

Surf Life Saving Australia - Circular

Title:	Women's Mentoring Program 3 – November 2021
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Audience:	All club members
From:	Claire Bennett, Development & Participation Coordinator
Date:	20 th August 2021
Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Women's Mentoring Program – third cohort commencing 26 October 2021 Call for nominations for mentors and mentees from membership, closing date Sunday 26 September 2021.

Introduction

SLSA embraces the importance of a diverse and inclusive organisation, including gender equality, and seeks to increase the number of female members who hold leadership roles within SLS nationally. The Women's Mentoring Program (The Program) supports and encourages confident, strong and skilled female representation within SLS, strengthening leadership skills, and identifying, and developing the next generation of female leaders to position SLS for the future.

It was recognised that a more deliberate focus was required to support the identification and development of emerging female leaders within SLS to ensure there is visibility and support of women ready for leadership positions, so they can fully utilise their potential to make a difference to our organisation, and so the Womens Mentoring Program was launched in July 2020.

The Program promotes women within SLS, facilitating empowerment, support and leadership skills which can be applied to their paid roles inside and outside of SLS, volunteer activities and everyday life. The Program promotes ongoing supported pathways of personal and professional development as well as networking opportunities. Each mentee is selected based on demonstrated leadership abilities and their potential and willingness to develop further in this area and move into leadership positions within SLS.

The Program supports Surf Life Saving 2025 Strategic Plan and our Mission to "save lives, create great Australians and build better communities" by developing a more capable and gender diverse leadership pipeline so our organisation can better reflect the demographics of our nation (50.2% female) and movement (45% female).

The Program was first launched as part of our 2020 celebrations to recognise the 40-year milestone of women in SLS on 1 July 2020, kicking off with 20 Mentors and 20 Mentees. We launched Cohort two in February 2021 with 42 ladies, and for Cohort Three we want to grow the Program and invite younger females to join. For the first time we are inviting young females from the age of 16 years to apply. We also wish to increase the intake from 20 mentors and 20 mentee's to 40 mentors and 40 mentees! We have taken the feedback on board from our members and can see the enthusiasm for this Program.

What are the individual benefits?

For the Mentee:

- Build confidence, capability and interpersonal relationship skills
- Supports them to take control of their own leadership capability and capacity by providing an opportunity to learn skills and behaviours and enhance their support networks
- Life engagement of our female members, providing networking and ongoing support groups, increasing their sense of belonging.

For the Mentor:

- Opportunity to be part of a legacy, give back and pass on personal and professional learnings, increasing their self-worth
- Enhance interpersonal and professional skills increasing personal value to the organisation and re-energising their engagement with SLS
- Strengthen coaching and leadership skills and gain insights into issues faced by members and the community from diverse backgrounds

What will the Program entail?

- The Mentee is responsible for establishing the path they would like to follow during the mentoring process. The main aim of mentoring is to help them determine their broad career and personal development goals and define a plan to help them achieve them.
- The Mentee is responsible for arranging meetings and setting the agenda. They need to take a proactive role in shaping the relationship with their mentor and put the time to best use.
- Mentoring meetings can occur in many ways. Mentor and Mentee need to agree on frequency, meeting length and regularity of meeting. Mentoring meetings usually run for 1 – 2 hours, although this may vary. We recommend meeting every 4-6 weeks. Most of our matches are not in the same state, so your meetings will be done over the phone, FaceTime or Zoom. You might also like to stay in touch by text in between meetings.
- We will have initial training for the Mentors and mentees before you get started, and this will introduce you to the online platform from McCarthy Mentoring which will guide you through The Program, and also help you to understand the mentoring relationship.
- There will also be workshops which SLSA will arrange every few months which you can attend should you wish to (online) which will further develop your skills in a number of ways, both personally and professionally.
- Most importantly, you will have an incredible support network of like-minded women at your fingertips to reach out to.

Mentor and Mentee feedback from Cohort 1 & 2

The mentee program has brought together some of the most knowledgeable, intelligent and dedicated females within SLS, essentially creating a melting pot of the best talent and leadership within the organisation. The mentor I have been matched with has absolutely exceeded my expectations. It's great to learn from someone who I aspire to both professionally and in terms of surf achievements.

Selection in this program has been one of the most significant achievements of my life so far. Little did I know that this program would offer such an opportunity for growth and reflection in both my career, SLS aspirations and my family life. My mentor is a fabulous woman who has experienced so much both in her career, community service and family. Her passion and her ability to reflect on situations in a positive and constructive way leaves me feeling energised and empowered each time we meet. I am so glad I took the plunge and completed the application. I am sure, in my mentor, I have made a friend for life!

The Women's Mentoring Program has been a great opportunity to assist other women as they try to find their place in our great organisation. As a mentor I have gained just as much from the experience as my mentee. You never stop learning and this program has provided me with the opportunity for self-reflection and evaluation to help grow me as a person too!

Overall I am very grateful for this experience, being part of this positive messaging that the program sends out to Women! It has inspired me, increased my confidence, and I'm proud to be taking on new roles. Hopefully I can in turn inspire other women in my club that change is possible, and women (of any age) can have a place at the table.

I think the program is exceptional - and really is the start of some inroads into changing the male/female balance in leadership with SLS by providing aspiring young leaders with the support they need to take on those leadership positions at their club and beyond, and break through some of the barriers that currently exist.

Program Timeline

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| • Mentee and mentor nominations due | 26 September 2021 |
| • Successful Mentor/mentee contacted | 13 - 20 October 2021 |
| • Program Launch (online) | 26 October 2021 |
| • Announce Mentors and Mentees | 26 October 2021 |
| • Mentor and Mentee Workshop/s (online) | November 2021 (TBC) |
| • Mentee Program reviews and workshops | Quarterly from November 2021 |

Where can I nominate for The Program?

Mentor expression of interest form [Click Here](#)

Mentee expression of interest form [Click Here](#)

(nominees need to be over the age 16. We have 2 age categories, 16-20 and over 21)

Please note that the closing date for nominations is **Sunday 26 September 2021**.

Further information

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback regarding the Women's Mentoring Program, please contact Claire Bennett at development@slsa.asn.au.

Our thanks to [McCarthy Mentoring](#) for their ongoing support of The Program.



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