

Women's Future – Global mentoring programme

Information for Mentees

Why we are running a mentoring programme?

At *In Diverse Company*, we believe that women are under-represented in the workplace. Companies are missing opportunities to benefit from the wealth of experience and expertise on offer. And women are not able to access the same levels of financial reward and career advancement as their male counterparts.

This is particularly acute for women who have taken a career break for reasons such as having children or caring for others.

Research shows that currently in the UK, men are holding 62 percent of manager positions, while women hold only 38 percent. And this disparity is even wider in areas such as the Arab states and North Africa, despite women often having higher academic achievement.

We believe that women have a vital role to play in organisations and economies, but access to work is crucial to enable full participation.

We have established the Women's Futures Mentoring Programme to support women who want to enter or re-enter the workplace to ensure that they have the opportunity to:

- Gain meaningful and fulfilling work
- Access the same earning potential as men and get paid fairly
- Improve organisational culture to value the contribution that women make
- Reduce un-employment and under-employment of women

Our mentoring programme has been designed specifically to support women to achieve the results above.

We have built the mentoring programme to focus on women's challenges; imposter syndrome, balancing multiple commitments, breaking into traditionally male dominated roles, focusing on global working to understand the challenges women face in different cultures, and to increase confidence in using different technologies as the mentoring relationships will use a range of technology software, fully supported by us.

We believe this programme will support women to grow in **confidence**, make connections to **networks** of support, have a safe space to **explore** ideas and ask questions whilst gaining **knowledge** and **skills** to gain employment or promotion.

The aim of the programme is to:

- Support and empower women to return to and enter the workplace - working with women of all ages
- Support women from lower socio-economic backgrounds to succeed
- Develop women's confidence in technology, through partnerships and opportunities with global technology organisations
- Provide a variety of diverse perspectives for women globally from male and female mentors, to interact and share experiences through global mentoring relationships and conversations

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a relationship between two people to explore and build knowledge, skills and confidence to be successful now and in the future. We undertake a careful matching process to ensure that the relationship will be successful and sustainable and offer support to both the mentor and mentee throughout to ensure that both parties are gaining from the process.

A successful mentoring relationship requires both to be open, honest and trusting of the process. The mentee needs to share what they believe are the challenges, barriers and development needs that might be holding them back. The mentor listens without judgement, asking questions, offering insights, sharing experience and encouraging the mentee. Mentoring relationships therefore often flow between professional and personal learning.

Mentoring is often characterised by:

- focussing on overall development aspirations of the mentee
- the relationship being professional but also cater to personal development needs, for example building confidence and credibility
- mentees bringing to the conversation whatever issues impact their success
- being a long-term relationship between the mentor and the mentee, usually lasting from 8 – 12 months

What is involved in being a mentee?

We welcome all women who identify with the aims of this programme, who think their careers are being affected by having taken a career break or working in an organisation that is not inclusive to women. When you express an interest, we will ask you to fill in a short and straight-forward form to help you think through your development needs, including what you think are the barriers you are facing and what your aspirations are. We will also ask you about the industries and type of roles that you are interested in as this supports us with the matching process.

We aim to always have a pool of mentors available to you. Therefore, as soon as you have completed the application form, we will get back in touch with you with a suitable mentor. We will aim to identify someone for you who is or has worked in the industry

that you are interested in, has considerable experience in the areas you have expressed interest in, and who is keen to support you both professionally and personally.

All of our mentors go through an induction with us so that they understand the good practices that we promote and are aware of the approaches that we use, that include listening without judgement, offering you a confidential and safe space to share your thoughts and offer you insights, suggestion and feedback related to your challenges.

We always aim to match people in different geographical areas to increase global and cultural understanding, but beyond that the matching is based on the needs of the mentee and interests of the mentor.

Mentoring relationships tend to involve a call lasting 1 hour a month over a period of up to a year, but this is determined by the mentee and mentor.

What support is provided?

We provide every mentor and mentee a pack of information called 'Getting your mentoring off to the best start'. This provides advice on the first 'chemistry meeting' to help both parties decide if mentoring and their mentoring partner is the right fit for them, how to establish ground rules and responsibilities and insights to both on the common pitfalls and how to navigate any challenges.

We run a regular webinar for all our mentors and mentees that join the programme. This provides an overview of the Women's Futures Mentoring Programme, the key skills to have a successful mentoring relationship and tips and advice about how both parties can get the most out of it, including how to wrap it up successfully at the end.

We check-in with our mentees at regular intervals through their mentoring relationship to ensure that you are getting the support you need, have established an open and trusting relationship and that we hear any thoughts or ideas you have on the programme.

You also have access to members of the In Diverse Company team should any problems or questions arise that you want to raise outside of the mentoring conversations.

Have questions or want to learn more?

Look at our mentoring pages on our website here: www.indiversecompany.com

Email the programme manager: Dominique.whitefoot@indiversecompany.com