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# Service Delivery Manual for Cultural Mentoring

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to a new field of opportunities to grow as an organization or enterprise in the cultural and creative field!

This manual aims at creating an awareness around mentoring and what it can unlock in people, connecting its distinctive traits to the world of arts and culture. Here you can find ideas, reflections and examples of what this “well-known yet not so embraced” learning methodology can bring to people and groups working in the arts.

On one hand, our approach considers creativity as a universal language that should be embraced within any mentoring relationship. To express, share and build meaning using a creative and playful approach – be it sketching, telling stories, using artworks and cultural experiences as references or creating imaginary scenarios – reinforces the bond between mentor and mentee and the sense of co-creating a unique experience.

On the other hand, mentoring is presented here as a process that could be introduced in many ways in the arts and culture sector, to improve the motivation, well-being and professional development of those who would like to get involved in the arts, especially young ones.

Hence, this publication is targeted at organisations and people in the cultural and creative sector at large, anyone who would like to find new, empowering ways to engage their staff, colleagues, volunteers and stakeholders.

It can be navigated as a manual to organize and deliver a mentoring programme that could be applied in different contexts:

- as a teambuilding system, to strengthen communication and collaboration amongst staff members,
- as a learning experience to be offered to interns and new hires to give them orientation, onboarding and on-the-job learning,
- as an opportunity to engage funding members and volunteers, complementing their involvement in the life of the organization with an experience that can award and enrich the resources, in time or budgetary terms, that they have made available.

More in general, the opportunity to adopt mentoring within a cultural organisation is to create an inclusive working environment and a fertile space for exchange, fostering dialogue, interpersonal relationships, continuous learning, experimentation, development of new abilities and self-esteem. Mentoring is also a powerful way to establish connections and build strong social and professional networks.

Many young people love to be part of something bigger and artistic. Many cultural centres, festivals, arts venues and events attract people willing to become somehow part of the experiences that are created. Pretty much any team from an art institution or cultural entity can benefit from time invested in strengthening relations and organizational culture.

Mentoring as it is presented here could be a valuable tool to rethink what is given and gained, offered and taken in arts and cultural participation.

# HOW TO USE

## THIS MANUAL

This publication has a double goal: to startle an interest in ways to connect mentoring and the cultural world by sensitizing people working in the arts on its benefits and to offer new approaches to the use of creative and artistic practices during the mentoring process.

This is why the manual is split into a first part where Chapter 1 offers a description of what mentoring is and how it differs from other learning experiences, highlighting its key components and unique advantages, followed by Chapter 2, which proposes a reflection on cultural mentoring from two points of views: that of cultural organizations as potential promoters of a mentoring programme to tackle several challenges in their relations management system;

and the point of view of mentors and mentees, and the tools and practices that they share through their relationship, where arts and culture can provide an invaluable ground for dialogue, and exchange and can facilitate the mutual understanding and learning process.

The second part aims at guiding any organization that would like to experiment with mentoring in their activities through the main concepts to acquire and steps to take. Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 present an overview of the phases that are needed, at an organizational level, to organize a mentoring project and launch a programme.

Chapter 3 focuses on the design phase, when the format of the mentoring programme needs to be decided, together with the audiences and goals that will be addressed. Chapter 4 explains the important step of selecting participants, and how to recruit and give orientation and training to the people who will then become mentors and mentees.

Chapter 5 and 6 present, respectively, strategies to match mentors and mentees and the main phases of the mentoring cycle, typical of any programme, giving the promoting organizations tips on which activities and events to plan. Chapter 7 is centred on supervision and assessment tools to understand to evaluate the effectiveness and success of the mentoring relationship.



# 1. WHAT IS MENTORING?



Mentoring evokes a special place for personal and professional development where someone is guiding someone else and everyone is at the helm - where care and trust fuel a relationship that can make a difference in the lives of those willing to engage in an open and authentic exchange.

Mentoring has been used for decades in several contexts: in corporate environments, it is a popular way for businesses to integrate new workers into the organization as seamlessly as possible. Youth mentoring programs promoted by voluntary associations have helped kids grow into confident, capable adults in many different countries. Top executive programmes often complement their courses by pairing students with established professionals to enable their path to become future leaders in key sectors.

Many people could name one or more mentor figures in their personal paths – teachers, inspiring colleagues, successful characters that have shown the way towards career and personal accomplishment. But mentoring as an educational, developmental, and empowering approach has received accurate definitions marking its intrinsic traits as a learning methodology.

Mentoring can be described as a process of both formal and informal transmission of knowledge and values through a structured and trusting relationship that links caring individuals. Typically, in mentoring relationships mentors offer guidance and support to people who wish to achieve their potential, helping them to develop their knowledge, their skills and to become more aware of their true desires and strengths.

Even though the mentee is often someone younger than the mentor, it is important to underline that mentoring represents a mutual learning process that can benefit both, the mentor and the mentee. Cases of peer learning, where both participants play the roles of mentor and mentee in turns or reverse learning, where a junior team member shares their expertise in specific areas with a senior colleague, show that mentoring is an open process where each contribution is equally relevant for the learning purposes at stake.

