



# AITPM MENTORING PROGRAM PILOT – HANDBOOK

FOR MENTEES & MENTORS

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# INTRODUCTION

The Australian Institute of Traffic Planning and Management Pilot Mentoring Program is organised by the QLD Young Professionals Committee and is intended to run from August to December (4 months). The Mentoring Program was developed as a result of the success of the NSW AITPM Buddy Program in an effort to foster a supportive and well-connected community. The Program aims to retain and support young professionals in the early years of their career as well as providing a forum for experienced AITPM members to give back to the profession.

The aim of these guidelines is to provide a framework for the basis on which mentors and mentees participate in the program. Each mentor and mentee pair will communicate, interact and achieve their mentoring program goals differently – in the way that best suits their pair. The program is intended to facilitate, not restrict, the participation of mentors and mentees and enable them to explore the great opportunities created when two personalities collide.

Thank you for your interest in the AITPM Pilot Mentoring Program and we hope it is an enjoyable and enriching experience for mentees and mentors.



## PROGRAM PURPOSE

The program should provide a forum for experienced practicing transport professionals, and young professionals to network and build a mentoring partnership. This is facilitated through this program by encouraging participants to meet regularly and discuss matters relating to the industry within an organised and supportive framework.

The program's purpose is not to help people find work through their partnership. It is noted that using the program for job seeking or recruitment purposes is a breach of the program's code of conduct.

## PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

### PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

All program participants, mentors and mentees, must be members of the Australian Institute of Traffic Planning and Management.

### MENTORS

Mentors will ideally have at least 10 years' graduate experience in a variety of traffic planning and management fields, in private and/or public practice. Mentors will have excellent communication skills, particularly listening, a desire to contribute to the future of the planning profession and the time to commit to several 1-hour meetings for the duration of the program.

### MENTEES

Mentees may be traffic planning and management recent graduates or young professionals with approximately less than 10 years of traffic planning and management industry.

Despite the above and importantly, any member of the Institute can be a mentor or mentee. AITPM acknowledges that a career contains many twists and turns, including sector changes and career breaks. To the best of our ability, we will attempt to link mentors and mentees with a suitable partner and support the principle of life-long learning and knowledge sharing that underpins the Program.



## MENTORING OVERVIEW

Mentoring is defined as “a mutually beneficial relationship which involves a more experienced person helping a less experienced person to identify and achieve their goals”. Mentoring relationships can be developed spontaneously or via a formally facilitated program, such as this program. Career mentoring can provide some of the most sought-after attributes that employers look for: industry awareness and firsthand knowledge of the challenges of life in the workforce.

A **mentor** provides support, a sounding board, knowledge, encouragement, guidance, and constructive feedback to the mentee by developing a genuine interest in the growth of their abilities and talents.

A **mentee** actively seeks support and guidance in their career and professional development from an experienced mentor. A mentee always has ultimate responsibility for their career and professional development.

The relationship is based upon encouragement, constructive feedback, openness, mutual trust, respect and a willingness to learn and share.

## BENEFITS

There are many mutual benefits of participating in a mentoring program for the mentor and mentees, including:

### MENTORS

- Contribute to the development of the future of the planning profession
- Improve management, leadership and communication skills
- Expand professional networks
- Transfer of skills and knowledge
- Recognition of skills, knowledge and commitment the profession
- Personal satisfaction from making a contribution to the industry

### MENTEES

- Develop communication skills and knowledge
- Build professional networks and a support system
- Increase confidence and self-esteem
- Discuss and learn theoretical and practical issues with a planner
- A confidential opportunity to discuss workplace issues
- Receive support and guidance to achieve career goals

# PARTICIPANTS ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF MENTORS AND MENTEES

- Act ethically and with respect towards all other participants;
- Maintain strict confidentiality and professional boundaries;
- Commit to attend all pre arranged meetings; and
- Discuss expectations in the first meeting and review as meetings progress.

## MENTOR'S ROLE STATEMENT:

Specific responsibilities include:

- Sign Mentoring Agreement with mentee;
- Negotiate a commitment for ongoing communication;
- Lead initial meetings with mentees;
- Assist mentee to identify individual needs and support career development;
- Attend information sessions or activities for mentors held by AITPM;
- Contribute to discussion and resolution of issues raised in meetings; and
- Participate in program evaluation and review.

The mentor may achieve these in a variety of ways by:

- Challenging assumptions;
- Encouraging the exploration of new ideas and innovative thinking;
- Being open minded and non-judgemental;
- Listening to the mentees' questions and problems;
- Assisting the mentee to identify and solve problems;
- Providing appropriate and timely advice;
- Encouraging an understanding of career options and outcomes; and
- Sharing professional experiences providing a different view of the matter under discussion.

