

Pathways Alum Mentoring

Mentor and Mentee Guidelines 2024



PATHWAYS
TO POLITICS
PROGRAM
FOR WOMEN

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*Thank you to the Pathways
alums and mentors featured
in this document for their time
and continued support of the
program.*

Introduction

Eight years ago, I launched the Pathways to Politics Program for Women with Professor Glyn Davis AC, the Honourable Julie Bishop and the Honourable Tanya Plibersek.

Inspired by the Harvard Kennedy School's program 'From Harvard Square to the Oval Office' I was convinced that in order to achieve gender parity in our parliaments, we needed to equip women with the skills and knowledge to succeed in running for elected office, and to thrive as political leaders – I am more convinced of this than ever.

Today the Pathway's aspirations are taking effect, with 32 electoral successes achieved. The Pathways to Politics Program for Women is a growing national network, with the program now running in six states and territories at the University of Melbourne (VIC), Queensland University of Technology (QLD), the University of New South Wales (NSW), Charles Darwin University (NT), University of Canberra (ACT) and the University of Adelaide (SA). I am delighted that in 2024 we will be fully national with programs launching in Western Australia and Tasmania. Through this network we are accomplishing real change.

We now have 450 alums; a growing cohort of women committed to changing the face of politics in Australia. Our vision of an alum network, supporting each other across political lines, is now coming to fruition at scale, and this has the potential to impact not just the make-up of our parliaments but their culture and comportment.

For the first time we are pleased to offer the Pathways Alum Mentoring program to alums of all our programs. I am so grateful to the women and men who have generously committed their time and expertise to supporting our alums as mentors and advocates, and I encourage all alums to make the most of this unprecedented opportunity.



Carol Schwartz AO

Welcome to Pathways Alum Mentoring

Welcome and thank you for taking part as a mentor or mentee. We are delighted to be offering Pathways Alum Mentoring to program alums in Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory and South Australia in 2024.

PAM aims to further empower and support our alum to actualise their aspiration to run for elected office.

The Pathways to Politics Program for Women now has 450 alums and the majority have indicated they plan to run for public office in the next ten years. Significant momentum is already underway with 32 electoral successes achieved across local, state and federal government since 2016. You can read more about Pathways via our [national website and Knowledge Hub](#).

How PAM Works

Mentors from across the political spectrum will be engaged and matched to alums to support their political aspirations by:

- Understanding the mentee's political journey to date;
- Providing practical guidance around potential strategies 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.

"It has been a pleasure to take part in Pathways Alum Mentoring as a mentor. The program provides mentees with a valuable opportunity to better equip themselves with the skills to navigate running for public office, whether that be at a local, state or federal level. Our sessions have allowed me to share honest and frank advice with my mentees about the challenging, but immensely rewarding, process of putting your hand up to run for elected office. I am passionate about empowering the next generation of women in politics, and I encourage women from across the political spectrum with an interest in running for public office to get involved."

Sarah Hanson-Young
Senator



About the Pathways Alum 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.

The program is designed for alum who are intending to run in the next 5 years.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Mentees will go through an online application process, which includes outlining:

- Political aspirations;
- Steps already taken towards public office;
- Key skill and/or experience gaps; and
- Priority areas they wish to progress during their year of mentoring.

This information will be shared with the relevant mentor once the match has been made. We have an outstanding group of female and male mentors from across the political spectrum and all levels of public office. They include current and retired politicians, and others deeply involved in political life.

Meetings will be held in person or online (e.g. via Zoom) and will be private and confidential. Guidance and support will be provided throughout the year and mentees will be expected to drive the interaction with the mentor.

PATHWAYS ALUM MENTORING REQUIREMENTS

All participants are expected to:

- Read the Pathways Alum Mentoring Guidelines and associated policies (included);
- Meet at least four times online over the mentoring period;
- Maintain professional standards of behaviour, safety, and confidentiality in accordance with the Pathways Code of Conduct, which will be shared with you;
- Respond to communications in a timely manner;
- Contact the Program Administrators with any concerns or questions; and
- Participate in required evaluations and provide feedback.