So, what are the most distinctive elements of mentoring?

Based on previous experiences of mentoring, there are at least two characteristics that differentiate it from other educational methodologies. The first one is the fact that in mentoring the definition of **learning objectives does not precede the process itself.**

At the outset of their relationship mentor and mentee open themselves to a shared exploration of what are the real needs that can be addressed through the process.

The goal that mentees feel they have is re-framed within the perimeter of the exchange: which aspects of the personal and professional development should the two focus on? What do both bring to the table and what would they like to gain? Unlike other approaches based on learning needs studied and defined beforehand, mentoring enables one to agree upon and co-design learning objectives as the relationship unfolds.

A second distinctive element in mentoring is the nature of the guidance typically provided by the mentor. Rather than giving prescriptive feedback and advising the mentee on what they should do, a mentor acts as a mirror to the other person, deeply listening to what is shared, guiding them to push the understanding further and responding with exemplative inputs and reflections to help mentees find their own course of action.

Mentors can certainly encourage certain behaviours and choices, but the essence of their presence is closer to the “show, don’t tell” technique where storytelling,

empathy and active listening are the fundamental resources in the mentor's toolkit. A mentee should always feel listened to, understood, and encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to self-reflect – rather than be told what to do or what to avoid by the mentor.

Being in a mentoring relationship means entering a space of mutual support where it is possible to consider things from new perspectives, understand our inner strengths and what still needs to be achieved, build tactics and strategies to reach new goals and be more in tune with our personal and professional lives.

Young Adults With a Mentor are:

55% less likely than their peers to skip a day of school

78% more likely to volunteer regularly

130% more likely to hold leadership positions



Mentoring programs boosted minority representation at the management level from 9% to 24%



Since the pandemic, there has been a 30% increase in mentoring initiatives at organisations

## 2. CULTURAL MENTORING: A TWO-WAY MATCH



Even though mentoring is a learning methodology relevant in any sector, the value-related and human components at its core make it a process that is especially effective in connection with arts, culture and creativity.

During the mentoring relationship, participants can get inspired by creative practices offering powerful tools to share and collaborate. Visual thinking is a resource that mentors can use when stimulating mentees to try and see things from new perspectives. Role-playing can be practised during mentoring to explore unknown social dynamics and their effects on how participants feel when challenged with new opportunities that include risk-taking and exiting the comfort zone.

The power of creating something personal and unique, be it a drawing, a short tale, a poem, a photo or a video can be channelled to open new forms of expressing what mentors and mentees experience and feel in alternative ways, reconnecting with possible latent passions and hobbies sometimes left behind. References to artists, their artworks, their lives and their impact on the world are strong reference points to exchange desires, and expectations, anchoring our ideas of what difference we would like to make, how and why. Embracing a shared arts experience and participating in culture together can

also become a fertile field for the mentoring relationship to root and grow.

Moreover, mentoring and culture can come together to empower people and organisations active in the arts and creative field. As students, would-be professionals and workers who have chosen a sector very much connected to the values of the societies that we live in (such as beauty, participation, communication, well-being, and peace), people engaged in the arts are very likely to enjoy and benefit from mentoring as a process that reinforces the sense of purpose in their paths.

The arts and culture market is characterized by unstable job positions, low income and gender and age gaps in career advancement: it is key to be connected to motivation, find momentum, decide to partner and network with peers and be open to new contacts and opportunities while navigating a job in the artistic and cultural field. The adoption of mentoring in the sector could play a role in supporting people through these structural problematic flows and faults.

Mentoring can provide a way to nurture creative and innovative energies, especially in young people, helping them to turn their

aspirations and dreams into plans and actions. It is an experience of re-connection to what really counts in life, to the inner elements of passion that moved us right at the start: more established operators and professionals could also benefit from it by rediscovering their deep connection to what drives their usually hectic day-to-day.

Top managers, stuck artists, students and interns could give each other mutual support in the form of opportunities to re-read their professional paths, finding new shades of satisfaction and professional relevance for themselves and for their purpose to change the world through the arts.

# 3. HOW TO DESIGN A MENTORING PROGRAM



Once you have decided to experiment with mentoring in your working environment, it is important to keep in mind that the main phases of designing a mentoring program typically consist in:

- Defining why mentoring might be a useful resource in a specific community or for a particular group: why do you believe a mentoring program is needed? And how do you determine this need? For doing this, it is important to conduct scans with which you will be able to identify needs, opportunities, and priorities in your surroundings.
- Designing your program's parameters: this stage will allow you to determine important elements of the program, such as the population it will serve, the sought profiles for mentors, the type of mentoring it will offer, and its structure.

Planning how to manage the program: this stage includes establishing policies and procedures, implementing ongoing training for staff members, and deciding how to evaluate the program's results, among others, **and deciding how to evaluate the program's results, among others.**

### 3.1 GOALS AND AUDIENCES

The first fundamental step is to explore the needs that they want to address through the programme.

