

NAVIGATING INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY: A STEP-BY-STEP MENTORING GUIDE



TABLE OF CONTENT

3 INTRODUCTION

- 3 The project and project partners
- 5 Guide's purpose and objectives

5 MENTORING

- 5 Mentoring concepts and definitions

7 UNDERSTANDING MENTORING IN INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PROJECT

- 7 Key concepts of mentoring in the context of international mobility
- 8 Roles and responsibilities of each party involved
- 9 The benefits of mentoring in enhancing participants' overall experience

10 SET UP AN EFFECTIVE MENTORING PROGRAMME

10 PHASE I - BEFORE DEPARTURE OF INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

10 STEP 1: Recruitment of mentors+

- 10 Create the announcement to mentoring program
- 12 Create the specific selection criterias
- 12 Conduct selection interviews
- 14 Warning signs in recruiting mentors+

15 STEP 2: Train the Mentors+

- 15 Training's objectives
- 15 Training's outline
- 19 Train the trainers

19 STEP 3: Matching mentors+ and mentees

- 19 Information gathering and profile analysis
- 19 Establishing matching criteria
- 21 Announcement of mentor+ - mentee pairing

22 STEP 4: Facilitate the initial contact

- 22 How to organise the relationship?
- 22 Which communication channel to use?
- 22 How to establish a connection?

23 PHASE II - DURING INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

23 STEP 5: Set up effective mentoring sessions

- 23 Key elements for effective mentoring relationships
- 24 Methods to use during mentors+ and mentees meeting

25 STEP 6: Support and communication

- 25 Providing Support
- 25 Facilitating Communication

26 PHASE III - AFTER THE RETURN FROM INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

26 STEP 7: Monitoring mentoring programmes

- 26 Monitoring aspects
- 26 Establishing a system for ongoing monitoring

27 STEP 8: Evaluating mentoring programmes

- 27 Evaluation aspects
- 28 Collecting feedback from mentors+ and mentees

30 STEP 9: Promoting sustainability

- 30 Strategies to ensure the sustainability of mentoring programmes
- 30 Encouraging mentees to become mentors+ in future initiatives, creating a cycle of support
- 32 Dissemination of successful mentoring stories in social media, websites etc.

33 CONCLUSION

34 BIBLIOGRAPHY

35 APPENDICES

INTRODUCTION

THE PROJECT AND PROJECT PARTNERS

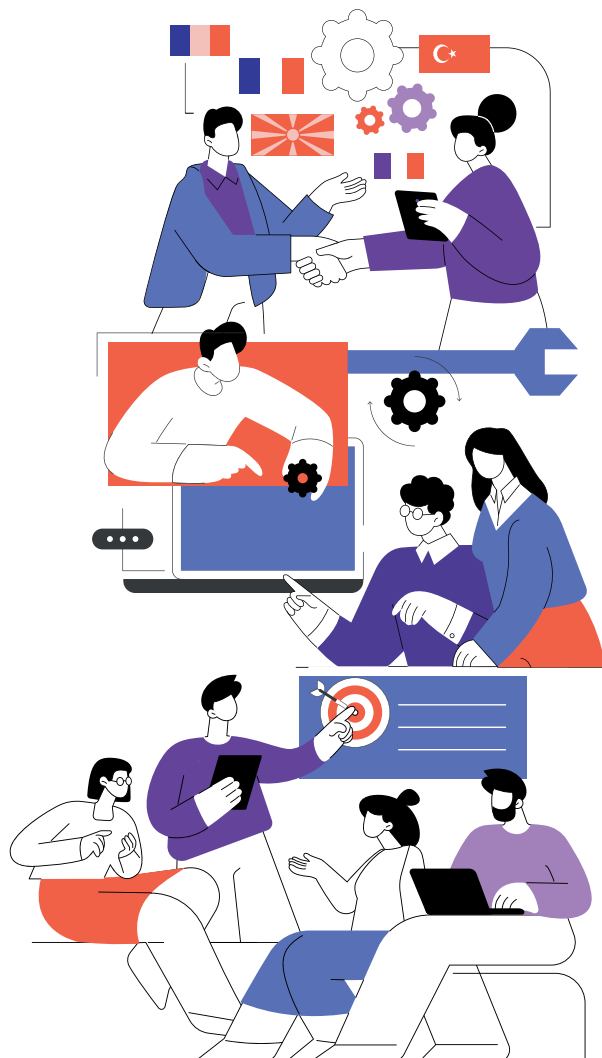
MENTOR (Mentor Engagement's Through Oriented Results) is an Erasmus+ KA2 project.

Given the rise of mentoring in Europe, it is crucial to assess the impact of mentoring on participants in international mobility projects and to equip youth professionals with the means and tools to better engage in mentoring actions. This project aims to strengthen the capacities of these participants by providing the necessary resources and methodologies and establishing European Mentoring, which aims to offer improved support for mentors and mentees throughout their journey.

The objective of the MENTOR project is to inform, train and prepare former mobility participants, professionals and people who have already lived abroad more than 3-months to become Mentors of the future mobility participants. By supporting future mobility participants, they will make European mobility more accessible and allay the fears of future participants, in particular those with fewer opportunities.

Following a mobility project, where participants have received enhanced support from youth professionals and trained mentors, they are better equipped to define or confirm their future projects and successfully enter the job market.

The project aims to assist and support youth professionals engaged in international mobility, regardless of the programme (VET, ESC, ISV, Civic Service...), in establishing a mentoring system. This system encourages the development and support of participants' mobility projects, with a focus on fostering intercultural relations, increasing awareness and recognition of diversity, and promoting tolerance.



The project involves partners from 5 European countries, each addressing unique geographical, demographic or social challenges:

ADICE (France)

Founded in 1999 in Roubaix, ADICE promotes equal opportunity by facilitating international mobility for those with fewer opportunities.

Through various French and European mobility programmes, ADICE aims to develop the social, vocational, and intercultural skills of participants, ultimately enhancing their employability.



ASPEM (Italy)

Based in Cantù, Lombardia, ASPEM has been involved in international cooperation, humanitarian aid, sustainable development, global citizenship education, youth mobility, and volunteering since 1979.

The organisation believes in the transformative power of volunteering for personal and professional development, fostering cultural bridges and active citizenship.

Volunteers Centre Skopje (Macedonia)

Established in 2006, the organisation has implemented over 70 projects under the «YiA» and «Erasmus+» programmes, as well as initiatives funded by local, national, and international donors.

Focused on connecting, engaging, and empowering young people through volunteering, VCS promotes European values and offers diverse opportunities for youth participation.

Pi Youth Association (Türkiye)

Founded in 2014 in Izmir, PIYA aims to develop knowledge, skills, positive attitudes, and behaviours among Turkish youth.

The association aligns its activities with decisions from the European Union, Council of Europe, and the United Nations, emphasising universal sensitivities, human rights, participation, and environmental issues. PIYA prioritises youth work.

Curba de Cultură (Romania)

NGO based in Izvoarele, committed to non-formal learning, culture, and community engagement. With a focus on improving education levels and community engagement in rural environments, the organisation operates as a pilot initiative addressing issues of rural development, educational access, and opportunities for youth.

Curba de Cultură utilises non-formal education to complement the formal educational system for young people in Romania.



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GUIDE'S PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The guide for youth professionals has a specific objective: to assist in implementing mentoring activities within their organisations on a European scale. It is designed to improve the capacity and knowledge of youth professionals, helping them in adopting new methods and practices related to mentoring.

As it is closely linked with the findings of the Transnational Study carried out under the MENTOR project, it incorporates insights from mentors and mentees across Europe who participated in the research. The guide is designed to address the identified needs of the participants and provide guidance on how to meet those needs.

The guide corresponds fully to the main objective of the MENTOR project which is to strengthen the capacity of youth professionals to implement and/or reinforce their mentoring system to facilitate the integration and support of future international mobility participants.

The MENTOR project proposes an innovative mentoring method called "Mentor+". This method innovates by complementing existing mentoring frameworks already required within European international mobility programs. Indeed, programs such as CES, Civic Service, or Erasmus+ demand that each participant be accompanied by a mentor throughout their mobility project. However, the "Mentor+" approach does not aim to replace these systems but to enhance them by offering additional and reinforced support.

Designated mentors, as in the ESC program, are responsible for providing support for volunteers' self-reflection on learning and professional and personal support. Within the MENTOR project, partners aim to develop a method that will allow participants to be accompanied by mentors (Mentor+) on intercultural and personal aspects, by individuals who have already experienced similar situations.



MENTORING CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

The concept of mentoring comes from Homer's epic poem «*Odyssey*». Mentor was the person to whom Ulysses entrusted his son Telemachus before leaving for the war of Troy. Mentor was responsible for the child's education and training, guiding him in his choices and growth to make him a wise and independent adult.

The current characteristics of the mentor emerge from the Homeric poem:

- mentor is a **wise, experienced, and trusted counsellor engaged in the active guidance and maturation of a younger individual;**
- mentor should have **empathy, maturity, self-confidence, resourcefulness, and willingness to commit time and energy to another;**
- mentor must be able to offer guidance for a new and evolving **professional life, to stimulate and challenge, to encourage self-realisation, to foster growth**, and to help make more comprehensible the landscape in which the mentee stands. [1]

These key concepts of mentoring are also found in the many definitions existing in the literature or provided by organisations and companies working in this field.

