



Youth for Water and Climate Programme

Mentoring Guide



Dear Mentor,

Welcome to the Erasmus+ Youth for Water and Climate Programme Mentorship Guide. This short document serves as a quick guide and reference document for the programme's mentors. Inside, you will find some general information about the programme, expectations, guidelines and helpful suggestions as well as a list of the participating mentees, and all the other information needed to successfully engage in this project.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for being part of the YWC Mentoring Programme and wish you a fulfilling experience.

The YWC Programme Organising Team

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The Youth Water & Climate Programme

The impacts of climate change continue to add more stress to water security and climate stability. For youth, the need for a sustainable future is especially important as they will have to live with the consequences of the choices we make today. Youth are already proposing innovative ideas and creating their own spaces for designing and improving the future state of water resources and climate stability, however they are limited by a lack of resources, capacity and connections. By equipping youth with the right conditions and resources to achieve their full potential, they can be agents of change by becoming future leaders, academics, professionals and entrepreneurs who will successfully address water & climate challenges, as well as contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This programme aims to address issues highlighted by youth and partner organizations related to capacity building, employability and a structure to better connect organizations and youth within the water & climate sectors. Against this backdrop, the following objectives have been set:

- To develop common and innovative methodologies to strengthen a global youth partnership that can address climate and water related issues and enhance outreach and impact.
- To support European youth in acquiring transversal and concrete skills in collaboration with programme partners at global, regional and country levels, enabling them to develop bankable projects or accessing employment opportunities that will contribute to the future condition of water and climate.

The programme has been co-created by the International Secretariat for Water, Solidarity Water Europe, Global Water Partnership, Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe, Global Water Partnership Hungary, CEWAS, and Good Planet Belgium. The programme is under continuous evolution and follows an iterative process of improvement, with the hope that it will increase and expand its impact and outreach with the course of time.

The programme will develop material which will be accessible to all European youth on the Youth for Water and Climate platform and will develop a sustainable youth programme which will accommodate a cohort of 20-30 young professionals. The first stage of this programme will select youth aged 18-30 from France, Sweden, Slovakia, Hungary and Belgium. During the selection process, priority will be given to youth with fewer professional water & climate opportunities so as to boost the development of the regions where they reside.

To support mentors in successfully guiding mentees, every mentee will complete a questionnaire about their professional needs and aspirations. Mentors will be able to use this to gain a better understanding of who their mentee is and how they can offer the best support.

In addition to the programme course material, project partners will provide mentors with support in the form of meetings and events. These will include an onboarding training, pre-curricular sessions, occasional opportunities to join evening networking sessions/events during the Blended Mobility periods, and other ad-hoc events.

Defining mentoring and the YWC Mentoring Programme

The YWC Programme has incorporated a mentoring component for participants as it is believed that having a mentor can be very beneficial when embarking on a water & climate career, since mentors can offer experience sharing, professional support and motivation.

Participants and mentors were matched as best as possible according to their professional backgrounds, interest areas and specializations. In mid January 2022, an information session was organized for potential mentors to familiarise themselves with the YWC programme.

Mentoring is a mutually beneficial development experience that can act as an important tool in an individual's professional growth. Although it can serve anyone at any point in their professional life it is particularly relevant in the early stages of one's career.

A mentor is:

- A guide to help the mentee navigate their professional journey
- A trusted and respected advisor
- Someone that explores with the mentee their current career situation, what they wish to achieve and how they can go about reaching their goals without prescribing specific solutions or career routes
- Someone that provides support and advice that empowers the mentee to explore, establish and pursue goals

The benefit of being a mentor

Mentoring is a relationship between two people which works towards professional development. It is based on mutual respect, trust and integrity.

Why is mentoring important?

Relationships drive growth, motivation, and inspiration in organizations and across sectors. Mentoring relationships have proved time and again to improve productivity, personal growth, and expansion of networks. Connecting with mentees and building these relationships can be a fulfilling part of one's career.