How to go about determining the goals of mentoring?

A great way is to identify the audiences or beneficiaries that will be involved and gather information about them. Observation is a method that can be matched with informal interviews about their willingness to invest in the programme, in terms of time availability and commitment.

For some organizations, the idea of adopting a mentoring programme could be directly linked to the intention to strengthen the ties with some of their target groups: volunteer staff, for instance, young members, or maybe students who undertake an internship. In this case, what is important is to verify the assumptions about these groups in terms of needs and their interest in being involved in a mentoring programme.

To what extent would they appreciate being connected with other people in the organizations? How much time could they dedicate?

Would they like to gain something more than what they usually do when taking part in the activities promoted by the organization? Do they have personal or professional goals somewhat connected to the life of the organization? A simple questionnaire could be a valuable tool to explore audiences deeper.

### 3.2 FORMATS

In the design phase, besides the audience that will be directly involved as mentors, mentees and tutors, these parameters should be clarified:

- What specific type of mentoring the organization will be offered?
- Where mentoring pairs will meet and how often?
- Which other stakeholder organisations and enterprises will be involved?

There are different types of mentoring to choose from depending on the goals that are set to be achieved with the program. Anyway, the type of mentoring that will be chosen will determine the program's structure, its length, the commitment required to mentors, and the kinds of activities to plan.




The five main types of mentoring are:

1. Traditional One-to-One Mentoring, pairing one adult with one young person.
2. Group Mentoring, typically matching one adult with up to four young people.
3. Team Mentoring, several adults working with small groups of young people in which the adult-to-youth ratio is not greater than 1:4.
4. Peer Mentoring, when people in similar age groups and positions mentor each other.
5. E-Mentoring, mentoring that happens digitally, through videocall and emails.

It is common to set a timeframe for scanning the time of mentoring relationships: how many meetings there are going to be between mentors and mentees, their duration, and their frequency.

There is no given duration for an ideal mentoring programme. Typically for couples to really bond and establish a relevant exchange, an average of at least 4 to 5 mentoring sessions lasting approximately 1 hour each and held every 2 to 4 weeks is considered to be an adequate timeframe for the methodology to be experienced fully.



*Artquest*, a UK-based organization supporting visual artists at all stages of their careers, has set up a **peer mentoring programme** for artists.



*NEMO* - Network of European Museums Organizations offers their member organisations the possibility to access a **One to One Mentoring Programme**.



Since 2016 *Young Women Network* (Italy) has been promoting **INSPIRING MENTORS**, a mentoring program with the aim of supporting young talents and bridging the gender gap in leadership.



Considering the time necessary to identify participants, select and train the mentors, match them with mentees, hold the sessions and a final evaluation of the process, an organization should consider a minimum lifespan of 4 months for running a mentoring programme, up to 10-12 months.

On the other hand, when designing an effective mentoring programme, it is essential to keep in mind that flexibility is a must. Every person, especially a young one, has different needs: this translates into offering each mentee the chance to meet their needs thanks to the program while building a healthy and trust-worthy mentoring relationship.

As for all relationships, the one between mentors and mentees requires care and attention: it is necessary to give them ongoing support and monitoring, especially at the starting stage, to make sure that the relationship can be close, trusting, and long-lasting.

***"With my students, it's so clear that a one-size-fits-all approach to mentoring does not work. I tell them, 'I am working to earn your trust. I am going to get things wrong, and I want feedback about that'.***

***Because at the end of the day, I think trust is what's really missing in these, how to understand people who work differently.***

***Like we have to have a foundation of trust where we can make mistakes and get feedback."***

**Chantel Prat,**  
neuroscientist, author of *The Neuroscience of You*, in conversation  
with Adam Grant



# 4. HOW TO SELECT AND ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS



## 4.1 THE RECRUITMENT OF MENTORS AND MENTEES

When designing a mentoring plan, it is essential to keep in mind that the quality of the selected mentors must take precedence over their quantity. Therefore, before selecting or recruiting mentors, it is important to define eligibility criteria and describe the mentor role while clearly explaining the attributes mentors should have to take place in the program: in fact, not all candidates for mentoring (both as mentors and mentees) will fit with the program's goals and structure.


In general, what is important to ensure in a mentor is a high degree of motivation and willingness to support other people, matched with interpersonal skills and previous personal or professional experiences that he/she is open to talking about and sharing. Since a good mentor, besides moral integrity, is someone who does not act as a consultant, but rather as a "wise and honest adviser", an ideal mentor is someone with great listening skills, empathy and a genuine curiosity for other people's stories and lives.

A mentor does not tell a mentee what to do or make decisions for them; he/she proposes different points of observation of the problems, helping the mentee to acquire greater awareness

of their own potential and to overcome the inner fears that constitute the first obstacle to pursuing personal development. Hence, in selecting or recruiting people for the role of mentor, attitudes and skills such as critical thinking, analytical skills and the capacity to observe and read human behaviours should also be considered as very important.