- Mentoring is a **learning relationship**, involving the **sharing of skills, knowledge, and expertise between a mentor and mentee** through developmental conversations, experience sharing, and role modelling. The relationship may cover a wide variety of contexts and is an inclusive two-way partnership for mutual learning that values differences. [2]
- Mentoring is a form of **coaching and networking**, contributing to the **growth of an individual**. Mentoring provides recognition, role modelling, encouragement and **personal attention to participants** - also called mentees. [3]
- Mentors need to possess all the competencies of a coach, along with extensive relevant experience. Mentoring is centred around wisdom. Mentors help people gain wisdom by leveraging their own to ask insightful questions, guiding them to explore and reflect on their experiences. Therefore, exceptional mentors typically excel in questioning and listening skills. [4]
- Mentor is a **trusted and experienced supervisor or advisor** who by mutual consent takes an active interest in the **development and education of a younger, less experienced** individual. [5]

Mentoring involves **mutual learning** and offers personal and professional benefits to both the mentor and the mentee. It is a relationship where both parties actively participate, learning and growing together. The mentee's success largely depends on their approach to the mentoring relationship. This means the mentee must take responsibility for their role, leading the relationship and facilitating the mentor's efforts to ensure it is satisfying and productive for both. Mentoring is a win-win situation: the mentee gains confidence and a sense of support, while the mentor enhances their skills as a leader, trainer, and coach.

Mentoring is a symbiotic relationship aimed at advancing careers and career satisfaction for both the mentor and the mentee.

Ideally, it is a **dynamic, collaborative, reciprocal relationship focused on a mentee's personal and professional development**. The ideal mentee aspires to self-assessment, receptivity, initiative, responsibility, honesty, and appreciation for his or her mentor. [6]

When mentees' participation is proactive, mentors can facilitate learning and development by empowering mentees to [7]:

- Practice, evaluate and adapt their ideas and processes away from outside interference. For example, a mentor might help a mentee focus on their goals without being swayed by negative feedback from people who do not understand the project's objectives.
- Develop and strengthen self-awareness and interpersonal skills that enhance overall functioning in life.;
- Develop a perspective that situates their work within the broader context of the workplace and the community to which they belong;
- Develop self-evaluation skills and a capacity for autonomous learning that will enable mentees to maximise the results of all learning events and to seek other opportunities independently.

As indicated at the beginning of this guide, the project aims to explain the different stages involved in implementing a mentoring system as part of an international mobility project.



UNDERSTANDING MENTORING IN INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PROJECT

KEY CONCEPTS OF MENTORING IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

Mentoring is a practice encompassing training, education, and support, commonly used in the context of international mobility. **International mobility is a non-formal education opportunity for young people to acquire new personal and professional competences and experiences while being abroad. Mentoring is a practice that, in this area as well, promotes the development and strengthening of skills.**

In the context of international mobility, mentoring supports participants to recognize and strengthen competences that derive from this experience - **like cross-cultural competence, language and communication skills, international understanding, ability to solve conflicts, widespread and democratic participation in global affairs - and increases youth employment possibilities**, helping volunteers qualify for more lucrative and interesting international positions in private and public sectors and providing opportunities to broaden horizons and explore career directions. [8]

In the context of the MENTOR project and international mobility, here are more details about the definitions of Mentors+ and Mentees:

- **Mentors+** are individuals with extensive experience in international mobility who serve as mentors to future participants. They typically include:
 - **Former Mobility Participants:** These are individuals who have previously participated in international mobility programs themselves. They have firsthand experience and insights into the challenges and opportunities of living and studying or working abroad.
 - **Professionals:** Professionals who have expertise in fields relevant to international mobility, such as intercultural communi-



cation, career development, or personal coaching. They provide valuable guidance and support to mentees based on their professional knowledge.

- **Individuals who've lived abroad for more than 3 months:** This criterion ensures that Mentors+ have a deep understanding of the cultural, social, and practical aspects of living in another country for an extended period. Their experiences can offer mentees valuable perspectives and advice.
- **Mentees:** Mentees are individuals who are preparing for or planning to participate in international mobility programs in the future. They seek guidance and support from Mentors+ to navigate the challenges and make the most of their international experiences. Mentees may include:
 - **Future Mobility Participants:** These are individuals who have been accepted or are in the process of applying for international mobility programs.
 - **Young Professionals:** Individuals who are planning to pursue career opportunities abroad or seeking international work experience to enhance their professional skills and prospects.
 - **Students and/or jobseekers:** Students who are interested in exploring cultural exchange, or personal growth through international mobility programs.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH PARTY INVOLVED

When planning to support a mentee, a future international mobility participant, the youth organisation implementing the mentoring system needs to define the different roles and responsibilities of each party involved:

1. Youth organisation
2. Tutor
3. Mentor+
4. Mentee

1. Youth organisations

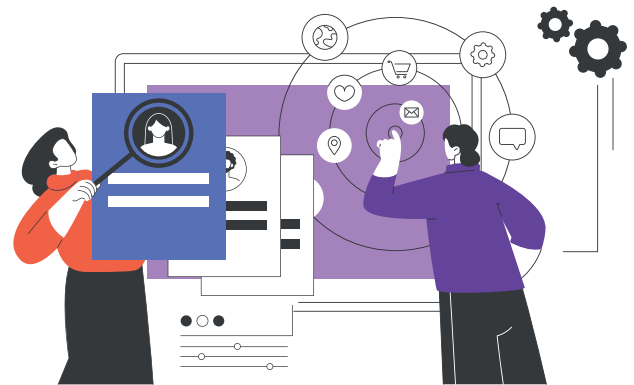
Youth organisations implementing a mentoring system have the following responsibilities:

- To **select** participants for mobility programs and **match** these participants with appropriate mentors+ based on individual needs and goals.
- To provide adequate **training and preparation** for participants before their departure and train mentors+ for their future role.
- To coordinate administrative procedures and logistical details, such as international travel bookings, accommodation, and insurance.
- To **ensure continuous monitoring** of mentors+ and mentees before, during, and after their stay abroad, providing ongoing support and advice as needed, and evaluating the progress and outcomes of the program.
- To **offer continuous support** to mentors+ and mentees throughout their stay abroad, addressing their needs and resolving any potential issues that may arise.

2. Tutor

In an international mobility project, certain programs require that each participant be accompanied by a mentor. These tutors are often members of youth organisations, and their responsibilities may be the same as those of the youth organisations. These responsibilities are as follows:

- The tutor offers **general support** to participants in international mobility, assisting with



understanding the organization's policies and procedures.

- They **guide** participants through specific administrative processes of the organisation, such as visa applications, insurance, contracts, etc.
- The tutor assists in **coordinating logistical details** of the trip, such as flight bookings, accommodation, etc.
- They **monitor the progress** of participants before, during, and after their stay abroad, providing continuous support and advice as needed.

3. Mentor+

For the MENTOR project, there is a distinction between 'Tutor' and 'Mentor+'. Indeed, the Mentor+ provides additional support to the Tutor, and has the following responsibilities:

- The Mentor+ **shares their personal experience** of international mobility in the same country or field of activity, thus offering a valuable and practical perspective.
- They **provide contextualised advice** based on their direct experience, tailored to the destination, field of activity, and type of project of the participants.
- The Mentor+ **assists in establishing relevant local contacts and offers advice** on the culture, customs, and behavioural norms of the host country.
- They **offer emotional support** by actively listening to the concerns and doubts of the participants, based on their own experience of the emotional challenges of international mobility.

4. Mentee

Mentees are not inactive in a mentoring relationship and have responsibilities too. Mentee's responsibilities are the following ones:

- Mentees must **actively engage** in the mentoring process by demonstrating open-mindedness and a willingness to learn from the experiences of their Mentors+.
- Mentees must **maintain open and regular communication** with their Mentors+, sharing their concerns, goals, and progress throughout their mobility experience.
- Mentees must **be willing to learn and grow** throughout their mobility project, leveraging the guidance and teachings offered by their Mentors+ to enhance their intercultural, professional, and personal skills.

- Mentees must **demonstrate adaptability and resilience** in the face of challenges and obstacles encountered during their mobility experience, using the support and advice of their Mentors+ to overcome difficulties.

THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING IN ENHANCING PARTICIPANTS' OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Mentoring can offer significant benefits when future international mobility participants are guided by Mentors+. These mentors+ provide invaluable insights, practical advice, and emotional support, helping mentees better prepare for and navigate the challenges of living and working/volunteering abroad. The benefits of the Mentor+ method are the following ones:

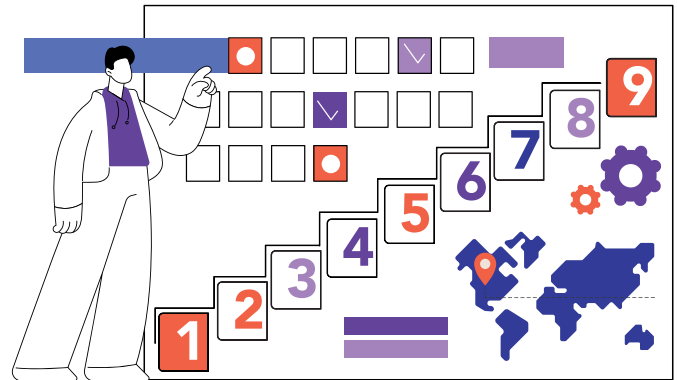
Direct experience	Mentors+ who have already had a similar international mobility experience can share their own challenges, successes and practical advice, enriching the preparation of future participants.
Personalised advice	Mentors+ are able to provide personalised advice depending on the destination country, the field of activity and the type of project. This allows for answering specific questions and providing more comprehensive guidance to mentees in their preparation.
Networking and cultural advice	Mentors+ can help future participants to make relevant local contacts to facilitate their integration and the success of their project abroad. For example, they can provide cultural advice on standards of behaviour, local customs and cultural differences to consider.
Experience sharing	Mentoring is not one-way. Mentors+ can also benefit from the relationship by learning from the experiences and perspectives of future participants. This creates a dynamic of mutual exchange and growth for both parties.
Confidence and support	Knowing that they have the support of someone who has walked the same path can boost the confidence of future participants and reduce their pre-departure stress. Mentees know they have someone to ask questions and to turn to in times of need.
Active listening and validation	Sometimes what future participants need most is to feel listened to, understood and validated. By providing a safe space to express themselves and be heard, Mentors+ can help future participants manage their emotions, doubts and concerns before, during and after their project abroad.
Different perspective	Mentors+ can bring a different perspective from that of official mentors. Mentors+' experience and expertise can offer a broader and more diversified view of the challenges and opportunities of international mobility.