Some benefits we hope you will gain from this programme include:

- Gaining new insights and perspectives from different experiences
- Enhancing relationships with the younger generation by expanding your network
- Achieving personal growth and learning more about yourself
- Reflecting on your accomplishments
- Feeling more productive and giving back to society
- Increasing your awareness of talent across the globe
- Having fun

Role and code of conduct

As a mentor you will help your mentee navigate a career path and/or develop professional goals through a series of conversations with specific targets and time frames. Mentoring is a learning partnership that when done effectively can be beneficial for both the mentee and mentor. Below are some cornerstones of a mentoring relationship that will assist you in establishing a good rapport with your mentee:

Building trust

Trust is a cornerstone of effective mentoring relationships. As a mentor in an eight-month programme, remember that your mentee will need to trust you rather quickly in order to accomplish their goals. Everyone has a different trust profile. Some of us trust people quickly while others take longer, withholding trust until the other person has proven to be trustworthy. Keep this in mind as you get to know your mentee.



There are behaviours that erode trust in a mentoring relationship. These may include:

- Cancelling meetings for more important priorities
- Lack of follow-through on planned actions
- Impatient or unfocused listening (e.g. not being an active listener)
- Lack of preparedness
- Breaches of confidentiality

Listening and intuition

Some important traits of a mentor include empathy, impartiality, authenticity, and the ability to connect and impart trust. Research shows that these are more important than the professional skills a mentor may have. Reflect on how you display or convey these traits in your relationships and how you might use them in mentoring. Listen rather than tell, be present and turn off your inner dialogue. Avoid jumping to premature conclusions and be impartial and non-judgmental. Pay attention to the energy that the mentee emits as motivation can fade as time moves on.

Confidentiality

Personal and professional information divulged during a mentoring relationship may be confidential. It is expected that both parties not disclose such information to anyone else unless both mentor and mentee have agreed otherwise

Experience based guidance

We learn from our failures and from the mistakes we make, far more than we learn from our successes. Therefore, the more we encourage mentoring, the more we can grow and avoid avoidable mistakes and failures. In mentoring, it is important to provide experience-based guidance and help your mentee to not repeat mistakes that can be avoided. You are primarily a mentor because you are in a position of experience and therefore if you can pass this experience, knowledge and insight onto your mentee, you will help them to develop and grow.

The guidance and advice you offer your mentee should be practical and concrete advice. If there are ever instances where you are unsure of the correct advice or guidance, do not fall into generalised assumptions or ill-informed advice. Instead, be upfront and let your mentee know that you do not have the answers in these cases. It is perfectly okay to not have all the answers.

Setting expectations and accountability

Start from where your mentee is in their professional journey. It is important to set expectations at the start of a mentoring relationship, to ensure that it thrives and is seen as a success for both the mentor and mentee. As a mentor, it is vital that your mentee knows about your background and experience as well as the level of support you are willing and able to offer to them. In the introductory meeting, make sure you set expectations and be clear on what you can realistically help with. At the same time, ensure your mentee understands what you are there to support them with and what not. Mentees should already be clear on the role of the mentor however it is worth reiterating this in the initial meeting.

Work with the mentee to establish realistic goals and the creation of strategies/actions to accomplish them. Check in on the status of the goals and activities during the meetings. Support the completion and acknowledge the accomplishments.

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Expectations and communication

As a mentor it is expected that you will:

- Meet with your mentee at least once a month for the duration of the programme. However, we respect mentors' time availability and hope that mentors and mentees will agree on their individual schedule
- Review and support the development of professional goals
- Listen to their concerns
- Give honest and specific feedback and advice related to their professional career and aspirations
- Join the YWC Community of Practice on the [GWP Toolbox](#)
- Update the organizers if there is any change in your availability or issue in the mentoring relationship
- Participate in an evaluation exercise/meeting at the end of the programme

There are a total of two face-to-face blended mobility events organized during this programme, the first one took place this past February in Budapest, Hungary and the second one will take place this August in Stockholm, Sweden. Should any of the mentors want to partake in the mobility event in Stockholm the organisers and mentees would be delighted, and it would be a great honour to have you join us.

In the context of this mentoring programme, and in order to allow for a minimum amount of time for exchange with mentees, the organisers recommend devoting at least one meeting per month to mentoring. The duration of these meetings should not exceed 90mins, depending on the agenda set by the mentee.

