

Leadership Mentoring Guidance

Leadership Alumni: 2025 Mentoring Guidance

1. Background

1.1. Leadership Alumni network

The UKGBC leadership programmes bring together professionals from all stages of their career and from across industry to take part in our unique programmes of leadership. Our action-oriented programmes provide a forum for sustainability leaders to grapple with the most critical issues that the sector is currently facing and will face in the future, while challenging participants to work collaboratively to address these.

1.2. Introduction to Leadership Mentoring

Each year, following graduation from the programme, we offer the opportunity for our leadership alumnus to be paired with a mentor to support them on their leadership journey. Every participant will be looking for something different in a mentoring relationship - from advising on achieving career goals, to support in their personal development.

"Following the initial 9 month programme, I was paired with a mentor from the UKGBC Leaders' Network, who has been instrumental in helping me understand my personal impact, and how to maximise that."

– Clare Murray, Levitt Bernstein

1.3. The UKGBC Mentoring Pool

The mentor/mentee pool is comprised of everyone who has participated in the UKGBC Leadership programmes such as Future Leaders and Change Accelerator.

If for any reason there is an insufficient number or type mentor to match with a mentee or vice versa then that mentee will join a waiting list, and be notified as soon as an appropriate candidate becomes available.

All mentors and mentees will be required to provide a short biography (100 words) which UKGBC will keep on file, and use in the mentor matching process.

2. The Mentoring Process

2.1. Putting yourself forward

Participants have the ability to opt in as a mentee or a mentor. We recommend looking at this relationship as a tango rather than simply a give and take. Your role as either of these, similar to the dance, is more about whether you take the right foot forward first or take the left foot back first. It is about sharing insights and knowledge so both the participants can help each other in their progress.

You can put yourself forward by filling in the form sent to you. In case the alumni email has missed your inbox [reach out to us](#) and we can resend it to you. We request you to make sure you include which programme you were a part of in the email. Through this form you are able to specify what kind of support you are looking for, and therefore what you wish to get out of this programme.

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2.2. Commitment to terms

Once mentor and mentee are matched and UKGBC are ready to make introductions, we ask each to accept the terms of the relationship. These are that:

- 2.2.1. The formal relationship has a fixed duration of one calendar year. This is in order to return the mentor to the pool to enable another participant the benefit of their insights, and it also provides the opportunity for UKGBC to manage the process and measure the impact in an annual cycle. Mentees will have the opportunity to extend their mentoring relationship beyond a year if their mentor agrees, and UKGBC must be notified. Moreover, if the mentees feel they are happy to take up the role of mentor in the next cycle they can do so too.
- 2.2.2. The mentor and mentee meet at least four times in the space of one calendar year. These meetings will be arranged by the mentee.

2.3. Introductions

Following acceptance of the terms, UKGBC will make the formal introductions between the mentor and mentee. It is then up to the mentee to schedule the first meeting (see further guidance point 4.3.1.)

2.4. Relationship wrap-up and impact measurement

The mentoring relationship will conclude one calendar year after the initial introduction unless agreed otherwise with UKGBC ahead of that time. As part of the impact measurement of the mentoring programme we request that a member of the UKGBC team attend for a portion of your final meeting to gather feedback on the process.

3. Information for Mentors

3.1. What can a mentor expect?

- 3.1.1. Those who take on the role of mentor advise and help facilitate the development of the mentee. In addition, they will need to support the mentee in trialing new ideas in their professional work, and challenge their assumptions from time to time.
- 3.1.2. The mentoring relationship should provide a safe environment in which the mentee feels able and willing to express their concerns and anxieties as well as discuss their ideas and aspirations. The mentee must feel assured that their confidentiality will be respected and that their discussions will not be reported back to their organisation or any other party without their agreement. For the relationship to be effective it needs to be built around mutual trust and respect.
- 3.1.3. The Mentor can expect to take on a number of roles within the mentoring relationship involving a range of skills and behaviours. Which role the mentor adopts at any time will depend on the needs of the mentee and the situation and his/her own areas of expertise. No one role is more important than another. See the table below for some inspiration for the different 'roles' which may be assumed by the mentor.
- 3.1.4. A mentor's role is to support and encourage the growth of the mentee's sense of responsibility for their own learning and development.

