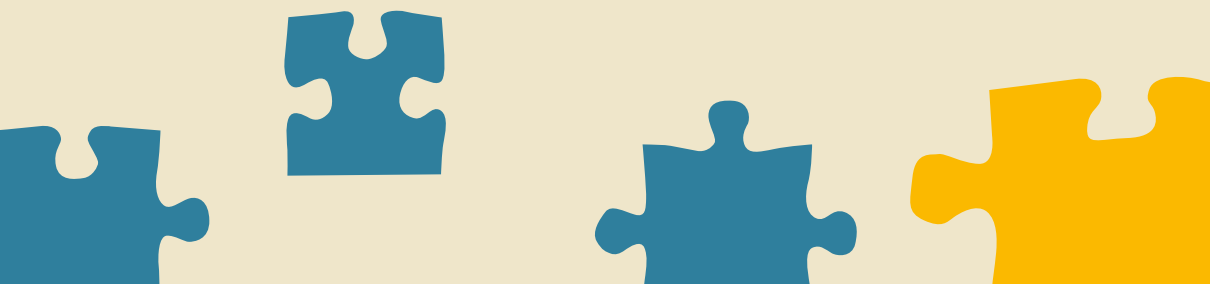




**Perspectives on Mentorship –  
Reinventing Mentoring  
in Arts and Creative  
Industries Management**



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We wish to thank: our interviewees for sharing their experiences, the participants in the REMAM academy who shared invaluable insights but also criticisms, and the participants in multiple REMAM events where we gained more knowledge and built dialogue to improve our own understanding. You all gave us shared moments of learning. We also wish to thank the Estonian Agency for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps for the funding as well as their continuous support throughout the project.

We believe that there is never only one right way to do mentoring; therefore, we hope that the different views and perspectives in the book will give you new ideas and thoughts about how to approach the challenge of mentorship.

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## INTRODUCTION

Cultural management MA programmes are facing dualistic demands – on the one hand, from potential employers, such as arts organizations, non-profits, and government institutions, for practical skills and knowledge on current practices in the art field; and on the other hand, the need for analytical skills, capacity to be critical and make transformations. They need to pay more and careful attention to balancing academic content with current management tools across a wide spectrum that includes leadership, accounting, communications and policy development, but also a multidisciplinary approach preparing students to adapt their skills and competences to many different professional scenarios. In a changing society, it is no longer enough to know the current practices and ways of doing work, as working life is changing rapidly due to digitalisation, globalisation, and the use of artificial intelligence in the fields of art and culture. It has also become crucial for young professionals to enter working life with established and highly functional networks, field-specific expertise and key contacts, in addition to transferable academic competencies.

Mentorship, serving as a tool for bridging between practice and academia, has been widely acknowledged as an excellent tool for self-development. In this book we will tackle the various aspects and perspectives of mentorship, especially in the context of (MA) study programmes with a focus on cultural fields. Each chapter provides an independent view based on the authors' own expertise, interest, and approach to the topic of mentorship.

The first part of the book gives the reader a basis for investigating mentorship and analysing the context, namely the cultural and creative industries, cultural management programmes and the relevant policies affecting the cultural field and mentorship.

The second part highlights mentorship based on our current understanding, building on previous research on mentorship, and practical examples and experiences. It provides a kaleidoscopic overview of mentorship, deepening our understanding from various perspectives. Specific focus is given to the cultural field as a context with special attention also to the perspective of entrepreneurship in the context of mentorship. Some of the chapters are more oriented to research and some more to practice, each reflecting the author's own views and expertise. Because mentorship is seen as an individualised process, each chapter presents a set of important questions to consider, or highlights insights for the reader to help in the process of designing and implementing a mentoring programme.

The third part summarises the key elements presented in the previous parts with specific emphasis on mentorship in the context of the curriculum. It aims to create a helpful tool for those who plan to integrate mentorship programmes into their curriculum.

The fourth part is a collection of case studies, exploring mentorship from the perspectives of mentors, mentees, and mentorship programme managers in various cultural and national contexts.

Throughout the book, mentorship is observed in the context of art and culture and cultural and art management programmes.

The book has been created in the context of the Erasmus+ strategic partnership project Reinventing Mentoring in Arts Management (REMAM) that aims to co-create a new comprehensive understanding of cultural management mentorship as a framework for professional lifelong learning, as well as part of academic education. Its focus is on establishing and maintaining a sustainable interaction between students, potential employers and field practitioners, simultaneously renewing our understanding of mentoring and creating a novel approach to mentoring that allows for the co-creation of knowledge. The project aims to create a learning model that allows both the development of analytical and academic competences, while capturing current field practices and tools and influential agencies responsible for occupational profiling to highlight the importance of mentors within cultural management programmes – something that is seldom acknowledged as such and is often seen as an additional activity rather than a role to be integrated within the curriculum.

The target group of the book includes anyone planning to implement or redesign a mentorship programme in higher education, employers and students as potential participants in mentorship programmes, and finally, anyone interested in broadening their understanding of mentorship.

We hope that the texts in this collection of articles will be inspirational for you, whether you need to find a mentor for yourself or become a mentor and share your knowledge, experience, and wisdom, or you are starting your own mentoring programme. Good luck on your mentoring journey!

In following section, we will introduce some of the key concepts used in the book.



## Key concepts and terminology

Terms in use	Definition
Mentoring Mentorship	Refers to both programmes and the process in which mentor and mentee share their knowledge and experience, and learn from each other.
Mentoring relationship Mentorship relationship Mentor-mentee relationship	Mentor-mentee relationship
Mentorship program Mentorship programme	The processes and practices used in mentorship.
Mentorship couple Mentoring couple Mentorship pair Mentoring pair Mentor pair	Mentor-mentee
Mentor pairing Pairing Matching Matching process	Establishing the mentor-mentee relationships, mentorship pairs.
Mentoring meeting Mentoring session Mentorship meeting Mentorship session	One encounter between a mentor and a mentee (e.g., "it is recommended that mentor and mentee have a minimum of 10 sessions/meetings")
Face-to-face mentoring In-person mentoring Live mentoring	Mentoring that takes place in the physical world.
Reversed mentoring	A younger and less experienced person becomes a mentor to an older and more experienced person, because s/he has the perspective of a younger generation and attitudes and ideas which have not yet acknowledged the pre-established professional conventions.

Terms in use	Definition
<p>CCI: Cultural and Creative industries</p> <p>CCS: Cultural and creative sectors</p>	<p>Cultural and creative sectors comprise all sectors whose activities are based on cultural values, or other individual or collective creative expressions and are defined on the legal basis of the Creative Europe Programme.</p> <p><a href="https://culture.ec.europa.eu &gt; cultural-and-creative-sectors">https://culture.ec.europa.eu &gt; cultural-and-creative-sectors</a></p>
<p>Entrepreneurship, start-ups</p>	<p>The process of developing, organizing, and running a new business to generate profit while taking on financial risk.</p>
<p>Knowledge; explicit, tacit</p>	<p>Knowledge can be seen as consisting of tacit and explicit knowledge. It can be seen as the process of learning, knowledge sharing and construction. Explicit knowledge is accessible through consciousness, in plain words, as information and individuals are aware of possessing that type of knowledge. Tacit knowledge is tied to the senses, tactile experiences, movement skills, and is rooted in action, procedures, routines, ideals, values, emotions.</p>
<p>Community of practice</p>	<p>Communities of practice are defined as a freely created community that engages in an activity together and then gradually forms a tight community that learns together through joint practice.</p>
<p>Professional identity</p>	<p>Professional identity is created through the practice of work but starts during our professional education. It includes specific knowledge and skills, is based on adopted values and beliefs. Professional identity is influenced and (re-)created in a dynamic manner in the contexts of our work, it is affected by socialisation processes and the communities or groups we belong to.</p>
<p>Online mentoring</p>	<p>Computer mediated, often boundaryless, egalitarian, and qualitatively different to traditional face-to-face mentoring. A virtual medium provides a context and means for exchange. The nature of the online mentoring relationship may be qualitatively different when mediated through a computer or mobile device.</p>
<p>Diversity</p>	<p>Diversity is about representation or the make-up of an entity.</p>

Terms in use	Definition
Equality	Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of how they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.
Accessibility	Accessibility is the practice of making information, activities, and/or environments sensible, meaningful, and usable for as many people as possible.
Inclusion	Inclusion is about how well the contributions, presence, and perspectives of different groups of people are valued and integrated into an environment.
Ethics	Ethics examines the rational justification for our moral judgements; it studies what is morally right or wrong, just, or unjust.
Empowerment	Empowerment means people having power and control over their own lives. People get the support they need that is right for them. Empowerment means that people are equal citizens. They are respected and confident in their communities.



## PART I

Part I will build an understanding of mentorship and the context of our focus – cultural and artistic fields – with specific attention on MA programmes in cultural management.

First, we introduce what mentorship is, providing a clear path towards understanding the multifaceted nature of mentoring (Chapter 1.1). Then several examples and cases of current practices in mentoring within cultural and creative industries are presented (Chapter 1.2), followed by an analysis of the context of the project, namely the cultural and creative industries and offering a glimpse inside the relevant policies (Chapter 1.3). Mentoring in the context of MA programmes in cultural management is elaborated in the concluding chapter of Part I (Chapter 1.4), presenting a framework for investigating the topic in a holistic manner.

## 1.1 Mentorship – Concepts, Roles and the Mentoring Relationship

Višnja Kisić, Dragana Jevtić / Creative Mentorship

### Abstract

This chapter will open up the theme of mentorship. It explores the key concepts and terminology with examples and perspectives built from extensive experience in the practice of mentoring.

### Introduction

The world today is ever changing, fast-paced, with frequent novelties, and insecurities. To keep up with the changes or be at the forefront, professionals need to be continuously building competences. Life-long learning is not an add on but a necessity if we want to keep up with innovations and challenges.

Alongside various kinds of training on topics related to specific professions but also soft skills, mentoring presents a very strong model for professional and personal development and lifelong learning. Mentoring encourages growth and motivation, improves productivity and engagement, facilitates connection between mentees and mentors, strengthens the community, helps expand the network of professional contacts, creates opportunities for cooperation and the exchange of ideas, and contributes to strengthening self-confidence (British Council 2021).

In recent years, we have witnessed the initiation and implementation of various mentoring programmes, which support different target groups – youth, women, professionals in media, culture, creative industries, business, IT, etc. In addition, many people engage in informal mentoring relationships outside of such organized programmes.

In the project Reinventing Mentoring in Arts Management, we have conducted case studies on mentoring, which can be found at the end of this collection of articles. These studies, as well as our professional experience, show that there are various approaches to mentoring, with different values and aims. This chapter and the information on mentoring that follows is based on the values which Creative Mentorship and its founders and team members stand for. Creative

Mentorship is an organization which since 2012 has run a one-year long mentoring programme for professionals in the arts, culture, creative industries, and media, and supports other organizations in creating and implementing their own mentoring programmes in the Western Balkans and throughout Europe, and promotes the idea of mentorship.

Creative Mentorship offers a mentoring model somewhat different from mentorship in academia, where a mentor leads a student through a scientific discipline, the literature and the process of writing and researching. It is also different from the model already established in some companies and even museums, where a new young intern or employee gets a mentor from the same institution, who leads him/her through the procedures and practices of that institution. Instead of connecting mentoring couples within one discipline, professional field or organization, Creative Mentorship connects mentees working in heritage, the arts, cultural management, creative industries, activism, or education through culture, with mentors who are experts in culture, business, politics, marketing, science, healthcare, education, etc. This kind of matching challenges the mentors and mentees in terms of their knowledge and perspective, creates an understanding of different ways of thinking, and builds bridges across generations, sectors, and cultures. It also fosters “outside-the-box” thinking and enables mentees to acquire knowledge and skills that they could not easily acquire within their own professional field (Kisić 2014).

If and when an organization, team or individual is ready to try mentorship, it is important to consider the right match. For example, if the mentee is a museum educator, it would be great to think about searching for a mentor that is a pedagogue, social worker or youth worker. If the mentee is in PR in a museum, how about having a mentor who is a marketing, PR, and communications expert. Similarly, a manager from the business sector would be great as a mentor for a director in the museum whose primary education is not in managing organizations and people. These unexpected and cross-sectorial matches can bring about many new insights, lessons, and developments.

As Marcello Majonchi (2022) very nicely says: *“the role of mentoring is ultimately providing mentees with a way to better understand themselves and their potential, and for mentors to re-evaluate their experience and translate them to learnings through the eyes of someone else.”*

## The Concept of Mentorship

### **The concept of a mentor dates back to Greek mythology**

Mentor was a friend and counsellor to the hero Odysseus. When Odysseus went to the Trojan War, he left his son Telemachus in the care of Mentor, who guided the child through life by sharing knowledge, experience and advice.

Mentoring is a special, interactive relationship between two people – a mentor and a mentee. As in the Greek myth, a mentor is usually a more experienced and knowledgeable person who has the knowledge and skills, which a mentee, as a less experienced person, still does not have. It is, however, getting more and more common that through reversed mentoring a younger and less experienced person becomes a mentor to an older and more experienced person because s/he has the perspective of a younger generation and attitudes and ideas, which are not yet bound by pre-established professional conventions.

Mentorship involves sharing knowledge, perspectives, experience and contacts between mentor and mentee, through which the mentor supports the mentee in terms of professional and personal development. The aim of mentorship is to provide opportunities for more reflection and the advancement of the mentee. Mentor and mentee work together on discovering and developing the mentee's capacities, talents, and skills, while the mentor has the role of a supporter and a companion.

Mentorship is:

- focused on the mentee,
- a one-to-one working process,
- a two-way learning process,
- a partnering relationship,
- confidential,
- a process of understanding and building confidence,
- focused on discovering talents and building capacities and skills,
- development oriented,
- focused on the person more than on a concrete task.

Mentorship is not:

- focused on the mentor's knowledge and experience,
- task-oriented,
- a protective relationship,
- a parent-child relationship,
- a friendly relationship no matter what,

- a therapy,
- a job searching opportunity.

Although mentorship is not counselling, supporting, networking, or coaching and training, it comprises some elements of all these development techniques. Next, we shall investigate in more detail what a mentor is and what that role comprises, as well as the benefits of being a mentor.

## The Mentor

### **The concept of a mentor dates back to Greek mythology**

Mentor was a friend and counsellor of the hero Odysseus. When Odysseus went to the Trojan War, he left his son Telemachus in the care of Mentor, who guided the child through life by sharing knowledge, experience and advice.

A mentor is a professional who is there for the mentee to learn from him or her. The role of a mentor is to listen and to open spaces for new directions in thinking, by asking apt questions, significant for the relationship. The mentor encourages an innovative approach to the work and everyday life of the mentee. In practice, there are numerous variations and expectations regarding the function and behaviour of people who are called mentors. Some of them are:

- To create a relationship based on mutual confidence, which will help the mentee's development.
- To provide constant development support for a certain period.
- To guide the mentee through the phases of professional and personal development.
- To examine, together with the mentee, all the options in his or her career development and to give career orientation advice.
- To help the mentee analyse his or her current capacities, skills, knowledge, and resources as well as those needed for the desired development.
- To convey to the mentee important information, knowledge and experience that will enable him or her to become better in what he or she is doing.
- To offer new perspectives, proposals and a different view of the mentee's doubts and questions.
- To give constructive feedback.
- To make available contacts useful for the mentee's development.
- To be a role model.



Each mentoring relationship is unique and most of the time it is perceived as rewarding by the mentors, who often volunteer to be mentors year after year. Next, we have listed some benefits mentors gain through the mentoring process.

What does the mentor get through the mentoring process?

- The opportunity to meet another person that otherwise he or she would not meet and to establish a relationship with him or her.
- A deep insight into the attitudes and values of different generations.
- Personal satisfaction through contributing to another person's development.
- An opportunity for improvement and personal development through the exchange of opinions and perspectives with his or her mentee.
- An opportunity for networking.
- Strengthening his or her position professionally and privately because somebody has expressed confidence in him or her by choosing him or her to be their mentor.

The roles of and benefits for mentors are multiple, and they vary for each individual and in each mentoring relationship. Therefore, there is no one prescribed way a mentor should be or behave with a mentee, and the benefits gained will likewise be different from one mentoring relationship to another. However, we need not aim for one specific role or aim for a concrete benefit but be open to the variety of inputs and developmental outcomes. Now, we will look at the mentee perspective.

## The Mentee

According to the dictionary, a mentee is a 'chosen student'. In practice, mentees are people who need support from a mentor and wish to improve their current knowledge, to develop personally, to learn something new, as well as to receive concrete advice. The mentee role requires from them certain predispositions: openness to new ways of working and communication, a desire to explore and a readiness for challenges and change. Mentees are personally responsible for their own learning and development, but they have their mentor's support during this process.

Meetings with the mentor are defined by the mentee's needs and interests. Mentees need to personally identify their goals and the aim of their mentor-

ing relationship, which can be changed over time. It is important that mentees come to meetings prepared and know what they want to discuss with the mentor. However, sometimes mentees are not able to identify their needs and development potential. For this reason, the mentor has a key role in assisting the mentee define this as best as possible. Finally, a mentee should be the kind of person who is open to suggestions, honest and completely present and dedicated to the mentoring process.

During the mentorship process, the mentee should:

- Take advantage of the opportunities provided by the programme for his or her personal and professional development.
- Create his or her personal and professional development plan.
- Be honest and open towards the mentor when defining his or her own needs as best as possible.
- Share with the mentor her/his own knowledge and experience
- Summarise the meeting experience with the mentor

What do mentees get from the mentoring process?

- A better insight into their own capacities and a deeper comprehension of their own strengths and areas to be improved.
- Knowledge of how to formulate goals for their continuous personal and professional development.
- An opportunity to communicate directly with the mentor as a special interlocutor for suggestions and directions.
- A unique opportunity to ‘take’ some time for reflection, planning and self-analysis.
- An opportunity to acquire life skills and knowledge that can help them recognise and avoid problematic situations and traps.
- An extended network with the mentor’s help.
- They become a member of an informal group of programme alumni, consisting of future leaders in the field of culture and established professionals from different fields.

Similarly, as noted for the mentor, there is no one way of being a mentee nor are the benefits the same. We wish to emphasise the multitude of mentoring relationships. The key for everyone is to find their needs, roles and methods within the mentoring relationship. Next, we will take a more detailed look inside the mentoring relationship.

## The mentoring relationship

The mentoring relationship means establishing an honest interaction between a person with knowledge and experience who wants to share with a less experienced person over a clearly defined and previously determined timeframe. However, the less experienced person may sometimes become the mentor; in other words, they will follow a reverse mentorship model. In mentoring relationships, a clear understanding of the roles greatly influences the success of the entire process. Therefore, it is important to clearly and precisely define the expectations that both persons have from this relationship to prevent disappointments. It is important to understand that mentorship is a continuous process in which presumed or desired effects cannot occur immediately after the initial meeting.

To have a quality mentoring relationship, it is crucial that both mentor and mentee are committed and active in a manner they find most acceptable. It is important to have an idea of the bigger picture because the changes we make in one area of our lives inevitably affect other areas. Honesty, openness, and trust are necessary for achieving your objectives and getting results in a mentoring relationship.

Based on our extensive experience, what makes this relationship unique in comparison to many other interpersonal relationships is the asymmetrical relationship between the mentor and the mentee – as the relationship is always guided by the needs, expectations and objectives of the mentee. The mentor's role is to be an interlocutor but also to provide support and advice, without asking anything in return. The mentor is driven by the desire to share his or her knowledge. The mentor's motivation derives from the satisfaction of observing others grow and develop. The rules of the game are defined by the mentor and the mentee regarding what is but also what is not allowed for the duration of the mentoring relationship. Here are a few examples of well-established rules of the game:

- 1) Show respect for each other by coming to meetings regularly and on time, by turning off mobile phones and allowing the other person to complete what they wanted to say.
- 2) Discretion: everything discussed inside the mentoring relationship is strictly confidential. If, for some reason, information from the meeting is to be communicated to other people, both sides should give their consent.
- 3) Define undesirable topics: The mentor and the mentee are asked to specify which topics are undesirable for discussion due to potential conflicts of interest or for any other reason.

- 4) Define communication outside meetings: for example, discuss whether sending emails or making casual phone calls between meetings for important consultations is possible and desirable for both parties or not.
- 5) Setting up joint rules needs to be done early on to avoid misunderstandings, and it is important that they are discussed in an explicit manner.

The following questions and answers can help in setting up a good mentoring relationship:

- 1) How often do you meet? It is common for the participants to meet once a month. In the beginning, the meetings can be organized more frequently, every 2–3 weeks, until the mentor and mentee become familiar with each other.
- 2) How long should a meeting last? Between one and two hours is a good time-frame that allows participants to remain focused.
- 3) Where should the meetings take place? Some mentoring pairs prefer to have one regular place for all meetings, while others find inspiration in changing the environment for their conversations. Some prefer meeting on neutral territory, outside the usual working space of the mentor or mentee, while others feel more comfortable in a working space. Sometimes, having a conversation during a walk can be a good solution; it is important that the place for the meeting is quiet so that the conversation isn't disturbed and interrupted. For mentoring pairs who live in different cities or countries, meetings take place virtually via Skype, for example (see also Chapter 2.4 Mentorship in the Digital World).
- 4) Taking notes or not? For the mentee it can be useful to make a few quick notes during the meeting to have a track record of conversations with the mentor and follow their own development. It may be useful for the mentor, while the mentee is talking, to write down an idea that comes up or a question they would like to ask, in order not to interrupt the conversation. Even though note taking is useful, if it is done excessively, it leads to reduced interaction.
- 5) Being in contact between meetings or not? It would be good if mentors encouraged their mentees to feel free to contact them even between sessions if questions or dilemmas arise.
- 6) Who defines the topics for each meeting and how? Mentees have priority in deciding what the topic of the meeting will be, unless otherwise agreed. A good practice is that a mentee sends an email with a desired topic several days in advance and in that way communicates what they would like to discuss with their mentor. This leaves time for the mentor to think this over and prepare for the topic and helps the mentee focus.

