and many people are coming together to give more knowledge. In that I had deliver presentation on the topic as speaker it superb experience and motivation is very important given by Ashwini Varadkar.

For me as a fresher it was outstanding experience of energetic community that is my Infosec Girls Mumbai.

Give a lots of clap to superstar audience that we got to help everyone.

Thank you so much to all in Infosec Girls Mumbai we are going to be rock 🌟 star."



Shivani Mohit

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# What did we achieve so far?

**Reaching further**

15 Chapters  
around the globe

**Encouraging talent**

80 percent  
first time speakers

**Upskilling people**

Trained  
over 3000+ Women



**Winning Prizes**

Program of the year  
Award at RSA

**Spreading awareness**

25+ college events



**Keep it open  
& accessible**

Sessions available on  
Youtube

**Start at beginning**

Trained  
over 500  
School students

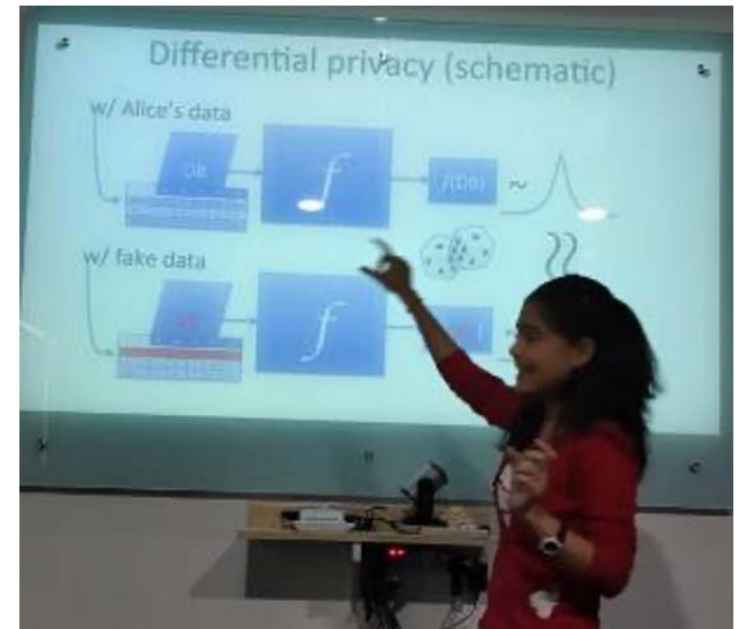
**Connecting consistently**

10- 15 meetups  
Per Month

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# United We Stand!!

- ❖ Being there for each of us, beyond just infosec
- ❖ Knowledge and individual hard work of
- ❖ Aims at exploring new horizons for infosecgirls



# Efforts Behind the Scenes - Chapter Leaders

❖ Creatives (Banners, posters, etc.)

❖ Finding new speakers

❖ Grooming budding speakers

❖ Experiment with new venues

❖ Experiment with formats like streaming platform, workshops, quizzes.