Another point that must be stated when selecting mentors is the mission of the program since the right profiles for mentoring are exactly those who believe in and support this mission. Especially in the context of an art organization, people who are championing cultural participation as a vital asset for personal and social growth, empowerment and happiness could be considered mentors. Either part of the staff or external to the organization, they share the vision that inspires the mentoring programme and can play an active role in this additional learning experience that the organization has decided to promote and offer.

Since recruiting mentors is not an easy task, another possibility is to partner with local organizations with established volunteer networks or illustrate that mentoring benefits both the mentee and the mentor to organizations with a large number of employees: this is important because many people hear of and take part in mentoring thanks to their participation in organizations as local business communities, universities and schools, places of worship and so on.



*"Mentoring touches eternity,  
you never know when  
impact ends"*

**Bernard Bijvoet**

*"To choose the friends,  
mentors, and coaches who  
can hold us accountable in  
accomplishing our dreams  
and goals, and who can  
inspire and encourage us to  
do so."*

**Donald Burlock,**  
Superhuman by Design

*"A mentor is someone who  
allows you to see the hope inside  
yourself"*

**Oprah Winfrey**

As for mentors' selection, establishing some eligibility criteria is also necessary for identifying mentees: not all youth can benefit from a mentoring program, and this is the reason why setting these requirements is imperative. The really important aspect of the mentees' recruitment is that their adhesion needs to be voluntarily decided. The mentee is an active person who proves to be serious about acquiring awareness, taking risks with their actions, speaking openly and clearly about their ideas, perplexities and fears, but also be able to practice critical thinking stimulated by the mentor, turning it into something constructive.

#### 4.2 ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

For recruiting both mentors and mentees implementing a screening process of possible participants is a good idea. A careful screening process guarantees greater reliability of mentors and helps ensure the safety of youth involved in the program. Other important parts of the screening process are orientation and training: regarding what concerns mentors, giving them a prematch orientation allows them to gather all the needed information to decide whether to participate in the program or not, as well as giving them the chance to meet other prospective mentors and start a support group where exchanging opinions and suggestions.

Other than orientation, it is essential to provide initial and ongoing training to mentors: this helps them have a more successful relationship with their matches and feel more confident about their ability to make a change and be a role model for their mentees.

The training of mentors can be organized in different ways: with an intensive half-day session, or shorter sessions held both online and in presence. The use of a toolkit or a guide that mentors can keep throughout the mentoring process where they can find references to what was explained during orientation and training is always a good option.

In the same way, once the youth who could take part in your program is selected, it is important to provide them with an orientation to understand if the program might satisfy their needs and meet their expectations. If they share the mission of the program, they could then be invited to take part in an interview that will help assess their eligibility and gather useful information for making the right match.

It is important to give young people the time to talk about what they want to get out of the mentoring program and to make them get to know one another, starting to build a community with other participants.

# 5. HOW TO CONNECT MENTORS AND MENTEES



## 5.1 INFORMATION GATHERED IN THE SELECTION PHASE

Creating a successful match between a mentor and a mentee takes a lot of effort and preparation. A preliminary step before the matching, is to look at the data collected during the recruitment phase and reflect on what information is still needed about mentors and mentees and who can provide it. The more accurate information you will be able to gather, the higher chances you will get to implement successful matching strategies.

With regard to information on the mentee, you can opt for questionnaires that combine more practical information with questions about the mentee's expectations, motivation and interests or gather the information through individual or group interviews.

Also, take some time to determine whether it is only the mentee who can give you the information. Especially for mentoring projects with younger mentees, it is interesting to also get the view of a third party about the needs and expectations of the mentee, for example, teachers, tutors, parents, social services or any care worker that is involved with the mentee.

In the course of this process, you might find that the expectations or needs of the mentee cannot be met in the context of the mentoring project you are developing, or the mentee is not intrinsically motivated to participate. This would be a reason to not accept the mentee's participation in the project and you need to have a scenario in place to discuss with the possible mentee that now might not be a good time for their participation.

Mentor information can be gathered in the same way. As seen before, the common selection processes for mentors include questionnaires, short individual interviews and training. The mentor training is an excellent opportunity to get to know future mentors more thoroughly. Through role plays and case studies, you will understand better how the future mentor sees the project and its goals, what his expectations are and how they position themselves in the mentoring relationship.

This will give you valuable information for matching. In case you detect attitudes or opinions that are not compatible with your project you will need to evaluate the ability to change.

Bear in mind that the information mentees, mentors and third parties provide is confidential and therefore you need to set up safe circuits and forms and also reflect thoroughly about what information you share.

## 5.2 MATCHING STRATEGIES

After gathering this information, you need to establish criteria for matching. These criteria are directly related to your specific project goals and it is worthwhile to have a discussion about what criteria you want to define as a team.