Mentor & Mentee Testimonials



"I have really enjoyed being a mentor in the Pathways Alum Mentoring program. Over many meetings with my mentee Jenna, our conversations have been substantive, detailed and thought-provoking, for both of us! I gain much from our interactions and enjoy providing encouragement and insight that can assist her with her career pathway. I was thoughtfully matched with a very talented and dedicated person. We were able to quickly establish the type of support she was seeking. Jenna is very open and self-aware which means that she can direct our conversations towards topics that are most helpful for her. Our match has worked very well."

Sally Capp

*Lord Mayor, City of Melbourne
PAM mentor*

"It's not until the rubber hits the road that you realise how valuable a trusted and wise mentor is. My experience of mentoring with P2P has enabled me to fast track my learning and draw upon years of political nous, stakeholder engagement and wisdom to inform my first year as a Councillor. I am in absolute awe of my mentor Sally Capp – from her incredible intellect, team leadership skills and visionary thinking. A highlight was spending a day in the office watching my mentor in action, a privilege that has imprinted in me many lessons in leadership, like a blueprint for me to follow!"

The mentoring component of the Pathways program was the perfect and important next step in the foundational lessons learnt during the program. One of the greatest strengths of the program is the relationship it fosters. It is this combination of theoretical, practical and unwavering encouragement that creates a solid foundation to leap from – shake out every opportunity, because you deserve to be the next leader in your community."

Cr Jenna Davey-Burns

*Councillor, City of Kingston
PAM mentee*

Mentor & Mentee Testimonials



"Pathways continues to deliver more women to elected office, furnishing them with useful training, mentors, and building their confidence. I have enjoyed mentoring each of the Green's mentees over my years supporting the program, particularly the women of colour. If we are to have politics that truly works for people, it needs to look like the community it represents – and that means far more diversity. The mentees get insight into party dynamics and tips for preselection and representation, and as mentors we get the satisfaction of watching someone blossom and back themselves and go on to change the world."

Larissa Waters

Senator

PAM mentor



"I always thought that to be a politician you had to be in that world from the start – study politics or be involved in student unions – neither of which applied to me.

Pathways to Politics showed me that my industry skills and lived experiences can be valuable in a political career, and that it's not "too late" to consider running for public office. The mentoring program took it further and helped me plan next steps in building my support network and preparing to run. My mentor provided valuable coaching, acted as a sounding board, and advocated on my behalf to open doors for me. The meetings helped me to accelerate my ideas and broaden my thinking, and I feel much more prepared for the path ahead thanks to the relationship of trust and support built with my mentor."

Holstein Wong

PAM mentee

Application and Matching Process

Pathways Alum Mentoring is a multi-partisan initiative providing women from across the political spectrum with the support they need to ascend in the electoral process at local, state/territory and national levels. We are committed to ensuring participants represent a range of perspectives including political, professional and personal experiences, and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The application process involves a series of brief questions to understand applicants' political aspirations, readiness to run, and skills/experience gaps currently faced.

A Selection Committee will choose the cohort and undertake matching to a relevant mentor. The Selection Committee will be guided by the principles of multi-partisanship, diversity and equity that inform selection into the Pathways to Politics Program for Women.

Read more: **Mentor match interviews**

- [Senator Janet Rice and Dr Judy Tang](#)
- [Georgie Purcell MP and Cr Jenna Davey-Burns](#)

"The Pathways to Politics program provided me a window into the experience of those who have been politically successful. I've loved being able to provide that same opportunity to my mentee as she navigates her own pathway.

Women love learning through sharing and to be able to help the next generation of leaders in this intimate way is a real privilege. To change the political conversation we need to have more women at the table."

Katie Allen
*Former Member for Higgins
PAM mentor*



Information for Mentors

Thank you for offering your invaluable time and expertise. Your involvement will help our alum to realise their ambition to run for elected office.

MENTORING EXPECTATIONS

We ask that you support them 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.

GETTING STARTED

A few things to keep in mind:

- You will be able to learn more about your mentee and their aspirations via email from the program team;
- Your mentee is responsible for driving the mentoring partnership, and will make initial contact and coordinate the meetings;
- Meetings may be undertaken in person or online (e.g. via Zoom);
- We encourage you to explore with your mentee an agenda for meetings to help focus your time together.
- Resources to support your discussions will be made available from the program team.