SET UP AN EFFECTIVE MENTORING PROGRAMME

The timeline of a mentoring program in international mobility can vary depending on the specific objectives and scope of the program, as well as the duration of the international mobility experience.

It's important to note that the timeline is general and may need to be adjusted based on the unique characteristics of the international mobility program and the needs of the participants.

However, we can distinguish the three main stages of mentoring: **before**, **during**, and **after** mobility.



PHASE I: BEFORE DEPARTURE OF INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

The period before participants leave for an international mobility project is vital for setting up effective mentoring. During this phase, key activities ensure mentors+ and mentees are prepared. From mentor+ recruitment and training to matching and initial contact, each step is crucial for a successful mentoring journey. This section outlines the 4 steps and milestones of the pre-departure phase, emphasising the importance of thorough preparation and support for both mentors+ and mentees.

- **Recruitment of mentors+** (6-9 months before arrival): Begin recruiting (interview and training) mentors+ with the appropriate expertise.
- **Training for mentors+** (1-2 months before arrival): Conduct orientation sessions for mentors+ outlining program expectations and responsibilities. Provide information on cultural adaptation, conflict management, roles, boundaries, communication and feedback.
- **Matching mentors+ and mentees** (1-2 months before arrival): Match mentors+ with mentees according to the destination, the mobility project or professional project.

- **Initial contact of mentors+ and mentees** (2-3 weeks before arrival): The mentor+ gets in contact with the mentee.

STEP 1 RECRUITMENT OF MENTORS+

It is essential to choose the mentor+ with the most suitable profile for future participants. The focus shouldn't be on finding «the best” candidate in terms of education or experience, but rather on identifying the most relevant candidate based on the needs and context of the future participants.

CREATE THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO MENTORING PROGRAM

Before recruiting mentors+, it is imperative to draft an attractive announcement that captures the interest of prospective mentors+. This announcement should clearly define the goals of the mentoring program, the expectations for mentors+, and the potential benefits of their involvement. It is essential to precisely understand the sought-after profile and the necessary skills to effectively fulfil the mentor+ role. By clearly outlining the selection criteria and expected responsibilities,

the announcement will attract qualified and motivated candidates, ready to contribute significantly to the success of the mentoring program.

For the promotion of mentor+ positions, the organisation uses communication channels that can be shared to facilitate the search for candidates. Each organisation will create its own plan for spreading information and creating promotions.

EXAMPLE OF ANNOUNCEMENT

Opportunity: Become a Mentor+ and make a difference!

Are you enthusiastic about making a positive impact on others' lives? Do you have valuable experience and insights to share with aspiring individuals? Here's your chance to become a mentor+ and inspire the next generation of mobility international participants!

We are currently seeking dedicated individuals to join our mentorship program MENTOR+. As a mentor+, you will have the opportunity to guide and support individuals in their personal and professional growth path.

Your expertise and guidance can make a significant difference in someone's life.

What you'll do:

- Provide guidance, advice, and support to mentees based on your expertise and experiences.
- Help mentees set and achieve their goals, both personally and professionally.
- Serve as a role model and inspire mentees to reach their full potential.

What we're looking for:

- Individuals with a passion for helping others succeed
- Already have volunteering and mobility experience.
- Experience: at least 3 months in international mobility.
- Communication and interpersonal skills.
- Empathy, patience, and a willingness to listen.

Why be a mentor+ with us:

- Make a meaningful difference in someone's life.
- Enhance your leadership and coaching skills.
- Expand your network and build lasting connections.
- Personal satisfaction from helping others achieve their goals.

Apply now to be part of our mentorship program and together, we can inspire, empower, and support new international mobility participants!

CREATE THE SPECIFIC SELECTION CRITERIAS

To identify suitable mentors+, youth professionals should have specific criteria to ensure a successful mentoring relationship.

Here are a few examples of people who can get involved as mentors+:

- **Former international mobility participant:** Individuals who have previously participated

in an international mobility project and express interest in becoming mentors upon their return.

- **Prospective mentors+:** Individuals who are not former participants but are eager to volunteer their time to mentor others. They must have at least 3 months' experience abroad.

Youth organisations can rely on the elements in the following table to create their own selection criteria:

SELECTION CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
Cross-cultural Experience	Previous experience in culturally diverse environments, providing enriching perspectives to support mentees. E.g. 3 months in a foreign country.
Availability and Commitment	Commit to actively supporting mentees and dedicating the necessary time to guide, such as being available for 2 hours per week.
Cultural Sensitivity	Ability to demonstrate cultural sensitivity, openness, and respect in international contexts.
Communication Skills	Proficiency in effectively conveying information and ideas, fostering clear and open dialogue with mentees.
Active Listening	Capacity to actively engage in active listening, demonstrating understanding and empathy towards mentees' perspectives.
Constructive Feedback	Ability to provide feedback in a constructive manner, offering helpful insights and suggestions for mentees' improvement.

CONDUCT SELECTION INTERVIEWS

Conducting selection interviews is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it allows the organisation to **assess the qualifications, experience, and suitability** of potential mentors+ for the mentoring program. Through interviews, organisations can delve deeper into candidates' motivations, communication skills, and their approach to mentoring, providing valuable insights into their suitability for the role.

Secondly, interviews provide an opportunity for candidates to ask questions and **gain a better understanding of the expectations and requirements of the mentoring program**. This ensures that candidates have a

clear understanding of what is expected and can make an informed decision about their participation.

The reasons for individuals becoming mentors+ can vary widely, both on an individual level and across different countries. Sustaining their motivation and supporting their growth is key to retaining mentors in the program. According to global findings from the Transnational Study, the primary motivation for individuals to become mentors+ is **to offer guidance and advice to mentees** while also developing their own cross-cutting skills. Mentorship relationships yield mutual benefits for both parties involved.

Additionally, interviews enable organisations **to evaluate candidates' interpersonal skills, empathy, and ability to build rapport with mentees.** These qualities are essential for effective mentoring relationships and can significantly impact the success of the program.

Overall, conducting selection interviews helps organisations identify the most qualified and suitable candidates for the mentoring program, ensuring that mentors have the necessary skills, commitment, and motivation to support mentees effectively.

Examples of questions that could be asked during the mentors+ interview:

- Can you tell us about your professional experience and skills in your field of expertise?
- What motivates you to become a mentor+ in this specific program?
- Have you had any prior mentoring experience? If yes, could you tell us more about that experience?
- How do you believe your experience and skills can benefit the mentees in this program?
- How do you plan to establish a relationship of trust and support with your mentee?
- What are your expectations from the mentoring program and your role as a mentor+?
- How do you handle conflicts or difficult situations in a mentoring relationship?
- Can you share a situation where you helped someone achieve their professional or personal goals?
- How do you plan to provide constructive feedback to your mentee to facilitate their progress?
- How do you plan to maintain your commitment and availability as a mentor+ throughout the program?



TESTIMONY

Viorela,
Mentor at Curba de Cultură,
Romania

” My name is Viorela, I live in Bucharest, Romania and I work in the pharma industry. After graduating, I joined the European Solidarity Corps because I wanted to do something different and impactful. That's where I discovered the wonderful role of a mentor. After returning to Romania, I knew I wanted to be that person, or at least try to. Even though I was nervous during my first mentoring session, I knew I had an advantage having been a volunteer before. I knew how it's like to be abroad and out of your comfort zone.

As a volunteer, it is not all sunshine and rainbows, but it is definitely a life-changing experience if you are aware of it and acknowledge it. That's where I intervene as a mentor, to help the volunteers live in the moment and appreciate every little thing they're doing. It is pretty easy to lose sight of what is important when you're overwhelmed with so many new situations. I always like to ask my mentees to reflect back on their experience to find moments to be thankful for. This is not always easy, but in the end they all succeed to gain awareness of their learning journey.

My favourite part is when they realise how much they grew and improved their skills and how confidently they look towards the future. It is all about the nuances of their journey and how we, as mentors, help them in becoming aware of the full experience.

WARNING SIGNS IN RECRUITING MENTORS+

The success of a mentoring process depends on the mentor+'s ability to adapt, support, and guide the mentee effectively while respecting their individuality and cultural background. When recruiting international mobility mentors+, it's important to be aware of potential warning signs that may indicate problems with a potential mentor+.

Examples of some warning signs:

- **Lack of cultural sensitivity:** a mentor+ who exhibits cultural insensitivity, bias, or ignorance may not be suitable for guiding individuals in international settings.
- **Lack of empathy and lack of listening skills:** an overbearing person who tends to impose his or her own thinking is not appropriate; it is important to be empathetic and to do this you must actively listen.
- **Unwillingness to learn and adapt:** Inflexible mentors+ who resist different perspectives and needs may struggle in international mobility, where flexibility is essential.
- **Lack of time and commitment:** a mentor+ who is too busy or lacks the time and commitment required to support a mentee may not be reliable or effective in providing guidance.
- **Communication challenges:** A mentor+ who struggles with clear, open, or respectful communication may not be the best fit.
- **Negative attitude:** a mentor+ with a consistently negative or pessimistic attitude can affect the mentee's morale and well-being during their international experience.
- **Disinterest in mentoring:** if a mentor+ seems unenthusiastic or disinterested in the role of mentoring, it can lead to a lack of engagement and support for the mentee.
- **Conflict of interest:** Ensure mentors+ have no personal or financial biases that could affect their impartial guidance.

- **Lack of cross-cultural experience:** Mentors+ without prior exposure to diverse environments may struggle to fully understand and support the challenges in international mobilities.
- **Safety concerns:** any indications of safety concerns or potential risks associated with a mentor+, such as a history of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct, should be taken very seriously.