Taking the time to reflect on what mentoring is and on the needs and roles is essential for building a good mentoring relationship, balancing the expectations and creating a positive outcome. It is important to openly discuss the roles, expectations and rules together early on in the mentoring process. Sometimes a facilitator or manager of the mentoring programme might be needed to initiate these discussions. We will now explore an important, yet often neglected topic – ending the mentoring relationship.

### How to end a mentoring relationship?

Even though there are people we will consider our mentors for the rest of our lives, the formal mentoring relationship within any formal mentoring programme has its time frame agreed in advance by the organizers, mentors and mentees. Therefore, all mentoring relationships should formally be wrapped up and finalised within this agreed period. The last meeting should be used for summing up the mentoring process and reflecting on final suggestions and comments.

Some useful tips for mentees for the preparation of the last meeting with a mentor are:

- The end of a mentoring process is the time for new beginnings.
- Use the process of ending the relationship to remind yourself of the good sides and progress you achieved in your mentoring relationship and personally as a mentee.
- With the mentor's help identify the type of support you need in your further development and how to attain it.
- Agree whether, how and how often you will stay in touch. This refers only to pairs who wish to do so outside the frame of the formal mentoring programme.
- Plan a fun activity with your mentor.

Some useful tips for mentors for the preparation of the last meeting with a mentee are:

- The end of a mentoring relationship is a good moment to encourage the future development of your mentee.
- Use the process of ending the relationship to remind yourself of the good sides and progress achieved in your mentoring relationship, as well as to compare what the mentee originally wanted to accomplish at the beginning of the mentorship relationship with the outcome of the mentoring.

- Compliment the mentee and their good sides – summarise and communicate to the mentee the progress they have made during the past year.
- Help your mentee identify the type of support needed for their further development and how to attain it.
- Agree whether, how and how often you will stay in touch. This refers only to pairs who wish to do so outside the frame of the formal mentoring programme.
- Encourage your mentee to continue learning and developing after the end of the mentoring relationship.

The ending of a mentoring relationship hence is an important part of the process, as is the starting point. By establishing a joint understanding and setting the expectations right, as well as following the process for wrapping up the mentoring relationship, we create space for new forms of mentoring to develop in the future and for the mentor to continue having positive influence on the further personal and professional development of the mentee.

No matter how much we invest in ourselves, it can happen that the mentoring relationship might not work. Even if all the steps have been taken carefully, the personality match, different unexpected life circumstances, and so on, might hamper the relationship. For that reason, we shall next discuss encountering difficulties in mentoring relationships.

### What if a mentoring relationship does not work?

Sometimes the relationship between a mentor and a mentee fails. The process of pairing a mentor and mentee is ultimately based on the idea of connecting two strangers who pre-commit to start a certain kind of relationship for a period of one year / 6 months / 3 months.

Sometimes there is just no chemistry. Other objective reasons for sensing the failure of the mentoring process may be the lack of clearly set expectations on both sides, an extremely busy mentor or mentee, confusing goals set by the mentee or a lack of honesty due to the mentee's desire to appear in the best light in front of the mentor, or vice versa.

If the mentor or mentee is busy and does not find the time for meetings, or if they feel they are not well matched, it is important to discuss this with each other and contact the mentoring programme team in a timely fashion to resolve the problem or find a replacement (Višnja Kisić, Daša Spasojević et al. 2014).

## Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the importance of reflecting on our role as mentor or mentee. We emphasise that the mentoring relationship is specific, and there are several ways of understanding it. For that reason, it is important to create a joint understanding of the expectations of mentoring relationships prior to engaging in any joint activity. The role of the mentoring coordinator or facilitator, such as our organization Creative Mentorship, is vital in establishing the space, time and process for these reflections and steps. This chapter provides insights with key definitions and questions to reflect on when building a successful mentoring relationship.

To summarise, the preconditions for a successful mentoring relationship are:

- Trust
- Respect
- Honesty and openness
- Desire to learn and develop

Mentoring relationships may occur in various contexts and in a multitude of ways, as discussed previously. Please find below examples of possible topics for mentoring meetings that can help you in exploring various opportunities for personal and professional development:

- Setting priorities – focus your energy, attention, and action
- Specific topics related to the mentee's profession
- Planning, initiating and managing projects, organizations, institutions
- Creating and maintaining partnerships
- Fundraising
- Financial viability, business models
- Audience development
- The role of culture and arts in society
- Goal-setting
- Decision-making
- Defining possible fields of work based on skills and values
- Working in a team, forming and leading teams, motivation, delegation
- Communicating ideas, creating a support network
- Personal management, motivation, and learning
- How to evaluate one's own work
- The relationship and balance between professional and private life
- Learning about international and national organizations and projects
- Developing new products and ideas
- Using new technologies

Although the list provided is quite comprehensive, these are only examples to offer options and developmental directions. The most important thing is that the mentees look into themselves and decide what they want to be working on with their mentors, as the focus of the mentoring relationship is on the needs of the mentee. Once these are defined (needs, areas for development, goals), the mentoring process can start. Every mentoring relationship is unique; we should never compare them but only learn from different examples and perspectives.

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## 1.2 Mentoring models in Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI)

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### Abstract

This chapter provides a selection of examples and benchmarks for looking at mentoring in the context of cultural and creative industries. It elaborates current practices by presenting various models for mentoring programmes.

### Introduction

The definition of occupations in the cultural and creative industries (CCI) shows that the tasks that they perform, and the skills needed are manifold and that the combination of creative and artistic competence and soft and managerial skills is something quite difficult to achieve through formal education. This makes their integration in the labour market a specific challenge for creative professionals in becoming entrepreneurs and starting their own businesses and in the adaptations that they will certainly need to make in response to unexpected or disruptive events. Think, for instance, about the effect of the Covid pandemic, which dramatically changed how creative goods and services could reach their audiences. This required an adaptation in terms of the financial, commercial, digital, and interpersonal activities of professionals.

This chapter deals with some of the special characteristics of the work of cultural and creative workers, arguing that any mentoring scheme must consider the skills and tasks performed during the professional life course of these workers. Departing from some well documented facts about the careers of a variety of professionals, the point is made for the need to develop a specific mentoring model for the sector. Besides the experiences documented in the REMAM case studies, the next section presents some of the characteristics of the mentee-mentor relationship in a selection of international initiatives. A deeper elaboration of motivations and expectations for an initiative in the museum sector is then discussed, along with the previous skills gap diagnosis which partially motivates the whole programme.

One of the aims of this whole book is to propose good practices and useful insights for the implementation of mentoring programmes. As there is no ‘one size fits all’, the other alternatives aimed at creating a personal and professional development process are considered, to better understand the kinds of skills that are transferable in a creative mentoring programme. The chapter ends with two final reflections about what is needed from mentoring in the training phase of the professional (the becoming) and about why some professionals find it especially hard to enter professional development processes. These considerations provide a base for the topics that are treated in this book, such as the professional identity and the equity problems with reflections on the under representation of some social groups in the creative workforce.

Creative workers must manage a ‘portfolio of roles’ to sustain their financial and creative well-being, as they are often referred to as ‘multiprofessionals’ and face multiple career transitions (European Parliament, 2021). Those atypical careers have both cooperative traits, as project-oriented activity requires cooperative efforts, and very competitive traits. Frequently, artistic careers include cut-throat competition and well-established hierarchies. For example, solo careers are perceived as the pinnacle of success for musicians, and likewise architects are still perceived as the professionals with the greatest prestige among interdisciplinary groups of heritage managers. Furthermore, career transitions are relatively more common in the CCI than in other sectors for physical reasons, life course circumstances and changes between subsectors (European Commission, 2021).

Some examples:

- Musicians frequently perform, but also conduct, compose, teach, research, run music festivals or companies and hold leadership and managerial positions in cultural organizations or in educational institutions.
- Dancers and ballerinas must often quit their professional careers due to injuries or physical limitations as they age.
- Women in the arts and creative sectors face career disruptions due to work-life balance and family related decisions.

In general, many cultural and creative workers leave the sector or the workforce during recessions and come back in smaller numbers when the situation improves (Woronkiewicz, 2015). The working conditions are made further challenging by the redefinition of the skills needed, and the cultural and creative occupations also require a redefinition of the formal and informal training and the lifelong learning education needed to achieve sustainable careers. Features such as a strong entrepreneurship orientation in many of the creative occupa-

tions render mentoring schemes especially effective for this sector (Porfirio, Carrilho, & Mónico, 2016).

How can professionals obtain the entrepreneurial and creative skills needed in the sector? No matter how practically oriented the formal education programmes may be, there are many soft skills and competences that can only be acquired ‘hands-on’. For instance, one of the conclusions of the European project on the capacities of the cultural sector in the European Union concludes that “creative minds may not be educated or trained in entrepreneurial innovation. Under this circumstance, the education system should provide the necessary mentoring on how to be successful in the CCI, for instance, how to find appropriate support for an undertaking” (VVA, 2021 – Creative FLIP).

### A model of one's own

Some of those special characteristics justify considering a blended mentoring model for the CCI. Before examining some of the options, we offer you the following overview of some of the characteristics of running mentoring models in the sector.

The purpose of mentoring is personal and professional development and growth, so cultural and creative workers can better achieve personal and professional goals. This is conducted through a cooperative learning process that creates a relationship. The resulting bond is a defining trait in mentoring that is mutually profitable to all parties involved and is built by means of a collaborative approach. In this relationship, the mentee benefits from the dialogical relationship and engages in introspection to use his or her personal experience to make the best of the reality-based learning situation that is created with the mentor. The introspection may therefore create better conditions for a deeper and more individualistic and better adapted development. The mentor, in turn, benefits from the possibility of reflection upon his or her own professional development in terms of updating skills and, more importantly in some cases, experience the sense of giving back to the professional community.

The mentoring relationship can be built under many formats, but in many of the programmes in the cultural and creative industries it is done on a one-to-one basis. This is one of the traits that differentiates it from other learning and development experiences – as discussed elsewhere in this book, peer mentoring and collaborations in informal communities of practice are some other alternatives from which creative workers can benefit. In the context of postgraduate

formal training in cultural management, for instance, there are ‘one-to-many’ schemes that derive from communities of practice or from postgraduate initiatives that self-organize peer-mentoring groups.

The mentor is meant to have had a longer experience that enables him or her to bring a better vision of the big picture and to act as a neutral observer of the career development of the mentee. To achieve personal and professional goals, inspiration and support are needed. Furthermore, if some scholastic skills are to be acquired, a mentoring scheme should include third parties to design some formal training and provide academic support to the mentors themselves.

Dialogue, networking and professional visibility or empowerment are some of the desirable characteristics of a fruitful mentoring relationship. In general, this is seen as one of the most effective ways of facilitating personal and professional growth outside academia both at early career stages and in lifelong learning.

Some of these traits are summarised in the following figure, where some of the principles that inform mentoring programmes in the CCI are presented.

Mentoring is an effective 1:1 development tool, where a mentee learns through conversation, challenge and reflection in a safe and non-judgemental space. (Museums Association, UK).

The key to a mentoring relationship is that the mentor has lived experience in the sector, field or discipline and can pull on that insight and personal experience to create a reality-based learning situation. (Museums Association, UK).

Due to its 1:1 nature, mentoring enables deeper and more individualistic development. (Museums Association, UK).

Mentoring partnerships create a relationship that supports career development (Australia Council for the Arts).

Mentoring is based on mutually beneficial exchange (Australia Council for the Arts).

Place attention on the ‘big picture’ perspective and not on the specific job or role perspectives (Australia Council for the Arts).

Mentoring enhances personal and professional growth (Australia Council for the Arts).

Mentoring is a collaborative relationship that helps unlock the potential of a mentee that inspires and supports him or her in achieving work and personal goals (Estonian Chamber of Mentors).

Mentoring can assist graduate students to establish professional careers by providing scholastic support, community and professional skills (Association of Arts Administration Educators).

Mentoring and training schemes supporting women artists and creatives facilitate education and professional growth and provide vital spaces of dialogue, networking and visibility (UNESCO, 2021).

Figure 1. Mentoring in CCI initiatives (compiled by the author)

## Requirements and motivations

Being a mutually beneficial scheme, for example, with a focus on peer mentoring, a mentoring programme should be a balanced arrangement between the mentor and the mentee. Unlike other development relationships, such as the tutoring that a creative student can receive from instructors during some formal training, peer mentoring has some special characteristics. Next, we will present an example.

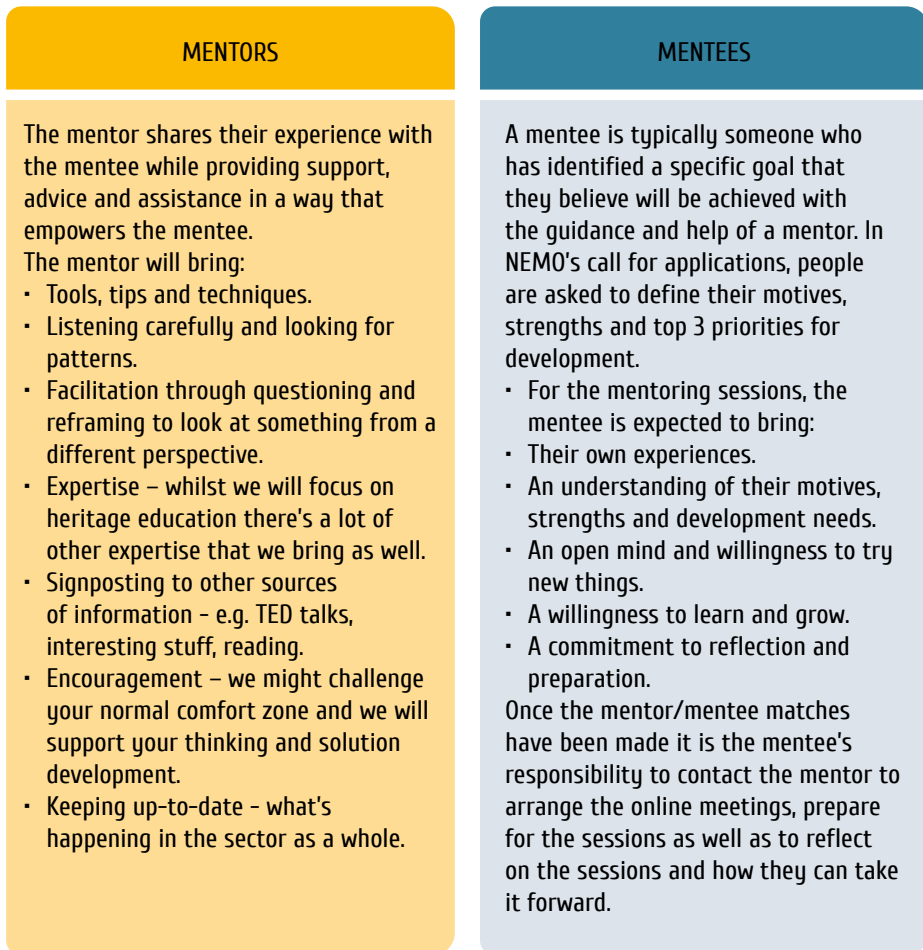
The NEMO mentor schemes, organized by the Network of European Museum Organizations<sup>1</sup> and managed by the Group of Education in Museums (GEM) is a good example for examining how the elements should be balanced to achieve a reasonable relationship between commitment, effort and rewards.<sup>2</sup> Based on this example, one can see that intrinsic motivation is more important than extrinsic motivation for the mentor, as there is no monetary compensation for the dedication of the mentor, unlike in the case of a professional consultant or personal coach.

The requirements and identified motivations for both mentors and mentees are presented in the following figure (Figure 2).

As seen in Figure 2 above, in a 1:1 scheme, there is a clear asymmetry of competences between the mentor and the mentee. However, both should be willing to engage in dialogue and to perform an introspective exercise to present and

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ne-mo.org/training/nemo-one-to-one-mentoring.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.museumsassociation.org/careers/mentoring/>



**Figure 2.** Requirements and motivations in the NEMO-GEM mentoring scheme for museum educators

assimilate the experience based on the skills gaps and qualities required in the UK museum sector (BOP Consulting 2016).

Research on skills gaps in cultural sectors is scarce, but research on the required personal qualities and how to improve the recruitment and qualities of workers is even more scarce, although some elements, such as personality traits, are difficult to change.

The 2016 study conducted for cultural institutions in the UK identified the following skills gaps: business and management skills to support income di-

versification, digital skills embedded across all organisational levels, leadership skills, and interpersonal skills, such as advocacy, leading change, forward planning, managing people (including volunteers) and workloads, succession planning, knowledge management, and environmental and carbon reduction management. The personal qualities needed to adapt to change and to be more entrepreneurial, less risk averse and more creative include conscientiousness, optimism, motivation, self-efficacy, persistence, curiosity, creativity, and the ability to learn and collaborate. Mentoring provides a way to share experiences, how skills have been encouraged, and how the mentors have achieved their skill level.

There are certainly some personality traits that facilitate the incorporation of mentors and mentees into successful programmes. For instance, self-identifying as a 'learner' has been found to be a trait that relates to the capacity for creating and sustaining a career in the highly competitive field of classical music, where successful careers are process oriented.

### **Question: How could mentorship programmes enhance skills and improve personal qualities?**

The nature of artistic and creative work makes mentorship especially suitable for enhancing professional and personal transformation processes. The 2010 Green Book defined peer-coaching practices (what today we can define as peer-mentoring) as the upgrading of skills and processes through exchanges between peers facing the same challenges, learning from the mistakes and successes of others, fine-tuning projects thanks to experienced tutors, exploring new technologies and expanding one's contact base. It is also claimed to be a highly useful instrument for bridging the gap between professional training and professional practice, as it provides access to high-level professionals who are not necessarily available in other contexts and helps build Europe-wide networks. Unfortunately, more than 10 years later, these processes are less than common in the CCI.

Despite their good fit, mentoring practices in the CCI are still relatively rare compared with other sectors in the economy. Although training, coaching, peer-learning, and mentoring are praised as good practices to be adopted in the CCI and to be promoted by creative mediators and public innovation agencies, they are still not fully incorporated into professional practice. A recent study in the United Kingdom on skill needs and mismatches identifies how employers

should provide advice and support to students, not only about employment opportunities or placements, but also about the nature of working life to improve their understanding of what creative work is about and the circumstances in which their careers would occur. One-to-one mentoring support is one way to develop such activities. Here again, as in many other dimensions that determine the lack of competitiveness in the cultural and creative sector across European countries, the size of cultural firms is a problem. While only 12% of the smallest firms (2–4 employees) offer such programmes in the UK, 29% of the largest firms (100+) do (Giles, Spilsbury and Carey 2020).

Another problem is the lack of a common understanding of mentoring and the differences between similar collaborative schemes of personal and professional development. We can find a nice clarification of the different alternatives in the study that Renshaw (2009) conducted for the Prince Claus Conservatory in the Netherlands. The different alternatives are ordered regarding the intensity of the engagement and the depth of the transformation or capacitation that is

#### **Buddying**

Buddying is an informal, friendly 'confessional' process in which experiences and insights are shared. It offers low-level support with little sense of progression and is generally only short-term, assisting a transition to a new job or new role.

#### **Shadowing**

A job role can be 'shadowed' by a musician with an interest in learning about the role, without necessarily aspiring to do that particular job. The reasons for wishing to gain experience through shadowing and observation need to be clear and understood prior to the activity taking place. Shadowing might take the form of peer-to-peer 'conversation' about their shared observation of practice. This could develop into a continuing professional peer relationship – i.e., peer mentoring.

#### **Counselling**

At the centre of counselling lies a conversation about personal development issues that arise from professional practice.

#### **Advising**

Advising constitutes a conversation about professional issues that arise from practice in a specific context (e.g., career orientation; possible new directions for the future; professional development opportunities; new networks and partnerships; marketing; budgeting).



**Tutoring**

Tutoring is an intentional, goal-oriented activity aimed at fostering the understanding and learning of knowledge through the process of questioning, critical dialogue.

**Instructing**

Instructing comprises a didactic form of imparting and passing on specialist knowledge and skills with little scope for dialogue – i.e., a mechanistic model of transmitting knowledge.

**Facilitating**

Facilitating is a dynamic, non-directive way of generating a conversation aimed at enabling or empowering a person(s) to take responsibility for their own learning and practice.

**Coaching**

Coaching is an enabling process aimed at enhancing learning and development with the intention of improving performance in a specific aspect of practice. It has a short-term focus with an emphasis on immediate micro issues. (E.g., how can I improve my performance in this particular area? How can I strengthen my workshop practice? What are the most appropriate ways of making my team work together more effectively?)

**Mentoring**

Mentoring is a more developmental process, including elements of coaching, facilitating and counselling, aimed at sharing knowledge and encouraging individual development. It has a longer-term focus designed to foster personal growth and to help an individual place their artistic, personal and professional development in a wider cultural, social and educational context (e.g., why am I doing what I do? How do I perceive my musical identity? In what ways does this impact on my professional life and work? Where am I going? What determines my long-term goals?).

**Co-mentoring / Peer-mentoring**

Co-mentoring entails a collaborative learning process in which both partners engage in an equal exchange of knowledge, skills and experience in relation to a clearly defined shared focus. It constitutes a form of peer-learning.