Nevertheless, there is a list of basic matching criteria that should be taken into account in every mentoring project:

- Availability (date and time of the mentoring)
- Territorial proximity
- Personal preference
- Character and temperament
- Life experiences
- Interests
- Cultural background

Before making the matches, it is important to ensure that mentors and mentees state their needs and personal preferences about the match, know how matching decisions are made and if they can or cannot request a different match, should the original match not be satisfactory.

The matches can be made by the person that will be in charge of the supervision of the mentoring relation but the best practice in mentoring organizations states that matching is best a team decision. Each mentor and mentee is different and matching is not an exact science. There is no such thing as a 100% success rate.

However, your team experience and getting different views before making a final decision will get you a long way.

Another common practice is to work with a first matching proposal « on paper » and make the final decision once you see the first interaction between the assigned mentees and mentors. It is important to try and do the match based on the learning needs or desires of the mentee: what you can do on paper is to identify a mentor that you think is suitable in that field or area. Through an exploratory meeting with the mentee and mentor, including the person in charge of the pairing, the matchmaker, it will then be possible to see if there is common ground and if the personalities match.

Once you have matched mentors with mentees, you can give each one of them basic information about the other. Some information about the mentee might be crucial for the matching process, but it doesn't necessarily need to be passed to the mentor. In a mentoring relationship both parties, mentor and mentee, should be able to get to know each other equally and the mentoring relationship is often for mentees an opportunity to start from scratch and get away from stereotyped roles they might be stuck in.

The less mentors and mentees know about each other the better. Consider only sharing basic information such as name and age. This gives them the opportunity to get to know each other

#### MATCHING TIP 1

Try to take into account *personal compatibility* between mentors and mentees: this involves considering personality traits, communication styles, and shared values.

#### MATCHING TIP 2

Give the match enough time to adjust to each other's needs and preferences. It may take a while! It's an *exploration*, just as any relationship.

#### MATCHING TIP 3

Organize an orientation event where mentors and mentees can gather and get to know each other as they learn more about mentoring. Facilitate self-matching!



without a previously constructed image of the other.

When you are ready to organize the first meeting as a moment for the match confirmation, you can opt for setting up a meeting with all mentees and mentors involved in the project (divide per territory or field if you have many mentoring relationships) and dynamizing it with activities to get to know each other.

This will give you the chance to observe any natural «clicks» or affinities that will make you confirm the initial match proposal or maybe make some changes. After this initial meeting, mentee-mentor couples will be confirmed and from hereon will meet up as a couple. It is a good idea to ritualize this moment.

As said before, there is no magical formula for successful matching. It is good practice to share this knowledge with mentors and mentees and explain that if after a certain time (trial period) they don't feel comfortable they can discuss this with your organisation. Be prepared to make changes if needed. You will need some spare mentors and mentees to make these changes as smooth as possible.

***"We can creatively ideate and design ways to communicate to others that we are fully present for them and their success.***

***Mentors and coaches do this all the time in an effort to build rapport with their mentees or teams.***

***By doing so, you'll become a superhuman who produces dynamic and extraordinary results not just for yourself but for others as well."***

**Donald Burlock,**  
*Superhuman by Design*





# 6. HOW TO MANAGE THE MENTORING PROCESS



## 6.1 THE MENTORING CYCLE

Before starting the mentoring process, there are a few protocols that both mentor and mentee should observe to ensure that the experience is as productive as possible. It's essential that the mentee and mentor establish a rapport before commencing the formal relationship, agreeing upon a few points:

- Mentoring should be voluntary
- Both mentor and mentee should share information in confidence
- The mentor is at no stage legally responsible for the actions of the mentee
- Both mentor and mentee must respect personal, professional, artistic and commercial ethics and not take advantage of the relationship

Some mentoring schemes suggest mentor and mentee co-sign a mentoring agreement where these aspects are clarified, and they set the perimeters of their relationship in terms of conduct, commitment and expectations. It is worth bringing this option to the attention of your team and deciding whether to use a document to make the relationship more official. Signing a mentoring agreement could be an activity that takes place during the first meeting between mentor and mentee.

In general, a mentoring relationship usually consists of at least three macro stages:

- Starting phase: designing the alliance and building trust
- Active phase: learning, sharing, and redesigning
- Ending phase: renegotiating if necessary, celebrating, and evaluating

In the mentoring relationship life-cycle, these 3 main stages are typically articulated into five phases:

1. Establishing the relationship: building rapport and trust
2. Setting direction
3. **Progression: getting stuck into it**
4. Winding up
5. Moving on

Mentors must invest time in the first two phases for the mentoring relationship to succeed. A relationship which is based on trust and sound direction is the foundation of progress. Skimping on these two essential phases can significantly reduce the value of later phases.

## 1. ESTABLISHING THE RELATIONSHIP

When mentors and mentees first start their mentorship relationship, it is important not to try to 'dive in' to the issues at once. First, mentors and mentees should establish rapport, for example by sharing common ground and stories. This involves showing a certain amount of vulnerability in opening up to get to know each other on a deeper level.