TESTIMONY
Mathieu ALBERTEAU,
Project manager
at ADICE Association,
France



ADICE recruits two types of mentors. Firstly, those I like to call 'alumni', although I don't think this is the most appropriate term. These are former ADICE beneficiaries, volunteers, trainees or entrepreneurs who, having returned from international mobility, are willing to give advice and share their experience with the next ones to go. In general, they have already benefited from a mentor during their mobility and know the Association; they are therefore directly invited to the training of mentors when they express the wish to be involved in the programme.

The other mentors are volunteers who apply for the project on the French government platform 'JeVeuxAider'. I talk to them to get to know them, understand their motivations and introduce them to ADICE and the association's mentoring project. If the volunteers I meet match ADICE's expectations for this project and they still want to get involved with the association, I invite them to the mentor training course with the 'alumni'.

STEP 2: TRAIN THE MENTORS+

The role of a mentor+ is a significant responsibility that should not be taken lightly. With this in mind, it becomes evident that proper training is essential to ensure mentors+ are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support their mentees. Mentor+ training aims to empower individuals interested in becoming mentors+, enhance their preparation before being matched with future participants, maximise the support provided by sending organisations.

TRAINING'S OBJECTIVES

The **objectives** of mentor+ training are to:

- **Empower the individuals** who are interested in becoming mentors+ with essential knowledge and skills for effective mentorship.
- **Improve the preparation of mentor+** prior to the matching with a future participant.
- **Help maximise the support already provided by the sending organisations**, further encouraging future mobility participants to get the most out of this mobility experience by being as well prepared as possible.

According to the results of the transnational study, future mentors+ indicated that they expect training on the following topics:

- Constructive feedback (64% of respondents).
- Intercultural awareness (58% of respondents).
- Conflict management (55% of respondents).
- Problem-solving (55% of respondents).
- Expectations and goals management (49% of respondents).
- Active listening (47% of respondents).
- Mediation (47% of respondents).
- Disabilities or special needs (33% of respondents).
- Leadership (27% of respondents).

The subjects covered in training significantly **influence the quality and relevance of a mentoring program**.

The MENTOR project has developed a Mentor+ training program. Youth organisations setting up mentoring systems can either use this program directly or draw inspiration from it to create their own training programs.



TRAINING'S OUTLINE

To maximize the likelihood of developing operational mentors+ capable of effectively meeting the needs of their mentees, a comprehensive training program is essential. This training will cover several key areas:

Key Elements of Mentorship

Youth professionals must first define the scope of mentoring for mentors+, clarify their roles, and introduce the overarching framework of the mentorship system. This introductory phase sets clear expectations and provides context for the mentoring process. During this stage, mentors+ will gain a deep understanding of their responsibilities, including guiding mentees, offering support, and fostering their growth. They will also become familiar with the overall structure of the mentorship system, including key processes and procedures.

By defining mentoring roles and system components at the outset, mentors can approach the training with clarity and purpose, building a solid foundation for effective mentorship.

The LISA Method

Certain skills are necessary to become an effective mentor+. The transnational study identified the following skills as particularly essential:

- Active listening skills (93% of respondents),
- Communication skills (80%),
- Ability to provide constructive feedback (78%),
- Ability to encourage and motivate (75%),
- Relationship-building skills (73%),
- Open-mindedness (67%).

Training sessions will cover these skills, introduce them to mentors+, and explore the skills in depth through practical exercises. It is essential for mentors+ to recognize, define, and appreciate these competencies in their mentorship roles.

These skills can be developed using the LISA method, which focuses on four pillars: Listening, Interculturality, Sharing and Advising.

- **Listening:** Develop active listening skills to understand not only the mentees' words but also their underlying emotions. Learn to interpret body language and recognize signs of discomfort or enthusiasm. Show empathy, validate their feelings, and create a safe space for expression.
- **Interculturality:** Respect cultural differences that may affect mentoring relationships. Understand how cultural backgrounds shape communication and values. Prepare for and address intercultural challenges, fostering open dialogue and finding mutually acceptable solutions.
- **Sharing:** Share personal and professional experiences to provide valuable insights and practical examples. Discuss international experiences to help mentees navigate new environments. Share relevant aspects of your background to build trust and highlight the importance of diverse perspectives.
- **Advising:** Provide practical advice and examples to support mentees in achieving their goals. Offer consistent support, help set realistic objectives, and assist in developing action plans. Share resources and guide

mentees towards opportunities for growth. By following the LISA approach, mentors+ will acquire the necessary skills to provide relevant, personalized, and intercultural support, fostering the success and growth of the young people they mentor.

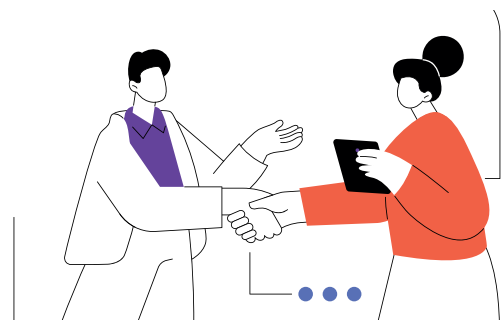
Mentorship Implementation

During training, Mentor+ participants will receive essential guidance on strengthening their mentoring relationships. This includes strategies for building trust, active listening, clear communication, setting goals, and providing constructive feedback.

Mentors+ will also learn to identify and manage potential challenges, adjust their mentoring style to meet diverse needs, and leverage tools and resources to support mentees' development. By equipping mentors with these skills, the training ensures more impactful and meaningful mentoring experiences.

Youth professionals should guide mentors+ to incorporate ice-breaking activities in their interactions with mentees to build rapport and foster open communication. These activities help break down initial barriers, create a relaxed environment, and encourage meaningful exchanges.

Mentors+ can use techniques like sharing personal stories, engaging in team-building exercises, or playing interactive games. These activities help mentees feel more comfortable, setting the stage for deeper engagement throughout the mentoring relationship. By promoting ice-breakers, mentors+ can create a supportive, inclusive atmosphere that enhances the mentoring process.



Examples of ice-breaking activities

WOULD YOU RATHER	TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE
<p>This game can be played in person or online, where mentor+ and mentee take turns answering “Would you rather” questions. It reveals personal preferences and encourages discussion. Here are a few examples of questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you rather see a movie or go on a hike? • Would you rather have only summer or winter for the rest of your life? • Would you rather have your lunch made for you every single day but never get to choose what the dish was, or be able to choose your lunch every day but have to make it yourself? • Would you rather never watch another TV show or movie again or never use social media again? • Would you rather be a famous celebrity or be famous in your professional industry? 	<p>Mentor+ and mentee list three facts about themselves, two of which are true and one false. The other person guesses which statement is the lie.</p>

Training should also emphasize the importance of regular mentor-mentee meetings, recommending a frequency of biweekly or monthly check-ins. Clear communication channels such as video calls, phone calls, emails, and in-person meetings should be suggested. By establishing regular contact and structured communication, mentors+ can foster supportive and productive relationships with their mentees.

Communication pyramid and potential issues with mentees

Mentoring relationships may not always go as planned, and conflicts can arise due to various factors, especially in the context of international mobility. Differences in expectations, communication issues, and cultural misunderstandings are common sources of tension.

Below are some typical conflicts and challenges that may occur between mentors+ and mentees:

Mismatched expectations	Conflicts can occur when mentors+ and mentees have differing views on the mentoring relationship. For example, a mentee may expect hands-on guidance, while the mentor+ might prefer a more independent approach.
Misalignment of goals	When the goals of the mentee and the mentor+ do not align, it can cause friction. The mentee may seek guidance that fits their personal objectives, while the mentor+'s expertise might not fully match those needs.
Communication issues	Misunderstandings can arise due to language barriers, different communication styles, or poor communication. These issues can limit the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.
Cultural differences	Conflicts may stem from differing cultural norms, values, or customs, leading to misunderstandings between the mentor+ and mentee.
Coping with cultural shock	Mentees facing culture shock may feel overwhelmed, which can lead to frustration or conflicts with their mentor+ or others in the host country.
Differing personalities	Personality clashes, gender roles, or differing communication preferences can create tension. For instance, an introverted mentor+ and an extroverted mentee might have differing expectations regarding the frequency and style of interaction.

Geographic distance	In remote mentoring relationships, time zone differences and scheduling challenges can lead to communication issues and conflicts.
Conflict resolution styles	Differing approaches to conflict resolution can cause additional stress. Some individuals may prefer direct confrontation, while others may avoid it, leading to unresolved tension.
Mentor's availability	If a mentor+ is not available as often as the mentee expects, it can lead to frustration or feelings of neglect.
Burnout and stress	Both mentors+ and mentees may experience stress or burnout, which can negatively impact their interactions and contribute to conflicts.
Role ambiguity	If the roles and responsibilities of the mentor+ and mentee are not clearly defined, confusion and conflict may arise over task delegation and accountability.

A well-structured mentoring program, clear communication, and carefully matching mentors+ with mentees can help prevent many of these issues. If conflicts do arise, it is important for mentors+ and mentees to involve

the youth organization for mediation and support. This ensures that both parties have access to the necessary resources to resolve disputes and maintain a positive mentoring relationship.

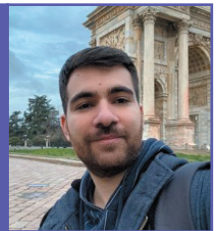


The mentorship training helped us enhance our skills and understand how we can assist foreign volunteers. We gained a better understanding that ESC volunteers from different countries may have varying needs based on their age and culture. One of our objectives is to provide them with the greatest support possible during their adjustment period by being there for them. We grasped the importance of the mentor-mentee relationship and learned how to support each other effectively.

Throughout the training, we gained practical insights into understanding the needs of volunteers under the ESC program and helping them adapt. We

TESTIMONY

*Turap Aktay,
Mentor at Pi Youth
Association,
Türkiye*



strengthened our problem-solving abilities and learned to be there for them whenever they face any challenges. For instance, we exchanged insights on how to proceed if a volunteer becomes ill or discussed what we can do to help them feel better mentally if they face challenges. We explored ways to help them integrate into our city life and culture more seamlessly. This training provided us with valuable perspectives and equipped us to offer more effective support to future volunteers.

