

INFORMATION PACK 2022

Women in Rail Mentoring Program

At the ARA we are committed to promoting diversity and increasing female representation at all levels of the rail industry. Our Women in Rail Mentoring Program was established to support, guide and retain women working in rail through a tailored professional and leadership development program.

Female mentees are paired with male or female mentors who can share their own career experiences and offer advice to support the mentee's career and leadership development. This is a program that has proved popular since its inception in 2019, empowering women to pursue rewarding careers in the industry.

The 2022 program will be delivered in a virtual format, with a face-to-face event for participants expected to take place later in the year, subject to COVID-19 restrictions. Based on the feedback of 2021 participants, the duration of the program has been increased from six to seven months to provide more time for the professional development of mentees.

[>> A best-practice guide to virtual mentoring by Art of Mentoring](#)

Why is Mentoring important?

Professional mentoring is a developmental relationship in which a mentor takes time to assist the career and professional development of a mentee. A mentoring relationship is one that is built on trust, in which there is an exchange of knowledge, experience and goodwill.

Participants in mentoring programs report a number of benefits including: improved confidence; self-awareness, clearer career direction; better communication skills; listening skills; feedback skills; more assertive communication; and enhanced management skills. Participating in a mentoring program can lead to greater job satisfaction, better performance and improved professional confidence.

Benefits of the Program

For Mentees:

- Engagement with knowledgeable and experienced rail professionals
- Guidance and support regarding workplace matters and career development
- Enhancing leadership skills and capability
- Excellent networking opportunities
- Receiving feedback and developmental guidance
- Identifying professional growth opportunities
- Support with career planning in the rail industry
- Exchange of expertise focusing on specific industry issues
- Goal setting
- Gaining new perspectives from outside your organisation

For Mentors:

- Satisfaction in helping others
- Giving back to industry or your profession
- Supporting rail industry emerging leaders

- Staying abreast of issues relevant to industry
- Further development of mentoring skills such as listening, asking questions, guiding, providing feedback, communication and interpersonal skills
- Gaining new perspectives
- Developing business networks
- Engaging with mentees from different organisations, sectors of the industry and locations around Australia and New Zealand

Some examples of what mentors may assist with:

- Act as a source of information and insight
- Suggest relevant options regarding career development or strategies for achieving professional goals
- Recommend resources to expand knowledge in a particular industry area
- Facilitate improvement of specific skills
- Help a mentee solve professional challenges in their working life
- Discuss issues of professional ethics, workplace related issues and options of how these may be addressed

The program is not aimed at directly securing job opportunities for mentees, however will aim to facilitate longer term career progression as an indirect result.

Who can participate as a mentee?

- The program is open to **female employees of ARA member organisations only** who have been involved in the rail industry for 24 months or more on the date of application. Mentees can be paired with mentors of either gender - this is to acknowledge the role of male champions of change and diversity in the industry
- Mentees are required to obtain approval from their employer to participate in the program. **Employers are asked to cover the program fee of their nominated mentee at \$350 plus GST.** *The ARA maintains a reduced rate to acknowledge the financial pressures being experienced by rail organisations during this time. The program fee does not include costs associated with participation in any face-to-face events; tickets to attend such an event would need to be covered by mentees' and mentors' organisations separately.*
- Interested candidates are to submit an application specifying their area of professional interest/potential outcomes as well as responses to other questions for consideration by the ARA.
- The ARA selection committee will seek to ensure a spread of mentees from a variety of ARA member companies, and the most suitable match between mentor and mentee pairs.

Who can participate as a mentor?

- Either gender
- Rail professionals with career experience greater than 10 years (this includes rail and non-rail experience)
- Employment with an ARA member organisation is mandatory
- Capacity to commit time to engage with their mentee (as per the table on page 5)
- A passion to see people reach their full potential
- Champions of diversity

- Willingness to share industry specific expertise
- Good reputation for values and conduct
- Proven excellent communication skills, with an ability to challenge and encourage mentees and enhance their professional development
- Personable and outcomes focused
- High achievers
- Located anywhere in Australia and New Zealand

Mentee responsibilities

- **'Drive' the mentoring relationship – give your mentor direction about what you want from the program and be responsible for booking online meetings**
- Respect your mentor's time and also your own. Make sure you give this program your full attention and devote enough time to achieve the outcomes you are seeking
- Undertake the program training provided
- Prepare for your meetings to maximise mentors time and the experience
- Read and abide by the Code of Conduct (page 5)
- Respond to your mentor and the ARA staff in a timely manner
- Complete the short feedback surveys sent to you to ensure we can continue to improve the program
- Advise the ARA staff immediately if there are problems or you cannot fulfil your responsibilities

Mentor responsibilities

- **Be available and accessible to the mentee according to the meeting frequency guidelines of this program. Understand that, if you cancel or postpone meetings frequently, you may send the wrong signal to your mentee and they might give up trying to contact you**
- Undertake the training provided. It will help you, even if you are an experienced manager
- Listen more than you talk
- You may not have the answers to all your mentee's questions. You are not required to go beyond the bounds of your experience or expertise
- Read and abide by the Code of Conduct (page 5)
- Respond to your mentee and the ARA staff in a timely manner
- Complete the short feedback surveys sent to you
- Advise the ARA staff immediately if there are problems or you cannot fulfil your responsibilities

Program format and communication

Mentees and mentors will be expected to complete the Art of Mentoring training online to prepare for their mentoring relationship.