The first sessions with a mentee are exciting. They consist of getting to know someone new, unknown until now. Mentors and mentees have lots of things in common but also many differences. It is the beginning of the construction of the bond between two people, in equal conditions, discovering one another little by little, and feeling safe and valued. In order to do that it is a good idea to give mentors resources and activities to do in these first meetings.

For example, they could take a walk in the neighbourhood of the mentee and let him/her be the tour guide. It is a way for mentees to take up an active role and to know each other in an easy and fluid way.

Another idea for the first meetings of the tandem is to make a list of activities that each of them would like to do in the context of the mentoring relationship. It gives the mentor the opportunity to ask the mentee what he/she needs help with. They can then share and comment on their lists.

They could ask each other:

- What is expected from the mentoring relationship by both parties?
- How, when and where will meetings occur?
- How will we communicate between meetings if at all?
- What are the boundaries of the relationship?
- How will we measure or review progress?
- How will we end the relationship?
- How will we identify if the

relationship is not working?

- How will we acknowledge when it is working?

In cultural mentoring, sharing an art experience such as attending an exhibition (physical or digital) or visiting a public library and discussing books, movies, and comics are essential activities to create the initial bond, connect and get to know each other deeply.

As the organization promoting the programme, you should guide the couples through a series of opportunities for cultural exchange through the arts, more or less connected to your projects and institutions, encouraging them to open up and discuss which ones to select as a mentoring couple.

Another supporting practice could be a notebook that travels between the mentee and mentor, each week one of them takes it home and leaves a puzzle, question, or activity for the other to do.

More in general, keeping a diary where to take note of what happens during the mentoring relationship also on an individual basis, is always a good input to give participants. As the hosting organization, you could decide to design and produce your own mentoring diary to provide to mentors and mentees, either digitally or on paper.

During the first meeting, it is important to keep in mind that mentors and mentees should also establish basic rules, define boundaries, and agree

### STARTING PHASE OF ANY MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

*designing the alliance  
and building trust*

### ACTIVE PHASE

*learning, sharing, and  
redesigning*

### ENDING PHASE

*renegotiating if necessary,  
celebrating, and  
evaluating*

on a shared style to develop a healthy relationship. As said above, during the first meeting, it is advisable that mentors and mentees sign an agreement, a non-formal contract where they declare to agree on confidentiality, commitments, and responsibilities towards each other.

## 2. SETTING DIRECTION

At the start of the relationship, it is common for the mentee to find it hard to define their goals. Sometimes a mentee might even come up with false goals to please or impress the mentor. Mentors can:

- Encourage the mentee to think big, dream and be unrealistic, whilst also defining a closer range of more tangible goals.
- Recommend that the mentee choose a maximum of three goals at any one time.
- Be prepared for goals to be unearthed well into the mentoring relationship as well as at the start, and for goals to evolve.

If mentors are committed to doing so, they can use creative techniques and tools that can become really valuable assets for engaging **managers** during the meetings. Some useful tools and techniques for setting direction can include, for example, a skill mapping where to visualize everything that the mentees are good at. Or also, exercises that trigger a reflection on how mentees make decisions in their life paths and when they have felt particularly happy and 'in peace'.

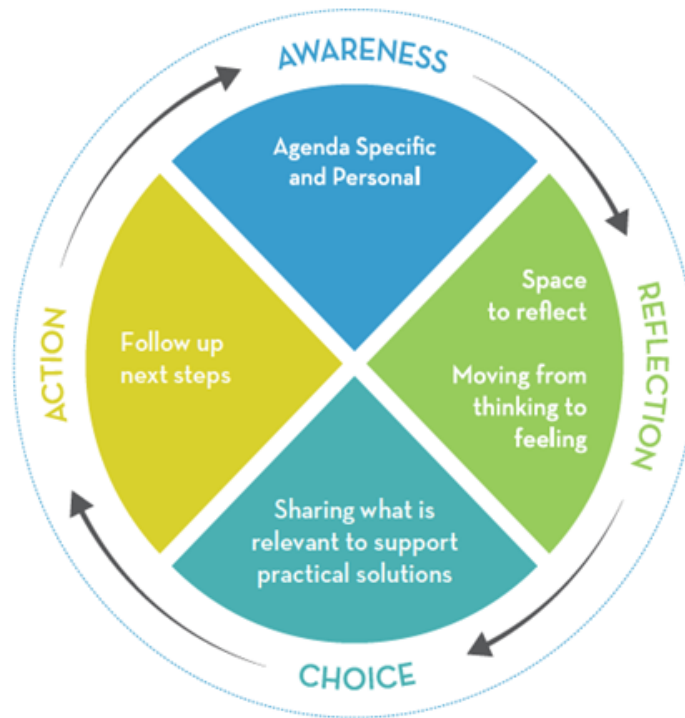
In cultural mentoring mentors should try and make large use of visual approaches, role-playing, storytelling and creative play when guiding mentees in setting the direction of mentoring. You can facilitate a more creative environment for mentoring by offering materials (such as colourful pencils, large paper sheets, post-its, stickers, Legos, Play-Doh, etc.) and space for the couples to hold their meetings.