TRAIN THE TRAINERS

To ensure the effectiveness of the mentoring system within each organization, it is essential for every member, including new staff, to **be capable of training mentors+**. Upon the arrival of a new member, it is advisable to introduce the individual to the objectives and stages of the mentoring system, including the training process.

Therefore, it is important to present and explain the various training materials, such as PowerPoint presentations, pedagogical handbooks, and templates. This ensures that all members have access to the necessary resources and understand the training structure, which enables effective training of mentors+ and supports the success of the mentoring program.

STEP 3: MATCHING MENTORS+ AND MENTEES

Since mentoring relationships are intended to last for several weeks or even months, the matching process should not be random and must be based on a specific methodology and criteria. Youth organisations need to carefully consider their approach and how

they want to conduct matching. Here are some proposed steps and methods for effective and qualitative matching.

INFORMATION GATHERING AND PROFILE ANALYSIS

The first step is to consider the information collected from both mentors+ and mentees, including their **interests, goals, skills, and needs**. This data is obtained through mentor+ interviews and during the project development phase of mentees involved in international mobility.

Then, youth professionals should carefully examine the profiles of mentors+ and mentees to identify potential matches based on pre-established criterias.

ESTABLISHING MATCHING CRITERIA

Define specific criteria for matching, such as skill compatibility, professional or personal development goals, and availability. These criteria may vary from one mentoring system to another.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of matching criterias:

MATCHING CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE SCENARIOS
Expertise and Skills	Matching the mentor+'s skills and knowledge with the mentee's needs.	Mentor+ who has given English lessons for a mentee looking to enhance their English.
Professional Experience	Aligning the mentor+'s professional experience with the mentee's aspirations.	Mentor+ with experience in children's entertainment and leisure activities for a mentee interested in this field.
Personality and Communication	Ensuring compatibility in personalities and communication styles for a harmonious relationship.	Mentor+ with an outgoing personality and engaging communication style for a mentee preferring a friendly approach.
Availability	Aligning the mentor+'s schedule and availability with the mentee's needs.	Mentor+ available for weekly evening meetings for a mentee with a full-time mission.
Development Objectives	Matching the mentee's development goals with the mentor+'s offered skills.	Mentor+ providing guidance and resources to help the mentee develop leadership skills.
Cultural and Linguistic Preferences	Aligning cultural and linguistic preferences to facilitate communication.	Mentor+ who has previously travelled to Estonia and is familiar with Estonian culture for a mentee interested in this country.

MATCHING CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE SCENARIOS
Matching People with Same Country	Facilitating discussions on intercultural aspects and potential challenges. Creating a strong bond.	Pairing individuals from the same country to exchange favourite places (if in the same town). Have the same cultural background, often leads to having similar approaches in dealing with situations/difficulties.
Matching People with the Same Project	Fostering a shared vision and purpose as both work towards common objectives. Mentor+'s guidance serves as inspiration for mean-ingful progress.	Pairing individuals with aligned goals and working on the same project for mutual support and progress.
Considering Mentees' Background as a Key Determinant	Enhancing understanding between the pair, facilitating guidance, and support. Mentors+ can share their network, creating trust for mentees to open up about their concerns.	Pairing based on mentees' backgrounds to build trust and understanding, enabling effective mentorship.

Once the criteria have been defined, compare the profiles of the mentors+ and mentees and proceed with the matching process.

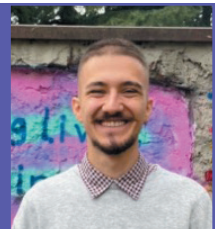


Being a local mentor was one of the most perfect experiences I have ever had in the last few years. At first, I was lost in what I had to be in front of my mentee, but with time I realised that I just had to be myself, to be the first local friend who would help my mentee have a better local experience of the place. As of right now, speaking from experience, being a mentor for me, it's a challenging and interesting period, where you are guiding someone coming from another part of the world in your local places, showing that person where to go out, where to do good grocery shopping or even where to have a good haircut. Even though most of these activities sound not so interesting for you to do, let me tell you my story of how I met my best friend Hugo from France.

In 2022, I became a local mentor for VCS for a few months, where I met Hugo, my best friend. Back in the time I was just showing him around, the breathtaking monuments

TESTIMONY

David Stoilkovski,
Volunteer at Volunteers
Centre Skopje,
Macedonia



of Skopje, and just talking with him, while improving my language skills in French. By the time I realised that both of us, we changed and grew up together, and learned much more about our cultures, basic skills, and so many other things just by becoming close friends with each other. Apart from this, through this journey of being a mentor, I encountered some obstacles as well, nevertheless, I would say that they are part of the amazing experience. Helping someone get to know his new environment, while at the same time befriending that person, and possibly becoming best friends with him, sounds pretty amazing to me, so that's why I did it, and encourage everyone to take the same opportunity and enjoy the journey.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF MENTOR+ - MENTEE PAIRING

In practice, announcing the mentor+-mentee match can be done through various means, depending on the preferences and practices of the mentoring organisation. Here are some common methods:

- **Email notification:** Send an official email to mentors+ and mentees to announce the match. The email may include relevant information about their mentoring partner, such as name and contact details. It may be useful to add a brief summary of their skills and experiences.
- **Phone call or in-person meeting:** For especially important or sensitive matches, it may be beneficial to contact mentors+ and mentees by phone or arrange an in-person meeting to announce the match and discuss mutual expectations.
- **Online platform:** If the mentoring organisation uses a dedicated online platform, mentors+ and mentees may receive an automatic notification on the platform once the match is made.
- **Personal follow-up:** After announcing the match, it is recommended to follow up with mentors+ and mentees to ensure they have received the information and to address any questions they may have. This can be done via email, phone, or in-person meetings.

No matter which strategy the organisation chooses, it is also important to ensure that both parties feel comfortable and satisfied with the match. In cases where adjustments are required, the organisation needs to be prepared to make changes.



TESTIMONY

Jolanta Ciopcinska,
Program coordinator at
Volunteers Centre Skopje,
Macedonia



I have the privilege of matching our local mentors with international volunteers (mentees), and each pairing always feels like the start of something special.

Matching is not an easy task as it involves considering many things. In VCS, we always look at shared interests, backgrounds, and goals to make sure that the mentor and mentee will get along. It's a bit tricky sometimes because despite our best efforts life gets in the way and schedules don't always align, making it challenging to keep the mentorship going as we would like to.

However, despite the small challenges, the joy of facilitating these connections, seeing the mentor's enthusiasm to share their time and guidance, and witnessing the mentee's openness to get to know someone new feels really good!

STEP 4: FACILITATE THE INITIAL CONTACT

Facilitating the first contact between a mentor+ and a mentee is crucial as it establishes trust, sets the tone for the relationship, and ensures clear communication of expectations and goals from the outset.

To facilitate the initial contact between a mentor+ and a mentee, it is advisable to guide through the following steps:

1. How to organise the relationship?
2. Which communication channel to use?
3. How to establish a connection?

HOW TO ORGANISE THE RELATIONSHIP?

It is important, from the first contact, to frame the relationship and how it will unfold. Indeed, it is necessary for mentors+ and mentees to agree on the frequency and duration of the relationship. It is also important to establish a clear understanding of each person's roles.

Youth professionals provide guidance on establishing and nurturing the relationship, offering advice on key elements such as sharing expectations, maintaining confidentiality, setting schedules, and building trust during the crucial first meeting. [9]

Limits of the relationships

Mentoring is a mutually rewarding experience that fosters personal and professional growth for both mentors and mentees.

The Transnational Study carried out as part of the MENTOR project reveals that prospective mentors+ acknowledge the importance of establishing clear boundaries. Survey participants underscore trust, empathy, and respect for personal boundaries. It is crucial to recognize that mentors+ have defined roles and responsibilities, which may not encompass every aspect or address every need of the mentee.

These boundaries, which define the parameters of the mentorship, are critical for creating a secure and supportive environment while minimising misunderstandings, conflicts, and ethical dilemmas.

WHICH COMMUNICATION CHANNEL TO USE?

While the Transnational Study suggests openness to utilising social media messaging and phone communication for initial contact, face-to-face interaction remains crucial even in times of digitalization.

Mentors+ and mentees should be aware of the various communication channels they can use throughout their relationship. These channels can include:

- Group meetings (if mentoring multiple mentees at once).
- In-person meetings.
- Instant messaging (*Messenger, Whatsapp, etc.*).
- Emails.
- Phone calls.
- Online meetings.
- Video calls (*Skype, Zoom*).

HOW TO ESTABLISH A CONNECTION?

Here's a suggested starter pack for communicating with a mentee (non-exhaustive list):

- **Contact information:** Share contact information (email address, phone number, emergency contacts), and any preferred methods of communication.
- **Calendar and scheduling tools:** Encourage the use of calendar tools, such as collaborative calendars, to help schedule regular meetings and track important dates.
- **Language and cultural resources:** Provide resources or links to materials related to the host country's language, culture, and customs to help the mentee prepare for the international experience.

- **Access to relevant networks:** If applicable, provide access to local / regional networks that may benefit the mentee's goals or projects.

The initial contact is a key stage in the mentor+ - mentee relationship and should not be neglected. By respecting the steps mentioned above, mentors+ and mentees put all the chances on their side to make it work.

PHASE II: DURING INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

Throughout the duration of an international mobility program, effective support and communication mechanisms play a pivotal role in ensuring the success of mentoring relationships. This phase encompasses various activities aimed at facilitating mentor+-mentee interactions, monitoring the progress of mentoring relationships, gathering feedback from participants, and recognizing their contributions and achievements. In this section, we delve into the critical components of support and communication during international mobility, emphasizing the importance of feedback collection and recognition initiatives to enhance the overall effectiveness of the program.

The main steps:

- **Set up effective mentoring sessions:** Ensure that exchanges between mentors+ and mentees are relevant and of high quality.
- **Support and communication:** Allow mentors+ and mentees to seek assistance as needed.



