

# Pathways Alum Mentoring

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

2024



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PATHWAYS  
TO POLITICS  
PROGRAM  
FOR WOMEN  
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## General FAQs

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### **What is the time commitment for the mentoring program?**

The Pathways Alum Mentoring program will run for eight months starting in January/February 2024, with a minimum of four one-hour mentoring sessions.

### **Once I am matched, what happens next?**

Once matched, participants will be introduced via email with the contact details of their mentor, then the mentoring experience can begin! Where possible, the PAM team will include the details of an assistant/diary manager to assist with scheduling meetings with the mentor.

### **Who initiates contact in the mentoring relationship?**

Mentees are responsible for driving the mentoring partnership, this includes making initial contact and setting up all mentoring meetings.

### **What do I need to do before my first mentoring meeting?**

Before the first mentoring meeting, mentees are expected to have read the PAM Guidelines and associated policies. The PAM team will also provide a recording of the mentee induction webinar to help mentees make the most of the experience.

### **When and where do mentoring meetings occur?**

We expect most meetings will be held online (e.g. via Zoom), but mentees may also meet face-to-face if this preferred for both parties. Mentoring meetings should ideally commence within the first month of initial contact. It is up to the mentees and mentors to decide how often to meet and agree on the most suitable timing of each meeting. The minimum expectation is for four one-hour sessions.

### **What should we discuss during our mentoring meetings?**

The mentoring relationship could focus on many different areas, for example skills development, career guidance, and professional growth. We recommend mentees reflect on their journey to date to identify priority areas and/or skills and experience gaps they wish to progress throughout the year, and proactively explore how the mentor might be able to support this within the mentoring discussions. To help focus the time together, we recommend mentees propose an agenda in advance of each meeting.

### **What support is available through the PAM program?**

In addition to the PAM Guidelines and FAQ document, mentees will have two scheduled calls with a local PAM team member to check-in and make sure they are comfortably progressing in the mentoring relationship. All responses gathered will be kept confidential.

**How can I make the most of my mentoring experience?**

Open communication is the key to any good relationship. As such we recommend the following for mentors and mentees to get the most out of the experience.

We ask that mentors support their mentees by:

- Understanding their political journey to date;
- Providing practical guidance around potential strategies required to become elected;
- Providing a safe place for discussion without judgement;
- Challenging assumptions and preconceptions about how to succeed;
- Encouraging self-directed reflection, analysis and problem solving; and
- Acting as a trusted mentor that maintains Alum confidence, motivation, and resilience in their pursuit of public office.

We ask that mentees fully engage with their mentor by:

- Coming prepared for meetings, and acting in a professional and authentic manner;
- Being clear about their political journey to date, and sharing reflections on strengths and skill/experience gaps;
- Defining priority areas they wish to progress throughout the year, and proactively exploring how the mentor might be able to support this within the mentoring discussions;
- Being open to feedback and receptive to listening and learning from their mentor;
- Spending time reflecting on the advice and knowledge shared during meetings, and identifying how they can leverage this to take further steps towards public office.

## Troubleshooting FAQ

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### **What should I do if I don't hear from the mentor after reaching out?**

Where possible, the PAM team will include in the introduction email the details of an assistant/diary manager to help schedule meetings with the mentor. We encourage you to include this person in all communications to the mentor.

If you have made the initial contact and have not received a response from the mentor's team, please contact your local PAM Administrator as soon as possible.

### **I'm a mentor and my mentee has not contacted me, what do I do?**

If your mentee has not contacted you to organise a meeting, mentors are welcome to make contact with them directly. If there is still no contact, please contact a member of the Pathways Alum Mentoring team as soon as possible to follow up with the mentee.

### **What if the relationship with my mentor/mentee is not working?**

If for any reason the mentoring relationship is not progressing ideally, please contact a member of the PAM team to discuss the situation. We will always endeavour to solve any problems that arise in a mentoring relationship. However, if this is not possible, either the mentor or the mentee can end the mentoring relationship without issue and with the support of the PAM team.

### **What if I'm going to be unavailable for a period of time?**

The PAM program is designed to run for approximately eight months in 2024, however we understand that schedules can get busy and there may be instances where a mentor/mentee must move meetings out by a number of weeks.

If for any reason the mentoring partnership needs to be extended outside of this timeframe, we recommend this is communicated to the mentee/mentor and PAM team as early as possible.

## What if I still have questions?

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If you have any questions or concerns regarding the mentoring program, you can reach out to PAM Administrators in your respective state or territory –

- **University of Melbourne** – Erin O’Loughlin: [pathways-to-politics@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:pathways-to-politics@unimelb.edu.au)
- **QUT** – Rachel Britton: [p2p@qut.edu.au](mailto:p2p@qut.edu.au)
- **UNSW** – Marian Iskander: [pathways.to.politics@unsw.edu.au](mailto:pathways.to.politics@unsw.edu.au)
- **Charles Darwin University** – Kim Humphrey: [pathwaystopolitics@cdu.edu.au](mailto:pathwaystopolitics@cdu.edu.au)
- **University of Adelaide** – Anne Carter: [anne.carter@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:anne.carter@adelaide.edu.au)
- **University of Canberra** – Amy Kilpatrick: [Pathwaystopolitics@canberra.edu.au](mailto:Pathwaystopolitics@canberra.edu.au)

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