# Chapter Leaders Around the World

**Pune Lead**



**Shrutirupa**

**Mumbai Lead**



**Ashwini**

**Hyderabad Lead**



**Shivani**

**Bhopal Lead**



**Shreya**

**Chandigarh Lead**



**Priyam**

**Italy Lead**



**Loredana**

**Delhi Lead**



**Saman**

**Delhi Lead**



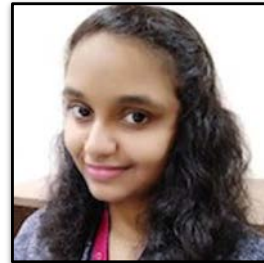
**Aarti**

**Jaipur Lead**



**Rupika**

**Nagpur Lead**



**Megha**

**New York Lead**



**Aastha**

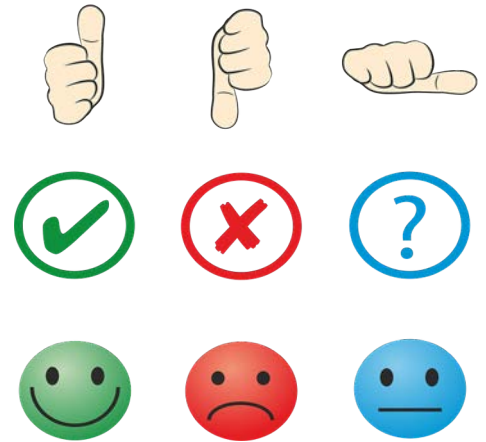
**New York Lead**

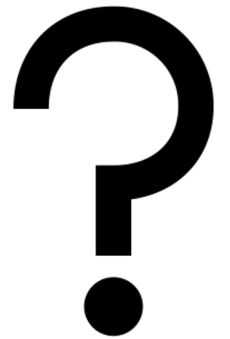


**Zoe**

# Community's Opinion

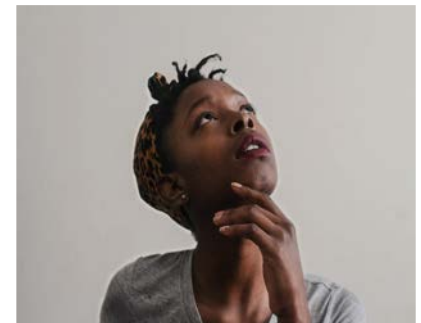
- ❖ Community members Expectation
- ❖ Fresh ideas from the community members
- ❖ New learning opportunities
- ❖ keeping a tab on the pulse of community by active feedback





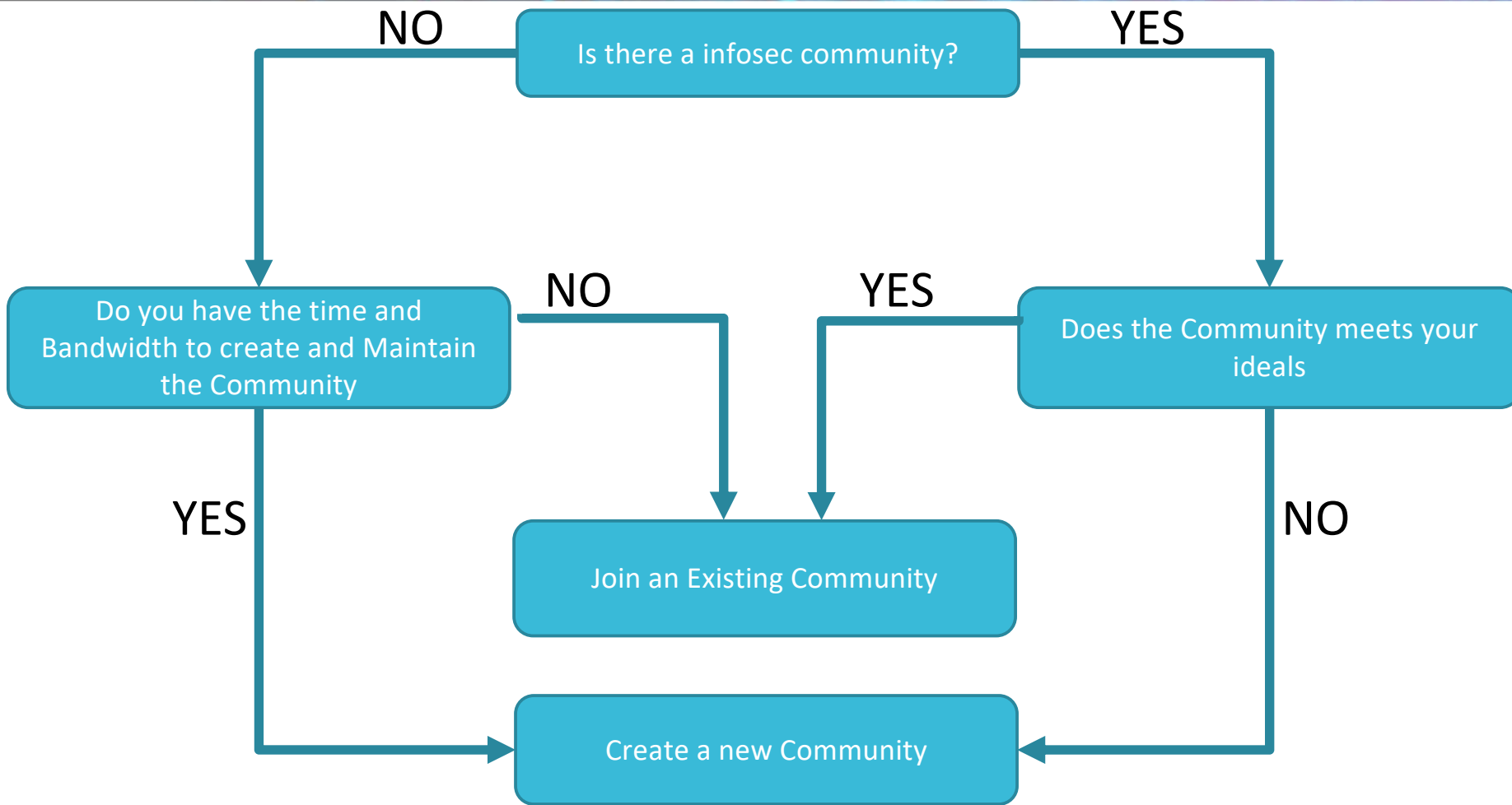
Should I start a community of my own  
or