STEP 5: SET UP EFFECTIVE MENTORING SESSIONS

Setting up effective mentoring sessions involves careful planning and clear communication.

KEY ELEMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Mentor+ and mentee should agree together about how often to meet and even schedule the times to meet. It will help to have a regular insight into relationships, to set goals and to progress towards them. It is important to establish a regular meeting schedule, especially during the first few weeks/months. Finally, if the mentee's initial goals have been achieved, or if the mentee is making good progress toward achieving those goals, the mentor+ and mentee may decide not to meet on a regular basis, but rather when relevant topics arise. [10]

For mentors+, the willingness to share their knowledge, expertise, and experiences with their mentees is remarkable. They should also be open to learn from their mentees, as learning along the mentoring relationship should be **mutual**.

On the other side, mentees should proactively seek guidance and feedback from their mentors+. Mentees should also show respect for their mentors+' time and efforts, expressing gratitude for the support they receive.

Crucially, effective communication in mentoring depends on openness and honesty from both parties. It involves engaging in candid discussions about goals, expectations, and challenges. Being open to giving and receiving feedback in a constructive and respectful manner is essential to the mentoring process.

Effective mentors+ possess the essential skill of **active listening**, a crucial element in

the success of mentoring. In a Transnational Study conducted through project MENTOR, 93% of mentors+ identified active listening as a crucial skill, while 82% of mentees expected mentors+ to possess this skill. This highlights the significance of communication in mentoring.

Active listening involves several crucial aspects:

1. Mentors+ give space to mentees.
2. Mentors+ guide the conversation.
3. Mentors+ make mentees reflect.
4. Mentors+ pay attention, summarise, and provide positive feedback.

Active listening, marked by attentive posture, note-taking, inquisitiveness, and information mirroring, is crucial for mentoring success.

METHODS TO USE DURING MENTORS+ AND MENTEES MEETING

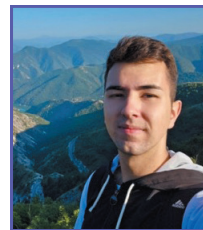
It is the responsibility of mentors+ to encourage mentees to reflect on their experiences and what has been learned. Here are some tips for making mentees comfortable during mentoring sessions.

1. Ask open-ended questions: Open-ended questions empower the mentee to articulate their goals, challenges, successes, feedback, and self-assessment.

2. Use a reflection framework: Mentors+ can employ a reflection framework to provide guidance and structure for their introspection to mentee. The framework assists the mentee in organising their thoughts, bridging theory and practice, and formulating future improvement strategies.

3. Provide constructive feedback: to recognize their accomplishments and suggest areas for growth. Constructive feedback should be specific, timely, pertinent, and respectful, concentrating on behaviour rather than personal attributes.

4. Model reflective practice: Mentors+ can encourage mentee's reflection by exemplifying reflective practice. This entails demonstrating how mentors+ reflect on their own international mobility experience/ daily life practices and apply reflection to enhance the mentoring skills and relationships. [11]



TESTIMONY
Stefan Nikolovski,
Volunteer at Volunteers
Centre Skopje,
Macedonia

Hi. My name is Stefan, and I've been a volunteer at VCS Skopje for quite some time now. I must admit, it's a truly rewarding experience to have the privilege of taking part in the change in our society, contributing to its growth while growing as a person yourself. I've met many amazing people on this journey - some of them in passing, while others have become lifelong friends. One of these people is my mentee, Youen.

It was my first time being a mentor, so I was a tad worried. However, as soon as I met Youen, all that worry disappeared. As we started chatting, I realised that whoever did the mentor-mentee matching did an amazing job. He is a kind-spirited and open-minded person who loves deep conversations as much as I do, and we literally talked about everything from the beginning of the universe to today's world. His determination to learn Macedonian really surprised me, and I was more than happy to help him learn it. Luckily, he was the best student!

I am really happy to have met Youen and had the opportunity to be his mentor throughout his ESC journey. I can't wait to see him again and rejoice about our lives!

STEP 6: SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATION

During the international mobility project, it is crucial for mentors+ and mentees to receive support and maintain good communication with the youth organization that implemented the mentoring system, ensuring that assistance and help are available when needed.

PROVIDING SUPPORT

Youth organisations play a crucial role in supporting the mentoring relationship, especially during international mobility. They can provide mentors+ and mentees **with resources such as training materials, articles, and networking opportunities to aid in their development.**

Organisations should offer guidance and assistance in overcoming challenges, addressing specific issues, and navigating the mentoring process. Regular check-ins and follow-ups from the organisation help ensure that both parties are aligned and progressing towards their goals, creating a strong support system that fosters a productive mentoring relationship.

FACILITATING COMMUNICATION

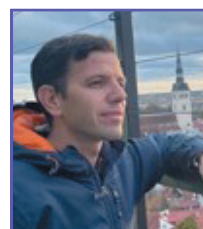
Youth organisations should establish clear communication channels for mentors+ and mentees during the mentee's international mobility. Setting up initial introductions, providing guidelines for effective communication, and encouraging openness and honesty are all essential.

The organisation should **facilitate discussions about goals, expectations, and challenges**, and ensure that feedback is given and received in a constructive and respectful manner. Effective communication is integral to the success of the mentoring process, and organisations should emphasise the im-

portance of active listening, which involves paying attention, summarising, and providing positive feedback.

Mentors+ and mentees need to feel comfortable approaching the organization supporting their mentoring relationship.

Organisations must be able to facilitate communication between mentors+ and mentees when necessary, particularly in the event of conflict. They play a mediating role.



TESTIMONY
Muhsin Şen,
Tutor at Pi Youth
Association,
Türkiye

The first step is selecting the right mentors. At our organisation, we choose mentors from our local volunteer team called Pixel Team. This is important because mentoring is a long-term commitment, and having mentors who are already dedicated to our organisation ensures reliability and continuity. Trusting volunteers who are already committed to our cause is more effective than those who aren't involved. It helps make the mentoring process more sustainable.

To keep track of mentors and mentees, we hold monthly meetings and ask them to fill out online feedback forms. We've provided mentoring to nearly 400 mentees across Europe and Türkiye, so using interactive digital tools adds a fun element to the process. Additionally, we conduct arrival, midterm, and final evaluation meetings with both mentors and mentees, based on their feedback from both physical meetings and online forms. This helps us make any necessary adjustments or updates along the way.

PHASE III - AFTER THE RETURN FROM INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

Following the completion of an international mobility project, it's crucial to focus on post-return activities that ensure the ongoing success of the mentoring experience. This phase includes monitoring the continued effectiveness of mentoring relationships, evaluating the program through feedback from mentors+ and participants, and planning for the future to sustain engagement and support. These steps are essential for optimizing the impact of the program and preparing for future improvements.

After return:

- **Monitoring:** How should mentoring be carried out and what factors should be taken into account.
- **Evaluation:** Collect feedback from mentors+ and participants to assess the program's effectiveness. Collect reports to assess the general progress of the process and to improve.
- **Sustainability and future planning:** Explore opportunities for alumni engagement and continued support. Consider the sustainability of the mentoring program and plan for future interaction.

STEP 7: MONITORING MENTORING PROGRAMMES

MONITORING ASPECTS

The organisation must continuously monitor the project throughout its duration. Monitoring allows for regular tracking and assessment of progress, performance, and outcomes in relation to the established objectives. It helps to **identify potential issues** early on, **facilitates timely adjustments**, and **ensures that activities stay on the right course**. In short, effective monitoring is essential for the

success of mentoring, as it guarantees efficient management and ongoing adaptation to evolving challenges and changes.

Key aspects of monitoring in mentoring include:

- It is typically conducted internally.
- It is a continuous, ongoing process.
- It is relatively low-cost but still requires proper budgeting.
- It focuses on tracking the programme's progress, including outputs, budgets, and compliance with procedures.
- It is usually qualitative in nature.
- It ensures that the programme consistently meets the needs of and engages with beneficiaries.
- It plays a vital role in day-to-day management.
- It concentrates on what is happening in real-time.
- It primarily provides the organisation with necessary insights. [12]
- It allows for rescheduling of activities or corrective adjustments during the project to ensure results and maintain quality.

ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM FOR ONGOING MONITORING

Establishing a system for ongoing monitoring involves creating a framework where mentors+, mentees, and the youth organisation engage in regular interactions and best practices. In the MENTOR project's "Transnational study on mentoring needs", **84%** of respondents (mentors+) emphasised the necessity of guidelines and support documents for mentees. This highlights the importance of a structured framework that goes beyond the initial matching and introduction phase and ensures continuous support for mentor-mentee pairs.

Regular check-ins, training sessions, support-group meetings, and practical assistance

ce contribute to the success and satisfaction of mentorship initiatives.

A key component of this approach involves both individual and collective meetings.

Individual meetings: These one-on-one sessions between mentors and mentees offer a private space for personalised discussions, goal setting, and addressing specific needs. Individual meetings play a crucial role in building a strong and supportive mentorship relationship, allowing for focused attention on the unique challenges and aspirations of each mentee.

Collective meetings: Collective meetings involving all relevant parties create a forum for group discussions, knowledge sharing, and collaborative problem-solving. Whether in the form of workshops, seminars, or regular group sessions, these collective meetings facilitate a broader exchange of ideas and experiences, enriching the overall mentorship experience.

They provide a platform for mentors+, mentees, and representatives from the sending/hosting organisation to share insights, challenges, and best practices, fostering a sense of community within the mentorship programme.

An important aspect common to all mentoring programmes is **the need to measure and assess their success**. Organisations must demonstrate the programme's effectiveness to mitigate the risk of it not yielding the expected results or losing participant interest over time.

Therefore, it is essential to establish methods and metrics for success to ensure ongoing programme evaluation and impact assessment.