Information for Mentees

We are delighted to offer you this opportunity! As with the Pathways Program, you will gain the most out of Pathways Alum Mentoring by being prepared, engaged and open to feedback. This is an exciting chance to test and strengthen your current activities towards running for office.

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

MENTEE EXPECTATIONS

We ask that you fully engage with your mentor by:

- Coming prepared for meetings, and acting in a professional and authentic manner;
- Being clear about your political journey to date, and sharing reflections on your strengths and skill/experience gaps;
- Defining priority areas you 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 your mentor;
- Spending time reflecting on the advice and knowledge shared during meetings, and identifying how you can leverage this to take further steps towards public office.

GETTING STARTED

A pre-recorded information session will be shared with you prior to the commencement of your mentor matches. A few things to keep in mind:

- You are responsible for driving the mentoring partnership, and this includes making initial contact and setting up all of the mentoring meetings.
- We encourage you to convey a sense of yourself in the introductory email, and to ask your mentor if they have any preferences for setting up the meetings (time of day, whether they have an EA who can assist with finding a time etc). You may need to be flexible at times, acknowledging the many work demands your mentor may face.
- Meetings will be undertaken online via a mutually convenient online platform (e.g. Zoom). We encourage you to propose an agenda for meetings to help focus your time together.

Pathways Alum Mentoring Policies

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All contact details will be maintained confidentially, and access limited in accordance with privacy policies at the participating universities.

Mentor/mentee confidentiality must be maintained throughout the mentoring journey and there is an expectation that the [Chatham House Rule](#) applies to discussions between the mentor/mentees. Please do not share or publish information about the relationship (on social media or other) without the consent of your mentor/mentee.

EVALUATION

Feedback is welcomed and encouraged throughout the duration of the program. Formal evaluation will also be undertaken via surveys for mentees.

DUTY OF CARE AND ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

Mentors and mentees are asked to agree to behave in a professional, lawful, ethical and responsible manner at all times. Anyone who experiences any uncertainty or discomfort with the mentoring relationship should contact the program director for their state/territory program.

ENDING THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP EARLY

If either the mentor, or the mentee (or both), face difficulties with their mentoring relationship, the first step is to contact the Program Administrators as soon as possible. By exploring challenges objectively, some problems can be diffused at an early stage. However, if this is not possible, then either the mentor or the mentee can request to end the mentoring relationship without issue, with the support of the Pathways Alum Mentoring team.

"I found this experience absolutely first rate. We were able to focus on the centrality of good policy ideas and the ongoing need for reform, as well as the crucial human elements of politics... and particularly the importance of taking the time to listen and genuinely engage with people from all walks of life. The Covid era actually made the meetings all the more relevant, as we were able to discuss the ongoing challenges of governing during a crisis."

John Brumby AO
Former Premier of Victoria
PAM mentor



Housekeeping

GETTING STARTED

Once you are matched you will receive information about your mentee/mentor and details to contact them. It is the mentee's responsibility to make first contact with the mentor, which we encourage you to do via email. A pre-recorded information session will be shared with you prior to the commencement of your mentor sessions.

CHECKING IN

From time-to-time you will receive an email or a survey from the Pathways Alum Mentoring team to check-in and make sure you are comfortably progressing in your mentor/mentee relationship. You will also have two scheduled calls with the team to check-in and make sure you are comfortably progressing in your mentor/mentee relationship.

FEEDBACK

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

- **University of Melbourne** –
Erin O'Loughlin:
pathways-to-politics@unimelb.edu.au
- **QUT** –
Rachel Britton:
p2p@qut.edu.au
- **UNSW** –
Marian Iskander:
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- **Charles Darwin University** –
Kate Macfarlane:
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- **University of Adelaide** –
Anne Carter:
anne.carter@adelaide.edu.au
- **University of Canberra** –
Amy Kilpatrick:
pathwaystopolitics@canberra.edu.au

"In our first meeting, my mentor, Senator Sarah Hanson-Young, cut right to the chase, identifying the electoral strengths of myself and my fellow mentee. She provided excellent advice on how to use our natural strengths to become effective political candidates."

Anna Crabb
PAM mentee



PATHWAYS TO POLITICS PROGRAM FOR WOMEN

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