Should I contribute to an existing community?



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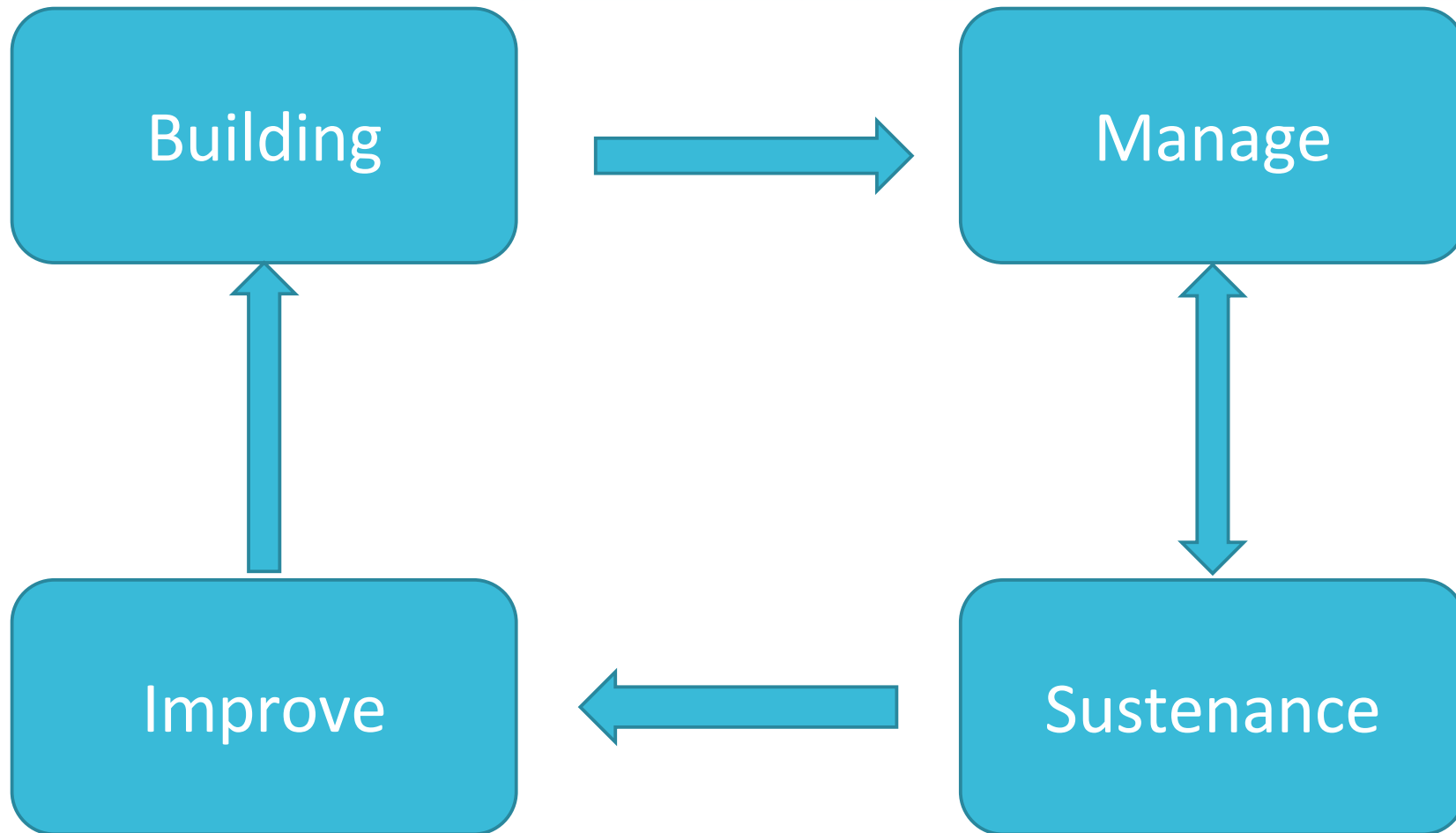