The Community of Practice

The most important communication channel within this programme is the [Community of Practice platform](#). It has been created by organizers as a place for the programme's actors to have ample opportunities to cooperate, communicate and network throughout the whole project length.

To join the community, please register on the Global water Partnership's toolbox at the following link, www.gwptoolbox.org. You will then be added to the Community of Practice (CoP).

If you have any issues connecting to the Community, please contact Rianna Gonzales at rianna.gonzales@gwp.org.

Aside from the CoP, mentors and mentees will select the communication channel that is most suitable to them (whether that be Email, WhatsApp, Zoom etc.) to organize the monthly meetings and to exchange information.

For any concerns or questions can contact Jergus Semko or one of the other coordinators.

At the end of the project, the mentors will be invited to a follow-up meeting to review the outcomes of the project. At this point mentors will be asked if they want to be part of the open-contacts list within the Community of Practice network so as to build a growing and effective community.

Relevant meetings

The organizers will make the first introduction between the mentor and mentee via email. From this point onwards it will be the responsibility of the mentee to take charge and contact their respective mentor. This can happen via any communication channel, and it will be up to the mentor and mentee agree on a communication channel that works for both and to schedule the time, date and format of the first meeting.

The organizers recommend devoting at least one meeting per month to mentoring. The duration of these meetings is recommended to be no more than 90mins, depending on the agenda set by the mentee.

The mentees have been given guidance on what the first meeting should include, and they are responsible for creating the meeting agenda. Ask your mentee to send the agenda to you at least a week before your meeting, as this will give you the opportunity to reflect on it and plan how you can offer the best support.

Things to remember for meetings:

- Ask the mentee to come prepared with an agenda and meeting objectives
- Review action items from prior meetings
- Discuss anything that goes against the mentoring agreement (being late etc.)
- Stay focused on meeting objectives
- Summarize action items with deadlines
- Debrief results
- Check in with your mentee between meetings, if necessary, to ask about their progress or if any support is needed.

Mentoring relationship issues

As in any type of relationship, there is the possibility that the relationship won't go as expected. Mentors are reminded that it is up to the mentee to keep this relationship alive and to actively engage in conversation and cooperation since it is the mentor who is offering their valuable time.

Should the mentors encounter any issues which are getting in the way of their mentoring activities, such as spikes in professional workload, personal issues, etc. this should be clearly communicated to both mentee and the organizers to come up with an alternative set-up.

Any other issues that arise and can't be effectively solved between mentee and mentor should also be communicated immediately to the organizers. In the event that no resolution is found, organisers will consider changing mentor/mentee, terminating relationship, and alike.

Closing the mentoring relationship and providing feedback

This mentoring component of the YWC Programme will officially end in August 2022. However, it would be good to start winding down the communication at least a month before by reviewing the goals set in the introductory meeting and reflect on what has been accomplished, where you were at the beginning and where you are now.

At the end of a mentoring relationship, we would advise taking a few minutes to reflect on the experience and provide constructive feedback, both for the mentee and for the mentor. As a mentor, you should provide useful feedback that your mentee can walk away with and use in their career and future mentoring relationships. Equally, encourage your mentee to think about how you could improve the way you mentor in the future. Welcome feedback from your mentee and when providing feedback, you may want to consider the following:

- Was your mentee proactive in managing the relationship?
- Did they engage with their goals and targets effectively?
- Were they punctual and efficient in scheduling regular meetings?
- Did they make the most of the opportunities to be mentored?
- What could have they improved?

Evaluation guidelines

The mentors will be asked to evaluate the overall programme progression in the middle and at the end of the project. This is to ensure valuable feedback from their side and to ensure that the next iteration of this project can evolve and better reflect the needs of the beneficiaries and participants.

Between April and May, a brief evaluation meeting will take place and one wrap-up meeting will be conducted after eight months (at the end of the project). The evaluation will be in the form of a questionnaire and online meeting.

The evaluation will need to be filled in a specified amount of time in order to meet set deadlines. The actual dates will be disseminated when the time nears.