## 3. PROGRESSION

Now that the foundation of trust is established, mentors and mentees can delve into issues and challenge assumptions and ways of doing things. In this phase mentors and mentees identify themes, patterns, blocks, limiting beliefs and options, reflect regularly on how the mentoring process is going, identify deeper goals and adjust plans accordingly.

Mentors can offer constructive feedback. This is feedback which comes from an ego-free place of genuinely wanting to help the mentee. Constructive feedback helps the mentee to see their actions in a new light which can help them to grow and achieve their goals.

An effective tool for this phase is the ARCA Conversation Framework which offers mentors a structure for mentoring conversations in this crucial stage of their relationship with **men-tees**.



**TABLE 1: Stages in the ARCA Framework<sup>18</sup>**

STAGE	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	TYPICAL CONVERSATION FLOW
AWARENESS	<p>What are the mentee's <b>high level</b> goals for the mentorship?</p> <p>What is the <b>specific agenda</b> for each meeting?</p>	<p>Review actions from the previous session, issues since the last meeting, anything which has come up which the mentee wants to address.</p>	<p><b>70% mentee</b></p> <p><b>30% mentor</b></p>
REFLECTION	<p>How does the mentee feel about the issue?</p> <p>What does the discussion reveal about the mentee's real <b>personal motivators, drivers and beliefs</b>?</p>	<p>Listen attentively.</p> <p>Ask probing questions before attempting any kind of problem solving.</p> <p>Identify the underlying motivators and unspoken issues.</p>	<p><b>90% mentee</b></p> <p><b>10% mentor</b></p>
CHOICE	<p>What <b>course of action</b> does the mentee choose to take?</p>	<p>Share relevant experience and information.</p> <p>Challenge the mentee so that they identify new approaches and apply their insights from the reflection stage.</p>	<p><b>60% mentee</b></p> <p><b>40% mentor</b></p>
ACTION	<p>What are the <b>specific and detailed actions</b> to support the mentee's choice?</p>	<p>Outline specific tasks, completion dates, next steps.</p>	<p><b>60% mentee</b></p> <p><b>40% mentor</b></p>

## 4. WINDING UP

It is time to wind up the mentorship once it has achieved its goals, the relationship has grown stale, the mentee has outgrown the mentor or the timeframe for the mentorship is over.

There can be 'natural' times for the mentoring relationship to finish, which may happen earlier than the set timeframe. The mentor and mentee must handle this stage sensitively, in case one party does not realise that there is limited further value in the relationship.

Support and supervision in the assessment of what has been achieved through mentoring can help go through the wind-up step. The hosting organization can facilitate moments for mutual check-ins that are key to agreeing on progress and closure.

A good option is also to officially celebrate the end of the relationship, organising a collective moment where all the mentoring couples take part to share their achievements and end the lifecycle of the mentoring process.

## 5. MOVING ON

Moving on can mean different things to different people. Mentors and mentees may decide to meet less frequently or not meet at all but maintain a friendship. In general,

there are things to encourage and things to avoid.

Preparing the transition to end ahead of time and frequently reviewing progress can help to plan a positive ending. Celebrating the successes and emphasising mutual learning are also important steps towards moving on to the final step. Both mentors and mentees should be open and honest about their feelings, agreeing on how/when/if they will keep in touch.

On the other hand, risks are that the couple allows friendship to obscure the practical purpose of the relationship or keeps the relationship going beyond its natural course. Mentors should be careful not to allow things to drift away or make the break abrupt. The hosting organization can ease this ending time by offering support to both, providing ways to make the closure natural, as part of any mentoring relationships.

## 6.2 PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND TUTORING

When planning activities for the mentoring program, it is important to list different tools and techniques that can be used by mentors in their meetings, so as to have a clear idea of which one mentors should be trained on.

Through these tools, mentors will have more chances to learn the strengths and weaknesses of mentees and help them enhance

their potential. Although, these goals are mainly reached when mentors already possess some important qualities and commit to:

- listen actively and give appropriate non-judgmental feedback.
- ensure confidentiality.
- share knowledge and insight about the cultural sector when relevant.
- offer different perspectives.
- offer support and encouragement.
- adapt to the mentee's needs and if necessary, renegotiate the relationship.
- draw on their own experience or inspiring stories when appropriate.
- confront and discuss current issues.
- ensure a clear ending of the relationship.

If mentors are committed to doing so, the suggested techniques and tools become really valuable assets for engaging mentees during the meetings.

Those who receive mentoring should never find themselves in the condition of feeling a state of psychological dependence with respect to the mentor, or even of entering into "negative" competition with him, but should always be able to realize the relationship with the mentor in a condition of parity, thus having the readiness to terminate it if the possibility of psychological subordination occurs.

