



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY
—
Sydney
Knowledge Hub

Inventor Mentoring Program

Program Guidelines

Apply to Participate

To apply as a mentee in the program, please fill out the following [application form](#) by Wednesday 7th August 2024.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please email Jane Cockburn, Program Manager, Sydney Knowledge Hub at jane.cockburn@sydney.edu.au

Introduction

The Sydney Knowledge Hub offers a mentor program for researchers who are considering the real-world impact that their research may have, and who have *no or very little experience with commercialisation*.

Through this pilot program, researchers will be matched with external mentors, who are there to provide support, guidance, and connections for those who may be thinking about market opportunities for the first time.

These guidelines provide information for mentees and mentors that have been selected to participate in the program. The Sydney Knowledge Hub will provide a structure for these conversations. Mentors and mentees may extend the relationship beyond these scheduled interactions.

Program Purpose

The purpose of this program is to give researchers who are new to commercialisation a safe, friendly thought partner with experience supporting entrepreneurs.

The purpose is to help researchers:

- Connect to an entrepreneurial community of support.
- Develop confidence in commercial understanding.
- Build interpersonal skills to communicate their research.
- Develop an understanding of what it takes to get a technology, process, or other invention to market.

The program provides an opportunity for mentees and mentors to develop a trusting relationship by meeting regularly and discussing matters relating to career development.

Participant Eligibility

Mentees must be a researcher (staff or higher degree researcher) at the University of Sydney at the start and for the duration of the program.

Mentors will be skilled external participants that have an interest and experience in supporting researchers in the early stages of commercialisation journey.

Mentees should apply via [this form](#) by 7th August 2024; mentors will be directly appointed.

Commitment

Mentees and mentors must commit to attending the six in-person sessions at the Sydney Knowledge Hub (Merewether Building on the Darlington Campus).

Lunch will be provided and there will be time for you to meet other researchers and speak with other mentors.

Session times:

- 12pm-1:30pm | Thursday 17th October 2024
- 12pm-1:30pm | Thursday 14th November 2024
- 12pm-1:30pm | Thursday 12th December 2024
- 12pm-1:30pm | Thursday 13th February 2025
- 12pm-1:30pm | Thursday 13th March 2025
- 12pm-1:30pm | Thursday 10th April 2025 + end of program celebration following.

In addition, mentees are required to attend three workshop sessions at the Sydney Knowledge Hub facilitated by [Cruxes Innovation](#). Mentors are invited may also choose to attend.

- Problem Discovery: 2pm – 4:30pm | Thursday 31st October 2024
- Validating your problem: 2pm – 4:30pm | Thursday 5th December 2024
- Communicating to partners & investors: 2pm – 4:30pm | Thursday 6th March 2025

Mentees and mentors also commit to completing program evaluation surveys online.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a learning and development approach that focuses on personal and professional growth by way of interpersonal connections. A mentorship is established on the assumption that individuals with greater experience and expertise (the mentor) can facilitate the learning and development of another (the mentee). Mentoring is relationship-oriented and involves more than just the transfer of knowledge. The key to its success lies in the quality of the relationship between the mentor and mentee, which must be based on trust, communication, commitment, honesty and understanding.

Roles and Responsibilities of Participants

Mentors and mentees work together to establish, maintain, and evaluate the relationship so the full benefits of mentoring can be achieved. The role and responsibilities should be clarified during the first meeting.

The Mentee

- Attends each meeting
- Is the driver of the relationship, and sets the agenda for each meeting, with the support of the Sydney Knowledge Hub
- Takes advice and is open to feedback
- Is proactive about managing the relationship and is organised and responsible, committed and engaged.
- Prepares areas of discussion & questions prior to meeting their mentor.
- Maintains trust and confidentiality to enable open communication

The Mentor

- Attends each meeting
- Guides, supports, and encourages their mentee
- Takes the time to understand their mentees by being approachable, respectful, actively listening, and asking the right questions
- Provides constructive feedback and relevant advice and acknowledges the perspectives of their mentee
- Maintains trust and confidentiality to enable open communication
- Models good practice

The Sydney Knowledge Hub

- Organises the sessions for mentors and mentees to connect
- Provides topics of exploration for mentors and mentees, including mentees guidelines.
- Supports both mentors and mentees in their relationship

Confidentiality for Mentors and Mentees

Topics discussed by mentors and mentees may be of a personal or controversial nature or have commercial sensitivity and therefore strict confidentiality must be maintained between mentors and mentees. Mentor and mentee agree to maintain confidentiality.

Matching Mentors and Mentees

The matching of mentors and mentees is undertaken by selection committee. It aims to best match participants' sector knowledge, interests, and compatibility.

The first meeting will provide an environment where both mentor and mentee can be formally introduced and meet other participants in the program, receive induction and ask questions about the program.

If either the mentor or mentee is uncomfortable with the pairing or decides the mentorship is not successful, the Program Manager will assist in re-matching the mentee with another mentor.

Closing the Mentorship

The formal mentorship between the mentor and mentee during the Program will run for seven months. At the end of this period, the mentor and mentee may decide that the mentorship has run its course and close the mentorship or opt to continue an informal mentorship beyond the formal mentoring program.

If you have any questions or input on this program, please contact:

Jane Cockburn

Program Manager

Jane.cockburn@sydney.edu.au