**Figure 3.** Mentoring in the broad picture of personal and professional development processes

Source: Renshaw, 2009. The Framework for Mentoring developed for the Prince Claus Conservatory in Groningen

intended. There are other differences in terms of the duration of the experience and the professional stage at which they are most effective (professionalisation, early stages, intermediate stages, leadership...). As shown in Figure 3, mentoring and peer-mentoring are the most intensive ways of building and conducting the process.

### Which kinds of skills and knowledge are transferred in a mentoring relationship?

Many of the professional relationships that emerge in the CCI are based on project and entrepreneurial relations. On the one hand, business-to-business relations emerge and professionals need good commercial skills. On the other hand, and this is more pronounced in some national contexts, the sector relies heavily on public contracting and provides services to public arts organizations. Knowing how to identify and relate to key stakeholders is essential and, in any of those cases, access to networks is crucial for professional development and commercial success (see also Chapter 2.3 Entrepreneurship Mentoring: the role of Universities).

In the CCI, as in all other sectors, T-shaped people are claimed to be needed in future. This implies holding multiple skills that should complement individual expertise and the mastering of a specific creative discipline. While the deep expertise of arts and creativity is to be the vertical part of the “T”, its horizontal part represents the breadth of those soft skills that are developed over time and shaped in learning-by-doing or learning-by-becoming processes of shared standards. For instance, a recommendation was made for museums in the UK to explore mentoring, shadowing and coaching schemes involving those working in the business and enterprise community to develop the necessary breadth of skills and experience (BOP, 2016).

Many of the skills incorporated in that wide part of the “T” are related to innovation. Consider digital and entrepreneurial skills. In terms of digital skills in the CCI, the process of identifying what is needed and the acquisition of the competences and skills can start in a mentoring process (Van Laar et al. 2022). Of course, innovation is much more complex than adapting to new technologies, but the transition of existing business models to digital ones can be better conducted when involved in some mentoring experience. Entrepreneurship is often identified as one of the attitudes and groups of skills that are more relevant in the work of cultural and creative workers. This is because the nature of

work is very much project-oriented, so each new project (play, tour, exhibition, design prototype, fashion collection...) is an entrepreneurial action. Moreover, these skills are transferable to other sectors and are part of the frequently invoked synergies and beneficial spill-overs that the CCI provide to other sectors of society, as when artists can transfer their intrapreneurial competences and skills to public administrations (European Commission 2014, Hale & Woronkiewicz 2021).

### **Mentoring through the career: higher education institutions and continuous personal and professional development**

Mentoring for becoming: Career identity in cultural management and in the CCI in the broadest sense would benefit from the extensive involvement of industry. This should be done right from the classroom (master classes and mentoring) to situated learning (internships, shadowing) (Reid, Petocz, & Bennett 2016). This has both personal and professional implications. Professionals in the classical music sector identify that their formal training, based in performance, was isolated from the professional world, which limited their opportunities to build networks and to benchmark themselves against industry standards (e.g., when building perceptions of success, expectations, identity, becoming aware of professional values or developing an entrepreneurial or pioneering mindset, see also Chapter 2.2 Professional Identity - the role of mentoring to build professional identity).

Some analysts highlight that mentoring practices should be brought from the co-curricular space into the core curriculum (López-Íñiguez and Burnard, 2021). These processes do not end at graduation, as young creative workers typically strive to make a living from their creative activity at the beginning of their careers (Cambell 2020) (see also chapters 1.4 and 2.2.).

The soft skills are important in any professional path in the CCI, as argued in the previous section, and they turn out to be especially important at the early stages of professional careers. Therefore, mentoring is often part of internship programmes, which combine educational and personal experiences in the professionalisation process. Mentoring is identified as a key dimension of internships in higher education institutions and at work. For a study of internships in the CCI in Belgium, mentoring has been seen to be positively related to the efficacy of the internship (Skujiņa & Loots 2020). This efficacy relates to positive outcomes of the experience, such as better placement rates and the comple-

mentarity and improvement of school learning. The study finds that firms are more committed to providing effective mentoring when the internship is paid, so their incentives are better aligned. Another important aspect of this relationship is access to the informal knowledge in the organization and professional networks.

When we talk about efficacy, we should of course consider the different goals and conditions under which mentoring takes place, who the promoters are, what do the participants expect, and many other aspects. In order to assess efficacy, evaluation is needed. For an example of the evaluation of a complex mentoring process, see the evaluation of the “Mentoring for All Programme”.<sup>3</sup>

Another way that mentoring experiences have shown their efficacy is during career transitions. For instance, when cultural workers want to undertake some formal entrepreneurial activity or when they are about to assume a leadership role in an organization. The REMAM case study about INCYDE and the programme funded by the Spanish Ministry of Culture and Sports discuss the motivations and perceptions of the mentees that participate in the programme, which involves cultural professionals with intermediate or advanced professional experience.

The informal experiences that emerge in some professional collectives, such as alumni from a cultural management programme, can be found at many stages of the professional life of cultural workers. These communities of practice (CoPs) are not subject to rules or formal hierarchies but provide a climate of confidence that favours reflection and provides personal and professional support.

When thinking about mentoring for continuous personal development, the pandemic and post-pandemic context must be carefully considered. To build up sustainable careers in the CCI and to increase the resilience of the sector, it is key to invest in lifelong learning in many dimensions (e.g., digital shifts, societal challenges, societal impact of creative practices). Freelance workers and those in micro-enterprises face structural challenges when engaging in these practices. Creative mediators should create appropriate settings to provide peer-to-peer learning strategies, mentoring and knowledge exchange between different CCI, as identified by the European Parliament (2021).

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.museumsassociation.org/app/uploads/2021/05/Mentoring-for-All-Evaluation.pdf>

## Challenges: When biases and difficulties in accessing professional networks matter

The implicit bias in professional relationships and the difficulty of accessing professional networks in the creative industries is frequently identified as an important barrier to professional development for women and minorities.

The gender dimension in mentoring projects for cultural professionals has been explicitly considered in some UNESCO publications, such as the 2021 gender dimension guidelines. For instance, there is the perception of unequal access to mentoring for women (Campbell 2020), although the evidence in the evaluation of mentoring in UK museums indicates that out of the 19 mentorship relations in the programme, 83% of the mentees and 89% of the mentors were women (UNESCO 2021).

Besides formal mentoring schemes for women, communities of practice (CoPs) are also mentioned as a way in which women look for personal and professional support to improve their careers. CoPs are social learning systems where peer-to-peer learning and support emerge. More and more frequently after the pandemic, social media tools facilitate the emergence of online CoPs (Hennekam, Macarthur, Bennett, Hope, and Goh 2019), bringing together teachers, tutors, supervisors, and peers. These communities are used to access mentorship and support, helping to meet the 'right people' to advance their professional careers.

For minorities, and this is a term that refers to many dimensions, the difficulty in accessing networks forms a professional barrier. This can also be due to the location of the professional, as remote areas do not benefit from the clustering of cultural and creative activities, and do not have access to public funding that concentrates in the areas with more population. In this context, the 'glocal' perspective and the organisation of communication capacity are needed. Regional policies that want to enhance the CCI as a driver of economic growth and as a way to deliver positive societal change should consider this special trait, and mentoring can improve the efficacy of those policies (Skoglund and Jonsson 2013). We have now drafted the consequences of the problems and suggestions for how mentoring can participate in the improvement of issues of diversity. Issues related to diversity in the CCI occupy a large space of the industry; therefore, this topic is more broadly elaborated in Chapter 2.5 Diversity, Equality, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI) and Mentorship in the Cultural Sector.

## Conclusions

The multiple tasks and skills that cultural and creative workers have to acquire and practice during their professional life course are beyond the content of any learning curriculum that can only anticipate and prepare its students for a changing and challenging working environment. The process of personal and professional development has, therefore, special characteristics for the integration of the student in the cultural sector, whether as a worker, as an artist or an entrepreneur, as well as in the later stages in their careers.

In this chapter we have argued that there are many ways in which personal and professional development processes can happen, each with different involvement of the parties, under different motivations and with different outcomes. Along the way, we have argued that mentoring is a suitable process for helping to overcome some of the difficulties that creative professionals face in accessing networks and acquiring soft skills that, so far, are seldom included in formal training for arts managers.

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### Other good practices and international cases:

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<https://kultur-kreativpiloten.de>

<https://en.unesco.org/creativity/news/peer-learning-participatory-policy-process-dynamic>

<https://creativeconomy.britishcouncil.org/projects/peer-coaching/>

<https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/OECD-EC-Culture-and-local-development-project-FLYER.pdf>

## 1.3 Cultural and Creative Industries as Drivers for Territorial Development, Innovation, Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship: A Public Policy Perspective of Mentorship

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### Abstract

This chapter enables the reader to better understand the context of the REMAM project and the cultural and creative industries. It highlights the specific nature and character of the field, and the policies within which mentoring takes place. Therefore, the context rather than mentoring itself is the focus.

### Introduction

Is there a place for policy intervention in the promotion of talent in the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI)? Regardless of the heterogeneity of CCI sectors, all of them reveal similar causes of market failure and face similar challenges related to the digital revolution, globalisation, increasing innovation and entrepreneurship. CCI share a common need for policy intervention to correct market failures facing innovation and entrepreneurship, the digital shift and globalization challenges (Plaza, Haarich, 2017). This chapter seeks to establish a preliminary approach to local/regional competitiveness and innovation and entrepreneurship policies in CCI, and its connection with mentoring. The overall aim of the chapter is to reinforce a basic understanding of the risks and challenges (organizational, technological, and institutional) facing the CCI in Europe to be able to develop smart local and regional innovation policies for competitive CCI development and encouraging stimuli for innovative spill-over effects for the rest of the economy. Understanding the risks and challenges is important for the creation of balanced operational public policies in Europe for innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitiveness in an increasingly intangible creative economy (e.g., knowledge economy). These policies often neglect the perspective of mentoring that could be used as a tool to meet these challenges. This chapter pursues an introductory approach given the substantial



absence of knowledge on the mechanisms of policies for creative and cultural regional innovation and entrepreneurship. The chapter provides an understanding of the context of CCI, and its specificities that affect potential mentoring programmes.

## A general framework for fostering local and regional CCI innovation and entrepreneurship

CCI is an extremely miscellaneous sector, and there exists a substantial lack of knowledge of and disagreement about the best public support policies, both to stimulate the CCI and to transfer their innovative and creative potential to other economic sectors (European Commission 2011a, 2011b). As an innovative field of economic activity, the CCI present a distinct character in terms of organisational, technological, and institutional dimensions. This distinct character also plays an important role in mentoring programmes.

The CCI also have a high element of risk and uncertainty (Caves 2000, Townley et al. 2009) common to other highly innovative activities. Therefore, there are two characteristics (mutually non-exclusive) that have been employed to describe the specificities of CCI: (a) the CCI face high levels of risk and uncertainty, like classical R&D activities, and therefore organizational, institutional, and technological structures need to be developed and supported through adequate public policies to deal with these risks, and (b) they constitute a highly networked value chain since they are based on social and cultural capital and network-intensive industries (in production, consumption, and distribution), which may have both a territorial basis (cities, regions) and a virtual dimension (social media, digital networks, global companies). In the case of the CCI, networks, more than capital or labour, help to cope with risks and challenges. The role of mentoring as a tool for networking is highlighted in many of the following chapters.

In order to strengthen current understandings of the CCI, two antipodal cultural and creative subsectors could be analysed, representing the ‘traditional’ cultural sector and the ‘modern-day’ creative industries – cultural infrastructures/museums and the video game industry. Art museums and the games industry represent two very different business models, and therefore cover a wide range of experience within the CCI, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The portrayal of two specific sub-sectors in the cultural and creative industries (CCI)

Cultural Infrastructures/ Museums	Game Industry
Culture, nature of a public good	Market-based creative sector
Brand-driven innovations	Technology-driven innovations
Non-technological innovations	Technological innovations
Symbolic knowledge (branding, design, advertising)	Analytical (science-based) knowledge Synthetic (engineering) knowledge
Value to customer created at the user-end of the value network (increasing importance of new media)	Value to customer created within the technological value chain
Place-branding driven externalities	Shared pool of skilled labour and spill-over effects on ICT, etc.
Informal barriers to imitation	Intellectual property rights
Production of images at the user-end (branding in New Media)	Production of images (part of the value chain)
Network economies at the user-end (accumulation of the production of images)	Technology-driven network economies
Museums as multinational organizations: Global value chain	Games-related R&D centres: Global innovation networks
New eContent for new media and new image distribution channels (e.g. iPhone)	New social network gaming: Changing the rules?

Source: Plaza and Haarich (2017)

In the following section, a preliminary approach to three dimensions of the relationships between CCI and Regional Economic Development will be presented.

## The cultural and creative industries CCI: An economic sector between culture and computer

The cultural and creative industries (CCI) are highly heterogeneous, with different organizational modes, different business models, various monopoly patterns and economies of scale, dissimilar cooperation structures, and different levels of public funding and economic performance within the EU (European Competitiveness Report 2010a, Dapp and Ehmer 2011, HKU 2010).

Notwithstanding the heterogeneity of the sector, the CCI as a whole exhibit similar causes of market failure and face similar challenges related to the digital shift, sustainability and increasing globalisation (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Common Challenges for Players in the Cultural and Creative Industries

Micro-firms and SMEs	CCI are strongly dominated by SMEs, especially micro-firms.
Human capital: creative work and working conditions	Project-oriented business models in many sectors. Workers in the CCI: multiple income sources (regular employment, self-employment, copyright, grants and subsidies, loans), combined with a fractured labour market, often leads to low-income levels and precariousness. Specific career transitions.
Uncertainty	The CCI face great uncertainty in demand. High-levels of unpredictability yield volatile returns to investment, leaving firms unable to rationally choose the profit-maximising output.
Intangibles for the CCI	The CCI face valuation difficulties because of information failures: Immaterial value produced by the CCI eludes balance sheets. Competitive markets do not price the intangible assets of cultural and creative firms (e.g. singular and unique artistic inspiration), hindering potential investors. As a result, the CCI face financial shortages.
Spill-over effects and positive externalities	The CCI face valuation difficulties because of spill-overs: The CCI give rise to important spill-over effects and positive externalities that benefit other firms and communities. As a result, the CCI do not capture all the returns on their created value (cash-inflows). That is, (1) they may invest less than would be optimal from a market perspective, and (2) the CCI face financial shortages.

<p><b>Micro-firms and SMEs</b></p>	<p>CCI are strongly dominated by SMEs, especially micro-firms.</p>
<p>Imitation challenges</p>	<p>The advantage for cultural and creative entrepreneurs largely depends on their uniqueness and exploiting first-mover advantages. Imitation at an early stage could threaten these advantages. Intellectual property rights (IPRs) do not work as effective protection and other barriers to imitation need to be set up.</p>
<p>Network Markets and Coordination Failures</p>	<p>The CCI operate in highly networked markets. Irrespective of the intrinsic aesthetic-value of the work of art, the value to the consumer arises in the social sphere, generated in the network economy. Networks usually form naturally, though coordination failures can prevent their development (e.g. while all parties potentially benefit from creating a network, there might be little incentive for one party to bear the start-up costs. As a result, (1) new relationships become difficult to forge; and (2) Well-established networks can build barriers to entry, hindering innovation).</p>
<p>Non-technological innovation versus technological innovation</p>	<p>Most traditional CCI follow business models based on non-technological innovation. However, emergent CCI (game industry, design) closely follow the opportunities offered by new technological innovations, mainly ICT-based. In many CCI, the potential for non-technological innovation (organization, marketing, etc.) are not sufficiently exploited. The CCI as a whole face challenges to protect their knowledge and their innovation-based competitive advantages against new competitors.</p>

Source: Plaza and Haarich (2017)

The CCI share a common need for policy intervention to correct the market failures from digital, innovation, entrepreneurial and globalisation challenges. The main theme of this book, mentorship, has a role as one solution to these problems. It facilitates sharing knowledge (both formal and informal) and can act as a tool for gaining access to otherwise closed networks. In addition, it makes it possible to build the competences and skills needed, for example, in entrepreneurship (see more in Chapter 2.3).

## Managing knowledge and skills in the CCI in a digital and global age

The organization of work is no longer characterised by the mass production of standardised goods in a hierarchically and bureaucratically structured way. The current landscape, especially in the field of the CCI, is characterised increasingly by knowledge-based forms of work that require the ability and willingness to transform established routines and practices in the face of new situations and challenges. Reich (1992) conceives this new type of work as symbol analysis: “Symbolic analysts solve, identify, and broker problems by manipulating symbols. They simplify reality into abstract images that can be rearranged, juggled, experimented with, communicated to other specialists, and then, eventually, transformed back into reality” (Reich 1992: 178).

Creative work is that part of knowledge-based work which focuses on the creation of “meaningful new forms” (Florida 2002a); for example, research reports or books, software, video games, objects d’art, industrial design, fashion or brands. Florida (2002a: 34), who considers talent as one of the crucial success factors for the creative industries (besides technology and tolerance) distinguishes two parts in this creative class: ‘the super-creative core’ and ‘creative professionals’. These workers are in general academically trained; their work is characterised by more complex tasks and a high degree of job autonomy. They find themselves confronted with complex problems and cannot forego continuous learning.

Studies have shown that the CCI often supply content that requires knowledge-based and labour-intensive input. However, production processes are not linearly organised but built around flexible and multidisciplinary teams, which often form on an ad hoc project base. The CCI therefore require skilled employees, who are more likely to hold non-conventional forms of employment (freelancing, temporary contracts) and have difficulty getting their skills recognised or certified formally (HKU, 2010).

Very little is known about the organization of CCI work and the related competences. Florida (2002a, b), for example, shows convincingly that cultural activities are highly concentrated especially in urban regions. This indicates that implicit knowledge and a pleasant, stimulating environment play an important role. Sydow and Staber (2002) illustrate that project networks are essential for the organization of television content production. These networks rely in general on supportive institutions in their surroundings. These regionally concentrated and institutionally stabilised patterns of interaction which, according to the ‘innovative milieu’ approach (Crevoisier 2004: 377), combines the roles of

technological learning in inter-organizational networks and spatial proximity. The core of this approach is the interaction “between the urban context and urban dynamics (...) and the evolution of production systems (economic innovation)”.

Therefore, we can assume that the knowledge-based work in the CCI is characterised not only by complex tasks and a high degree of job autonomy (as in all knowledge-based work, see Reich 1992 and Heidenreich 2004), but also the crucial role played by inter-organizational networks and the essential role of regional institutions, which stabilise the networked interactions between territorially concentrated creative activities. These networks and institutions – incentives and opportunities – facilitate the exchange of tacit knowledge (e.g., non-written eSkills in relation to social networking) and contribute to the innovativeness of creative milieus. Mentoring is one of the activities that allows newcomers (e.g., graduating students) to enter these inter-organizational and regional networks, as the mentor can act as a gate keeper (see more in chapters 1.4 and 2.2 ).

Future studies should analyse the patterns of the organization of CCI work and current schemes of initial and continuous learning in complex environments, which require high levels of creativity, autonomy and adaptability.

### **The CCI and their networks as channels for the transference of creativity and innovation**

Cultural organizations, as well as CCI performers and constituencies, can play an important role in creating networks between different professionals, groups, institutions, sectors and segments of society. This was observed for museums in 1989 when Star and Griesemer (1989: 393) took the example of a natural history research museum to show how such a cultural infrastructure can serve as a basis for cooperation between dissimilar social, scientific, and professional groups, bridging diverse social backgrounds. These linkages include:

- (a) Perceptible networks among diverse actors: the CCI can link networks that are not directly linked, thereby filling structural holes (Scott, 1991). A set of players with connections to other social worlds is likely to have access to a wider range of information/data. In this sense, the CCI can play a critical role as innovation facilitators/drivers.
- (b) Intangible connections between brand circuits (co-branding): Cultural heritage/infrastructure becomes an effective economic engine as effective

branding catalysts. The branding power depends on the accumulation of different brand circuits (Plaza et al. 2015, Plaza, Aranburu, Esteban 2022).

- (c) Bridging tangible and intangible networks: Cultural Industries contribute to bridging different constructs of meaning (multi-vocacy of meaning), which stimulates innovation. Positive co-branding strengthens the effectiveness of tangible networks/circuits.

In this sense, CCI-assets can bond apparently distant and different sectors, employing their ‘connecting’ function as it “connects concepts, places and paradigms from different backgrounds” (Lazzeretti 2011: 352). Moreover, cultural entities, like museums, can connect highly particular specialised global/national/local circuits that crisscross the world, connecting specific groups of cities (Sassen 2010). These networks/circuits vary enormously. Some are specialised and some are not; some are local, some are regional, and some are global. In other words, cultural industries bridge not only networks in the generic sense of the word, but more importantly, they can bridge very specialised circuits. Museums, for instance, and ‘high-level culture’ organizations/actors connect physical/material circuits: Their reputation can open access to signature architects (Pritzker prize circuit). They are customers for knowledge-intensive business services (e.g., signature architects) and advanced technologies (Plaza 2008). Museums connect to high gastronomy circuits like Michelin star chefs. Branded museums connect to (attract) large international tourist flows, airlines, hotel chains and/or premium fashion brands. In addition, ‘high-level cultural’ institutions, like fashion shows, are important, yet informal arenas for social networking, especially among the educated population and as strategies of social distinction (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). They may also contribute to the attractiveness of a region for members of transnational businesses (Sklair 2005).

