

**Pacific Futures Mentoring Programme
2026-2028 Handbook**

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: How much time will this really take?

Participating in the Programme sees you invest at least one hour per month of your time in the mentoring relationship. All pairs are required to participate in an orientation meeting, an end-of-Programme meeting, and complete the mid-Programme review and end-of-Programme evaluation.

Q: Is there any cost to taking part?

There is zero financial cost to participating in the Programme. The Programme assumes participants can access free online meeting platforms (Teams, Zoom or other) or communication apps (Whatsapp or Messenger) to connect with their partner. If pairs agree to meet in-person at a venue, cafe or restaurant, any costs related to doing so will be borne by pairs.

Q: What if my mentor is not in my discipline - does that matter?

Being paired with a mentor in your exact or similar field may not be possible and will depend on mentor applications received at the start of the cycle. The matching process will try to find the best fit for every mentee based not only on their field, but also in areas they need advice or support in and preferences as indicated in their registration form.

If your mentor is not in your discipline, consider the benefits of having a mentor from another field who can bring new insights or perspectives to your own. There is also an option to wait for another cycle when a mentor in your field does apply.

Q: Will anything I discuss be shared with my supervisor or employer?

No. The mentoring relationship is built on trust and respect, with all pairs required to sign a mentoring agreement at the start before entering into the mentoring relationship. This agreement and expectations outlined in the Programme Handbook underscore the importance of confidentiality.

Q: What do I do if my mentor/mentee does not respond to me?

Be patient. Give them time to respond. There are a number of reasons that could explain a delay. Allow at least 3 to 5 business working days for them to reply and then send them a follow up email checking in to see if they received your email.

Q: What do I do if I have tried multiple times and still not have heard back?

Contact the Programme Coordinator, who will check the contact details are correct, and also try on your behalf. If still unsuccessful, you will be offered a chance to re-match depending on suitability of options and/or defer your participation to the next mentoring cycle.

Q: Can I pause for a few weeks if fieldwork or family commitments intervene?

Yes. Talk to your pair and let them know if you need to take a “pause” or “break” and be clear about the length of time you need and the resumption date.

Q: What do I do if I no longer have time to commit to this mentorship?

Timely communication is key and respect for your partner must be upheld. Consider whether this is a temporary “break” or a permanent one, and make a call based on your circumstance. Let your mentor/mentee know whatever the case, as well as the Programme Coordinator.

Q: How do I approach my mentor in the first instance?

Start with a polite email introducing yourself. Start by getting to know each other and building rapport and trust.

Q: What advice do you have for a first-time mentor/mentee?

Be open and humble. Actively listen, engage and just be yourself.