



APA Women & Planning Division

Pilot Mentoring Program 2021 Mentoring Program and Resource Guide

A Message from the Division:

The Women and Planning Division is excited to announce the pilot mentoring program to our membership for 2021!

In our 2020 Membership Survey we asked our membership what they wanted to see from our Division, there was an overwhelming interest in the Women & Planning Division coordinating a mentorship program for members. Many of the early and mid-career members identified their desire to participate in a mentoring program to be connected to women in positions of leadership, to learn from their experiences as successful planners. Similarly, tenured members noted their desire to mentor and give back to early career professionals. In response, the Division created the pilot mentoring program.

The purpose of the Women & Planning pilot mentoring program is to match students and early or mid-career Division members with tenured members or members in positions of leadership. This program is intended to enhance career growth, member professional development, and increase the representation of women in positions of leadership in planning.

Mentee spots in the initial pilot program filled up within one hour after the announcement. We specifically want to thank those tenured members who are volunteering their time to help position the next generation of women planners. The Women & Planning Division Executive Board are thrilled and grateful that each of you have chosen to participate in this program!



Program Components:

This is a self-led program for mentoring pairs - it is intentionally flexible so that each mentoring pair can work with what suits their interests and aptitudes. The type of mentoring that a student needs to get her first job would be different from someone with 5-10 years experience who is interested in transitioning into leadership, or a planner looking to start their own business.

The initial program is six months in length. Although it truly is up to each pair how often to meet, we suggest that mentor pairs get together at least once per month to work on mentoring (ideas below).

As this is the pilot year, we need your feedback and help to make it better. We will be checking in periodically and providing a survey at the end of 2021 to see how it went. If the program is successful, it will be expanded in 2022.

Your Match:

The WPD matched interested mentors and mentees based on areas of interest, years of experience, individual goals of participation, and where requested and feasible, geography. We personally went through all the applications and information provided to pair up planners based on these factors.

By now, you should have received your mentor match from our APA Women and Planning 2021 Mentoring gmail account (apawpdmentoring2021@gmail.com). If you don't see it, please be sure to check your spam folder.

Given the flexible virtual format, mentors and mentees can decide when and how often to meet. If you happen to be geographically close and feel safe and comfortable doing so, you can also meet in person per the latest CDC guidance and your local restrictions.

We suggest using the first meeting to walk through preferred meeting days/times and goals for the program.

Suggestions for Mentees:

As you have likely already discovered, growth and learning are first, and foremost, our own accountability. We find that creating and maintaining a successful professional relationship takes time, and what you get out of it is based on what you put into it. Planning is an ever-changing field, we must be adaptable and committed to learning new skills. Each of us must be motivated, engaged and committed to owning our own learning.

One suggestion on how to "Own your own Learning?"

Check out this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pw53uRedr5U>

After watching this video, ask yourself what you want to work on during this mentoring program and share it with your mentor. Some questions you may ask yourself:

- *What are my strengths?*
- *What kind of work energizes me most?*
- *Where do I most need to grow and develop?*
- *How can I be more strategic about my career growth?*
- *How can I determine any blind spots to career growth?*
- *What kind of impact do I want to make as an individual and as a leader?*
- *What formal skills do I need? What informal or "soft" skills do I need?*
- *Are there any barriers that can stand in the way of achieving my goals?*
- *What are my values, mindset and beliefs? How do these shape my work?*
- *Where do I see myself in one year? Five years? Ten years?*



Suggestions for Mentors:

Sometimes we find that mentors' roles as more advanced professionals in the field can be intimidating, and therefore we encourage mentors to be proactive in showing their interest in mentoring! If you haven't already heard from your mentee, we recommend that mentors make the first contact and reach out to their mentee match to see when they would like to meet and what is preferred. We also recommend mentors take an active role in setting up meetings throughout the mentoring relationship. Of course, this isn't necessarily required - we also encourage mentees to make the first and continued contact if they feel comfortable.