Second, the CCI can also connect apparently dissimilar regions and cities (Plaza et al. 2015, Plaza et al. 2022), bringing together, for example, old, industrialised cities, like Bilbao with global nodes (e.g., New York) through the Guggenheim brand. The value of a CCI brand lies in its ability to make a city visible and to generate economic activity. Brand image plays an important role in fostering development and innovation processes. In our global world, economic renewal is as much about image/reputation as it is about investment and production. This is because investment and production depend on the image of locations that facilitate the process of simplifying and organizing information, thus enabling people to choose the locations of their various urban experiences (economic activities). Another important factor in this context is the easier attrac-

tion of creative talent and highly qualified professionals to cultural nodes, as suggested by Florida (2002a and 2002b).

Third, ‘high-level culture’ institutions symbolically assert a city’s transition to the knowledge-driven postmodern era, and its value for creativity, innovation, and culture (e.g., the knowledge eEconomy). Cultural industries produce images, and the new media has the potential to drive both image reproduction and image demand simultaneously. Online media (online press, blogging, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Instagram or Tik Tok) helps in the long run branding power of cultural infrastructures, events and assets. The critical accumulation of these positive images supposes a break with an industrial past and the start of a new economic trajectory; they may improve the reputation of a region (Plaza et al. 2015, Plaza et al. 2022). The economic potential of culture in regions consists mainly of breaking-up path dependencies and lock-in effects, which are so important especially in old-industrial regions and territories. In other words, culture might be an ideal remedy against the risks of regional lock-in effects (Grabher 1993). Last, but not least, cultural industries and infrastructures are the manifestation of specific cultures and identities and connect global audiences to specific cultural settings.

In conclusion, cultural institutions, events and assets can play an essential role in the renewal of regions and territories in at least three dimensions: 1) They are an important crystallisation point for social networks and regional identities; 2) they may facilitate the recombination of knowledge and thus contribute to an innovative milieu (Camagni 2001, Crevoisier 2004); and 3) they can break-up reputation-related path dependencies, reinforcing positive change and repositioning. Future work should analyse the bridging effects of CCI/sectors and infrastructures and generate reliable knowledge on the effects of culturally inspired networks on economic activities and regional reputation. The role of mentoring as building bridges between, for example, newcomers and established institutions is an important element to investigate in the context of CCI/sectors as bridges.

## Conclusions

The CCI represent an increasing portion of regional and national economies. They give rise to solid positive externalities (within and outside districts), noteworthy spill-overs but are also characterised by significant uncertainty in terms of demand and volatile returns to investment, information failures and risk of



imitation at an early stage, which could threaten their growth and obstruct revenues and employment. They must acclimatise to new digital value chains and media, and globalisation procedures. The lessons learned for the CCI-related sectors will bring relevant knowledge in defining a new generation of innovation and competitiveness policies that will also apply to other sectors, especially in services and other emerging industries (logistics, energy distribution, ICTs).

Public policies can play a vital part in developing CCI activities, to create revenues, employment/jobs, exports, as well as economic growth in general. They can do this by addressing several of the common barriers and challenges facing the CCI.

**Coordination and cooperation:** Operational creative networks will impact the ability of companies, cities, regions and territories to generate a cross-over of ideas and flows of new information/data to fuel innovation and creativity. Government can facilitate networking where coordination failures are present. Strong networks of individuals and service providers can prevent problems arising from small-scale SMEs (Kimpeler and Georgieff 2009). New digital technologies can open value creation networks (e.g., living labs, open virtual laboratories to fuel or power open-source research cooperation partnerships).

**Financing:** Public policy could facilitate the efficient and effective supply of financial resources by the market (e.g., private equity, risk capital, micro-finance, sponsorships, and guarantee schemes). Many CCI have problems funding their projects (EC 2011b). Volatile and unpredictable incomes, high ratio of self-employed workers, insufficient collateral, insufficient financial literacy and mentoring all limit CCI access to capital and finance (Dapp and Ehmer 2011). Micro-firms and SMEs often need amounts of less than 30,000 euros, making lending and loaning unappealing to commercial banks due to the administrative and organizational costs required (Söndermann et al. 2009). There is a need to create a new class of financial tools for small businesses and young entrepreneurial CCI SMEs that offer targeted financing to meet specific financing needs.

**Research, technology, development and innovation (RTDI) and internationalisation:** Policy can support the internationalisation and RTDI processes of SMEs that constitute the majority of the CCI. However, the definition of innovation used in established public programmes does not correspond to the way the CCI work (Söndermann et al. 2009). Here, new forms of research and innovation support, as well as adequate internationalisation schemes, are required.

## Education and training/Mentoring CCI-growth from knowledge and knowledge assets

Territories and businesses can attain qualitative growth if they bet on pioneers and human capital, continue to cultivate a set of partnerships, networking, and collaboration strategies, and improve their own profile. Strategic specialisation in the knowledge economy based on a cohesive policy-encompassing structure, foreign trade investment, education, upgrading skills and research, together with the improvement of institutional, organizational and financial platforms helps to enable more collaboration and teamwork, thus generating supplementary knowledge assets.

Moreover, public policies can facilitate the creation of a pool of symbolic knowledge, analytical (science-based) knowledge and synthetic (engineering) knowledge, as well as the development of business and management skills. It should be noted that CCI SMEs and micro-firms need financial support to alleviate the risk of skilled worker fluctuations (e.g., entrepreneurial mentoring by experienced entrepreneurs), financial education as a condition for such financing, and business and technological literacy.

Framework conditions: Legal, tax systems, institutional conditions should be encouraging, as should systems for safeguarding intellectual property, regulatory structures, and competitive settings.

To finish, public policies can reinforce, direct and channel the promising spillover effects of the CCI for other sectors and industries and society at large, so that further companies, clusters, sectors, or entities can benefit from CCI firms through knowledge diffusion, creative partnerships or other inputs for innovation and creativity. The role of mentoring to bridge the gaps between urban and regional, providing access to networks and providing a tool for sharing informal knowledge is a topic often neglected in policy discussions. The following chapter might provide new insight on how mentoring can be used as a tool to manage the challenges identified. However, the role of the policy level remains often an unanswered challenge.

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## 1.4 Mentoring, University Education Programmes and the Cultural and Creative Sector

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### Abstract

This chapter aims to outline some relevant concepts and issues that often arise when designing and implementing mentorship programmes. We clarify the contextual aspects of a university as the institutional setting and the role of the Cultural and Creative Sector (CCS) as fields requiring specific types of mentoring. We focus on mentorship programmes in universities, considering the students as mentees. The insights in this chapter are built on various labour market reports as well as experience in implementing mentorship programmes in an academic setting. Further, we draw implications for mentorship in higher education programmes in cultural management. Several aspects related to integrating mentorship into the curriculum are outlined from a practical point of view, supporting those running such programmes, and curriculum leaders and administrators in developing and maintaining mentorship as part of degree studies for cultural managers.

### Introduction

The importance and nature of mentorship has been widely studied (see e.g., Mullen and Klimaitis 2021, Ragins and Kram 2007). Mentorship is a crucial element of learning, education, and professional and personal development. Yet, mentorship as part of formal education within higher education has only been studied in the context of fields, such as teaching and nursing (see e.g. Hawkey 1997, Nowell et al. 2017). In the CCI, the idea of mentorship has been actively applied and practiced (e.g., Creative Mentorship in Serbia; Creative Mentor Network in the UK, and other examples presented in Part IV of this book). There are mentorship schemes developed to support professional competencies in the CCI; for example, as part of the Nordic Baltic mobility programme (Nordic Culture Point, 2022) and the Creative Europe MEDIA business cluster

programme. However, the potential of mentorship as a curricular element integrated within higher education has not yet been fully explored.

Research into mentorship programmes specifically designed for higher education in the cultural and creative sector are rather scarce. In the university setting, the concept of mentorship is sometimes understood from a wider perspective; for example, Armour (2021) considers supervisors (such as highly experienced professional musicians) as modern-maestro mentors. That hints at the idea that an educator with vast practical experience can also act as a mentor. As Armour points out, the relationship between a tutor and undergraduate can be viewed through an appreciation of educational theories, while the broader aspects of adult development are relevant within the discipline of mentoring (Armour 2021).

### Institutional setting

To address mentorship in the context of arts management education, we start by tackling the institutional setting – the university. The institutional approach allows us to identify the actors involved in mentorship processes – what kinds of practices they share, what beliefs, values, and norms they share and contribute to the joint action. Institutional theory looks at any phenomenon by identifying the actors, their shared activities, and the practices, values, norms, and rules the shared practices are based on (see e.g., DiMaggio and Powell 2000, Scott 1987). It is accepted that universities today face institutional pluralism, and have to engage in multiple fields simultaneously (Kraatz and Block 2008, Frolich et al. 2013). It is also clear that practices in arts and cultural management are not homogeneous. Both the university and CCI institutional fields are in the process of forming, and at the same time, are created by isomorphic forces (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, Ansmann and Seyfried 2021), which create the interplay between these two fields and the actors within them. Therefore, the stipulated separation of universities (referring to the academic community and agents in a broader sense) and the CCI (including arts management practices) should be considered as ever changing and intertwined in reality.

Modern education systems whose players are aware of the needs of current and future labour markets should aim at providing transverse skills as soft skills (communication skills, problem solving skills, management skills),<sup>4</sup> while also

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.reading.ac.uk/seecc/skills-transformer/>



providing opportunities and tools for students to be matched to experienced professionals from different sectors<sup>5</sup> to experience the practical challenges of real-life situations. The interaction between a community of practice and a student is promoted on the policy level of both fields, and there is a strong call to address the needs of the sector in the curriculum of arts and cultural education. Nowadays, it is common that groups of students working in projects developed during their studies are using their theoretical knowledge in practice to offer innovative solutions. The projects entrusted to students vary in complexity – starting from market research to the creation and development of new products.<sup>6</sup> Accurate identification of the demand for the CCI is generally hampered by discussions concerning the internal classification and definition of the sector, as it constitutes a relatively new direction of economic development that plays an invaluable role in fostering the innovation potential of other economic sectors. One of the priorities is to improve student prospects on the labour market by promoting a shift from employee to employer. University of the Arts London matches mentors with mentees by discipline, stressing how important it is to speak the same ‘arts industry language’ to offer wisdom and tips on how the industry works (Professional Mentoring scheme UAL).

However, practices, norms, values and regulations are not identical in academia or the CCI. Aims and essential ‘rules of game’ can be substantially different. Still, from the macro-perspective of the ecosystem or cultural ecology (see e.g., Holden 2015), both fields are connected and interdependent parts. Furthermore, on closer inspection, we can see that many dimensions within these fields are based on the same values or built on each other by complementing each other. Although some dimensions of these two fields are and will remain contradictory, being based on institutional logic inherited from different fields, we wish to build on the complementary aspects that contribute to developing mentorship programmes that could essentially meet the needs of both the CCI and academia.

Knowledge in the university and the CCI has an essential role in the ecosystem. The university is about creating, curating, sharing and somewhat storing knowledge. The CCI is valued “to the extent of its association with individual creativity”, and that creativity is often about the creation of new knowledge (Deloitte 2021). The CCI relies on creativity and intellectual property rights; it is built on talent and knowledge that is based in its people. Similarly, in the

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<sup>5</sup> <https://student.londonmet.ac.uk/jobs-and-employment/career-and-employability-advice/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.aalto.fi/en/corporate-collaboration/study-projects>

university context, especially in the arts and culture, knowledge is often also based in people – music students often choose a school for a specific professor, a maestro to learn from. Visual arts students follow professors who are often established artists to learn from them. In both fields learning from each other, learning from colleagues (peer-to-peer learning) is a common practice. In the CCI this happens in professional networks and shared creative teams. In the university field, unofficial or regulated peer-to-peer learning is a common practice among academic staff and students. Researchers and academics cooperate and share knowledge, learning from each other, picking up knowledge from their peers and building on new discoveries.

Distinct to the university field is the tendency towards unified knowledge, whereas in the CCI uniqueness and exceptionality are often considered competitive advantages. The university setting has a standardised, objective measurement orientated approach to knowledge. In contrast, knowledge in the CCI field is less standardised, meaning the indicators of what is considered knowledge or *good* or *poor* knowledge depends on the sub-field of the sector and can vary significantly. Creative people may look at what is *worthy* knowledge very differently, and mentors from the field may have completely different approaches to the depth of knowledge and assessment of knowledge.

From the perspective of the (re)invented model of mentorship in the arts, we should consider the need for ‘new’ knowledge as a central aspect in both fields. The CCI faces many new challenges as society changes rapidly, leading to unexpected conditions. The degree programmes preparing managers, leaders and executives for the sector should adapt and redesign their curriculum accordingly. Higher education programmes have to find new flexible solutions to educate students to respond to the needs within society. We know the CCI needs people with new competences, the capacity to adapt to changes and capable of being change agents (e.g., see more in VVA et al. 2021). The range of skills and knowledge for new managers and policymakers in the CCI cannot be acquired only through current formal education, and therefore the methods of learning and methods of educating need to be reassessed (Kiitsak-Prikk, Jyrämä, Zemite 2022). Ultimately, the knowledge dimension is shared and approached similarly in universities and the CCI: both universities and the CCI value knowledge, but the *assessment* of knowledge and knowledge sharing can vary. Mentorship could be a strategic tool for new co-created knowledge. From the knowledge creation perspective, it could bind both fields and engage mutual commitment.

## Between academia and communities of practice

A community of practice can be defined as a community of people who share some activity or practice and have similar values, norms and language (Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998). A community of practice affects how mentoring programmes are implemented in the university context and how cooperation with the CCI is organized.

If we look at the issue of communities of practice from the university perspective, we conclude that the university is hierarchical, structured and shares common values, whereas the CCI is network based, agile and fragmented (Kuznetsova-Bogdanovitsh 2022).

From the university perspective, some programmes lean more towards industry practice, while others, more towards academic practice. Cultural management programmes usually try to balance both. The implementation of a mentoring programme at the organizational level of the university might be slow and challenging because every initiative must be approved by the university's bureaucratic system. A more flexible approach might be provided by programme coordinators or directors at the curriculum level.

On the other hand, practices in the CCI context are network and talent-centred. We can identify a strong link here, as many of the university professors come from the field and academic staff are very often integrated in both fields and wear at least two hats – teaching students and themselves being active practitioners in the field (e.g. working in the production of cultural events). Communities of practice at the curriculum level are integrated into the CCI, so there is an opportunity to overcome the structure and hierarchy. An important aspect is that mentors come from somewhat different communities of practice, but for the sake of sustainability, they have to come from both communities of practice. Chopra et al. (2019) raise a point worth considering in terms of ethics, namely that mentoring as a process needs to be mindful and honour the virtues of integrity and honesty. As mentors wear various hats, for instance, in addition to being someone's mentor, they may also serve as executives within an organization and the hat they wear may influence the advice they provide the mentee. There may be situations when the best interests of a mentor may not align with the best interests of a mentee (e.g., a mentee may have a wonderful professional opportunity that takes them away from a mentor or their company). In that case, a mentor has to wear a mentor's hat and think about what is best for the mentee, and not necessarily what is best for the mentor and their organization.

The specifics one has to take into account is that the CCI employs not only *pure* industry professionals, but also a range of technical and support staff, which implies the need for collaboration skills to work with these professionals. Consequently, it is necessary to develop communication, empathy and collaboration skills with professionals working in other cultural and arts fields, as well as with the representatives of other sectors of the national economy. The CCI are mainly project based with a lot of self-employed freelancers and a rapidly changing environment. The labour market requires interdisciplinary cooperation and collaboration in operative situations when it is necessary to perform several functions in a specific position, as well as the need to requalify. While developing and implementing the mentorship model, it is necessary to think about how to provide opportunities to work in an interdisciplinary way and create open communication, including mutual learning experiences.

The crossroads between the university and the community of practice presented above is by no means universal or comprehensive. The settings of the mentoring programme are subject to many different dimensions that are widely discussed in this book. However, the aspects discussed in this chapter suggest which practicalities of the implementation of mentorship in arts and cultural management degree programmes should be discussed and if there is a need to develop a sustainable integration of mentorship into the curriculum.

### Implementing a mentorship programme in a university setting

Mentorship in a university seems to be a rather recent and trending topic among scholars. Mentoring has become an accepted practice to help improve the individual behaviour and performance of students (Du Boulay 2021). The institutional framework affects any mentoring relationship (Mezirow 2009). The formal mentorship differs from informal mentorship structurally and qualitatively, yet their potential is also rather attractive (Baugh and Fagneson-Eland 2007). The three instructional contexts that shape the mentoring practice in a university setting are said to be the structure of the school curriculum and assessment, the organization of teaching and mentoring, and the student population (Wang 2001).

Many universities have been practicing peer-to-peer mentoring either as separate programmes or integrated within the curriculum. This is usually in the form of students supporting freshmen to adjust to university life. In the context of the university, we can find research published on mentoring for educators

and its importance (see e.g., the overview provided by Kutsyruba and Godden, 2019). Mentoring student teachers (early-stage teaching professionals) has been studied by Nowell et al. (2017), who outline the limited literature and gaps in the formal evaluation of such mentorships. Scholars stress that mentor knowledge is deeply rooted in their teaching knowledge (Becher, Orland-Barak 2018). Mentoring doctoral students has also been considered rather recently (e.g., Mullen 2020, Vauterin 2021). The difference between supervisor or professor and mentor relies on the mentor role as facilitator: “The mentor-student relationship could not exist unless teachers remind themselves that their role is not so much to profess as to facilitate” (Mezirow and Taylor 2009: 79). We can definitely find academic discussions and reflections around mentorship and education, although not yet in the field of cultural management education.

Concerning mentoring for and with students inside the university framework, we can detect several streams in the literature. The perspective of peer mentoring among students in higher education seems to be slightly more established in academic research, having emerged at the beginning of the 1980s (e.g., see Terrion, and Leonard 2007). Mentoring fresh graduates or young professionals in their early career stages is considered by Woloshyn et al. (2019), but still from the perspective of how professors support the well-being of graduates. This stream refers to connecting students/graduates to a community of practice (see also Chapter 2 on knowledge and communities of practice). This happens in what is often referred to as the mentoring third space (Richards, Powell, Hammack, McMullen, Bacnik, Lewis, & Sams 2014: 11) which “is the location where the mentee and mentor become partners and where the integration of knowledge moves the undergraduate into the community of practice where optimised academic dispositions are attained.” Du Boulay (2021) stresses mentoring as an opportunity for students to develop their ‘social capital’ and demonstrate the attributes employers are looking for.

There is also a discussion of the dual aims of mentoring – personal support and professional learning (Kutsyruba, Godden 2019). It is possible to highlight the multiple skills and roles of mentors in education as follows:

- The ability to promote reflective discussion;
- Interpersonal skills;
- Prompting critical reflection;
- Modelling and role modelling;
- Collaborative relationships;
- Knowledge about individual needs;
- The humanistic and educational orientations operating in tandem;

- A wide spectrum of skills and strategies to make what they know accessible to others;
- Enhancing professional thinking (Becher, Orland-Barak 2018, Crutcher, Naseem 2016, Izadinia 2015, Harrison et al. 2006).

Due to the complexity of the roles mentioned previously, Becher and Orland-Barak (2018) argue that mentors in different contexts prioritise and adopt certain roles and neglect others. The background and identities of a mentor and a mentee definitely influence how the relationship develops, as does the organizational context (Du Boulay 2021). Kutsyuruba and Godden (2019) place emphasis on the well-being of the mentees as an essential part of the mentor's role.

From the perspective of the CCI, mentorship programmes organized by universities provide a very important link with the sector; close collaboration that is inevitable while implementing a mentorship programme definitely ensures and strengthens ties with practitioners and highly assessed professionals. The mentor network, which envisages the involvement of professionals working in the CCI, using their personal professional experience and contacts, helps students gain an in-depth understanding of the institutional and organizational structure of a particular branch of the CCI as well as the specifics of project management in this field.

One of the challenges while implementing a mentoring programme in arts/cultural universities is that professionals working in the CCI often lack knowledge of mentoring or coaching. Because of this, we argue that formalised models might be beneficial for mentors to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and of the methods and tools to be used in the mentoring process. Starr (2014) writes that when mentoring is supported as part of an organized scheme (e.g., run by a university), it is likely that the coordinator will ensure the support process and principles, but the amount of structure used in mentoring schemes does vary. Most schemes appoint coordinators to 'match' mentees to mentors, while some encourage mentees to find and approach their own mentors. Some organized schemes have formal reviews and assessment mechanisms, such as structured interviews or electronic questionnaires, while others are happy to gather anecdotal feedback as an indication of effective relationships.

Bryant-Shanklin and Brumage (2011) suggest formalising mentoring at the university level by using the Collaborative Responsive Education Mentoring Model. The model focuses on the collaborative process of mentoring between faculty members and pre-service teacher candidates or practicing teachers, primarily based on the aim of fostering international scope and activities in the

research field. This model aims to achieve a systematic approach to strengthening research results in the university by supporting diverse groups of faculty at multiple colleges and universities to conduct collaborative research projects.

## Key aspects of mentoring programmes in higher education institutions (HEIs)

### People

The central person in the mentorship process is the student; therefore, it is crucial that their needs are understood and taken into account by those who are organizing and coordinating the mentorship programmes in the universities. During mentorship programmes, the challenge arises of considering the needs of the students as well as important issues they need to understand while going through the process. These might include understanding personality traits, industry-specific skills, models of employment, the importance of social competencies, and a general understanding of the activities of cultural and arts organizations in a broader socio-political and economic context.

Mentorship programmes in universities can vary and could involve different players, such as:

- mentors from the university staff;
- mentors from the field;
- peer-to-peer mentorship within a study course or programme.