At the beginning of the paths, the mentee always clearly sets out the objectives they want to achieve in order to better understand the learning needs, trying to recognize one's strengths and weaknesses and using them as a starting point to further encourage and develop one's path.

In keeping a healthy balance throughout the relationship, the organisation promoting mentoring can play an important role, offering mentor and mentee tools and moments to assess how the experience is going for both. For instance, some non-for-mal conversations could be organised for all mentors and mentees to share their progress.

The figure of a **tutor**, to be provided by the organisation, is also an effective choice for mentors and mentees to find support and solve possible doubts or conflicts. The tutor can also be the person in charge of supervising and assessing the overall mentoring process, collecting feedback from participants and promoting more formal evaluation systems at the beginning, in the process and at the end of the relationship.



# 7. HOW TO MEASURE SUCCESS



## 7.1 ONGOING SUPERVISION

The choice of introducing a mentoring tutor is linked to the role of monitoring and supervising the progress of the mentoring relationship as it unfolds. The organization promoting the programme should have a clear action plan to ensure supervision, with a person dedicated to it.

These actions can include:

- regular follow-up of the relationship, check in with mentors and mentees on a regular basis to ask how they are doing, how they feel in the relationship and if the project is meeting their needs;
- regular meetings with mentors to provide them with resources for the mentoring sessions, best practice sessions and additional training (for example: how to set limits) for mentors;
- regular meetings with the stakeholder involved (school, for instance), to assess the project and the progress of the mentees they derived to the project.



## 7.2 OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Building an assessment plan for your mentoring program is essential to increase understanding of effective practices in youth mentoring relationships and programs, the effectiveness of programs through a feedback/continuous quality improvement process, and for other several reasons.

In general, the more able to assess your program's effectiveness you are, the more accountable it will be: through the assessment plan you will deliver evidence of how your goals have been (or haven't been) met and why.

Thus, to ensure the quality of your program you must:

- Develop a plan to measure program processes: for implementing this plan you will have to select indicators of program implementation viability and volunteer fidelity (i.e. training hours, meeting frequency, and relationship duration) and develop a system for collecting and managing specific data.
- Develop a plan to measure expected outcomes, which will include specifying expected outcomes, selecting instruments to measure them (questionnaires, surveys, interviews), and implementing an evaluation design.
- Create a process to disseminate evaluation findings by developing **and delivering reports to program constituents, funders, and the media.**

and delivering reports to program constituents, funders, and the media.

Based on research, two relatively simple benchmarks against which similar one-to-one mentoring programs can measure themselves to ensure that relationships will have positive effects are:

- Duration
- Relationship quality

Despite the usefulness of bench-marks (even though mostly for one-to-one mentoring), conducting a structured evaluation often produces better results.

The two major types of program evaluation are:

- Process evaluations focus on whether a program is being implemented as intended, how it is being experienced, and whether changes are needed to address any problems.
- Outcome evaluations, that focus on what, if any, effects programs are having.

Regardless of the used typology, the assessment of your mentoring program, whether it is in the form of one-to-one mentoring or other approaches, is a needed tool for improving the quality of mentoring programs.

Questionnaires and group or individual conversations are often used to assess essential aspects of

the mentoring process, such as the evolution of the specific mentoring goals, how the mentor and mentee feel about their participation in the project, whether they would like to repeat the experience and whether they would recommend the project.

At the end of the process, questionnaires could also be extended to third parties involved in the mentoring process, to evaluate individual progress, satisfaction with the project and willingness to repeat their participation.

***"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."***

**Maya Angelou**



# CONCLUSION

Mentoring, its many uses and continuous adaptations, projects us in a dimension of mutual learning where positive models of knowledge transmission for personal and professional development rely on human values and qualities.

Trust, commitment, openness, active listening, curiosity, and self-awareness are all life components that being part of a mentoring relationship allows us to practice, deepen and experiment through new, more powerful human connections.

The worlds of arts and culture share this promise of creating stronger bonds based on ideas, desires, emotions and experiences of beauty that connect people beyond time and space. Cultural participation grounds us: it reconnects us to the values at the basis of our individual and collective behaviours and is an essential part of how we grow and live as citizens.

A more direct match between what happens in mentoring and what creativity and culture can bring to our lives is a direction worth exploring in many different ways. This Manual suggests some of them, introduces cultural mentoring as an experience to be offered by cultural organizations to strengthen their bonds with people. But also encouraging the use of creative practices and cultural experiences as grounds to make the mentoring process root and grow.

Promoting mentoring in relation to the arts means investing in the capital that is created around collective cultural and artistic experiences. It is an act of recognition of what the arts and culture can bring into people's lives in terms of personal and collective growth, multiplying the chances for the symbolic and social values at stake to live beyond the cultural participation itself.

Personal satisfaction, happiness, balance and professional development are the goals of many of us. Both mentoring and the arts can make great contributions to it. It is definitely worth checking in how they can, once matched.

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