2021 Pilot Program Fast Facts:

- Six months in length
- Division-matched mentor pairs
- Flexible virtual meetings
- Suggested meeting of once per month, but flexibility is paramount
- Periodic check ins from Division, and a wrap up at the end of the program
- If pilot is successful, program will be expanded in 2022

Mentoring Ideas:

- Resume review
- Cover letter feedback
- "What's your plan?" - What are your goals? Create a mentoring action plan to lead you toward them!
- Leadership personality tests
- Meeting/event shadowing - let them see you in action
- Networking or introductions via virtual coffee - who should your mentee meet? Who in the field can you introduce them to?
- Tips for thriving in a male-dominated work environment
- Discuss differences between managing and leading
- Discuss what leadership means to you
- Share career stories - talk about successes and failures and what you learned
- Exchange and discuss useful articles and/or policies related to planning practice
- Develop a career roadmap
- Goal setting
- Conflict management strategies
- Public speaking strategies
- Business or meeting etiquette
- How to better achieve work/life balance or ask for flexibility
- Building strategic work relationships
- Effective communication
- Interview tips and questions, mock interview
- Negotiation strategies



Optional Questions for Mentees - Conversation Starters:

- What is your preferred way to communicate? (Phone, email, time of day, etc).
- What are your major accomplishments?
- What are your major challenges?
- How has your position or planning changed from when you first started?
- Do you manage any staff members? What is the best part of that? What is the most difficult?
- What is your background, education, previous and current job experience?
- Why did you choose your field of interest as a career?
- To what do you attribute your success?
- What is your self-described management or leadership style?
- What is your favorite part of the job? Least favorite?
- What technical skills do you have such as budgeting, law, GIS, urban design, or writing?
- What do you think are the most important non-technical or soft skills to have?
- Do you have certification, registration, or license in a professional field?
- What professional organizations or certifications are helpful in your career?
- What do you see as a growing demand or trend in your field?
- How do you deal with being the only woman in the room/your firm/the field?
- How do internal politics affect your position? How do external forces influence your work?
- What should women leaders know that differs from a male perspective?
- How do you balance tactical and strategic?
- How do you recruit and maintain a good team, attract talent?
- What overall educational or career advice do you have?
- If you could go back in time and do anything differently, what would you do?

Optional Questions for Mentors - Conversation Starters:

- What are your short-term goals?
- What are your long-term goals?
- What is it you really want to be and do?
- What is working in your career?
- What is not working?
- What ideas have you developed to help you overcome challenges and meet your goals?
- How can I help you grow your network? Is there anyone with a particular skillset I might know that I might be able to introduce you to?
- What areas do you feel comfortable addressing on your own and what areas require more support?
- How can I help you achieve your goals?



Resource Links:

SCARF Assessment:

<https://neuroleadership.com/research/tools/nli-scarf-assessment/>

Goal Setting: <https://www.mindtools.com/page6.html>

How to have Difficult Conversations: <https://www.judyringer.com/resources/articles/we-have-to-talk-a-stepbystep-checklist-for-difficult-conversations.php>

Conflict Management Skills:

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/conflict-management-skills-2059687>

Confident Public Speaking:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tShavGuo0_E

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/quora/2019/10/01/this-powerful-habit-can-help-you-become-a-more-confident-speaker/?sh=6bbb39511baf>

Mentoring at a Distance:

<https://leadership-effect.com/articles/mentoring-at-a-distance/>

Women Need a Network of Champions:

<https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/why-women-need-a-network-of-champions/>

Bridge the Learning Gap:

<https://www.planning.org/planning/2020/dec/bridge-the-learning-gap/>

“The Mentor’s Guide” by Lois Zachary

“The Mentee’s Guide” by Lois Zachary

“The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More & CHange the Way you Lead Forever” by Michael Bungay Stanier

“Monday Morning Mentoring” by David Cottrell

“Monday Morning Choices” by David Cottrell