Annex A. Mentor Power Questions

As the mentor, your role is to guide the meeting, ask relevant questions and listen. Remember, you are NOT there to solve your mentee's issues, do the work for them or have them do work for you.

They are in the driver's seat, and you are their guide, so have the following in mind:

- 1. Encourage the mentee to come prepared and bring relevant material and information to the meeting.
- 2. Greet your mentee warmly, build rapport.
- 3. Discuss action items from the previous meeting with the meeting preparation form (found in materials tab in Community). Do not judge mentee if they do not complete all action items. Discuss the roadblocks in completing the items and give support. New commitments for action items can be set.
- 4. Establish new objectives for each meeting. Sometimes the outcomes will be about other issues that have come up. Once issues are resolved, the mentor can bring the mentee back to the original goals set and how to accomplish them.
- 5. Explore the set objectives. Ask questions, share, and guide. The mentor will ask the mentee what actions need to be taken to achieve their goals. This is a great time to ask questions so the mentee can get find their own answers. After the mentee explores ideas, the mentor will suggest ideas and shares experiences.
- 6. Discuss plan for possible roadblocks. This will allow the mentee to realize when the roadblocks occur and how to effectively deal with them.

Annex B. Mentor Power Questions

GETTING STARTED

- 1. What do you hope to accomplish through our mentoring relationship?
- 2. What characteristics are you seeking in a mentor?
- 3. How might I mentor or coach you? Do you like me to be really honest and get to the point, or is there another way that works for you?
- 4. What principles should we develop to manage confidentiality?
- 5. What are your expectations regarding this mentoring relationship?
- 6. What questions do you have about our mentoring relationship?
- 7. What should we do if we find we are not compatible?

VALUES AND VISIONS

- 1. What are your life dreams?
- 2. In what way have your dreams turned into plans?
- 3. What would you like your life to be like in five years' time?
- 4. How can you ensure that your work life is meaningful and relevant to you personally and professionally?
- 5. What five values – in order – are most important to you?
- 6. What is your greatest talent?
- 7. Who are your most inspiring role models and what values do they have?
- 8. To what degree do you believe you are living up to your potential??
- 9. What legacy would you like to leave?
- 10. What is one thing you could stop doing, or start doing, or do differently, starting today that would most improve your professional life?

GOALS AND ACTIONS

- 1. What important goal in your life would you like to give more attention to?
- 2. What is it that makes that goal important to you?
- 3. What do you need to achieve your life goals?
- 4. What challenges are you facing right now at work/school?
- 5. What are your current work/study goals?
- 6. How do you measure your goals?
- 7. What is the most difficult goal for you to accomplish?
- 8. What are you currently doing to overcome this difficulty?
- 9. What would you attempt to do, if you knew you could not fail?
- 10. What is the worst thing that could happen if you attempted that thing – and failed?
- 11. What work goals would you like to achieve in the next three to six months?
- 12. What is attractive about these goals?
- 13. How realistic are the goals?
- 14. What resources are needed to help you achieve your goals?
- 15. What kind of timeline needs to be established to help with your goals?

LIFE AND LEARNING

- What are ways that you cope with stress and deadlines?
- In what areas would you describe yourself as highly flexible?
- What ethical principles govern your decision-making?
- In what areas would you describe yourself as highly inflexible?
- What sustains you when everything and everyone around you seems to be in chaos or against you?
- What have you learned from your own mistakes, failures or disappointments?
- How do you manage the balance between your work life and your personal life?
- What has been the most difficult lesson you have had to learn?
- When you are trying to learn something new, how do you typically go about it and how does that work for you?

Annex C - Development Activity Suggestions

- Sharing career history
- Address mentee challenges
- Identifying goals
- Discuss interpersonal skills
- Role play
- Provide or suggest networking opportunities
- Provide oral and written feedback
- Suggest articles and books
- Connect your mentee with individuals for informational interviews
- Review samples of your mentees work
- Train or guide the mentee in a specific skill
- Recommend relevant trainings or workshops available
- Conduct a SWOT analysis with your mentee



<https://youthwaterclimate.org/>