

# Blekingeflickan Code Club

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## Abstract

The Blekingeflickan Code Club project, funded by the ELLIIT Gender and Diversity Group, was started to give young girls the chance to explore the world of computing, where women remain under-represented. As part of this project, the Girls Can Code workshop series introduced girls in grades 5 and 6 to programming, robotics, and creative computing. Over four weeks, six workshops were held at Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH), where twelve participants took part in hands-on activities that helped them develop basic programming skills and gain confidence working with electronics and simple paper-based robots. The project promoted sustained interest in computing, with many participants expressing enthusiasm for continuing to learn about technology.

## Project Summary

Funding from the ELLIIT Gender and Diversity Group supported the delivery of six Girls Can Code workshops between 30 October and 20 November 2024 at the Ericsson Space within BTH's Department of Software Engineering. These workshops formed the core activity of the Blekingeflickan Code Club project.

The sessions introduced participants to writing simple interactive programs using Scratch, Python, to control BBC Micro:bits. The workshops offered practical opportunities to experiment with sensors and to work in teams to design and test their creations. The activities also included building paper-based robots and exploring motor controllers, helping the participants connect programming concepts with physical systems.

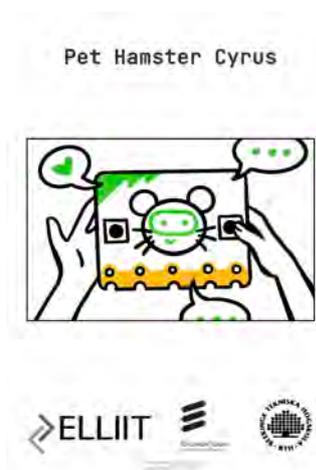


## Results and Impact

Twelve girls attended the workshops, with a smaller group (eight) attending all regularly throughout the four weeks. For many participants, the workshops were their first introduction to programming and physical computing. They gained experience with block-based and text-based programming, learned to control motors and sensors, and created simple interactive systems using BBC Micro:bits. Working with real devices and robots helped them understand how code relates to physical systems and increased their motivation to continue learning.

The workshops were led by female university students from BTH. Their involvement aligned with the project's goals as it provided visible examples of women studying computing. Their presence also helped create an environment where participants felt comfortable asking questions and trying new tasks. The workshops used a hands-on approach as the girls were encouraged to try things themselves rather than just watch or listen, which helped them build confidence and stay engaged throughout the sessions.

Feedback from parents was very positive. Several noted that their daughters became more interested in technology and began asking more questions at home. Although the group was small, the workshops had a clear effect, with participants showing stronger interest in continuing with computing-related activities.



The Blekingeflickan Code Club supports the ELLIIT Gender and Diversity Group's mission to widen participation and diversity by giving girls early access to computing. The outcomes show that continued support for these outreach activities can strengthen interest in technology among young girls and contribute to increased diversity in future technology education and careers.

## Acknowledgement

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