

Mentoring Program

Program Information Kit

Introduction

The Volunteering Victoria Mentoring Program brings together experienced senior leaders of volunteers with entry-level managers of volunteers. The program offers both professional and personal development opportunities for passionate individuals who are looking to develop their skills and careers. Mentors and mentees are strategically matched, and Volunteering Victoria seek to facilitate the growth of this one-to-one relationship.

The objective of the program is to:

- strengthen the volunteering sector,
- build the capacity of its members, and;
- foster networking and relationships.

We endeavour to support the development of specialist skills and knowledge in the volunteering sector through collaboration and the exchange of insights, experience and wisdom.

Both parties can benefit from a mentoring relationship. Typically, the **mentor** will benefit from:

- Developing their mentoring and leadership skills
- Strengthening relationships and expanding on their existing networks
- Making a meaningful contribution towards professionalising the volunteering sector and supporting upcoming leaders
- Gaining a sense of personal and professional satisfaction
- Staying in touch with emerging issues relevant to entry-level managers of volunteers

The **mentee** will benefit from:

- Connecting with an experienced leader of volunteers willing to share their insights, knowledge and expertise as a mentor
- An exchange of different ideas and resources from a mentor that is external to their organisation
- Guided reflection, debrief and communication with their mentor
- Goal setting and working towards achieving these goals
- Ongoing development of skills and knowledge specific to volunteer management
- Building confidence and leadership skills
- An expanded and highly skilled professional network

How does the program work?

The Mentoring Program runs for nine months, typically from March to November¹. As a guideline, we recommend that mentees and mentors meet at least once a month for the duration of the program for a minimum of 1.5 hours to 2 hours, preferably face-to-face. It is expected that both mentees and mentors can commit to the program's schedule of key dates when applying to be an active participant in the program.

Mentees and mentors will be introduced to each other at an introductory workshop. At this workshop the mentoring pairs will be expected to negotiate and sign a Mentoring Agreement. This will include setting goals for the next 9 months and scheduling the time and date of their first mentoring session.

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a mutually beneficial relationship, often between a more experienced person with specialist skills and knowledge, supporting the needs of a less experienced person. Mentoring is a partnership-based process that involves communication and a willingness to learn and a willingness to share relevant insights and expertise. It is often helpful at key transition points in a mentee's career such as starting a new job, expanding duties or taking on new challenges. The agenda is driven by the mentee and the relationship between the mentee and the mentor enables professional and personal development through knowledge exchange, as well as supportive and challenging dialogue.

Mentoring guidelines

Volunteering Victoria's Mentoring Program is not a coaching or counselling service.

Coaching is job or process related, is usually short term and develops specific new knowledge or skills to be used in a job. In the main, the agenda is driven by the coach and often has an organisational focus.

Counselling is generally short term too and is a helping activity that may have an "overt therapeutic purpose". It may be used as remedy and address motivational or attitude issues. It can cover any area of a persons' life.

The Volunteering Victoria Mentoring Program is not about:

- ✘ Providing advice to the mentee
- ✘ Providing specific workplace skills training to the mentee
- ✘ Making decisions on the mentee's behalf
- ✘ Providing performance management
- ✘ Providing psychological counselling

¹ Mentoring partners may choose by mutual agreement to extend the relationship beyond the end of the yearly program, but any such arrangement will be outside the formal program.

How to apply

The Mentoring Program opens for applications from potential **mentors** and **mentees** on 1 January each year, and typically closes in early March. Individuals listed on our expression of interest list will be notified by email as soon as applications open. It is important to note that registering your interest does not necessarily guarantee a place in this program.

A limited number of mentoring pairs are matched each year. There may be more applications than available places. Before making your application, please ensure that you are able to commit to the relevant [key dates](#). It is expected that participants can attend these important events that also support the learning and development process.

Successful applicants can expect to be notified by email around mid-March.

Mentee selection and responsibilities

Mentee Selection Guidelines

The selection of mentees for the Volunteering Victoria Mentoring Program will be based on the following criteria:

- Up to 2 years' experience in a volunteer management/coordinator role
- Clear and realistic goals they would like to achieve through the mentoring partnership
- Commitment to a 9-month program, meeting a minimum of once a month with their mentor
- Attendance at relevant events as listed in the program's [key dates](#)
- Able to commit to the time requirements of the mentoring program
- Able to demonstrate the [values](#) of Volunteering Victoria
- Is a member of Volunteering Victoria (or their organisation is a member)

Mentee Role and Responsibilities

Mentees in the Volunteering Victoria Mentoring Program are expected to:

- Ensure that their line manager, or appropriate member of their organisation, is aware of and supports their involvement in the Mentoring Program, and understands the time commitments required as a part of the program
- Take responsibility for their professional development and be a pro-active participant in the mentoring relationship
- Plan meetings with their mentor and create a list of topics for discussion related to their development
- Observe confidentiality and professional boundaries
- Be prepared to participate in scheduled training sessions
- Be open to feedback and learning positively from it
- Be willing to learn through listening, observation and reflection
- Be prepared to take risks and be open to new approaches, attitudes and skills

Mentor selection and responsibilities

Mentor Selection Guidelines

The selection of mentors for the Volunteering Victoria Mentoring Program will be based on the following criteria:

- Minimum 5 years' experience in a volunteer management/coordinator role
- Strong credibility within the volunteering sector
- Ability to commit to the time requirements of the Mentoring Program
- Demonstration of the [values](#) of Volunteering Victoria
- Commitment to a 9-month program, meeting a minimum of once a month with their mentee
- Understanding that the role is a volunteer role
- Is a member of Volunteering Victoria (or their organisation is a member)

Mentor Role and Responsibilities

Mentors in the Volunteering Victoria Mentoring Program are expected to:

- Develop a Mentoring Agreement with a mentee and fulfil commitments as agreed
- Provide empathy, active listening and appropriate use of questioning and summarising techniques
- Be honest and open in providing non-judgemental feedback
- Maintain a professional relationship based on mutual trust and respect
- Encourage actions, reflection and learning
- Contribute towards evaluating the program
- Participate in any scheduled training sessions and meetings

Closure Policy

Every effort will be made by Volunteering Victoria to appropriately match mentees and mentors. If for some reason one or both of the participants in a mentoring relationship are unwilling or unable to continue, please contact the Volunteering Victoria team. All discussions will be handled confidentially.

Evaluation

Volunteering Victoria will conduct a formal evaluation of the Mentoring Program at conclusion. Feedback will also be collected at various intervals throughout the program. Participants are welcome to provide feedback to Volunteering Victoria at any stage.

More information

Contact the Volunteering Victoria team:

Email: info@volunteeringvictoria.org.au

Phone: (03) 9052 4524