

'Go out into the world and make a difference'

"You can be entrepreneurial in any sector," Joana Baptista declares — and in her short, yet diverse, entrepreneurial career she is certainly living up to that **maxim**.



Her first business idea? An interactive attachment for toothbrushes. "It was designed for children to help them improve their brushing," she explains. "There was a game, and also incentives so you could win prizes."

Her second company was an app to help university students organise grocery shopping: "That was great because it combined my passion for business but also my enjoyment of technology and coding."

And it is technology where she sees opportunities for teenagers: "It's such a great space for young people to be in because it's so easy to learn how to code," she explains. "There are so many free platforms online, and it's something that doesn't involve any cost — apart from your own time."

Although, for her latest project Baptista has taken things offline, developing a series of children's books with her friends. "Each book takes a modern twist on a classic fairy tale. We rewrite it to tackle issues such as sexism, **homophobia**, racism and discrimination."

"I'm very passionate about getting girls involved in business and **STEM**," she continues. "People tend to look at women and think they are not sure what they're doing, whereas men have a lot of confidence."

Nevertheless, Baptista points to inspiring role models for young women: "My greatest idol is **Karen Brady**," she says. "She runs a football club which is a male-dominated space."

What does it take to be an entrepreneur?

Bright spark

"Embrace failure," Baptista says. "You are never going to go through life without making mistakes, so it's important not to look at failure as a negative: you can spin it on its head and make something positive out of it."

YOU DECIDE

1. Should everyone be taught how to code?



WORD WATCH

Maxim – A short statement expressing a general truth or rule to be followed.

Homophobia – Dislike of or prejudice against gay people.

STEM – Science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Women are underrepresented in jobs in these fields — see the *Wired* link in Become An Expert for more.