# Framework to Build a Community



# Framework to Build a Community



# Framework to Build a Community - Build

Build



Name the community



Find a venue



Plan the meetings



Find the speakers



Create the mailing list and social media handles



Announce the meeting

# Framework to Build a Community - Manage

## Manage



Partner with a venue providers



Find Co-leads



Plan the frequency of the meet-ups



Finalise the date in advance for the meet



Announce the meet on Website, Mailing list, Twitter, Facebook, etc



Code of conduct

# Framework to Build a Community - Sustenance

## Sustenance



More Leads or co-leads



Venue Related Issues – Discuss them out



Buddy system



Never Shy away in asking for help



Knowledge base that we are working on



In case no local meets, then we have online sessions.

# Framework to Build a Community - Improve

Improve



Ask for community feedback



Implement the feasible feedback



Experiment with the different types of formats



Adapt to situations



Hold the highest standards of integrity in all of our actions

## Ethos of a Community



The community and its members are always ready to help.



Community should always be giving more than sum total of what is provided.



Dedication towards imbibing interest in infosec among new professionals.



Community is inclusive of everyone i.e. right from a common college student who is interested in infosec to the a professional who wants to learn something new



Community is inclusive of everyone i.e. right from a common college student who is interested in infosec to the a professional who wants to learn something new



The enthusiasm and encouragement given to each other.



# Future Roadmap

- ❖ Sustainable Community for next 10 years
- ❖ More Chapters around the world
- ❖ Host free conferences for the community
- ❖ Encourage participation of candidates from unsung areas
- ❖ Focus on educating under represented categories



# KEY TAKEAWAYS



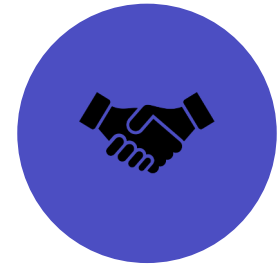
PAY IT FORWARD



POSITIVE  
DIFFERENTIATION



SECURITY MUCH  
MORE SECURE




PARTNER WITH  
ORGANIZATIONS



**We are making an impact....**

**YET, We Have a Long Way to Go!!**



"Our greatness comes when we appreciate each other's strengths, when we learn from each other, when we lean on each other." - [Michelle Obama](#)

# Special Thanks.....



# Reach Us!!

- ❖ Website : <https://infosecgirls.in>
- ❖ Email: hello [at] infosecgirls [dot] in
- ❖ Twitter: [@infosecgirls](https://twitter.com/infosecgirls)
- ❖ Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/infosecgirls/>
- ❖ YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/InfosecGirls>
- ❖ LinkedIn:- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/infosecgirls/>
- ❖ Mailing list :
- ❖ <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/infosecgirls>

Thank You