In order to ensure the best possible result for all parties involved, it is of utmost importance for the organizers of the mentoring programme to communicate the goals and tasks within the programme clearly to all participants. If any of the parties involved is unsure of their role, their rights and obligations, the result might be far from what was expected or desired. Providing guidelines to help structure the meetings between mentor and mentee, providing mentors with all kinds of tips and tricks, facilitating mid-term networking events, and exchanging experience on a regular basis will definitely contribute to better outcomes.

Mentors (also from previous cycles of a programme) can be united in a network where they can consult each other and exchange experiences. Maintaining such a network would definitely ensure that students can be provided with a deeper understanding of the very diverse and fragmented CCI labour market. The establishment of consultative councils for specific study programmes or sub-pro-

grammes might also be useful in the context of sustaining a close link with the sector and (potential) mentors.

### **Motivation**

One of the difficulties that every university that implements a mentoring programme may face is how to find potential mentors interested in contributing and then keeping them. Mentoring, if taken seriously, is quite a demanding relationship, and mentors might get tired from the intensity of the process, hence questions like – What measures could be used to sustain the relationship with mentors and their contribution and motivation? – are of utmost importance. Therefore, the challenge for the coordinator is to organize a process so that it is interesting and fulfilling for mentors as well as the mentees. Providing specific training and guidelines as well as opportunities to network and share experiences with other mentors are some of the tools that can be used. As only a few CCI professionals have enough experience as coaches or mentors or have a background in psychology, it is crucial to strengthen their mentoring skills in order to ensure better results from the programme, but also to enable mentors to grow and develop their personal skills as well. Mentors in the programme implemented in the Latvian Academy of Culture even suggested inviting a specialist on adolescent behaviour to meet and consult the mentors on the peculiarities of working with generation Z.

The question of whether the organizer or coordinator of the programme should consider paying mentors for their services is also likely to come up sooner or later. Building long-term relationships with CCI organizations and enterprises is an even more ambitious goal when implementing a mentoring programme, as, in our opinion, there might be a shift from personal to organization-based mentorship. Such a shift would avoid situations where, for instance, a mentor with whom a university has built a lasting relationship leaves a particular company, be it a theatre or a festival, the knowledge about how to mentor novices should not leave that organisation with that person but rather stay within the organisation.

It is important to acknowledge that experienced professional coaches and mentors can work with anyone, as they have had hours and hours of training on how to help others change their lives and reach their goals. Mentors who are only practitioners (e.g., in the CCI) by comparison can share their experience and give advice but being able to help the mentee is much more likely when the mentor knows specifically what the mentee is aiming for, what their specific needs are. The motivation of mentees to be part of the mentoring programme,



to be the driving force of the process and to succeed is of utmost importance. If a mentee is not motivated then the mentor, who is first and foremost a successful practitioner in the field but not a professional coach or psychologist, cannot help, and the mentorship process will often be unsuccessful. Starr (2014) argues that when mentoring is provided as part of an organized scheme, as it is in universities, potential mentees are often people identified as ‘talent’ or having ‘high potential’ or requiring development. In cases where the mentorship is integrated into the curriculum, the pre-mentoring stage is where the university can help clarify the gaps and needs of a mentee. The tutor from the university should be there to help define the needs for each student in the mentorship and what gap should be filled by mentoring, as well as address the issue of assessing the student’s performance.

As well as providing motivated mentors for the sustainability of a mentoring programme in a university, we also have to train the students so that they have an ‘open mindset’ and want to maintain a link with their alma mater, and after graduation naturally commit to being mentors in the programmes they themselves benefitted from as mentees.

## Resources

If a university plans to launch a mentorship programme, it is important that it holds an established place in the CCI ecosystem. The preconditions for a successful (re)invented mentorship model are resources. A university has to consider that implementing the programme will require extra human resources for management and administration and financial and technical resources to maintain the network of alumni, practitioners and stakeholders, ensuring regular communication and the collection of feedback, as well as organizing specific training and networking events.

In that sense, less resources seem to be needed if the mentoring activity is part of the core of the curriculum, part of the learning objectives, and not as an extracurricular activity.

In some cases, establishing consultative councils for specific study programmes or sub-programmes might be a solution. Then the mentors become involved both in the formulation of the objectives of study projects and internship tasks and in the evaluation of the projects. The selection of both council members and mentors, as well as their motivation to engage in this collaboration are key aspects to fulfil this task successfully.

One should be aware that a sustainable mentorship programme is time consuming and demands regular contributions. Joint platforms for researchers and practitioners (e.g., ENCATC) could and should support this valuable tool within their international network. There is a need for explicit activity to integrate academia with communities of practice. Some EU programmes and grants are assigned to support this issue (Creative Europe, EU Media Programme) and could be used to finance the new initiatives of mentoring.

### Impact

There are several examples of mentorship as additional extracurricular programmes for supporting students (e.g. University of Tartu [mentorship programme](#), UVP/EHU programme). In the case of cultural management mentorship models, the focus should not be only on supporting students and mentees during their studies (providing new networks of contacts, providing help with their studies, helping them to grow), but also facilitating skills and creating, maintaining and developing mentorship relationships from both sides that will be relevant throughout their professional lives. Having skills and an understanding of what mentorship is (in both roles) and what benefits it provides should be one of the learning outcomes in degree programmes since such knowledge provides added value to the whole CCI ecosystem.

We argue that promoting mentorship relationships either as part of a curriculum or as voluntary programmes should be integrated into the development strategies of universities, as we believe mentoring activities have much a wider societal impact. By being at the centre of the networks necessary for mentorship as part of education, universities re-create their connectedness to the wider society. Keeping in mind that both mentors and mentees gain knowledge, new skills and insights, new connections and other positive effects, universities clearly help spread the positive impact of the programme in society.

Taking this into account, universities may introduce some changes in relation to their curricula and networking to encourage the mindset of mentoring (e.g., through grading, quality assurance, the managerial level, alumni relationships and networks). We have to train students as potential mentors, cultivate their readiness to give back their share to the university, the community and the CCI. Not only students, but MA or BA thesis supervisors also need to strive for a mindset of greater openness. Course descriptions, for instance, could include learning to balance between different inputs and suggestions (from supervisors, consultants, and mentors) as learning outcomes.

## Evaluation of the success of a mentoring programme in an HEI

Obviously, an important part of a mentoring programme is evaluating its impact and success. At the end of each cycle all the participants (both mentees and mentors) should be given a questionnaire and provide feedback as to whether the goals of the programme have been achieved, what the main benefits are, what the difficulties were and, most importantly, how to improve the programme. It is important to remember that the main target group of the mentoring programme is the students; therefore, their satisfaction with the programme, their responses and suggestions are the most important. However, the feedback from the mentors and their satisfaction is also crucial; they should also directly benefit from their involvement and not only provide a service; it is important to build a sustainable network of mentors and ensure that they are ready to participate more than once. The coordinators should also consider, however, that there is no one ideal or perfect way to implement such a programme, as each approach has its pros and cons, benefits and challenges.

One of the criteria for evaluating the programme might be the interaction between the university and the CCI, where students gain a deeper understanding of the diverse branches and institutional and organizational practices. It has been confirmed that the curriculum or specialist field matters – only mentors and mentees who have experienced the same approach or a similar curriculum fully understand the students' problems (McLean 2004). Therefore, it is useful for the mentors to come from the same field and that they have had similar training. We suggest that cultural management mentorship programmes benefit from using mentors with the same type of education. Therefore, a strong alumni network is a valuable resource for building a fully functioning and beneficial mentorship module in cultural management degree programmes. Another indicator for evaluating the success of mentoring programmes within cultural management education could therefore be whether the network of mentors participating are from the CCI and whether they have similar educational backgrounds.

If the mentorship programme is integrated in the curriculum, students should receive credit points as a measure of how their participation has been evaluated. A 100% success rate in mentoring programmes is not possible since it can happen that either a mentee or a mentor will withdraw from the process. If a programme is voluntary and the relationship between mentee and mentor does not work out for some reason, it is not such a big issue, but this might cause problems in a programme that is an integral part of the study process. This

potential obstacle should be taken into account and the programme coordinator must be responsible for keeping everybody onboard and be ready to offer a lifebuoy alternative in situations that are impossible to resolve.

Further research is needed on how much this is also applied in cultural and arts management programmes.

## Sustainability

We believe that one of the most important elements of mentoring programmes in university education is sustainability. Universities in general are oriented towards stable sustainable development, building on past generations and resources while struggling to keep up with the times, and face with dignity, for instance, the challenges of digitalisation. The university field has historically invested in the development of the values of equality and equity. Equally accessible and cumulative education is considered a core value in democratic countries and universities operate in an institutional setting that guarantees comparatively stable and sustainable resources.

The CCI, on the other hand, has only been striving towards sustainable development perhaps during the last couple of decades. Economically sustainable design is one of the main trends in this sector. But social sustainability, including equity, as well as economic and environmental sustainability, are still quite new and only emerging dimensions in the CCI.

In its very essence, mentorship is aimed at achieving a long-term impact on mentees, and mentorship programmes in universities are definitely oriented beyond temporary projects. Usually there are three stakeholders in the programmes: the mentee (student), mentor (professional from the sector) and manager/organizer/coordinator of the programme (usually, a representative of the university). The coordinator of the mentoring programme is the one responsible for ensuring the social sustainability, the sustainability of relationships with mentors and a sustainable mentorship programme. The sustainability of the relationships between the university and its mentors is crucial. These could be considered one part of the social sustainability for both the university and the CCI.

## Practical tips

### **Suggestions for the coordinator:**

Decide whether your mentoring programme is going to be part of the curriculum or a voluntary option for students.

Assign one or two people who are directly responsible for ensuring the implementation of the mentoring programme in your HEI (if it is not part of the curriculum, who would be the most suitable people from the most suitable structural unit to coordinate it).

Design the whole scheme as a step-by-step process, set deadlines for each of the steps.

Plan the process of applications to the programme so that it does not clash with exams or other important events in the students' lives.

Use brainstorming to decide the possible pros and cons for each option and decide on the best way to pair the mentees and mentors. Be aware that this is the most challenging stage of the whole implementation process (Options: 1. The HEI is responsible for the pairing process. 2. The students are allowed to choose their mentors. 3. Use a speed-dating approach.)

Communicate the main goal and tasks of the programme and what to expect to all participants clearly.

Provide guidelines for structuring the mentor-mentee meetings that can be used as needed.

Provide training for mentors as most probably relatively few CCI professionals have sufficient experience as coaches or mentors or have a background in psychology.

Provide additional networking events (i.e. at least mid-term but possible at other times as well) as a platform for sharing experiences.

Consider inviting a specialist in adolescent behaviour to meet and consult the mentors about the peculiarities of working with generation Z.

Consider involving the alumni network to spread the word and help build a stock of mentors.

Remember that one of the keys to a successful mentoring process is student motivation. Do not talk people into the programme, admit only those whose motivation is strong and who show initiative, otherwise you run the risk of frustrating the mentors and yourself.

Once the programme is established, provide opportunities for future participants to meet programme alumni.

Brainstorm with your peers and colleagues about how to motivate mentors in the long term and ensure the sustainability of the programme.

Be ready for the question of the remuneration of mentors to arise, especially if the same mentors are involved repeatedly.

Discuss how the success of the programme will be measured.

Remember that a 100% success rate (successful pairing and successful mentoring process for all pairs) is not likely. There will always be more or less successful cases.

Initiate a mentoring programme in your HEI only if you have enough resources to ensure its sustainability and only if you have strong support from faculty and management.

### **The needs of mentors:**

To transfer real-life experience, to involve mentees in practical tasks in a natural CCI setting, to eventually involve mentees as new promising employees, successors in their work.

Getting to know the new generation, and learn from them.

Networking with other mentors and professionals in the field.

Tips for being a successful mentor and training as a coach.

Signpost non-academic sources of information.

**The needs of students:**

Wide selection of mentors.

Get to know the industry from the inside.

Acquire the feeling of real-world work experience.

Practical work experience.

Exchange of experience.

Access to help in finding their way in their new career.

In-depth insights into the profession from a person not directly related to the academy that can provide fresh opinions.

Individual approach, emotional support.

Support in the study process.

Contacts, networking, including with other participants of the programme.

New job opportunities in the field.

New knowledge – both theoretical and practical – in a specific field.



## PART II

Part II presents a variety of diverse perspectives on mentorship, each contributing to a more holistic view of mentoring that acknowledges its multifaceted nature. As discussed earlier they represent the voice of their authors, either with a focus on research and academic analysis or analysis of practice and experience. Yet, each provides the reader insights, advice and reflections for managing mentorship programmes, with a focus on the CCI and the curriculum in MA programmes.

Part II starts by looking at mentorship from the perspective of managing and sharing knowledge in arts academies recognising the multiple, established but also informal and often unrecognised ways that mentoring contributes to knowledge sharing and co-creation in academic contexts (Chapter 2.1). Next mentoring is viewed as part of building professional identity by looking through several existing studies followed by an analysis of three specific cases (Chapter 2.2). Further, the chapter moves on to look at mentorship in the context of entrepreneurship with several examples and insights (Chapter 2.3). Mentoring in the online context is the focus of the next chapter, offering examples, analysis and advice on managing mentoring programmes online (Chapter 2.4). The concluding three chapters look at mentorship in terms of ethics and values. The first looks at managing mentoring in light of diversity, equality, accessibility and inclusion and guides us to reflect on the specific qualities of these issues through several examples (Chapter 2.5). The chapter on ethics and empowerment focuses on the mentoring relationship, helping us to become aware of the different ethical dilemmas and challenges inherent in all mentoring relationships, and how to manage mentoring while acknowledging the wealth of values in a more ethically sound manner (Chapter 2.6). Part II concludes by looking to the future, highlighting the transmodern way of looking at mentorship (Chapter 2.7).

The contexts of REMAM, namely the cultural and creative industries and higher education, are present in various ways in each chapter. Likewise, each chapter provides food for thought as well as practical advice for anyone involved in a mentoring programme.



## 2.1 Knowledge Sharing and Co-Creation Within and Between Academia and Practice. The Role of Diverse Mentorship Practices in the Knowledge Management Framework

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### Abstract

This chapter takes on deeper look at mentoring in the art academy context, especially from the knowledge management perspective. Identifying mentoring roles, actors and ways of mentoring and taking into consideration both formal and informal mentoring.

### Introduction

In this chapter we will discuss mentorship in the university context with a focus on knowledge sharing and creation, the challenges of sharing knowledge, finding a common language, and identifying the enablers (or barriers) to knowledge co-creation in mentorship relations and processes. As a starting point, we assume that actors representing academia and practice, as well as students, can be considered part of distinct or interlinked communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991), where the participants of a community share similar values, norms and practices that follow dominant community-specific logics (von Krogh and Grand 2000). These practices, beliefs and forms of language differ in different communities, and such communities can form in universities and remain active for different periods. For example, a community can form in a long-term study group within a given educational programme, through project work within a subject lasting a single semester, and even indefinitely beyond academic studies, for example, when people continue working in an ensemble formed with course mates. While all this diversity can be confusing and complex from the perspective of individual learners and organizations, we suggest there is a role for mentors between academia, student life and fields of practice, and we will therefore discuss the various actor roles in knowledge sharing contexts (Wenger 1998, Kauppila et al. 2011, Jyrämä and Äyväre 2005, 2007, updated 2017, Nyström et al. 2014). We build the discussion on findings from

knowledge management models, namely the contribution from Nonaka et al. (2000, 2001) and experiential learning in general. Discussions on the nature and specifics of communities of practice is presented to provide a context for the discussions.

We propose that mentors, as one type of actor, can be seen as helping to introduce, interpret, or integrate elements of one community or practice into or for another, or building new shared practices or knowledge. We explore how an actor can perform several roles simultaneously or during different stages of a joint activity, and how the context and their actions can determine their roles. We specifically look at the context of arts management and entrepreneurship classrooms and discuss the various learners, examining whether in terms of their mindset the learners or teachers can be perceived as mentors or unexpected mentors or not mentors at all for the other participants. We will investigate recent findings (Kristina Kuznetsova-Bogdanovitsh, 2022) on knowledge sharing and co-creation in the university context, with specific focus on mentorship and building bridges between academia and practice. However, we acknowledge that these communities and spheres can be interlocked or intertwined with more or less distinct borders. Kuznetsova-Bogdanovitsh (2022) suggests that the entrepreneurial mindset can facilitate knowledge management between diverse communities of practice for those involved.

## What is knowledge and knowledge management?

### Tacit versus explicit and individual versus collective knowledge

Knowledge can be classified and understood in different ways. Viewing knowledge as tacit or explicit is a perspective for understanding knowledge and the processes of learning, knowledge sharing and knowledge construction. The methods used to address, manage and construct these two types of knowledge are necessarily different, involving different activities which can, however, occur in the same context.

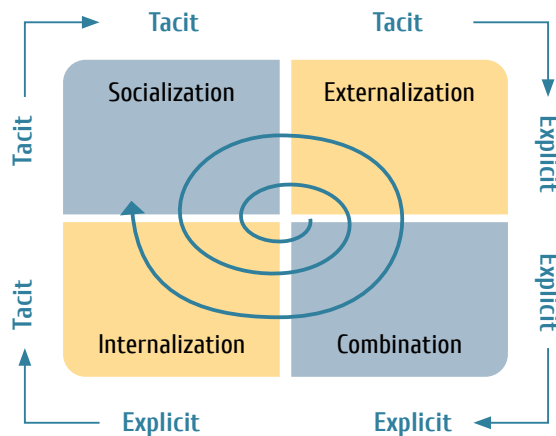
Explicit knowledge is always grounded in tacit knowledge (Polanyi 1962), hence they are in some ways inseparable. Explicit knowledge is accessible through conscious thought, in plain words, as information, and individuals are aware when they possess that type of knowledge.

Tacit knowledge is tied to the senses, tactile experiences, movement, and it is rooted in action, procedures, routines, ideals, values and emotions. Processing

tacit knowledge usually occurs implicitly without conscious effort. Some scholars speak of these concepts as ‘knowing’ and ‘knowledge’ (e.g., Baldwin 1978), emphasising the action in tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge contains elements of explicit knowledge and contextual elements, which support the application of the given knowledge (e.g., Von Krogh et al. 2000, Nonaka et al. 1996). It is complex, yet precious and difficult to manage. At the level of the individual learner, critical reflection skills and self-awareness are needed to navigate, structure and manage the interrelationships between tacit and explicit knowledge. This includes methods for sharing existing knowledge and (co)-creating new knowledge, and of accessing the same explicit knowledge (information and facts) that individuals develop as tacit knowledge. From the organizational perspective, it is important to build processes to consistently work with both types of knowledge continuously moving through individual and collective stages – something that is well represented in the SECI model of knowledge management (see Figure 1, Nonaka et al 2000, 2001).

Next, we shall present one of the most known models enabling the flow of knowledge through socialisation, externalisation, combination, and internalisation phases, known as the SECI model (see e.g., Nonaka et al. 2000, 2001).

Looking at the SECI model in an organizational context, we must acknowledge that the model is best applicable to understanding knowledge co-construction rather than as a tool for specific management processes. The model is based on the constructivist paradigm that sees knowledge as socially constructed and



**Figure 1.** SECI model of knowledge co-creation (Nonaka et al. 2000, 2001)

emphasises its fluid nature. Nevertheless, to understand the mentorship process and the roles of mentor and mentee in terms of knowledge creating and sharing as this relates to knowledge management processes, the SECI model provides us with an excellent tool for capturing the different forms of knowledge and their transformations within this context. We complement the model with insights from communities of practices, which are often used when studying mentoring or learning in universities (e.g., Hall and Burns 2009, Kimberly 2003, see also Chapter 2.2).

The SECI model of knowledge management gets its name from the first letters of the four stages of knowledge flow – socialisation, externalisation, combination, and internalisation (Nonaka 1994). *Socialisation* is the process of sharing tacit knowledge (Yeh et al. 2011) within the experiential learning framework (e.g., Dewey 1916, 1934, 1938, Kolb 1975, 1984) perceived as the natural starting point in the learning or practice experience. *Externalisation* is the process of articulating tacit knowledge as explicit concepts (ibid.). This can occur through stories, informal discussions or doing things together. The nature of tacit knowledge is implicit, and once internalised it might not be easily articulated, and therefore can lose its context or explicitly identifiable meaning, and it might appear that tacit knowledge in an externalised form may appear for the speakers or teachers to ‘fall on deaf ears’.

For the knowledge to become tacit again and acquire renewed meaning, two other steps need to happen, according to Nonaka. *Combination* is the process of integrating concepts into a knowledge system (ibid.), which makes it possible to find an appropriate place for the new among the existing. This involves combining new knowledge with existing or other new (explicit) knowledge, making categories and systemising the knowledge. Therefore, it underlines the importance of having a knowledge management system. *Internalisation* is the process of embodying explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995). Internalisation occurs through doing, experimenting, and piloting the knowledge in practice. Hence, it can be viewed like the stage of active experimentation in Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle. It is putting into practice what has been learned, which can happen both in and out of the classroom. Internalisation may occur while studying themes and topics or allowing for *eureka* moments to happen.

The movement and actual knowledge creation inside the model occurs along two main continua: tacit and explicit, individual and collective (Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995). The SECI model is not only a categorisation of the movement,

but emphasises enabling all the knowledge transformations to occur, to build spaces and practices that facilitate the flow of knowledge.

As an example, we categorise some activities in mentoring as knowledge flows in the context of the Music Estonia case (see PART IV for the full case study).