Mentors and mentees will be expected to be in contact each three weeks via their choice of online communication method, e.g. phone, email or videoconferencing.

During the program, mentees and mentors will receive regular communications from the ARA, access to support materials and be provided with helpful tips and information via webinars.

During and at the end of the seven-month program, participants will be invited to provide feedback to the ARA about their experience.

The ARA will be looking to organise participation in a face-to-face event for mentees and mentors, subject to COVID-19 restrictions. Ticket costs to attend such event would need to be covered separately.

Resources and program materials for participants

- Access to the online platform
- Online tool kits and resources
- Art of Mentoring online training
- Participation in the program webinars
- Certificates of completion
- [Women in Rail Network hosted by the ARA on LinkedIn](#)
- [Young Rail Professionals Network hosted by the ARA on LinkedIn](#)

Once participants have been selected and matched, all the necessary materials will be made available online.

Program fees

- Mentors: free
- Mentees: \$350 plus GST. This includes participation in the program, webinars and supporting online resources.

Mentee program fees do not include the cost of participating in any face-to-face events.

Program capacity

Up to 60 pairs, subject to sufficient applications and high-quality matches.

Application process

Mentees and mentors will be asked to complete an application form to assess their eligibility for the program and to collect details about what they are looking for in a mentoring partner. To ensure quality and integrity of the program, applications will be reviewed by the ARA and selected applicants will progress to the matching process that aligns suitable mentees and mentors for the best program outcome.

Certificates

Certificates of completion will be provided to mentees and mentors upon conclusion of the program in PDF format.

Indication of the time commitment for mentors and mentees

Activity	Approx. length
Training, reading and webinars	About 4 days in total
Preparation and time spent in mentoring conversations and follow-ups	1-2 hours each three weeks
Program evaluation surveys	½ hour in total

Key dates (dates may slightly vary)

Activity	Approx. date
Applications Open	15 February 2022
Program Information Webinar	22 February 2022
Applications Close	25 March 2022
Matching Pairs, Confirmation to Participants for both programs	29 April 2022
Program Launch Webinar	13 May 2022
Program Review Webinar	5 August 2022
Completion of the Program	December 2022

Additional webinars to provide support for participants may be scheduled during the program

Code of Conduct

In applying for and entering into the Women in Rail Mentoring Program, mentees and mentees agree to abide by the following Code of Conduct:

1. Demonstrating commitment to the relationship and getting the most out of the Mentoring Program.
2. Both mentors and mentees have a responsibility to invest their time, skills and experience into the partnership. Mentors and mentees must respect each other's time and other responsibilities, ensuring they do not impose beyond what is reasonable.
3. All participants must maintain confidentiality and privacy of any information discussed during the program.
4. It is recognised by both mentors and mentees that the ARA is not responsible for any career advice provided during the program; participants should use their best judgement in determining whether to follow recommendations received during the course of mentoring.
5. Both mentors and mentees may request to opt-out from the relationship if they feel it is not working for them. However, they have a responsibility to discuss options to improve their relationship before deciding on this step.

Privacy policy

Information about the program privacy policy with regards to the personal information of all program applicants is available via <https://artofmentoring.net/privacy/>

What do I do next?

Submit your application by completing the online application form.

Mentees will be asked questions about their background, and what they would like to achieve by working with a mentor for seven months.

Mentors will be asked about their career experience and areas in which they feel comfortable mentoring. Please give as much information as you reasonably can as it will assist the matching process. You will be advised if there is a suitable match by the end of April 2022.

Frequently asked questions

How long will the Mentoring Program run for?

Both Mentoring Programs will run for seven months from May 2022 to December 2022.

Is the program open to ARA members and non-members?

Only employees of ARA members organisations can participate as mentors and mentees.

What's the cost?

Employers are asked to cover the program cost of their nominated mentee of \$350 plus GST. The ARA maintains a special reduced rate to acknowledge the financial pressures being experienced by rail organisations during this time.

Mentors participate free of charge.

Mentee program fees do not include costs associated with participation in any additional face-to-face events.

How many people can participate in the program?

Up to 60 pairs for the Women in Rail Mentoring Program (subject to sufficient applications and high-quality matches).

Why do you need me to provide so much information on my application form?

The information you provide will help us 'match' the right mentee with the right mentor, based on experience, skills and what you both want to achieve from the program.

What are the matching principles of the program?

The matching process is primarily based on the requirements relating to career/professional development areas that a mentee would like to advance and a mentor is ready to add value to.


When will I know if I've been successful, and if so, who I've been matched with?

Once the selection/matching process is finalised, we will contact you to confirm whether you've been accepted into the program and who has been selected as your mentoring partner. It's important to note we won't 'match for matching sake' to ensure high quality and integrity of the program. You should hear from us by late April as to whether your application has been accepted.

How often does a pair communicate?

A pair should communicate at least once every three weeks.

Will discussions between mentees and mentors be confidential?



Absolutely! Great mentee/mentor relationships are based first and foremost on trust. Discussions between mentors/mentees in the program are not reportable as part of the program. Mentor/mentee pairs are encouraging to discuss upfront how you will handle confidentiality.

I participated in the program as a mentee in the past, can I do the program again with a different mentor?

Unfortunately, mentees cannot repeat the program to allow opportunity for others to participate. However, previous mentees are encouraged to apply as mentors subject to eligibility requirements.

Contact

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