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Sounding board	Someone to test ideas and suggestions
Facilitator	Point to potential opportunities, arrange introductions and access key people
Adviser	Provide objective advice on a range of issues, including career opportunities
Coach	Assist the learner to improve a specific skill
Expert	Be a source of technical/professional knowledge
Role model	Promote and encourage positive behaviours in others
Source of feedback	Provide objective and constructive feedback on development
Confidant	Listen to fears and concerns
Motivator	Encourage and motivate the mentee to achieve their goals, and boost morale
Challenger	Play “devil’s advocate”, challenge assumptions, encourage different ways of thinking

3.2. Benefits for the Mentor

- 3.2.1. While the focus of the mentoring relationship is primarily on the development needs and opportunities of the mentee there are also benefits for the mentor including
- Refreshes own view of work
 - Encourages self-reflection
 - Develops professional relationships
 - Provides closer and greater networks and contacts within the industry
 - Develops coaching/management skills
- 3.2.2. Mentors are not expected to solve mentee’s problems for them but part of the role is to act as a sounding board for discussion of problems identified by the mentee. Through a confidential process of listening and questioning, mentors should help mentees to reflect upon their own progress, clarify issues and help them towards resolving their own problems.
- 3.2.3. We also offer the opportunity for mentors to tap into the resource of mentees and other leadership alumni members– either by including them on projects, or just to offer different perspectives on challenges as appropriate. Any relationships in this capacity will be administrated by UKGBC.

3.3. What commitment is expected from the Mentor?

- 3.3.1. The Mentor will:
- Clarify the level and nature of the advice and support that the mentee will need and that the mentor feels able to provide. This “chemistry check” is in effect a meeting to decide how mentor and mentee will work together, how regularly they might like to meet formally and informally and so on.
 - Initiate periodic meetings with the mentee and be available within reason
 - Appreciate his/her differing experiences and needs
 - Respect and maintain confidentiality in the mentoring relationship
 - Ask open and appropriate questions
 - Reflect back feelings and opinions he/she observes

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- Make suggestions without sounding prescriptive
- 3.3.2. It is important to remember that the Mentor does not have to be an expert on everything they are asked about

3.4. Top 'tips' for being a successful Mentor

- 3.4.1. Invest time early in the relationship to establish rapport and get to know the Mentee.
- 3.4.2. Recognise your own strengths and weaknesses in relation to the Mentee's development needs and be prepared to guide them to other sources of help if appropriate. You are not expected to be an expert on every subject.
- 3.4.3. Support the Mentee in producing realistic development plans and goals. Be honest, don't support unrealistic expectations. If the Mentee's plans and/or career aspirations are impractical or unreasonable then challenge them.
- 3.4.4. Wherever possible encourage the Mentee to work out their own solutions to problems that they face. Be aware that you are a role model. How the Mentee perceives the way in which you manage yourself and others will impact on your relationship with them.
- 3.4.5. Build the confidence and commitment of the Mentee and help them develop by providing honest feedback in a constructive and positive way.
- 3.4.6. When the time comes to end the formal mentoring relationship, end on a positive and supportive note by reviewing and sharing the value and benefits that you have both gained from the experience.

4. Information for Mentees

4.1. What can a Mentee expect?

- 4.1.1. While there is the opportunity to foster an ongoing relationship between Mentor and Mentee, it is down to the Mentee to manage this relationship. Aware that participants are extremely busy and may not be readily accessible.
- 4.1.2. The responsibility for making things happen and putting plans into action primarily lies with the Mentee. Those putting themselves forward as a Mentee must take into account that organising these sessions is their responsibility when entering into the arrangement.

4.2. Benefits for the Mentee

- 4.2.1. There are many potential benefits for the Mentee to gain from the mentoring relationship including:
 - Improving and building self-awareness and confidence
 - Providing the opportunity to learn from a role model
 - Offering professional development
 - Providing advice and information
 - Encouraging reflection on practice
 - Providing personal support and career development
 - Developing various skills
 - Promoting support on your career and providing impartial advice
 - Allowing you to speak to someone outside your work area
 - Offering the opportunity to network and increase your knowledge of the industry
 - Providing a wider perspective and insight into the industry and its culture
 - Allowing sharing of issues in a confidential and impartial environment
 - Helping in clarifying and setting development goals

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- Offers a safe environment to test out ideas and suggestions
- 4.2.2. Reasons to have a mentor:
- To act as an impartial sounding board. They create valuable space and time for the Mentee to stand back and review where they are now, where they want to get to, and how best to get there
 - To contribute viewpoints, advice and information from their own knowledge, experience and expertise
 - To assist the Mentee to achieve changes and goals to meet their potential.

4.3. The role of the Mentee

- 4.3.1. The Mentee is expected to be:
- Willing to enter the relationship with a clear set of objectives
 - Willing to learn
 - Willing to challenge their views, behaviours, assumptions and ways of working
 - Able to ask for and receive feedback
 - Willing to discuss issues
- 4.3.2. It is important to remember that the Mentee is expected to play a full part in deciding the forms of support they will find most useful. These can be reviewed and revised at later stages.
- 4.3.3. It is a good idea to keep a record of the meetings, noting what has been discussed and agreed, and the objectives for the next meeting.