**Figure 2.** SECI model of knowledge co-creation adapted for mentoring – Music Estonia case

Socialisation: Tacit-Tacit	Externalisation: Tacit-Explicit
Informal one-to-one discussions, social events	Mentors encouraged to share experiences in story format Enabling meeting experts and share discussion in different contexts
Internalisation: Explicit -Tacit	Combination: Explicit-Explicit
Practical assignments given by mentors to mentees Piloting	Lecturers Formal seminars and speeches Mentors sharing models they use for their work

The role of the mentorship in the above example, in initiating the creation and sharing of knowledge, can be seen as a knowledge enabler, ensuring the flow of knowledge through all its transformations. We will return to the SECI model in the university context at the end of the chapter.

Even if we find the SECI model to be a good tool for making sense of knowledge flows, it has also had its fair share of critics. Some say that it is too restricted to the organizational context and does not include the inflow and outflow of knowledge from the organization. In addition, it is seen as being focused more on knowledge co-creation than managing knowledge (e.g., Bereiter 2002, Harsh 2009, Zhang and Huang 2020), and is therefore confined inside the organizational context. In response to this criticism, we suggest addressing these issues through mentorship.

Now we will present the second perspective for understanding the roles mentorship can play in knowledge creation and sharing in communities of practice as the context.

## Communities of practice, identity, and knowledge

Several studies have adopted the communities of practice perspective when analysing learning or identity-building processes in the education or higher education context (e.g., Jawitz 2009, Wiles 2013, see also Chapter 2.2). The concept of communities of practice is a widely adopted perspective when studying learning, and knowledge sharing and creation (e.g., Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998, Wenger and Snyder 2000, Brown and Duguid 1991, 2001). Communities of practice are defined as freely created communities that engage in a common activity gradually forming a tight community that learns together through joint practice. The characteristics of a community of practice include “the language, tools, documents, images, symbols, well-defined roles, specified criteria, codified procedures, regulations, and contracts that various practices make explicit for a variety of purposes” (Wenger 1998: 47). Wenger (1998: 73) further defines the dimensions of practice as a property of a community through mutual engagement, joint enterprise and a shared repertoire. Hence, communities of practice can be summarised as a community of people who share some activity or practice and have similar values, norms and language (Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998). In the university context, communities of practice have been viewed as communities consisting of students, teachers, and other academic staff.

The key premise in communities of practice is seeing the communities as spaces for learning through joint practice, experience and socialisation processes. While the context of communities of practice is seen as strongly supportive of a variety of knowledge sharing opportunities, the occurrence of a learning process is not a given, but might need some catalyst for the learning process to start.

Nonetheless, communities of practice as joint enterprises, with mutual engagement and a shared repertoire are supportive of the development of the individual identities of its members through socialisation processes (see also Chapter 2.2). Communities of practice are defined as having a hierarchical structure, where a novice would move from a peripheral positions towards the core of the community of practice as they learn – knowing the communities *practice* and the values, norms, and ways of acting inherently well (Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998). As identity and knowledge are closely connected, and learning and the accumulation of knowledge is seen as building the hierarchy within the community, it can be argued that it could also result in individuals hoarding knowledge rather than sharing (e.g., Davenport and Prusak 1996).

In the context of an arts university as an organization, a lot of learning, knowledge sharing and co-creation happens in communities of practice, where the community often builds around a discipline (e.g., violin players, harpists, or cultural managers) or professor. In art universities, learning usually also requires practical exercises and not only theoretical work; in addition, students build their knowledge and understanding through experience or practice-based methods, such as observation, imitation, reflection and experimentation. One example might be student concerts or students being involved in teaching. As mentioned earlier, these communities are often centred around professors or experts; however, they can also be made up of peers/students, or follow other formats. Conceptually, communities of practice have borders, and it could be argued that they encompass only the insiders within the university. However, in an (art) university context these communities can also be open to the field of the discipline in the broader context. In such cases, these communities are platforms for professional networks, where future contacts are created, and the logic of the given art field is learned (see also Ibarra et al. 2005).

Naturally, the arts field is not the only field wherein communities of practice are of such high importance; the same applies to the medical field, and many others, as has been widely researched. However, not all communities – even in the arts university context – are communities of practice by definition; neither can they be approached synonymously according to institutional categories (Herne 2006).

As communities of practice look at the creation and sharing of knowledge, learning through socialisation from expert to novice, it provides an excellent tool for analysing mentorship, where the expert (mentor) shares knowledge with the novice (mentee). Next, we will focus on looking at mentoring as a tool for creating and sharing knowledge in the context of communities of practice in art universities.

### **Mentoring as a tool for knowledge management**

There are several studies that look into mediating, enabling and facilitating knowledge creation and learning. The conceptualisations of the trigger or enabler for learning or knowledge creation processes are multiple. Concepts such as mediator, activist, broker, facilitator each having specific roles and characteristics (see Table 3 in the appendix). The different conceptualisations give us tools for identifying the tasks involved in mediating and enable us to analyse

their connectedness to mentoring in the context of learning. Through this we understand the skills needed in mediation or facilitation work, and hence gain an insight into the skills and competences mentors should possess (see also Chapter 1.1).

What is needed to mentor or facilitate interaction between different communities of practice? It is important to point out that although the categories somewhat overlap, each does bring forth new tasks to be considered. To pinpoint the role of a mentor in knowledge creation, we build insights from the conceptualisation of knowledge mediation and contribute by acknowledging the new perspectives in the mentor concept.

The role of a mentor in knowledge creation and learning processes has been discussed extensively in previous research. It has been proposed that the relationship between knowledge and mentoring focuses on tacit knowledge – mentors share their tacit knowledge with mentees and see mentoring as sharing their experience of an organisation or sector, policies and methods for solving problems (in a context) (see more in the discussion by Karkoulian et al. 2008). These activities are based on sharing knowledge. In many cases these mentorship programmes are formal, pairing up mentees (novices) with mentors (experts), where the mentors could be from several levels within an organization and are often superior or more experienced peers. However, challenges in formal mentoring programmes can emerge when aiming to ensure relationships of trust and manage the personality match. Karkoulian et al. (2008) found more support for informal mentoring, especially in terms of using new knowledge. Their study looked at mentoring and learning through sharing tacit knowledge, as well as putting the learning into use (i.e., externalisation).

It has been proposed that mentoring should be integrated into a knowledge management system (Srivichai et al. 2012) as a means of managing and interpreting information (overload) in information systems and in more formal knowledge management processes; therefore, also proposing a preference for formal mentoring processes. It is worth pointing out that the necessary elements in such an integration are common to previous findings – trust and relationship building. However, specific to an internal mentoring system, the perception of the mentor by the mentee, was found to be important. How mentors were perceived as experts by the mentees in relation to the focus or topic of the mentorship affected the success of the mentoring relationship. This result relates to our discussion of communities of practice, where the roles of novices and experts are recognised, and the path towards the core of the community led by the expert (mentor) provides learning for the novice (mentee). However,



looking at the mentor-mentee relationship from the perspective of a community of practice does not provide tools for assessing mentoring success in terms of a formal-informal dichotomy.

Bruant (2005) looked at peer mentorship, which is less discussed than the supervisor-mentee format, and pointed out that peer mentorship was often used either explicitly or implicitly to integrate newcomers into an organization and could be seen as an act of formal or informal mentoring. He elaborates the role of the mentor through the knowledge management perspective, adopting the SECI model, and especially focusing on externalisation and socialisation – the transformation of explicit to tacit and tacit to tacit. The one-to-one setting in peer mentoring with actors at a similar hierarchical level allows knowledge sharing in a more relaxed social setting, through informal discussion, stories and doing together, hence enabling socialisation and externalisation processes for knowledge sharing. Peer mentoring was also looked at in a study of the university context (Grant-Vallone and Ensther 2000), pointing out that the mentoring relationship in student-to-student pairs gained better results in terms of mentee adaptation into the social context of the university, although it did not provide a similar outcome for the career perspective as in supervisor-student mentoring. Therefore, we can assume that the supervisor mentor-mentee relationship might be better suited to sharing explicit knowledge for the career context, whereas tacit to tacit socialisation might work better in peer-to-peer mentor relationships.

As pointed out by Swap et al. (2015), people learn consciously but also unconsciously through experience, informal teaching and so on. Mentoring and storytelling have been proposed as tools for informal teaching practices. Based on the findings, we suggest storytelling as a tool for mentoring especially in informal contexts. Informal mentoring is related mainly to the socialisation and externalisation phases as pointed out earlier through informal discussions. Sharing experience and doing together are ways to share and co-create tacit knowledge and should be recognised as a part of mentoring processes, even if the mentoring processes can also include more formal activities.

The previous research especially points out the need to reflect on informal versus formal mentoring activities, as well as the hierarchical status between mentor and mentee. We wish to emphasise that to have a holistic mentoring programme, both informal and formal practices as well as peer-to-peer and supervisor/expert-mentee relationships are needed; they contribute to different elements of mentoring.

## Knowledge sharing and co-creation in the university context – mentorship for building bridges between academia and practice

In this section we will elaborate further on the specific context of the university setting, discovering what is mentorship – who are the actors and existing or potential mentors and mentees, and how knowledge is shared and created in this context. We will highlight this through the case of an art university. We investigate the different mentor roles by relating the conceptualisations of these roles with the SECI model processes, and with suggestions on the roles required in a specific context. Each relationship is analysed, and specific insights presented. In Table 1 below the mentoring actor/role examples are presented according to the SECI model and knowledge conversion stages with comments on how these actors are relevant and present themselves for the given stages.

Table 1 highlights some key activities needed in a university setting to ensure knowledge flows, both from practice to learning and vice versa. It is important to notice that mentor roles can be formally assigned as mentoring, or occur in informal settings, where unexpected mentoring occurs. Anyone may take on the role of a mentor sharing his/her expertise. However, we wish to point out that the role of the invisible hand (i.e., university management) and practices are vital in ensuring that both formal and informal knowledge sharing and mentoring has space and legitimacy to take place.

**Table 1.** The SECI cycle and mentoring roles in the context of an art university

SECI cycle stage	Mentor role (adapted from mediator roles, see appendix)	Comments
Socialisation: tacit-tacit	<p>Activist; catalysing the sharing and creation of knowledge</p> <p>Invisible hand; creating structures and enablers for knowledge sharing and creation</p> <p>Note that the invisible hand is needed in all stages of the cycle</p>	<p>We suggest the importance of activists here is as people (including learners and educators as well as administrators) who decide to act, take part, or organize activities. They engage in informal mentoring activities, or activities that create occasions for mentoring, e.g., inviting practitioners to give a lecture</p> <p>University decision-makers/leadership have the potential to act as an invisible hand, supporting the learning climate (e.g., Maden 2012) and structures for joint action and building (formal) mentoring processes</p>

SECI cycle stage	Mentor role (adapted from mediator roles, see appendix)	Comments
Externalisation: tacit-explicit	Brokers; interpreting between different communities of practice	Brokers are crucial in both processes involving the transformation of knowledge: externalisation and internalisation where boundaries need to be overcome. Sometimes a broker is needed to pass knowledge from one field or community to another. In many cases mentoring can open new fields or communities – the mentor can act as a broker
Combination: explicit-explicit	Cultural intermediary; building understanding about one community for another Translator; explaining specialist concepts and language from one community to another	Even when working with explicit knowledge, we need to understand what is meant by the terms, data, information and be able to judge and evaluate it. Mentoring can be open to and form a means to build these competences.  Art managers work between art, management, and society; therefore, arts managers (including students, practitioners) are often perceived or expected to fall into this category due to the nature of the work.
Internalisation: explicit-tacit	Brokers; supporters in identity building  Cultivators of care; identity building is often sensitive, and empathy and care are needed	Identity building and work extends beyond internalisation (identity formation) to socialisation and externalisation (or the expression of identity). Both identity-building support and the cultivation of care are long-term; therefore, sustainability is needed to construct healthy mentor-mentee relationships.

In this section, the case of an art university is used to present examples of mentorship from classes in entrepreneurship as well as observations from academic life in general. The art university is used as an empirical setting for the discussion of mentorship. Mentorship here is perceived as a tool for knowledge management and the discussion of mentorship roles, while the examples are also organized according to individual actors within the academic context (i.e., students (peers), educators, internal knowledge workers and external experts).

## Students/peers

When we think about students or peers as (potential) mentors in the academic context there are some common characteristics that can be outlined. First, the respective levels of expertise that the mentor and mentee possess is under question. In a university context, a central element of academic (arts) studies is the acceptance of professors as experts with greater expert authority than others. Students might have trouble trusting the knowledge or guidance of other students. On the other hand, the expertise in student-student relationships might relate more to the socialisation element of university life, where senior students are easily trusted as experts (see also Grant-Vallone and Esther 2000). Once there is an underlying awareness and trust of knowledge and/or experience, the students will tend to seek mentorship and guidance from their peers. Second, such mentorship often also happens unexpectedly in the process of (group) learning. In addition, the expertise of fellow students might emerge from also being a professionally established alumnus.

When we look at the entrepreneurship classroom in particular, a lot of knowledge sharing happens through storytelling; for example, sharing professional experiences, examples of successes and failures, ideas, and projects. This is one of the significant differences between the entrepreneurship classroom and musical instrument studies; for example, where technical skills and co-playing are an inseparable part of the community of practice. The storytelling can be complemented by learning-by-doing in an entrepreneurship classroom, as well as through project work.

From the conceptual perspective, student-mentors often adopt the concept of mentor-activist creating opportunities for others to share knowledge (e.g., events, projects), as well as self-initiated or unexpected leadership within group work and other similar formats. When we think about arts management students in particular, the perception or expectation is often for them to act as translators or even cultural intermediaries. These *unexpected* mentor roles are often the ones arts management students quite readily accept and adopt, which might intervene with free knowledge flow and shared novel knowledge construction; for example, by focusing on *how things are done* in the creative industries rather than *letting us explore how we want things to be done* in the creative industries. Language as an integral part of storytelling plays an important role here.

## Educators – teachers

The role of educators or teachers in sharing and co-creating knowledge has received plenty of attention from various perspectives. Often educators are seen as experts guiding student-novices to a community of practice (see e.g., Wiles 2013, Jawitz 2009). The role of educator as mentor guiding a student mentee is an often-accepted position, yet still problematic. The educator-student relationship when seen in a mentorship context highlights the problems associated with the strong power position of the teachers within the academic community. As discussed by Hall et al. (2009), educators (professors) might implicitly, and even explicitly, provide only one possible path for student learning and perceptions for their future careers; therefore, limiting the potential learning paths that, for example, external mentorship could provide. Hence, there might be a tendency to guide students toward specific (accepted) tacit and explicit knowledge rather than a diversity of learning paths and contexts.

The specific nature of entrepreneurship (or work-life) educators and core field educators as mentors presents different perspectives on the working and learning reality. Entrepreneurship educators often refer to the ‘big picture’ of the economy and career, while core educators often focus on skill and knowledge development for a particular career as an artist, musician, actor, and so on. Yet, both groups find the importance of professional networks, starting from communities of practice in academia, crucial. Therefore, this could be the foundation for approaching and renewing mentorship in the teaching context.

While in the case of educators *knowledge brokering* is one of the key elements focusing on knowledge conversion (tacit–explicit–tacit), the way this is acted out by mentors might be quite different, ranging from the more authoritarian “this is the knowledge you need” to a mentee-driven “let us explore the knowledge you need”. If a role in long-term identity building or the cultivation of care is expected and accepted by mentors, then considering the learner’s identity, values and tacit knowledge becomes essential.

## Internal knowledge workers

When looking at the diverse academic roles in an art university context, we question whether the mentors with the most potential for diverse knowledge management activities are educators or internal mentors rather than external mentors. By internal mentors, we mean internal knowledge workers, positions such as programme administrators, faculty specialists, R&D project managers, international department specialists to name a few. They have the potential

to combine their professional identity within the community of practice they belong to, their awareness of the organization, their knowledge of the learning and teaching activities as well as knowledge/training in mentorship activities. These qualities afford them broader perspectives on the necessary support, knowledge, and mentoring for students. They could potentially be considered skilled facilitators between individual learners and different organizational collectives, as cultural intermediaries between different disciplinary communities of practice, bridging these different communities of practice, and potentially enabling access to the professional field outside academia.

Not being educators in one of the main fields, the challenges associated with the ownership of the knowledge can be overlooked. However, being perceived as *belonging* to the community and building trust with students needs to be considered and requires a means to showcase the knowledge and membership of a community. Perhaps an even more important point to consider is that these knowledge workers only have access to the explicit knowledge that the students bring up in discussions, especially if the discussions (meetings) are brief and there is no opportunity to explore their tacit knowledge, values and aims. Often, these meetings are indeed short and goal oriented; for example, students come and ask about exchange possibilities or course choices in the curriculum.

### **Organized mentorship programmes**

Arts universities, like many others, offer formal mentoring programmes using university alumni or other experts to mentor students. An external mentorship is often sought by the students and offered by universities especially close to graduation as a means to prepare them for work-life. The aim is to provide students with external mentors as a connection with fields of practice as well as sharing relevant professional experience (see also Chapter 2.2 for an example).

The discussion on the different ways mentoring might take place in an art university context, looking at mentoring through various positions or roles within academia, highlights that mentoring can occur through learning activities, yet the context of learning in the core discipline or some other (e.g., entrepreneurship) plays a role in reflections on what career or community the students are being prepared for. In addition, the power position between student and mentor might influence the mentoring activity and the sharing of knowledge, especially in terms of what is perceived as relevant knowledge and necessary competences.

## Summary

In this chapter, we looked at mentoring from the perspective of knowledge management. We introduced two models that can be used as management tools in respect to enabling (or barring) the creation and sharing of knowledge. First, the SECI model affords us tools for reflecting on organizational practices and how they contribute to providing *ba* – the physical or mental space for different knowledge transformations to occur. The focus is on acknowledging the key differences between tacit and explicit knowledge and how these influence how we share and create knowledge and how this can be managed.

The second model presented communities of practice, emphasising the contextual and social nature of creating and sharing knowledge and looking at knowledge from a learning perspective. By understanding how we learn in communities that guide implicit norms and values provides us with tools to see the benefits of communities of practice as platforms for joint learning and learning from expert to novice. On the other hand, communities of practice also provide us tools for understanding the barriers different communities might create between communities. This allows us to find ways to overcome these barriers.

In this chapter, we also looked at mentoring in a university context, more precisely in an arts university. We looked at the different cycles of knowledge transformation through the SECI model, highlighting what kinds of mentoring roles might take place or might need to take place in each cycle and why. The mentor roles are adapted from previous literature on mediating how creating and sharing knowledge can be catalysed or facilitated. It is important to notice that these roles might relate to both individual and collective actions, as well as organizational structures. Hence, mentoring needs organizational structures and practices that enable knowledge sharing in mentor-mentee relationships both by creating events, opening formal programmes, but also creating an organizational culture that supports creating and sharing knowledge, rather than seeing knowledge as a basis for power positions in organizational hierarchies. We highlighted that mentor roles can be integrated into several organizational positions within academia, and discuss each identifying the relevant positive and negative elements.

Through an analysis of mentoring and knowledge management in an art university we conclude by arguing that it is not enough to see mentoring only in terms of formal mentoring programmes but we must also acknowledge the informal and often unexpected mentoring occurring in peer-to-peer student relationships in the context of learning activities.

## Managerial insights

The following section provides tools and questions for managers wishing to create or improve mentoring in their organization by building a knowledge management perspective. We look at mentoring as a way to facilitate the creation and sharing of knowledge, often between academia and practice, or between different communities of practice. These insights will provide ways to dismantle barriers to knowledge sharing.

### How to ensure knowledge flow and transformations – tacit-explicit – explicit-tacit

The SECI model points out that for an organization to have a flow of knowledge sharing and creation it needs to ensure it has spaces and activities that allow different types of knowledge to transform, to be shared and (re)created. When looking at your own organization, consider the following questions:

- Do we have time and acceptance for reflection to take place?
- Do we enable informal sharing of knowledge and have spaces for it – coffee rooms, shared social gatherings?
- Do we encourage peer-to-peer mentoring – to also take place informally?
- Do we allocate time and resources for peer-to-peer mentoring, supervision, discussions, and training for employees and students in mentorship practices?
- Do we identify internal knowledge workers – other than peers and educators – and allocate training, guidance and support for them?
- Do we have knowledge systems, including how data and information is stored, described, and used – is it understandable and accessible? Pay attention to language and metadata – data descriptions.
- How do we encourage the use of existing data pools?
- Do we have help and mentoring on what data we have and how to use it?
- Do we encourage experts to share their knowledge (or is knowledge a ticket to promotion) or encourage or facilitate expert-to-novice mentoring?
- Do we provide ways to pilot or experiment with implementing acquired new knowledge with the support of others (mentors)?
- How can we benefit from communities of practise and overcome barriers?

Communities of practice are a social phenomenon created without any input from management but through professionals sharing a similar education, or through ways of working, or in a university context in specific disciplines and through sharing similar aims and learning goals. From a knowledge manage-



ment perspective, they provide a powerful tool to enable learning but at the same time for identifying barriers between different communities to sharing and co-creating knowledge from one community to another. Communities of practice inherently build professional identity – what is my work and what should I do or not do as part of my profession? In order to manage the learning and knowledge processes occurring within and between communities of practice, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do we know what communities of practice exist in our organization?
- Who belongs to these communities, how can we ensure that we include connections to communities outside our organization? In the university context educators could make visits to fields of practice and vice versa practitioners could make visits to the university, or act as mentors for staff and students.
- How do we ensure a path for the student from an isolated novice to an expert at the core of the community, learning community norms and values through peer-to-peer mentoring and expert-novice mentoring?
- How do we enable sharing between communities – do we encourage cross discipline learning (taking courses), job rotation, do we have ‘other’ course that enable cross community encounters and training for teachers to enable cross discipline mentoring?
- Towards identity development for students through mentorship, do we consider tacit knowledge, identity and the values of mentees, and ensure that they are not simply substituted by explicit knowledge?
- How do we build trust, as trust is crucial on all levels of mentorship (allow long-term relationships, mentoring education, and mentor quality check-ups)?
- Do we encourage openness and allow the unexpected to happen through the allocation of time and freedom.
- Do we identify informal mentors, and allocate time, resources, and training for them?
- Do we have formal mentoring programmes? How do we identify potential mentors and train them? Do we aim for inter-community or cross community mentoring or both?
- Do we pay attention to language, encourage sharing through storytelling, verify understandings of key terminology used, ensure that mentor and mentee have similar understandings or reflections on the language?

