



Mentoring with us

Thank you for putting your hand up to be a mentor with Cultivate. We have more demand from women seeking mentoring than we ever anticipated, and our ability to help them depends entirely on the generosity of women like you. So, thank you.

Here we've set out the main things you need to know about being a mentor with us. If you have any more questions, don't hesitate to email Jessica@cultivatelab.nz

For more information about Cultivate Mentoring Lab check out our website www.cultivatelab.nz

What makes a good mentor?

We think there are three simple qualities that make a great Cultivate mentor:

1. Experience - being able to critically reflect on your own experiences and bring those insights to the relationship.
2. Empathy - being able to listen without judgment, play someone's own insights back to them, and support them to find answers.
3. Passion - for helping other women to be successful.

There's no way to test for these qualities, so we largely rely on personal connections and word of mouth to recruit our mentors.

Matching

We take a range of things into account when matching mentors with applicants, including, for example:

- Profession or area of work
- Interpersonal style
- Specific challenges an applicant is facing
- Experience
- And our personal favourite, 'uncommon commonalities'.

Through personal connections, the application process, and our Weirdly survey we know a bit about our mentors and applicants, which makes the matching process relatively easy.

Time commitment

We ask mentors to commit to 12-24hrs over a 6-month period (basically an hour a week or fortnight depending on what the relationship needs).

How you structure that time is up to you and your partner - you might agree to have lunch once a week, go for a walk and a coffee once a fortnight, or spend half a day together once a month.

Before a partnership round kicks off we ask applicants to reconfirm their commitment to Cultivate. It is important to us that they are fully engaged with their mentor, and respect the time commitment you are making.

The 'programme'

A good mentoring relationship can't be prescribed, so there is no formal programme as such. We rely on our mentors to tease out the challenges their partner is facing and help them find the solutions.

About a month before the partnership round begins we will introduce you to your partner via email, and ask you to connect with one another to make introductions before things kick off properly.

Then at regular intervals through the 6-months we will send you both some thought starters to help you get the best from your time together. It's optional whether you use these, but they will be helpful to some partnerships.

Support

Twice a year we hold 'Effective Mentoring' sessions for mentors, run by a coaching expert. Participation is optional but if you're at all nervous about how to be a great mentor we encourage you to come along and have your fears allayed. The fact that you are taking the role seriously indicates you'll be a great mentor!

We also hold other capability building events through the year that are available to all mentors and applicants in the Cultivate family.

Once the partnership begins, we will largely leave you to your own devices, but we will formally check in with you and your partner after two months to see how things are going. If the relationship isn't working for you, or you have any concerns, you're free to contact us at any time.

Discussions between you and your partner are confidential, but if you hear something that causes you real concern about their safety, we encourage you to raise it with a Cultivate trustee (contact details on our website) immediately so we can support you on a course of action, or directly with authorities in extreme cases.

Feedback

At the end of the 6-months we invite both partners to provide feedback on the process and suggestions about how we can improve Cultivate. Again, if there is a glaring issue we'd prefer you raise it early than let it fester.