



Youth for Water and Climate Programme

Mentee Guide



What is the Mentee Guide?

Welcome to the Erasmus+ Youth for Water and Climate program Mentee Guide. This short document serves as a quick guide and reference document for project's mentees. Inside, you can find basic information about the project, its timeline, and all the other information needed to successfully engage in this project.

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Basic Information about the YWC Program

The impacts of climate change continue to add more stress to water security. 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 to design and improve their future but they are limited by resources, capacity and connections. Once they are equipped to realize their full potential, they can become leaders and entrepreneurs in addressing the challenges of sustainable management of water resources and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This program aims to address issues highlighted by youth and partner organizations related to capacity building, employability and a structure to better connect organizations and youth. As such, the following objectives have been identified:

- To develop common and innovative methodologies to strengthen a global youth partnership addressing climate and water related issues and enhance its outreach and impact.
- - To support European youth in acquiring transversal and specific skills in collaboration with program partners at global, regional and country levels allowing them to develop bankable projects or accessing employment opportunities and thus contributing to building a water secure world

The program is co-created by 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. It is designed with a continuous iteration in mind, in order to build reputation and achieve maximum effectiveness over the course of years.

The program 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 program which will accommodate a cohort of 20 young professionals. The first iteration of this program will target youth aged 18–30 years old from France, Sweden, Slovakia, Hungary and Belgium.

In order to help them with gaining the real-world experience, applicants will receive a mentor who best fits their needs and who will help them to figure out what kind of situation they need to prepare for.

Apart from the actual material, the project partners will be offering the mentees two blended mobilities and networking opportunities, together with some field trips.

The main contact point for all mentees :

**Jergus Semko –
jergus.semko@gwpcee.org;
+421 904 004 277**

In case of any issue, mentees have to contact Mr. Semko first. He will also be present at both main live events to support all participants and ensure a seamless flow of the program.

Overview of the YWC Mentoring Component

As part of the wider YWC Programme a mentoring component is also available for the participants. Using the profiles and descriptions submitted in the application process, mentors were identified to best fit these criteria. In the middle of January 2022, an information session was organized for potential mentees to get them familiar with the basic information about the YWC program. During the same time, a matching process ensured that mentors are adequately matched with right mentees, based on each other's background and preferences.

An online on-boarding session with mentees was planned for January 2022. During this session, the mentees were presented with the overall program and provided with general information. The Mentee Guideline document, providing additional information such as roles and responsibilities, was distributed before the first Blended Mobility.

Communication

The foundation and basic communication channel for the YWC project will be the CoP platform. The platform will provide the project actors with ample opportunities to cooperate, communicate and network throughout the whole project length. Mentees and mentors are invited to join the CoP platform to exchange and collaborate. That said, mentors and mentees are invited to select the communication channel of their choosing (Email, WhatsApp, etc.) to organize the monthly meetings and to exchange information. Two in-person workshops, one in February and one in August, will act as another major project aspect. The first one happening in Budapest, Hungary, and the second one in Stockholm, Sweden.

If possible, the mentors will be invited to join a networking session during the workshop in Stockholm. During these workshops, the project partners will create an open-minded environment, focused on supporting the needs and inspiring cooperation between the mentors and the mentees, as well as between the mentees themselves.

Roles and responsibilities of the Mentee and code of conduct

- The first thing to clarify in terms of roles and responsibilities of the mentees is that the communication between any given individuals needs to be clear and honest. The relationship between a mentee and mentor may be brand new so it is important that positivity and respect for both sides is reinforced.
- The role of the mentees is to create clear expectations and goals for the mentee/mentor relationship based on their own professional objectives which were determined in the YWC journey. It is the mentee's responsibility to take the lead in organizing the meetings with the mentors, setting the agenda for each meeting with clear objectives and following up on action points.
- The mentees are also expected to actively listen to the guidance of mentors based on their own professional and maybe even personal experiences. The mentors have been paired with each participant based on their profile, area of work and the varying point of their professional career. The mentor will be there to help the mentees with the curriculum content, guidance on entering the professional work place and provide support in the form of theoretical as well as the practical examples to further guide the mentee throughout the YWC journey and possibly beyond. To ensure the reinforcement of positivity and reassurance, mentees are suggested to actively engage in the mentoring experience and seize additional opportunities which might be proposed by the mentor such as networking events.



It is imperative for the mentees to be open to different points of view, as the mentors might sometimes utilize different approaches that are perhaps unknown or unfamiliar to the mentees. One of the main roles for the mentors will be to help the mentees clarify the objectives, set the targets and help structuring mentees' journey in the water and climate field.

The mentees will also be interacting with other participants of different backgrounds and experiences and we highly recommend to share with your fellow peers to gain another perspective. This has the potential to blossom into something unique.

As stated before, this will be an equal relationship between the mentors and the mentees. The mentees are not to agree to do mentors' work if they did not agree to it in a separate agreement from the YWC project. Mentees are also required to promptly and properly announce any major change in their availability or any other situation that can affect the rest of the group or the whole program. For this purpose, the aforementioned focal point was created as well.