The mentoring roles described below in Table 2 provide good tools for understanding how mentoring should occur and for monitoring the process in an organization. We encourage you to especially look at the roles below and

think about how you could use these descriptors to catalyse and facilitate mentor-mentee relationships and the sharing of knowledge and how to integrate these into informal or formal mentoring programmes.

**Table 2. Mentoring roles**

Mentoring role	Description	To be used for
Invisible hand	Structures and organizational culture	Create formal mentoring programmes Ensure time and resources for informal mentoring
Activist	Activating, creating events and activities	Allow the freedom to engage in creating new events and activities (also for students) – building a mentoring organizational culture
Broker	Building bridges between communities	Recognise the different communities of practice and the potential differences, as well as joint activities, and ensure brokering and mentoring between them
Translator	Focus on language	Understand the differences in concepts and their understandings, ensure training and ways to create a common language between mentor and mentee

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Appendix I

Table 3. Full table with mediator role conceptualisations (adapted from Jyrämä and Äyväri 2015)

	Cultural intermediary	Brokers	Translators	Activists	An invisible hand	Supporters in identity building	Cultivators of care
Authors	Bourdieu, 1984 McCracken, 1986 du Gay et al., 1997	Wenger, 1998, 2000; Brown and Duguid, 1998	Brown and Duguid, 1998	von Krogh et al. 1997, 2000	Mittilä, 2006	Jyrämä and Äyväri, 2007	Kantola et al., 2010
Relating concepts		Boundary spanners Knowledge broker Inward and outward mediating	uh	Initiator (Mittilä, 2006) Catalyst as making something happen (Stähle et al., 2004)	Catalyst as a creator of structures (Stähle et al., 2004)		
Main tasks	To create meaning. To mediate between differing fields or worlds. To mediate between national cultures.	To act in the area of overlapping communities of practice trying to build ties between the two communities. To introduce elements of the practices of one CoP into another CoP.	To frame the interests of one community in terms of another community's perspective.	To bring different people and groups together to create knowledge. To create spaces and occasions for joint actions. To make something happen.	To create structures and facilities for joint action. To create dynamic structures, e.g. networks.	To support the identity-building process (from a newcomer or novice to a professional)	To foster learning understood as becoming especially in the context characterised by numerous sub-fields or "mini-worlds".

## 2.2 Professional Identity – The Role of Mentoring in Building Professional Identity

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### Abstract

This chapter looks at mentoring from the perspective of professional identity. It analyses some current literature on mentoring with a focus on professional identity, examines three empirical cases, and provides new insights into how to adopt the professional identity perspective in the management of mentoring with a focus on the CCI and curriculum building.

### Introduction

In this chapter we reflect on how mentoring affects the professional identity-building process. We extend the understanding gained from previous literature, as the role of mentoring in professional identity has been examined extensively. Yet, the specific nature of the cultural field and the professional identities within has received less attention. In this chapter we focus on mentoring in two stages in professional life, on one hand, entry to student life, the first steps in starting to build a professional identity within the cultural field, and the exit from student life, entering full-time work life and building on the professionalism gained through education. We will examine the relationship between mentorship and professional identity at two distinct stages – entry to and exit from student life – and the context of entering a cultural organisation. We will examine the relationship between mentorship and professional identity at two distinct stages – entry to and exit from student life – and the context of entering a cultural organisation. The examples are used to highlight these critical moments in the process of building a professional identity rather than to make generalisations.

The chapter is structured in the following way: first, we discuss the relationship between mentorship and professional identity as explored in the literature, and the examples of entering and exiting student life in the context of art universities and cultural organisations are introduced followed by a reflection. The

chapter concludes by providing insights for practice in organisations and universities, especially those offering cultural management programmes, so as to better create and manage mentoring programmes.

## Professional identity

Identity as a concept has been analysed in several disciplines and from various perspectives. Here we adopt a social identity perspective to bring forth multiple identities created or re-created in the social context (for a discussion see e.g., Hyun-Woo et al. 2020). At an individual level, we all create and re-create our identity. In this chapter, we shall focus on professional identity, one's identity in the context of professional life, the workplace or in the context of reflections on the career path.

There are various elements that are inherent in our identity irrespective of the work-life context, but that still may play a role, such as a gender, ethnicity, religion and nationality. In addition, within a work-life context, our education, experiences, and the communities we belong to or aspire to belong to all influence our professional identity. These elements might overlap, complement, or support us but also conflict with each other. In addition, as pointed out in the social identity approach, we may re-create and question these elements throughout our lives (see e.g., Collinson 2003)

As pointed out above, professional identity is dynamic and changing throughout our (professional) experiences and changes according to (professional) context (see e.g., Clark et al. 2012). Professional identity starts to form strongly during our education, and thus emerges during student life and then takes different forms and interpretations throughout our professional career as we – just like organisations – are influenced by institutional context(s) and the inherent changes (see e.g., DiMaggio and Powell 2000). Professional identity is inseparably intertwined with personal identity – the individual's unique history and choices based on his or her moral and conceptual framework in a defined community or institution as well as his or her professional path, success and failures (Henkel 2000).

Professional identity has been conceptualised through several elements. Fitzgerald (2020) summarised these dimensions in the following way “(professional identity) includes actions and behaviours, knowledge and skills, values, beliefs and ethics, context and socialisation, and group and personal identity”. Hence, professional identity is created through our actions and practice of work



– what we do and how we do our work. It involves specific knowledge and skills, both explicit and tacit and is based on adopted values and beliefs that build ethics. Professional identity is influenced and (re-)created in a dynamic manner in the contexts of our work, it is affected by the socialisation process, the communities or groups we belong to (see more on the perspective of communities of practice in chapters 1.4 and 2.1). In the analysis of our example cases, we will later reflect on these dimensions of professional identity and how mentoring plays a role within them.

There is a multitude of studies on professional identity. Beijaar et al. (2004) provide a comprehensive overview of research on the professional identity of teachers with a meta-analysis of 25 studies. Moreover, there are also studies focusing on professional identity in academic and higher education institutions. In addition, nursing has been one of the professions analysed in several studies (see e.g., Fagermoen 2008, Fitzgerald 2020, Willets and Clarke 2014). These studies often highlight the role of the discipline as one of the main elements influencing professional identity. We will return to this in our analysis of the student's professional identity-building processes (see also e.g., Clark et al. 2012, Jawitz 2009). We shall draw on the findings from these various fields, yet focus on the field of the arts and culture, both as an academic field (concentrating on students) and as a professional field. Next, we will investigate professional identity in the context of students.

## Professional identity and learning a profession

Learning a profession also means adopting a professional identity. The theories, knowledge accumulated, and competencies acquired all contribute to understanding the profession and forming a professional identity. Professional identity has been examined in research on higher education from several perspectives, either explicitly or implicitly as reflective practice, professional reasoning, transformative learning, professional roles, professional socialisation and professional values (Trede et al. 2011: 366–367). The theme has become topical due to external pressures on higher education institutions to update curricula to include practice-based pedagogical methods to better prepare students for work-life. However, it has been found that few studies in fact focused specifically on this topic, even if they touch upon professional identity (Trede et al. 2011)

As mentioned earlier, professional identity building has been analysed in the context of various disciplines, such as social work, medicine and teacher edu-

cation. These studies seem to point out similar patterns and findings. We propose that professional identity especially in the higher education or educational context entails acknowledging multiple identities as well as cultural, social or identity capital – belonging to a community of practice and experiencing practices and culture during studies (e.g., Goldie 2012, Tomlison and Jackson 2019). Goldie (2012), in her study of medical students, looks at professional identity in an institutional setting. She highlights the importance, on the one hand, of recognising the potential conflict between personal and professional identity; for example, being an introvert, yet aspiring towards a profession that entails social interaction. In addition, expectations about professional identity are created, for example, through previous encounters with professionals in the field or through the media. She proposes that special attention needs to be paid to reflect on and tackle the potential conflicts at the beginning of study programmes. Moreover, she highlights that there are (always) multiple identities at play and to fully develop professional identity during studies, practice from within the field is necessary in addition to the theoretical content offered during classes (e.g., student nurses meeting patients in addition to theoretical content) (see also Wiles 2013 on the traits described below).

Wiles (2013) looked into the professional identity of students studying social work. He identified three dimensions through which students construct their professional identity. First, the desired traits, meaning what they are learning and the knowledge passed on in the context of the content of the curriculum. Second, developing a sense of shared identity with other social workers by learning through experience and entering a community – as in the communities of practice framework (see Wenger 1998). Third, navigating a process of individual development or a learning path. These dimensions are intertwined and occur simultaneously in the students' everyday lives.

Professional identity starts to emerge and is influenced by education from the beginning of their studies as pointed out by Lamote and Engels (2010) in their study on students in teacher education. Another significant moment in the process of forming professional identity was found to occur during workplace experiences (internships), when elements of theoretical learning were put into a practical context.

In summary, we highlight that professional identity is intertwined with personal identity and the presumptions and understandings we have of the profession are affected by the social context, for example, communities of practice that create the inherent values, norms and practices underlying the professional



**Figure 1.** Elements of Professional Identity

identity (Wenger 1998). Moreover, it is built on knowledge accumulated during education, learning from theories and research (Figure 1).

The elements identified in Figure 2 play a role in building professional identity, although their importance may vary case by case and throughout the professional identity-building process.

Next, we shall look at the relationship between the development of professional identity and mentorship, aiming to discover when and how mentorship can or should play a role in professional identity-building processes.

## Mentoring and professional identity

In this section we focus on mentoring as a process towards professional identity, where mentors create relationships with mentees and consciously contribute to their professionalisation and career perceptions (see e.g., Hall and Burns 2009). Our focus here is on the interrelationship of professional identity with mentoring. We will investigate the relationship especially in the context of arts and cultural fields, and in the context of higher education, namely cultural management programmes.

As a starting point, we will return to the conceptualisation of social, cultural and identity capital as determinants or outcomes of professional identity. Social identity is based on our (social) networks and social capital – how well we build networks and enlarge or change them. It has been proposed that social capital and our networks play key roles at intersections in our career when ending or starting a new phase in our career, when entering or exiting one organisation for another or entering or exiting the context of education. Networks can both enable or hinder these career changes (Ibarra et al. 2005) depending on which networks we belong to, or have access to, and their legitimacy in the aspired positions (see also Chapter 2.5 for a discussion of inclusion). These critical points in building professional identity – entry and exit – were also highlighted in the previous subchapter. Therefore, it is worth reflecting on whether mentoring can influence social network building while studying and how networks enable learning, but also when making preparations for joining a work field, especially in specific contexts such as arts or cultural organisations.

Randell et al. (2021) address the relationship between mentor and mentee (referred to as protégé in their study) and the identity perspective. They elaborate on the various dimensions at play. The mentor is seen as a door opener who provides access to potential career steps as well as a legitimisation agent for the mentee’s competencies and skills. In addition, mentor and mentee relationships build a mutual understanding of the respective identities and provides the mentee with new self-perceptions and enables potential future avenues as part of the professional identity-building process. The context of the study, white American males as mentors and Afro-Americans as mentees, creates a very particular context, yet these key elements could be generalised to other contexts, namely an “insider” in the art field as a mentor with a newcomer as a mentee (see discussion in Chapter 2.1). We wish to highlight the importance of seeing several potential futures in one’s professional career due to mentoring – this could have implications for mentorship programmes, raising questions like whether there should be one dedicated mentor or many role models for several possible careers and futures.

Mentorship implies that it is not just a one-way relationship, but the identity building and learning are mutual. Therefore, the mentor is affected by the mentee and vice versa. However, in cases where the mentor and mentee have different values, religious beliefs, or similar, this can potentially create conflict or, more positively, open new insights and avenues. The way we act or practise our profession is affected by our values and beliefs. Mentors as well as mentees might need help to recognise their respective (conflicting) values and beliefs

as a means to understand the differing practices proposed or adopted. These differences are pointed out through an excellent example from Johnson (2003) in her self-analytical study. The lessons that can be derived from the study are many, (see Table 1) (see discussion in Chapter 2.1).

**Table 1.** Being a mentor – key lessons (from Johnson 2003)

Lessons from the mentorship relationship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not to impose your values or knowledge, but to co-create and share knowledge</li> <li>• Open up the aims</li> <li>• How to end the mentoring relationship               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on how the mentoring relationship turns into a professional collaborative and collegial relationship</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Having different identities during the mentorship relationship               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles that affect professional identity and personal identity; acknowledge the multitude of identities and changes in the mentor-mentee roles through joint learning</li> </ul> </li> <li>• As a mentor you don't have to be everything – be open about your limits</li> <li>• Respect personal statements and beliefs</li> </ul>

Therefore, it cannot be assumed that mentees and mentors share the same or similar beliefs, values and norms, and the mentoring process, being on a joint learning path towards a (new) professional identity, might cause value conflicts or suggest that values or beliefs be adjusted. The way that mentee and mentor values are recognised and considered may vary. The role of values, and potential value conflicts, is one of the ethical issues at play (see Chapter 2.6).

The diversity of mentors and mentees and the differences in perceived professional identities are also highlighted by Hall and Burns (2009) in their analysis of mentoring doctoral students. They emphasise the need to understand mentoring not only as sharing knowledge and skills but foremost as a process of building (professional) identity. The identity perspective creates several practical implications for the mentoring process, such as opening up the diversity of ways of being, diversity of values and diversity of potential avenues as professionals; for example, not seeing only one way of being a researcher but several.

Mentoring students to prepare them to enter a new field of work-life is a practice in many education programmes. Alumni or other professionals are invited to share their work-life experiences and facilitate a smooth entry to the profession for students. In addition, many universities have peer-to-peer mentoring

(tutor) activities for new students, in which more experienced students guide newcomers into the student life and introduce them to the university.

When looking at mentoring in a study context, the concepts of mentor, mentee and the managers of the mentoring process may have different understandings and conceptualisations. For example, students (mentees) face similar professional identity learning processes within the learning context, where the academic staff, lecturers, fellow students, and supervisors all become relevant actors co-creating the professional identity. However, these roles might not be explicit nor recognised (see Kuznetsova-Bogdanovitsh and Jyrämä 2022).

Based on research on the blurred nature of professionalism in the higher education system, Whitchurch (2008) states that higher education professionals need to develop “new forms of professional space, knowledge, relationships and legitimacies associated with broadly based institutional projects such as student life, business development and community partnership” (Whitchurch 2009, Kehm and Teichler 2013: 417). Mentoring, co-creating and developing professional identity can be an extension of this.

Mentorship, especially in the context of education, can, however, be systematised by tackling several aspects and dimensions. Nora and Crisp (2007) point out key dimensions that ought to be considered in mentorship programmes in the higher education context (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Dimensions to consider in mentorship programmes in HEIs

Dimensions to consider in mentorship programmes in HEIs
Support system for emotional safety
Building a sense of exploration and goals/goal-setting
Identification of strategies and plans to achieve goals

When looking at creating or maintaining professional identity, we identified that professional identity occurs at several levels, including my personal individual identity, collectively at the community level, and through elements of learning. Mentorship likewise takes place at each level, yet the methods and activities differ. At the individual level, it is important to recognise the mentees’ own personalities, aims and preferences, and not impose the mentors’ perceptions of the ‘right way or correct career path’. Often peer-to-peer mentoring

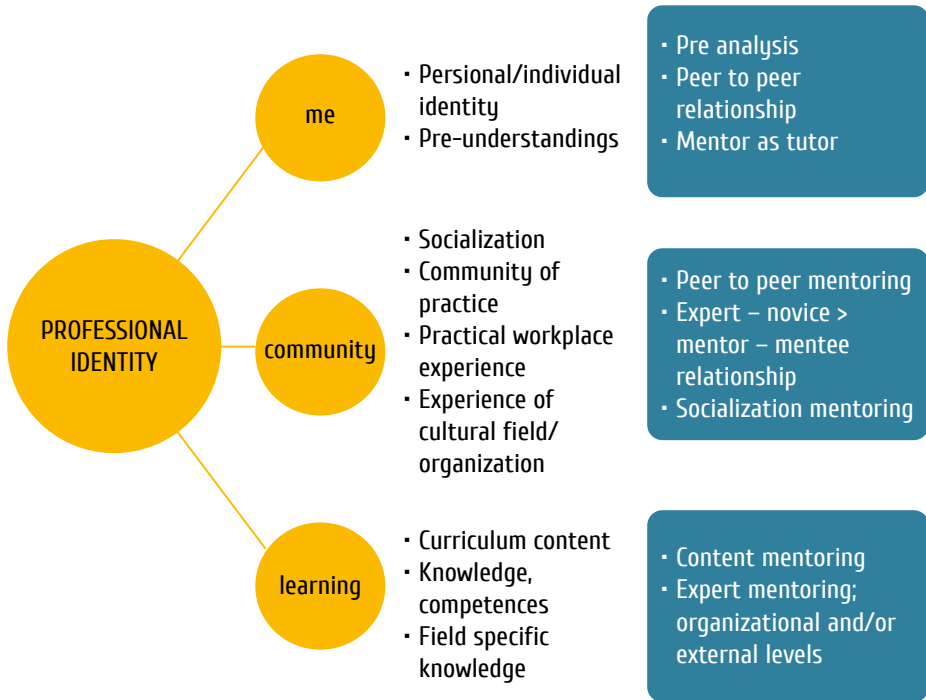


Figure 2. Mentoring and professional identity development

also promotes professional identity building through joint reflections and informal discussion.

At the community level, we identified two main streams for mentoring: 1) socialisation into the community, and 2) assistance along the path from novice to expert. Mentoring, especially in terms of the socialisation stream, may take place through peer-to-peer mentoring, but the path from novice to expert often requires mentoring from an expert, someone that the mentee accepts as an expert. Similarly, looking at mentoring as learning competencies and skills, the knowledge attached to a professional identity requires expertise from the mentor. Both peer-to-peer and expert-novice mentorship relationships, therefore, contribute to adopting knowledge relating to the profession, but also knowledge on the professional practices and norms. To conclude, we wish to emphasise the need for sensitivity and openness in every mentoring relationship, to ensure the individual's own identity can develop and avoid building one-sided views of professional identity that neglect possible (future) career paths. Figure 2 summarises these findings.

Next, we shall look into some examples of the relationships between mentoring and professional identity, focusing in particular on entry into the cultural management fields of education and work.

## Examples of mentoring in a cultural organisation and university context

### Example 1: Entry for a young professional

Our first example is based on a young professional’s entry into her first professional job in an arts organization in a small city in Estonia after graduating. The organisation is an arts company – a theatre – which does not have an official mentoring programme but where peer-to-peer assistance is essential not only at entry level but throughout the process of professional development. In theatre organisations, it is common to progress within the company (department worker to department head, cross-department position changes etc). Mentoring along the way as well as guidance for entry-level people is essential to maintain ongoing development and the quality of the theatre.

Case description	Comments and notes on the case description related to mentoring
<p>The case investigates the process of entering an organisation as a young arts (management) professional. The person (Kate) in question started working as a stage manager in a theatre in November 2021. The work includes collaboration with most of the theatre’s creative and technical employees. This is Kate’s first official job after graduating. Her education is in the same field as she is currently working. She has had work experience in similar positions during her studies. Kate was interviewed by her manager in February 2022, after the first 3 months of employment as part of her progress report. This case analysis is based on the interview.</p> <p>The organisation in question does not have an official mentor system but applies several implicit mindsets related to mentoring. Kate works in a small department with 2 other employees on the same level as her. Their department manager is not involved in their daily tasks but oversees their well-being and work-life management.</p>	



Case description	Comments and notes on the case description related to mentoring
<p>During the first couple of weeks, Kate had a chance to work with the previous employee in the said position. They had a chance to exchange key information about the job, which is particularly specific and detailed in many aspects. The introduction to the general structure of the organisation, work patterns and people was conducted by the department manager and fellow colleagues.</p> <p>During the interview, the employee stressed that support from fellow colleagues was welcome and there were no issues with getting started. In the later part of the interview when discussing a possible mentor system, they did not express a keen need for a mentor as "my two other stage managers were there to fill that role".</p> <p>The department manager had tasked the other 2 stage managers early on to be guides for their new colleague. One of the stage managers has 30 years of experience in the organisation and the other was a relatively new employee who had experienced the same on-boarding process 3 years earlier. The manager felt it was a suitable solution for a smooth entry to the position.</p> <p>The social capital and extensive experience of those two people along with the common goal of the entire theatre crew to "make quality performances happen" seems an efficient approach to a good entry to that organisation.</p> <p>Socialisation with other teams/departments happens during the actual work. Kate's first big task was to be involved in producing a new performance during which tight collaboration across departments was necessary, including an official celebration after the premiere. This is something that is ingrained in the theatre but could be overseen by a manager to make sure it works. In Kate's case, she was willing and upfront to get to know all the other personnel.</p> <p>Key elements that also supported the smooth entry were the new employees' education and precious work experience (Goldie 2012). They had a clear idea of what the job was about and how the theatre as an arts organisation works. They could use their education but also put their personal traits into action. As they said themselves: "I am willing to ask until I get relevant information and can solve a problem on my own."</p>	<p>Peer-to-peer mentoring; focus on the content of the work.</p> <p>More formal mentoring by the manager, focus on organisation, organisational practices, and routines.</p> <p>Peer-to-peer mentoring was seen to work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeing others as experts</li> <li>• Trusting peers</li> </ul> <p>Taking on the role of mentor in an informal manner.</p> <p>There is a need to also pay attention to socialisation across an organisation, not just in the team or department. Professional identity from education and from previous work experience already developed and shared with peers.</p>

Case description	Comments and notes on the case description related to mentoring
<p>This case is a very positive one, as the position she came into is central to the practical theatre work and the person was handpicked for several attributes that the organisation knew would work for this position. The case would be different if the new employee had not had previous experience in the theatre. Then, a specifically appointed mentor could be essential to guide the employee through the entry process.</p>	<p>For every new person who enters the organisation a needs analysis can help personalise the mentoring process.</p>

### Example 2: Entering university

Our second example looks at mentoring at the entry to university. Usually, universities offer tutoring at this stage for newcomers, whereas the concept of a “mentor” is more connected to the exit stage when students need work-life knowledge to build their professional identity. However, we claim that the tutoring period, when students are integrated into university life and their discipline, is a starting point for building professional identity. These insights are general, but generalisable to arts management education as well. In the next example, we reflect on the experiences of a second-year student on her experiences when entering university.