A successful and effective mentor has:

- Respect and consideration for the mentee;
- A high level of expertise and knowledge of planning;
- A genuine interest in the mentees' growth and development;
- A commitment to the mentoring program;
- Highly developed communication skills (particularly listening, questioning and giving constructive feedback); and
- The ability to have some influence on behalf of the mentee.

### MENTEE ROLE STATEMENT:

- Sign Mentoring Agreement with mentor;
- Negotiate a commitment for ongoing communication;
- Initiate the organisation of all meetings (e.g. develop a schedule of meetings agreed by the mentor);
- Organise an (informal or formal) agenda of discussion topics for meetings;
- Contribute to discussion and resolution of issues raised in meetings; and
- Explore own strengths and development needs.

The mentee may achieve their role by:

- Reviewing their experiences as a young professional in the workforce;
- Discussing and developing their career goals;
- Be willing to share their hopes, needs and expectations; and
- Always having an open frame of mind.

A successful mentee will:

- Organise all meetings with their mentor;
- Commit to the mentoring program;
- Take responsibility for their own personal and professional development and opportunities;

## MATCHING MENTORS & MENTEES

The matching of mentors and mentees is undertaken by the Mentoring Program Committee. Mentors and Mentees complete an online questionnaire to assist in matching compatible participants with similar interests to maximise the benefit of the program. Participants may wish to be a part of the program in both a mentor and mentee capacity, and can indicate so on their questionnaire.

If either the mentor or mentee is uncomfortable with the pairing at any stage during the Program, or decides the mentorship is not successful, the Early Mentorship Closure section of this handbook explains the process for ending a mentorship between a mentee and mentor.

## SUGGESTED PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

The following program is a suggested framework for mentoring pairs to follow throughout the Mentoring Program. Participants may choose to follow part of the program or may choose to create their own framework.

### STAGE 1

#### BEFORE THE FIRST MEETING & MEETING 1 – NEGOTIATING EXPECTATIONS AND GOALS

- Mentoring Program Agreement
- 'Before the First Meeting' Activity

### STAGE 2

#### MEETINGS 2 & 3 – ESTABLISHING THE RELATIONSHIP

- Getting to know each other
- Education / career / work history and aspirations
- Identify development needs
- Mentor to discuss experiences & highlights

### STAGE 3

#### MEETINGS 4 & 5 – CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- Career mapping
- Identify short- & long-term goals
- Identify key skills, both strengths and for development
- Action planning towards goal and skill attainment
- Mentor to discuss experiences & highlights

### STAGE 4

#### SUSTAINING THE RELATIONSHIP

- Keep in touch!
- Attend networking events



## STAGE 1 – NEGOTIATING EXPECTATIONS & GOALS

### MEETING 1

The first meeting is critical in establishing the foundations for the development of the mentorship but can be quite daunting for both the mentor and the mentee. The key to a successful mentorship is to ensure that both participants share the same objectives and expectations of the program. These should be discussed openly and negotiated within the partnership.

### ORGANISING THE FIRST MEETING

The mentee is responsible for contacting the mentor to organise a time and place for the first (and subsequent meetings) that is suitable for both participants. It is strongly recommended that the first meeting is organised at the Mentoring Program Induction.

### DISCUSSION POINTS

**THE COMMITMENT:** It is essential that contact be maintained throughout the mentorship. It is recommended that participants meet at least 3-4 times over the 4 months. However, the level of time commitment needs to be discussed and negotiated between the mentor and mentee. Some partnerships may wish to meet monthly during the program or may supplement this with regular emails or phone calls.

**PREFERRED STYLE OF CONTACT:** Both the mentor and mentee need to decide whether contact during the mentorship will be formal or informal. Participants should also decide whether they want to follow the suggested program framework, discuss pre-prepared topics at their meetings or would prefer ad hoc discussions.

**LOCATION:** Both participants need to agree on a preferred location(s) to meet during the mentorship. Suggested locations include the mentor or mentee's office or a café.

**GOALS:** Participants should discuss what they want to achieve through the Mentoring Program and how they will reach their goals.

### AVOIDING POTENTIAL PITFALLS

Mentors may expect the mentee to do all of the contacting/organising to 'drive' the program, but mentees are often reluctant to seem too demanding. To avoid this, it is best to plan for the next contact together at the end of each meeting. If either party cancels a meeting don't be disheartened and continue to reschedule. If either party needs to reschedule, it is a good idea for the mentee to immediately give the mentor a list of three or four alternative times and locations to meet so the mentor can select a suitable time and location or suggest an alternative.

