

Young Innovators Program: Mentor FAQ's

1. ***Can I still be involved in this if I haven't done mentoring? If I haven't done project design before? If I'm not familiar with these types of topics?***

Yes! The Young Innovators Program has been designed so that innovators gain key skills and knowledge, through a series of workshops and experiences, run by Equal Ed, and a range of community and corporate partners. Mentors do **not** need to add value by providing further skills. Instead, mentors can add value through one or more of the following:

- a. Listening Reflectively:
 - i. Helping innovators reflect upon workshop experiences, and the key learnings which they have made
 - ii. Helping innovators 'connect the dots' between their project ideas and their learnings
 - iii. Prompting innovators with questions, and identifying areas of projects where further thought may be required
- b. Contextualising Issues
 - i. Sharing their insights on certain sectors, stakeholders, and community issues, based on career and lived experiences
 - ii. Helping innovators 'connect the dots' between their project ideas and motivations, and local community contexts
- c. Passing on Social Capital:
 - i. Connecting innovators with relevant networks (where relevant)
 - ii. Passing on learnings and experiences related to employment, education, and community sectors
- d. Supporting Project Design:
 - i. Helping innovators develop and manage realistic timelines and expectations for their project development
 - ii. Supporting innovators in the development of their projects

Equal Ed will also deliver training prior to commencement, and ongoing support throughout the program through a range of methods, to ensure that all mentors feel confident and supported (*see Q3 below*).

2. ***How will I be matched?***

Mentors will be matched with innovators based on how closely their experiences and field of expertise matches with the field of the innovators' project aspirations.

We may also match mentors based on other factors ***if it will provide a unique perspective relevant to the innovators' identity and needs.*** (These may include gender, cultural and ethnic background, etc.).

The main purpose of the matching process is to ensure mentors and innovators can relate to each other, build on each other's perspectives, and further the innovators' ability to reflect on their experiences as they plan their community innovation.

Mentors will also **only be matched with innovators from their LGA.**

2. ***What is the time commitment?***

Mentors involved in the program will have an ongoing commitment, along with a small number of 'one-off' commitments. A breakdown can be seen as follows:

Ongoing:

- 1 x 60-90mins meeting with innovators / fortnight
- 1 x 15mins check-in with Equal Ed staff / month

Once off:

- 1 x 2.5hr training session at start of program
- 1 x 2hr panel event mid-program
- Optional attendance to corporate workshops

3. ***What support will I have?***

You will be supported by Equal Ed staff throughout the mentoring program. There will be dedicated Equal Ed staff who will work with you, and supporting staff, to address any questions, concerns or issues that may arise.

Supports include:

- Initial training (*see Q6 below*)
- Monthly check-ins to monitor program progress, and troubleshoot any issues
- Fortnightly communication to pass on relevant program updates, and provide resources to support upcoming meetings after specific workshops

- Ongoing points of contact for any queries and concerns

4. ***What will the sessions focus on?***

Innovators will experience a range of workshops from corporate and community partners, on topics such as ‘Turning Ideas into Impact’; ‘Engaging with local communities’; ‘Sustainable Financial Strategies’; and ‘Developing Innovative Solutions’; before developing and pitching their projects.

Thus, conversations between mentors and innovators will likely focus on:

- Reflecting on learnings and experiences from workshops
- Contextualising learnings and motivations with local community needs
- Learning about the type of work and operations which council does in these areas
- Guidance about potential project ideas

As each mentor and innovator will form a unique relationship based on their experiences, perspectives, and an innovator's current project development idea, the above are guidelines rather than restrictions (*See Q1 above for more info*).

5. ***What else will be involved?***

Apart from developing a working relationship with a young innovator, mentors will have multiple other opportunities throughout the program. These include opportunities to:

- Connect with other mentors from various departments across both WyndhamCC and BrimbankCC
- Attend workshops targeted at innovators, networking with local community organisations and corporate partners such as Deloitte, KPMG, and Accenture
- Hear the final pitches of innovators during our final session, gaining an awareness of a range of new projects being developed by passionate young people in the local community

6. ***What will the training cover?***

The training will cover 6 main points:

1. Aims of Program
2. Matching Process and Mentee Profiles
3. Program Structure
4. Mentor Roles & Expectations
5. Highlighting Strengths of Mentor Perspectives
6. Practical Elements & Admin
 - a. (eg. Use of online platforms & child safety)