Setting success metrics from the beginning of the programme is highly important. These metrics should align with the goals and objectives of the mentorship and be measurable to track progress effectively. [13]

For example, organisations might measure success by:

- Looking at whether mentees achieve certain career milestones or develop important skills, like leadership or technical know-how.
- Checking if the mentor+ and mentee are happy with the programme, and get feedback from their relationship performance.
- Asking for success metrics gives organisations a clear picture of how well the mentorship programme is working and where to make improvements.
- Checking whether mentors+ are available for future mentoring projects and whether mentees propose themselves as future mentors+.

Monitoring in mentoring encompasses tracking various signs of success and involves evaluating, updating, and adjusting the programme based on actual situations.

Whatever monitoring system is established, it also needs to be evaluated. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. The monitoring system is assessed and evaluated based on the predetermined aims and objectives of the project, utilising different digital, written (printed), or oral methods, questionnaires, and online forms (surveys) tailored to the preferences of all parties involved. [14]

STEP 8: EVALUATING MENTORING PROGRAMMES

EVALUATION GUIDELINES

Monitoring and evaluation are naturally linked. They both offer insights that are valuable for the organisations and youth professionals. The evaluation happens in the course of monitoring.

Here are some evaluating aspects for mentoring:

- It is often done externally by an independent evaluator but can be done internally or jointly

with help from another organisation or critical expert.

- It is infrequent and undertaken at a specific point in time.
- It is relatively expensive, especially for small to medium organisations.
- It offers an in-depth, methodologically rigorous assessment.
- It may be qualitative and/ or quantitative.
- It ensures that the project is accountable to funders and stakeholders.
- It looks retrospectively and analytically at results of the project.
- It focuses on what has happened.
- It provides insights primarily needed by donors. [15]
- It helps to set up future projects by improving where necessary

An evaluation provides a snapshot of what a project or programme has accomplished at a specific moment, like taking a picture. Monitoring, on the other hand, is comparable to recording ongoing activities in a film or video.

COLLECTING FEEDBACK FROM MENTORS+ AND MENTEES

The follow-up phase of a mentoring programme involves gathering feedback from mentors+ and mentees. It's crucial for organisations aiming to have an effective mentorship to prioritise a continuous feedback cycle. The cycle includes three key stages:



Adapted from *The Feedback Cycle*, Zachary, L. J. (2011). *Creating a Mentoring Culture: The organisation's Guide*. Germany: Wiley, p.132

asking for feedback, receiving feedback, and taking action based on feedback.

1. Asking for feedback

Choosing the appropriate methods and tools is crucial, considering factors like frequency, format, content, time constraints, and available resources. Examples of commonly used methods include surveys, quizzes, interviews, observations, and self-assessment tests.

The effectiveness of feedback depends on the clarity and relevance of the questions asked. To achieve this, a mix of open-ended and closed-ended questions is essential to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Questions should be clear, specific, and actionable. It's important to avoid leading, closed, biased, or vague questions that could influence or mislead responses.

For example, the youth professional who meets with mentor+ and mentee can ask about their goals, expectations, challenges, achievements, satisfaction and suggestions for improvement.

- *What are your short/long-term goals?*
- *What do you expect from your mentoring relationship?*
- *What challenges are you currently facing?*
- *What recent accomplishments are you proud of?*
- *How satisfied are you with your progress/mobility/mentoring relationship?*
- *Where do you see room for improvement?*

Whenever possible, collecting feedback anonymously can be beneficial, as it ensures complete honesty from the participants. Afterwards, it can be useful to collect all the feedback in a plenary session, to give everyone the opportunity to explain themselves (without forcing people), to encourage discussion about what has emerged and to assess whether an issue is of concern to others.

2. Receiving feedback

Youth professionals should be open-minded and receptive when receiving feedback. It's crucial not to resist negative feedback but

instead acknowledge it. Also, summarising the collected feedback is essential, as it promotes a constructive dialogue between youth professionals and mentors/mentees.

3. Acting on feedback

Analysing and reporting the collected feed-

back is the next step. Patterns, trends, gaps, and insights should be identified to evaluate the effectiveness of the mentoring programme and pinpoint areas for improvement. [16]

To evaluate and improve these areas, organisations should focus on two main categories:

PROGRAMME	RELATIONSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess whether the mentoring programme accomplishes its objectives. • Identify reasons why the programme falls short (if it does) and evaluate its overall organisation. • Examine how well the programme aligns with the expectations of mentors+ and mentees. • Determine the frequency at which mentors and mentees should provide progress and relationship reports/feedback. • Recognize the favourite aspects of the programme. • Highlight specific areas for improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess whether the predetermined relationship objectives were met. • Examine shifts in mentor+-mentee relationships. • Determine the ways in which mentees benefit from the mentoring relationship. • Establish methods to ensure that the identified benefits can be attributed to mentoring. • Explore the impact of mentoring on the mentors+ themselves. • Develop strategies to maintain and enhance the productivity of mentor+-mentee relationships. • Identify the necessary support mechanisms for mentees and mentors+ after the conclusion of mentoring. [17]

Implementing feedback is a dynamic process demanding dedication and a commitment to continual improvement. Disseminating findings is crucial, fostering transparency and

recognition within the team and organisations. This iterative process supports a mentoring environment that fosters growth and development for all involved.

”

From the organisational perspective, the evaluation of the pair is done regularly during and after the mentoring programme. The mentors are filling reports during the mentoring, after each session done with the mentee, with the objective of keeping track of general information and the flow of the meetings, while keeping the privacy of the conversations. The mentors are in constant communication with one of the coordinators of the organisation to update, self-evaluate and discuss further steps in the mentoring process. The communication is done by calls, messages or face to face, depending on the availability of both sides.



TESTIMONY
Sorin Berbecar,
Project manager
at Curba de Cultură
Romania

For the mentees, the overall evaluation is done at the end of the service, with the help of a form with questions. The questions are made to evaluate and have the feedback of the mentee about the relation and attitude of the mentor, the tools and methods used, the planning and personal development process, as well as the results of the learning process. We also ask for any suggestions in order to improve our mentoring process.

STEP 9: PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY

STRATEGIES TO ENSURE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF MENTORING PROGRAMMES

Maintain activities

One of the first ways to make a project sustainable is to maintain its activities beyond its end. **The very principle of making projects sustainable is to create activities and tools that can be used after the project has ended.** It is also possible to ensure that the activities are diversified so that they can be adapted to a wider range of situations.

Youth professionals should think about the future right from the start of the design process, to create a system that can be maintained over time.

Update of the implemented mentoring system/programmes

To ensure that mentoring programmes are sustainable, the system itself needs to be updated after gathering feedback, comments and suggestions from the beneficiaries of the system. **It is therefore very important and relevant to evaluate the system regularly in order to adapt it to the needs and expectations of the beneficiaries, which are constantly evolving.**

Especially during the project evaluation (refer to the sections on 'Monitoring' and 'Evaluating the Mentoring Programme'), collecting feedback anonymously enables changes and adjustments based on the insights gathered.

Dissemination

One of the strategies for ensuring the sustainability of a mentoring programme is to disseminate it not only to the beneficiaries, but also to the general public.

Dissemination occurs through the daily activities of organizations with imple-

mented mentoring systems, including social networks, newsletters, and local media (radio, television, etc.). Dissemination also takes place through events organised by the organisation, whether face-to-face or online. During the events, the presence of mentors+ and mentees enhances the impact of the programme and makes it more interactive. In particular, they can talk about their own experiences.

Communicating and disseminating about the project means that the results and the impact on the beneficiaries can continue to be talked about.

Development of new tools

If necessary, organisations can develop new tools and methods to adapt their system/programme to all types of audiences. Rather than starting from the beginning, this can be done by using the tools already developed as a basis for creating new ones. In fact, certain tools can be the origin of other tools or systems, while being adapted to specific situations.

ENCOURAGING MENTEES TO BECOME MENTORS+ IN FUTURE INITIATIVES, CREATING A CYCLE OF SUPPORT

Highlight the benefits of mentoring

The project study allowed partners to identify the benefits of mentoring and how each participant could gain from the experience. Notably, it was found that a significant majority of mentors+ believe the experience will enhance their intercultural and communication skills (67% of respondents). Additionally, the experience could help develop other skills, including language, leadership, and problem-solving abilities.

The study conducted for the project revealed that mentees still require support to broaden their professional and personal networks.

The mentoring experience has highlighted the importance of networking, and mentees now recognize the need to expand and leverage their networks in their future careers.

Mentoring: a long-term impact

Mentoring does not just have a short-term impact; it is really about creating a long-term project that can lead to other projects.

Becoming a mentor+ allows the development of new social, personal, professional, and intercultural skills, enhancing both professional and personal growth.

Expand personal & professional networks and career development

By staying involved and becoming a mentor+ themselves, mentees can expand their professional and personal networks with other mentors+ (e.g. Alumni Community) and mentees. They have the opportunity to meet people who participated in the same programme, with different profiles, backgrounds and experiences.

The Alumni Community fosters connections and interaction among former mentors+. It serves as a professional and personal network, offering a space for individuals with similar experiences to exchange ideas. Typically, the alumni community is organized directly by the organization managing the mentoring system.



Mentoring can boost mentors+' careers and open up new opportunities. They are better able to overcome obstacles in their careers.



TESTIMONY

Triin Tallo,
ESC Volunteer coming
from Estonia to Pi Youth
Association, Türkiye



I am really glad that I have a mentor because she is the first contact person if I need to talk with someone. My responsibilities as a volunteer are much different from other volunteers and because of that I need to find some other ways to get to know local people and one of the opportunities is to go out with a mentor. She can introduce me to locals. Also, we have had many talks about local and Turkish culture. Even when I'm shy to talk in Turkish, she is one of the best people to practise with. Most of the time we are just talking but thanks to her I have tasted local food and visited places which locals know but others don't. Our first hangout was looking for shoes for me - she knew where to go. Sometimes it can take a bit of time to get to know a person but once you do - it can be a friend for your life.

I would say, mentor is not just a person with whom you should hang out because she is your mentor but because she is your friend: person who you can trust (and she can trust me), person who helps you to get to know the culture, language, habits etc, person who gives you different perspective to life and someone who helps you to settle in and make life easier here.