## STAGE 2 – ESTABLISHING THE RELATIONSHIP

### MEETING 2

This meeting should focus on the mentor and the mentee getting to know each other. Learning each other's interests and opinions beyond planning helps build trust and understanding in the mentorship. Topics for discussion may include "Where in the world do you most want to travel to and why?", "How would you spend your last day on earth?", "What personal/professional qualities do you most admire/detest?", "What are your favourite hobbies?", "Are you a morning or a night person?", "What is your dream job?", "Have you completed personality or learning type tests before? What were your results?", etc.

### MEETING 3

It is recommended that at the third meeting mentors and mentees share some of their own career/work history. Initially, mentors may share their general career history, significant experiences and how they got to where they are now. However, mentors should discuss in depth a couple of anecdotes from their own experience. For example:

- I wish I had known at the time .....
- The project I am most proud of is .....
- I am so glad I did/didn't .....
- A significant obstacle I overcame was .....
- I was most proud to be a planner/engineer when .....
- My biggest learning curve was ....
- My greatest professional success or achievement is .....
- Early in my career, I didn't realise ....

Mentees can share similar information, based on their experiences. Both mentors and mentees should reflect on what is important to them and what drives them both personally and professionally.

## STAGE 3 – CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### MEETINGS 4 & 5

Towards the end of the mentoring program (after Meeting 3), mentors should focus on the career direction of the mentee (e.g. where do they see themselves in 10 years). Mentees may want assistance from their mentor to clarify their preferred career direction or to develop a career plan. It is important to review the career direction based on the mentee's likes/dislikes, strengths, experiences and skills, values and interests. Partnerships may consider long term goals (extra study or specific experiences) or short-term goals (networking opportunities and training courses).

## STAGE 4 – SUSTAINING THE RELATIONSHIP

As the mentorship develops it is important to reflect and consider successful aspects and identify areas for improvement. Self-assessment of the participation of the mentor and mentee is important to measure the development and success of the mentorship, as well as the personal and professional development of both Mentor and Mentee. Mentors and mentees can consider the following questions when evaluating their participation and the development of the mentorship.

- Has the mentee/mentor attended all meetings and Mentoring Program events?
- Does the mentee/mentor have a positive approach to each meeting?
- How does the mentee/mentor respond to new ideas and suggestions?
- Has the mentee developed realistic career aspirations?
- Has the mentee/mentor completed agreed tasks?
- Is the mentee/mentor been punctual and organised?
- Has the mentee improved professionally?
- Has the mentee expanded their professional network?
- Has the mentee/mentor actively developed a level of trust with the mentor/ mentee?
- Has confidentiality been maintained?
- Has progress been made towards the mentee's goals?
- Has the mentee/mentor cancelled meetings?
- Is the mentee/mentor been attentive during the meetings?
- Does the mentee/mentor ensure there are no interruptions during the meetings?, ie phone calls, people in office, etc.
- Is the mentee/mentor comfortable with the mentorship?

## EARLY MENTOR CLOSURE

There may be situations where the mentor/mentee relationship ends prematurely. The reasons for this can vary and the relationship can be ended with a “no fault” closure. The ‘no fault closure’ can be initiated by either party and the reasons for the closure are not required. The primary aim of the ‘no fault’ closure is to ensure a win-win situation for both parties and there is no blame attributed by or to either party. Both parties can initiate the closure and in some instances the program coordinators may be requested to facilitate the closure.

The process to end a relationship can be done either directly between the mentor and mentee or by requesting the program coordinators to facilitate it. If either the mentor or mentee chooses to close the relationship themselves it needs to be done with professionalism and respect. It is recommended that a final meeting be held to discuss the closure and the reasons behind it. The conversation should include the following:

- Start with the good – talk about the highlights and positives from the relationship.
- Communicate the reason(s) for ending the relationship – be honest and tell your mentor/mentee why you are ending the relationship. This may be difficult but it is important and shows respect to the other party; and
- Give your mentor/mentee honest feedback – just because your relationship hasn't worked out doesn't mean they won't be successful in another relationship.

Above all the conversation should be respectful and professional so both parties can learn from the experience and reflect on what worked and what didn't. Should this method be chosen it is important to contact the program coordinators to notify them of the closure of the relationship.

If either the mentor or mentee do not feel comfortable in closing the relationship the program coordinators are able to assist. The coordinators can act as the facilitator to professionally close the relationship. In these instances, the party instigating the closure should contact the coordinators as soon as the decision has been made so the relationship can be closed quickly. The coordinators will contact the other party and notify them of the closure of the relationship.