The project organizers envisioned that the mentors will dedicate a few hours a month to this program. One meeting per month between mentees and mentors is expected. . . However, mentors' time availability needs to be respected and the mentors and mentees must clearly discuss their availabilities and individual schedules.



The Introductory Meeting

Once you have been introduced to the mentor assigned to you, it is time to have the first meeting with your mentor. You will be required to initiate the first meeting. Whether over a phone call, video call or in-person meeting, an introductory meeting is an essential first step for mentoring. The introductory meeting should cover the following points, though not limited to them, and it is important to discuss them openly and honestly, straight away:

- Brief introduction of both of you.
- How often should you both meet or speak?
- What will be the best format for communication?
- What can the mentor offer?
- What is the mentee looking for?
- What are the expectations by the end of the programme?

Do not be afraid to set the expectations at this stage - it makes the entire mentoring process a lot easier and you will be starting off on the right foot. The meeting can last however long both parties wish for it to. We would recommend at least 45 minutes in the first meeting, as this can help both parties to get to know one and other and really discuss the objectives for the mentoring relationship. If you are conducting the mentoring relationship virtually, we would always recommend video calling, where possible. Video calling will add a more personal approach to the relationship and help you to begin to build rapport straight away.

Setting the Expectations

It is important to set expectations at the start of a mentoring relationship, in order to ensure it thrives and is seen as a success for both the mentor and mentee. As a mentee, it is vital that your mentor knows about your background, experience to-date and goals, but also that they disclose what level of support they are willing and able to offer to you. Is this a check in every week or a call once a month or is it possible to meet face to face? Ensure, within the introductory meeting, you set expectations and be clear on what you are realistically looking for help with. At the same time, ensure your mentor understands what your objectives are for being mentored.

Reflect and set actionable goals

As a mentee, it is vital that you take time to reflect on what your mentor is telling you, the guidance they are providing you with and how you can use this to reach your goals and objectives. Remain curious throughout the mentoring relationship and ask your mentor questions about their career, the challenges they may have faced and how they might approach the goals and objectives that you have. The mentor's job is to share their experience and help guide you in your career development.

For your mentor to do this effectively, they may well encourage you to stop and reflect on what they are telling you, during the mentoring meetings. Be sure to listen carefully, take notes and take time to reflect, both in the meetings and afterwards. You can use your YWC Notebook/Journal to take notes and useful recommendations and advice. During mentoring meetings, there may be periods of silence between you and your mentor. That is okay. Whilst silence between you may feel uncomfortable at the start, it should be something you get used to over time and can help you to really consider how you can develop your career.

As well as listening to your mentor's advice and guidance, you should be responsible for setting actionable and realistic goals that you can work towards. Whilst an overarching objective for the 8 months is a good starting point, you should also break down your goals into more manageable and 'bite-sized' goals, which you can complete on a weekly or monthly basis. These will help to give your mentoring meetings structure and can guide your meeting agendas with your mentor.

Closing the Mentoring Relationship

This mentoring component of the YWC Programme officially ends in August 2022, including, so there is a clear end for the mentor/mentee relationship. However, it would be good to start winding down the communication at least a month or two 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.

Unresponsive Mentor

Sometimes mentors can slowly disappear, or meetings become less and less frequent (please remember it is your duty and the mentee to keep initiating the meetings), and it can be tricky to follow up on them. This can happen even though it is not ideal. If you feel that your mentor is not engaged, or that they are beginning to feel unable to further support you, it is best to have an upfront conversation and decide to end the mentoring relationship. If you had a successful introductory mentoring meeting, then you should have already discussed the frequency of meetings and the time that they are able to allocate, so do use this as a guide. If the mentor is not keeping to the decisions that were agreed to at the introductory meeting, please contact the focal point for the mentoring component or your programme focal point.

Providing Feedback

At the end of a mentoring relationship, we would advise taking a few minutes to think about and provide constructive feedback, both ways. As a mentee, you should provide feedback that your mentor can take with them, going forwards into their career and future mentoring relationships. Equally, encourage your mentor to think about how you could improve the way you have been mentored, for the future. Welcome feedback from your mentor and when providing feedback, you may want to consider the following:

- Did your mentor offer effective support?
- Was their experience valuable and aligned with your objectives?
- Were they punctual to meetings and invested in them?
- Did they engage with your objectives and targets, effectively?
- Did they make the most of the opportunities as a mentor?
- What could they have improved upon?

Evaluation of Mentoring Programme

At the 8-month programme, the mentees will be asked to evaluate the overall programme progression in the middle and at the end of the project. This is to gather valuable feedback from the mentee perspective to ensure that the next iteration of this programme can evolve and better reflect the needs of the target beneficiaries.

The evaluation will take a form of a questionnaire and an online meeting. The evaluation will need to be filled in a specified amount of time in order to meet set deadlines. The specific dates of the evaluation will be shared when nearing closer to the required time.



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