DISSEMINATION OF SUCCESSFUL MENTORING STORIES IN SOCIAL MEDIA, WEBSITES ETC.

Identifying and collecting

According to the Cambridge dictionary, a success story is *something or someone that achieves great success*¹.

To present success stories that demonstrate the effectiveness of the mentoring project, it is important to know how to identify and collect them.

Success stories are situations that have gone as smoothly as possible from start to finish or that had a challenging start but turned out to be highly rewarding mobility experiences.

In the case of mentoring, they are relationships that have been beneficial and have had an impact on both parties. They are also relationships that have met all the objectives set at the beginning of the relationship. Those involved are fulfilled and often willing to repeat the experience.

Mentoring can also be the catalyst for a new situation, such as the opening up of new opportunities, the development of a professional career or the personal well-being of the mentee.

Availability and dissemination of the testimony

To ensure that a mentoring system impacts the general public, it is important to showcase success stories and make them accessible. This can be achieved by creating a dedicated page on the organization's website for testimonials from project beneficiaries (mentors+ and mentees).

Additionally, if the organization uses social networks for communication, sharing these success stories there could also be effective. Social networks are good communication channels and their diversity means they can



reach many different audiences: *LinkedIn* for professionals, *Facebook* and *Instagram* for the general public.

If the structure has an international dimension with beneficiaries and partners who do not speak the local language, translating the testimonies and success stories into English will enhance their accessibility.

Offering various types of testimonials, such as written, photo, video, comic, and oral formats (at events or to other mentors+ and mentees on specific occasions), allows youth professionals to regularly renew and revitalize communications.

¹ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/success-story>

The aim of this guide is to provide youth professionals with a hands-on tool on how to implement a successful mentoring programme.

Starting with the importance of mentoring and its theory along with how youth professionals should act to set up an effective mentoring programme and its impact, this guide provides a comprehensive overview of mentoring practices and theory.

The guide offers a step by step approach to implementing mentoring in international mobility projects. However, it also goes beyond this scope by offering a broader perspective on mentoring programmes. Having in mind the role of mentoring as well as the support from the European Union and recognition on their side of the effectiveness of mentoring, the project and its partners aimed to develop this guide to assist in establishing more successful mentoring practices. Setting up a mentoring programme by youth professionals, recruitment and training of mentors+ are the starting point of any mentoring programme. Creating clear programme goals and objectives, definition of roles, methodology and activities are the basis for a good programme. To match mentors+ and mentees, it is crucial to first approach mentor+ motivation and training with careful attention. Youth professionals must ensure thorough and attentive preparation in this regard.

Based on the Transnational Study of Mentoring needs also done within the MENTOR project, the guide was given added value and a dimension that helps in matching of mentors+ and mentees. Having active listening, building networks as well as strong personal and professional growth were highlighted throughout the study and are reflected also in the strategies for matching. There is no growth without a challenge and that is also acknowledged by both mentors+ and mentees as the guide also offers the youth professionals insight into encouragement of mentors to share their experience and also how to encourage mentees to maintain their

motivation. It provides an overview of the benefits of being a mentor+ as well as gives tools and guidance to youth professionals to help mentors+ initiate contact with mentees and establish a rapport. But there can be no progress if the programme is not monitored or evaluated and the guide also comes with know-how on how to establish monitoring between all parties. Last but not least all programmes need to be sustainable as impact is not always instant. Providing guidelines on how to make mentoring programmes more sustainable, how to keep mentors+ and mentees engaged as well as how to disseminate successful stories makes a step towards achieving better and greater mentoring programmes in the future.

Given the successes of mentoring as well as the role international mobility plays in the development of young people, it is crucial to provide adequate support and ensure proper implementation. Having more comprehensive tools for organisations and youth professionals not only adds value to the portfolio of the organisations, but more importantly creates a positive impact in the community where the mentoring programme is implemented. Building better mentoring programmes helps in building a more inclusive and better society where young people are active citizens that continue to contribute to their communities.



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RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTING MENTORING PROGRAMMES: TEMPLATES, CHECKLISTS, CHARTER VALUES, CONTRACT

To set up an effective mentoring system, certain documents are needed to formalise everyone's involvement and to define the terms and conditions of the programme. These documents can also serve as resources for mentors+ and mentees to access necessary information for the smooth progress of their relationship, as well as to find guidance.

Through this guide, the partners of the MENTOR project share templates that can be used or inspired by youth workers to create their own documents.

The following templates are:

- Charter of engagement for mentors+.
- Charter of engagement for mentees.
- Interview template for mentors+.
- Interview grid for mentors+ (what questions to ask).



CHARTER OF ENGAGEMENT FOR MENTORS+

Creating a charter of engagement for mentors+ provides a framework for the mentoring system and ensures that mentors+ are committed to it.

The charter of engagement should contain the following parts:

- description of the project/mentoring system;
- objectives;
- modalities such as the duration of the commitment;
- responsibilities of a mentor+;
- project's method(s);
- expected impact(s) throughout the mentoring period;
- involvement of mentors+ and mentees;
- data protection.

It's important to get mentors+ to sign an engagement charter, explaining what they are committing to during the mentoring period.

If there is any misbehaviour, youth professionals should refer to the charter of engagement to review what the mentors+ have committed to and remind them of the terms of the mentoring system.

The charter should be signed once the mentors+ have been selected. This can be after the first interview or after the mentor+ training.

CHARTER OF ENGAGEMENT FOR MENTEES

As with mentors+, it is important for mentees to sign a commitment charter to provide a framework for the mentoring relationship. The charter provides a context and makes

the mentee's entry into the mentoring system 'official'.

Here is an example of a engagement charter for mentees:

*I, the undersigned,
hereby certify that I wish to take part in the **[INSERT NAME OF THE PROJECT]**
project as a mentee. This project is set up within **[INSERT THE NAME OF THE
ORGANISATION]**.*

*I am aware that this may help me in my personal and professional development
and that it is an essential step in the successful implementation of the
Mentoring Programme.*

*I undertake to be present during the interviews/training offered by the
organisation and during the interviews with my future mentor+, at least
[FREQUENCY OF THE EXCHANGES] over a minimum **[DURATION OF THE
MENTORING RELATIONSHIP]**.*

*I also undertake to inform **[NAME OF THE ORGANISATION]** if I wish to
withdraw from the mentoring process and support.*

Done at....., on.....

[SIGNATURE]

INTERVIEW TEMPLATE FOR MENTORS+

It may be useful to provide mentors+ with templates or other documents to help them with their first steps in their new role.

Here is an example:

Objectives of the interview

- Make contact with the mentee;
- Get to know the mentee;
- Build a mentor+-mentee relationship;
- Understand each person's expectations and motivations.

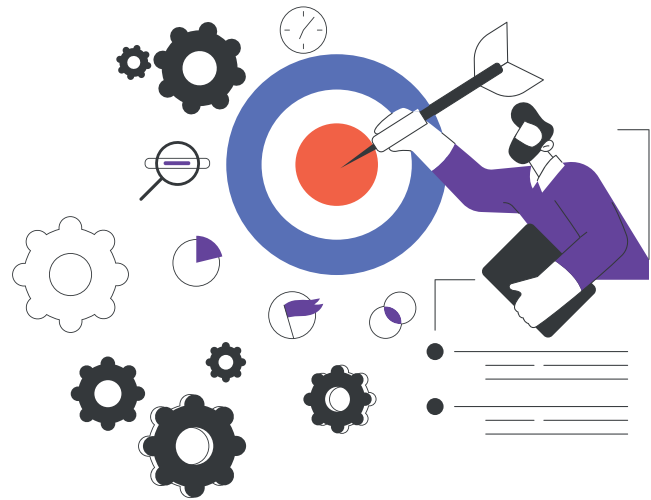
Before the interview

Mentors+ should contact mentees in advance to arrange the date of the interview (by email or telephone).

Mentors+ need to prepare the attendance sheet for both themselves and the mentee to sign (using online signature software if needed). After signing, mentors+ should download the updated version and repeat this process for each subsequent meeting. Mentors+ can prepare the information they want to share about their own experiences of international mobility.

During the interview, mentors+ should think about :

1. Having the attendance sheet signed (for mentors+ and mentees).
2. Introducing themselves and asking mentees to introduce themselves.
3. Reviewing the objectives of the interview.
4. To guide mentors+, they can use the "interview grid" created for this purpose. They can find examples of questions they can ask mentees to help them understand their project.



5. Asking mentees if they have any questions in return.
6. Agree on the date of your next exchange(s) and write it down in your diary so that you do not make any mistakes or forget anything.

After the interview

If required by the organization implementing the mentoring system, mentors+ must provide proof of their discussions, such as an attendance sheet signed by both parties.

INTERVIEW GRID FOR MENTORS+ (WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK)

The appendix lists examples of questions that could be asked to mentees during initial discussions.

Project objectives

- Why do you want to go abroad?
- What are your personal or professional objectives?

Their project

- Which international mobility programme are you going with?
- How long will you be abroad? In which country?
- In which field will you be?
- What will your assignments be?
- In what environment (urban or rural)?

Local life

- Have you ever travelled outside your home country? If so, for how long and in what context(s)?
- Have you ever been to the country where you are going on a mobility placement?
- Have you ever lived in a shared flat?
- Have you done any research on the country in which you are going on a mobility placement? If so, what information has impressed you?
- Do you plan to travel within the country itself or in neighbouring countries in addition to your voluntary work?
- Are you comfortable travelling independently in a foreign country?



Personal

- Do you have any sports, artistic, or other activities in your country that you should try to continue during your mobility, if possible?
- Have you ever done any voluntary work?

After mobility

- Do you know what you're going to do when you get back from your placement?
- Where do you see yourself professionally in 5 years' time?

About the mentor+/mentee pairing

- What are your expectations of our partnership?
What do you expect from me?
- How would you like us to communicate (email, telephone, video call, etc.)?



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