It should be noted that not all mentee and mentor relationships work out, whether it be interests, schedule or personalities it is to be expected that some relationships will need early closure. In all cases no fault is attributed to either party and participants will be encouraged to participate in future programs.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION AND REVIEW

It is important to acknowledge the end of the Pilot Mentoring Program, even if the mentor and mentee agree to continue the mentorship after the program. It is a time to formally acknowledge the value of the program, appreciate the time and contributions of the mentors and the lessons learnt by both mentors and mentees. It is important to each reflect on each other's professional and personal development.

All program participants will be asked to complete program evaluation surveys throughout the course of the Mentoring Program and at the conclusion of the program. The Mentoring Program Organising Committee welcome any suggestions and feedback on the program at any stage from all mentors and mentees.



## EXPECTATIONS & CODE OF CONDUCT

AITPM is offering the Pilot Mentoring Program to provide members with new opportunities and benefits for being part of the community. As such, there is an expectation that all participants read and agree to abide by the following code of conduct throughout the duration of the mentoring program and any ongoing mentoring relationships that are sustained beyond the close of the program.

Participants should raise any concerns regarding breaches of the code of conduct to the organising committee for investigation.

### VISION & VALUES OF THE ORGANISATION

As the peak body for traffic and transport practitioners in Australia, it is our vision, that working together, the industry can achieve a sustainable, efficient, safe, multimodal transport system that is accessible by all communities.

To contribute to the achievement of this ambitious vision for the industry, our mission is to lead our members and practitioners to connect, collaborate, participate to advance their skills, capabilities, and knowledge.

In doing so we will be focused on:

**Community** | AITPM will grow a strong, connected, and supportive community of practitioners to enhance the resilience and capacity of the industry.

**Collaboration** | AITPM will facilitate collaboration and engagement across the industry to influence better outcomes.

**Capability** | AITPM will grow industry capability through sharing and developing knowledge and experience.

**Governance and Organisational Excellence** | AITPM will ensure the correct operational enablers are in place to allow us to fulfill our mission and objectives

Participants are expected to contribute to the mentoring relationship in a manner that supports the vision and values of the organisation.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Topics discussed by mentors and mentees may be a personal opinion or of a sensitive or controversial nature, therefore strict confidentiality must be maintained between mentors and mentees. By signing the **Mentoring Program Agreement (Appendix 1)** the mentor and mentee agree to maintain confidentiality.

The opinions and representations by mentors and mentees are strictly personal in nature and do not necessarily reflect or represent the opinions and values of AITPM.

## MEETINGS

AITPM has zero tolerance for misconduct including but not limited to harassment and discrimination. Participants must abide by the QLD COVID health orders when determining possible communication methods. It is noted that some participants may choose to conduct face to face meetings, when permissible. If both parties agree, face to face meetings must be organised in public open spaces or in office spaces where one of the parties are an employee.

## DATA PRIVACY

All personal data collected for the purposes of the program will be maintained within AITPM for the purposes of the program only and will not be shared with third parties.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The program's purpose is not to help people find work through their partnership. While it is understood that building new professional relationships may naturally open participants up to new opportunities, using the program for job seeking or recruitment purposes is a breach of the program's code of conduct.

The pursuit of employment and / or recruitment where it makes any party uncomfortable should be reported to the program organisers and may result in termination of the mentor relationship.

## MENTORING PROGRAM AGREEMENT

Please complete this agreement at your first meeting and return to  
aitpm.ypn.qld@gmail.com

We, \_\_\_\_\_

And \_\_\_\_\_

(mentor and mentee),

voluntarily commit to the Planning Institute of Australia Young Planners Mentoring Program for the 4-month duration.

We will:

- > Meet at least ..... (please provide agreed interval);
- > Attend any mentor program sessions and activities held by AITPM;
- > Have a genuine interest and commitment in the Pilot Mentoring Program;
- > Be objective, honest and supportive;
- > Act ethically and with respect towards all participants;
- > Respect and maintain strict confidentiality;
- > Contribute to discussion and resolution of issues raised in meetings; and
- > Participate in the Mentoring Program evaluation and review.

We acknowledge that either person has the right to discontinue mentorship for any reason, and we will follow the Mentor Program's early closure guidelines as outlined in the Mentoring Program Handbook.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions or concerns throughout the pilot mentoring program, please email [aitpm.ypn.qld@gmail.com](mailto:aitpm.ypn.qld@gmail.com) as per recent guidance. The QLD YPN Committee will keep in contact with both the mentor and mentee throughout the program.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the Planning Institute Australia (PIA) Mentoring Program Handbook in shaping the structure and content of these guidelines.