Case description	Comments and notes on the case description related to mentoring
<p>The case example is built on a case in Finland. When entering a university, students have orientation weeks with a programme consisting of various information sessions on study systems, curriculum, scheduling, etc. Different university services present themselves and explain their function.</p> <p>During those weeks, the students are divided into tutor groups. In the case of Rose, our case student, she entered a tutor group with two tutors, let’s call them Jill and John. Jill and John are senior students from the same programme. The tutors participated in many orientation week events and were available to answer further questions and problems that might arise during the information sessions or otherwise. The main aim of the tutor groups is to build a student community, ensuring that students get to know at least a few others. During orientation, Rose felt that Jill knew all the university systems well, whereas John was more specialised in the studies. Both were easy to approach. The tutor group visited the campus, library, classes etc. to familiarise themselves also with the physical context of the studies.</p>	<p>Planning the studies; tutor can mentor professional identity through an explicit or implicit valuation of courses suggested for the first year.</p>

Case description	Comments and notes on the case description related to mentoring
<p>As university entry occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face meetings or partying was rather limited, often occurring outside, and many of the tutor groups' joint activities were organised online. Rose felt that getting to know the other students went slowly. However, later when getting to know fellow students better, it also became easy to ask fellow students for help or advice.</p> <p>The tutor group was also assigned a teacher tutor, Peter. He was introduced when the first lectures started after the orientation weeks. The teacher tutor organised joint activities to build group spirit and introduce other staff members, such as the students' main professors, and doctoral students; and invited alumni to their joint events. Once again, these events were mainly online. Yet, this allowed Rose to learn names and faces. The teacher tutor is there to help with all study-related problems and questions, and acts as a bridge or facilitator towards other staff if needed. Peter can also help in case other problems in life occur by knowing the right services to go to for support and help.</p> <p>When Rose was asked to reflect on her professional identity, she named the following examples as contributing from her perspective to her understanding of professional identity:  Teachers share their own experiences from practice; for example, sharing how they had coped when things in practice did not occur as the study books indicate, due to lack of resources etc.  Alumni visits and the stories they shared of their experiences.  Learning skills and competences during lecturers  Receiving advice from fellow students, teachers and alumni.</p>	<p>Role of face-to-face meetings for mentoring; how do we assign mentor roles, tutor by position, fellow students only through learning them (in face-to-face settings)</p> <p>Explicitly connected to building professional identity by presenting (selected) staff members and alumni.</p> <p>All taking a role of mentor in an informal manner.</p>

### Example 3: Exiting university

Our third case presents an example of an exit stage and mentoring in the university context based on a formal mentoring programme at Aalto University. The case description is based on their website and an informal interview transferred into a story format: [The Aalto University Mentoring Programme for alumni and students | Aalto University](#). Aalto University’s mentoring programme also includes students from Aalto ARTS – students studying within the arts and cultural fields.

Case description	Comments and notes on the case description related to mentoring
<p>Peter is going to graduate within a year and is unsure which career path he wishes to enter and what kinds of job offers to aim for. He has had several work-life experiences and enjoyed most of them, but now he wishes to have a broader view of the possible options. Peter notices the announcement on the mentorship programme; this could be a good solution to reflect on opportunities for future work.</p>	<p>Applying to a mentorship programme creates the need to reflect analytically and think about one's own skills, competences, and interests</p>
<p>He works on his motivation letter, the kinds of aspects he would like to discuss and point out, he has so many interests, which ones might be relevant... During the application period, the mentor description opens, and Peter is eager to see what the mentors say about themselves. He investigates the descriptions and then starts to evaluate them. Should I take the one from the same education as mine, or would those with similar interests but different backgrounds open more diverse views? It is not always easy, as the mentors are not presented using their full names, as the focus is their competencies, expertise, and interests.</p>	<p>Allowing students some freedom to choose the mentor might result in surprising matches. In addition, not revealing the full names aims to direct attention away from the popularity of the mentor, for example, in the media, and focus on their competences and interests.</p>
<p>Peter ends up selecting a mentor with similar interests but different educational background as his first choice. He feels that during his studies he has already met professionals from his own field and wants to broaden his perspective. The mentoring relationship was successful, Peter and his mentor ended up discussing a wide range of topics, both in the personal as well as the professional sphere of life. It did not provide a straightforward answer to Peter's question on what career path to pursue but it did give him tools and insights on how to move forward, what kinds of paths there might be and how to proceed.</p>	<p>As several testimonials from mentors point out, the mentorship relationship rarely involves only discussions of professional life but captures personal spheres as well, there is a need to support the emotional safety of mentees and mentors, as indicated by Nora and Crisp (2007).</p>

## Conclusion

This chapter investigated the topic of mentorship from a professional identity perspective. We first presented and elaborated on the conceptualisation of professional identity and other aspects of the theme in the literature. We identified key dimensions, such as personal or individual identity, identities connected to belonging to a community, and identities created through the knowledge, competence, and skills inherent in a profession through studies and work. Each dimension is an integral part of professional identity and cannot be seen in isolation; therefore, all elements need to be considered when discussing, analysing, or working with professional identity.

The chapter focuses on integrating the perspective of professional identity within discussions of mentoring. The dimensions identified all affect mentoring work, and hence need to be included when creating and offering guidance for mentoring. We point out different mentoring roles and responsibilities from informal mentoring to formal mentoring programmes, as well as roles often described as tutoring, mediating, or facilitating being integrated into mentorship. The content of mentoring is both emotional, and connected to socialisation, entering a community (of practice), as well as specific professional knowledge, competencies and skills.

We wish to highlight that as mentoring is directly connected to building a (professional) identity, it also entails implicit and explicit power relations. The choices about who are perceived as experts or mentors, what practices, knowledge or skills are presented, and recommended, what kinds of futures we foresee and present are all inherently building one perception of professional identity and only by recognising this may we be open to see multiple perspectives and choices. Power is also an inherent aspect of the mentor-mentee relationship, and special care ought to be taken to ensure there is also empathy and the ability to listen to others to ensure the individual identity is considered. However, at the same time we wish to point out that the mentor ought to be seen as an expert and a ‘door opener’, capable of legitimising the mentee’s knowledge, competences, and skills for the target community (of practice).

The examples chosen were selected to highlight critical incidents in professional identity building, with a focus on entry and exit in the context of higher education – the moment of becoming a student of a profession and then moving towards the professional field as a qualified employee, as well as entering and exiting an organisation. These critical incidents were seen to be moments when professional identity is affected and when there is often informal or for-

mal mentoring at play. Our examples highlight that mentoring is rarely conducted by one sole mentor, but several people engage in the mentoring process with different profiles and tasks. It is important to acknowledge the individual's own identity and aim to personalise the mentoring relationships and process to accommodate the individual's own needs and perspectives, or even the multiple identities we all have. The case of entering university life highlighted the necessity of face-to-face meetings as an important part of both mentoring and identity building within a new organisation or when entering a university (also see Chapter 1.4). To conclude, we emphasise that mentoring, especially peer-to-peer and informal support from colleagues or peer students is a valuable part of professional identity forming or change during both studies and when entering a company as a new employee.

### Implications for HEIs and potential employers

This section provides tools and questions for managers and academic staff as well as people organising mentoring to understand the key elements of mentorship from a professional identity perspective. These questions and insights will provide ways to better understand the mentoring process and relationship, both in a formal and informal context, and allow managers to create better entry and exit experiences for students in universities or for employees in cultural organisational contexts.

We identified three dimensions where mentoring takes place, namely individual identity, entering a community (of practice) and learning knowledge, skills, and competencies. In all these, it is essential to reflect on who needs to be involved in the entry and exit processes, including both peers and supervisors in the process to capture different aspects.

When considering the entry of a student or employee and the perspective of individual identity, reflect on the following:

- Identify areas where the new employee will not have as much support and provide extra discussions about these topics.
- Set up face-to-face meetings with a new employee over the first 3–4 months.
- Build relationships that allow open discussions.
- Build a culture of care and empathy.
- Do not impose your views on what is 'right' but also be open to new ideas.

## Community

- Allow time to facilitate informal discussions about the development of the new employee with their peers and colleagues.
- Include peers that have a similar experience and help them to support the new employee.
- Remember that what is self-evident for you might not be so for a newcomer; ensure the new employee gets praised for everyday successes, and is introduced to hidden norms and ways of working.

## Knowledge, skills, and competencies

- Ensure the newcomer understands the content of the work.
- Provide materials and essential documents on the organisation's formalities, systems, do's and don'ts over a prolonged timeline (not just in the first week) and go over essential steps with practical input.

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## 2.3 Entrepreneurship Mentoring: The Role of Universities

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### Abstract

This chapter elaborates mentorship especially in regard to the perspective of entrepreneurship and higher education institutions. Looking at the benefits of mentoring in a unique context and providing insights both from literature as well as the analysis of a case from the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU.

### Introduction

Universities are transforming their traditional structures that focus on teaching and research, and including a third mission (Eskovitz, 2019) as a strategy to achieve greater impact in their reference context. The future of universities as institutions involves assuming the role of an entrepreneurial university (Guerrero and Urbano, 2012), promoting entrepreneurial and engaged capacity across the entire university, thereby activating its true potential. In this context, fostering an entrepreneurial spirit throughout the organizational structure of the institution is the key tool to promoting more entrepreneurs and employable students and facilitating linkages with and the impact on other societal actors and entities surrounding the university (Saiz-Santos et al. 2017).

Universities have to work with their staff and students to create an entrepreneurial atmosphere that supports social, sustainable and economic development based on entrepreneurial and innovative foundations. This policy strengthens the engagement of the university with society and industry and other stakeholders (Shvindina et al. 2022, Stolze 2021). In fact, most European universities have developed several programmes and incubators to promote their students through start-ups and the creation of academic spin-offs from university R&D outcomes.

Nevertheless, to consolidate these entrepreneurial programmes in the university, the incubation infrastructure is not enough; it is also necessary to define new standards in entrepreneurial education and introduce them across the curriculum. This objective requires placing the university teacher at the centre of the model, leading new educational models focused on innovation, social and

sustainable engagement, and productive creation, as a long and continuous mentoring process.

In short, a new model that encourages university teachers to assume the role of mentorship: general mentorship to increase student empowerment and entrepreneurship mentoring dedicated to students with entrepreneurial motivations. The university itself could be a network that favours contact between academic and business mentors and start-ups that are developing projects with high growth potential.

One of the main objectives of the REMAM E+ Project is to identify a mentoring model that enables both career building support and the development of practical knowledge and skills for students. Therefore, valuing mentoring programmes in universities as a transfer tool would be a key factor to consolidate the third mission and transform these institutions into entrepreneurial universities. The CCI sector is especially in need of mentoring models to achieve better results in local and regional innovation for competitive development in the arts and culture (Plaza & Haarich 2017).

## Background

An entrepreneurial and innovative society is more open to continuous learning, innovation and social commitment. We must not forget that universities are very resilient and enduring institutions (Audrescht 2014). Therefore, universities can counteract the adverse effects of the environment and work with their students to create an atmosphere conducive to social development on the pillars of entrepreneurship and innovation. Mentoring programmes are a great opportunity to take advantage of the capacities of technical staff and teachers and use them to provide students with better skills in their transition from studies to a professional career: looking for their first job, planning their professional roadmap, or implementing ideas to create innovative start-ups.

Badwan et al. (2022) highlight “that the role of teachers’ mentorship in influencing students’ entrepreneurial intentions has received little attention” in the literature. Their results demonstrate the positive influence of entrepreneurship education through mentorship “to effect students’ attitudes, perceived behavioural control and, subsequently, their entrepreneurial intentions”.

This is especially important in art and culture studies, where the difficulty in finding the first professional fit and career development are greater than other

academic fields. In addition, we must consider that the quick implementation of new technologies and growing digitisation have caused deep changes in productive activity in general, but also in the cultural and creative industries (CCI) in particular. The CCI are manifesting innumerable creative changes derived from the digitisation process that, on the one hand, opens new opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment in the sector, but on the other hand, forces CCI entrepreneurs to be well trained, technologically aware and willing to cooperate with other entrepreneurs. Joining forces, capabilities and skills is key to being able to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the digital revolution. This is the great value of entrepreneurship mentoring programmes in this sector. The mentor is not only a source of knowledge and experience for a mentee, but also a valuable networking tool in the search for allies that will definitively strengthen the projects of any ICC entrepreneur (see Chapter 2.4 “Online mentorship”).

That is the reason why the development of a standard mentoring model designed in and for the university in general, and the cultural and creative industries in particular, is one of REMAM’s objectives. Guiding university governance (Cosenz 2022) on adopting mentoring programmes aims to improve educational innovation, entrepreneurship motivations and the professional skills of students in the arts and culture. Faculties can have an important impact on the development of the cultural and creative industries at the local and regional level.

The development of standard mentoring methodologies in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) would allow the introduction of mentoring programmes into the academic curriculum in universities, and an opportunity to contribute to developing entrepreneurial ecosystems and areas of differentiation for university competitiveness.

### Types of entrepreneurship mentoring

Mentoring for entrepreneurs involves a professional relationship where the mentor becomes a guide providing perspectives and knowledge, tools that invite questioning and the search for solutions that improve the performance and development of their businesses. We can find three types of entrepreneurship mentoring depending on objective:

- a) The personal development of the entrepreneur;
- b) The professional development of the entrepreneur;

c) **Business development:** through relevant advice and exchange of experiences.

Choosing an entrepreneurship mentor is not easy. First, he or she must have a deep understanding of how a business works. Second, it is important that the mentor knows how to identify the technical challenges that an entrepreneur faces. Especially for entrepreneurs who are starting out, having a mentor from the beginning is a smart way to access mutual support and ensure success (see Table 1). Next, we shall investigate the benefits in more detail.

**Table 1. Benefits of Entrepreneurship Mentoring**

1. Improves the skills of the entrepreneur.
2. The mentor is an expert who advises and shows the entrepreneur new perspectives.
3. Helps the entrepreneur create their own contact networks.
4. Supports the development of emotional intelligence and confidence.
5. Helps the entrepreneur learn to create methods and strategies.
6. Helps provide motivation and harmony.

## Benefits of entrepreneurship mentoring

### 1. Improves the skills of the entrepreneur

The mentor has an interest in the entrepreneur doing what is best for their company, but also a focus on developing long-term entrepreneurial skills. Identifying opportunities and working together to reinforce learning is one of the key tasks of the mentor. St-Jean and Audet (2012) recognised that the learning outcomes of entrepreneurship mentoring could be divided into three general groups: cognitive, skill-based, and affective learning. Mentorship improves management skills, business vision and increases the recognition of new opportunities. Affective learning includes a lower sense of solitude and a greater sense of self-efficacy and resilience.

### 2. The mentor is an expert who advises and shows the entrepreneur new perspectives

One of the benefits is having an experienced source to turn to for advice. The mentor can provide answers to questions and give suggestions that make a dif-

ference in the business world. It can also help reduce anxiety in daily situations and important decisions, supporting analysis and inviting new perspectives to make it easier to cope with challenges.

### **3. Helps the entrepreneur create their own contact networks**

Mentors have valuable connections in the business world. They can support with contacts and ease introductions and open 'closed doors'. They can also teach how to create and open their own professional doors, and teach mentees how to cultivate relationships and contacts.

### **4. Supports the development of emotional intelligence and confidence**

Emotional intelligence shows how controlling your emotions can be crucial for business success. Mentors can give advice on how to resolve heated conflicts with employees or customers. A mentor can accompany and support mentees with tools for managing emotions that, without doubt, are part of the entrepreneurial path. A key aspect that strengthens mentoring entrepreneurs is trust. Self-confidence is very important for success as entrepreneurs. The self-confidence of the entrepreneur is the driving force that provides the resilience and power necessary to build and face entrepreneurial situations. An entrepreneur will need diverse mentoring support and skills depending on the phase of the start-up (Memon et al. 2015). Mentors must have the ability to help entrepreneurs to take advantage of their self-confidence, maintain it, and see every challenge as an opportunity. That is why depending on the personality traits of the entrepreneur, or his or her management style, the mentor should be different in each case.

### **5. Helps the entrepreneur learn to create methods and strategies**

Mentors support entrepreneurs with their experience and can transfer methods and strategies that have been successful in their professional path. This can help prevent or address problems and situations when they arise. Working directly with a mentor provides the advantage of getting answers to direct questions and having conversations that clarify issues of interest. The direct feedback of a mentor can lead to details and learning about businesses that would otherwise be difficult. This knowledge is valuable, but it is much more important to share it so it can be applied in the specific business challenge. This is what will give the entrepreneur his or her own systems and methods that constitute his or her know-how in the long term.

## 6. Helps provide motivation and harmony

Like confidence, motivation can also be irregular in an entrepreneurial career (Memon et al. 2015). The mentor can help with the encouragement to take the right steps and assertively build a vision. A lack of confidence can cause restlessness. A good mentor can share those moments, providing perspective and the serenity to face challenges from an objective point of view. A good mentor is a companion and talent developer. It is a good alternative for guidance and support in the entrepreneurial adventure. Emotions, barriers, and doubts are normal when you are building a business. A mentor is dedicated to the entrepreneur and his or her business, talents, and dreams, and is there for the entrepreneur when he or she needs their experience and knowledge. Entrepreneurship mentoring is also a solution to loneliness, which most entrepreneurs experience as they begin their journey.

Having summarised the benefits of mentorship in the entrepreneurial context, we will now discuss some different mentoring activities.

### Entrepreneurship mentoring: individual group mentoring

Most mentoring programmes are designed based on an individual, peer-mentoring model. In the case of entrepreneurship mentoring, we have identified several advantages of in-group mentoring. We can classify group entrepreneurship mentoring in four general types:

1. One mentor and several mentees/entrepreneurs.
2. One mentor and several mentees (a start-up team)
3. One mentee and several mentors
4. One entrepreneurial team (mentees) and several mentors

The objective in all of these is to enhance learning, not only from a single mentor or a team of mentors but also through peer-learning.

In the first and second case, these groups are designed under a scheme that has the largest number of similar characteristics that may be associated with an industry, market, region, or business model to allow greater integration. In the case of a start-up team, it is oriented towards internal discussion mentoring.

The dynamic is like individual mentoring, except that the questions and needs of in-group mentoring are not from a single mentee, but from a group. This may

seem disadvantageous for the mentee, but the learning is rich because peers may ask questions that the other mentee did not realise were important. The ideal for group mentoring is for it to be systematised, scheduled in advance, and intended as a series of several meetings in a scheduled order.

The third and fourth cases are models that seek the specialisation and multi-disciplinary of mentoring. It is like a 'board of directors/experts' model in which the entrepreneur or team of entrepreneurs can have an expert team for market, legal, technical, and financial areas that allows them to accelerate a project. This approach is recommended for entrepreneurial projects in the growth, internationalisation or scaling phase. This model can include both individual mentoring with each one of the members of the 'board' or group mentoring.

Group entrepreneurship mentoring offers many advantages:

- **Diversity of opinions:** One of the best advantages of group mentoring is the ability to generate dialogue, debate or discussion under certain themes – something that does not exist in individual mentoring where there are only two opinions interacting.
- **Circular learning:** Here we are not talking about peer interaction but a whole circle of people who are speaking the same business language within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, which generates learning not only with the mentor but also with their peers.
- **Networking and contacts:** Apart from what we can learn in the specific mentorships, we can also generate win-win relationships between the mentees.
- **Mutual understanding:** Psychologically, being accompanied in a learning process and feeling that they may have the same opportunities or difficulties when starting a business provides greater motivation and a feeling of empathy, which is important for a more adequate process. Sharing professional dreams and ambitions, as well as problems and concerns, validates them and creates a sense of belonging and mutual understanding.
- **The value of entrepreneurship mentoring programmes in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.**

Entrepreneurial ecosystems are complex systems (Cearra et al. 2021). Stam and Spigel (2016) define it as a set of interdependent actors and factors coordinated in such a way that they enable productive entrepreneurship in a particular territory. As shown in Figure 1, Spigel (2017) gives mentoring programmes a very important role in entrepreneurial ecosystems. They consider mentors and networking as key social attributes for sharing entrepreneurial knowledge in an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

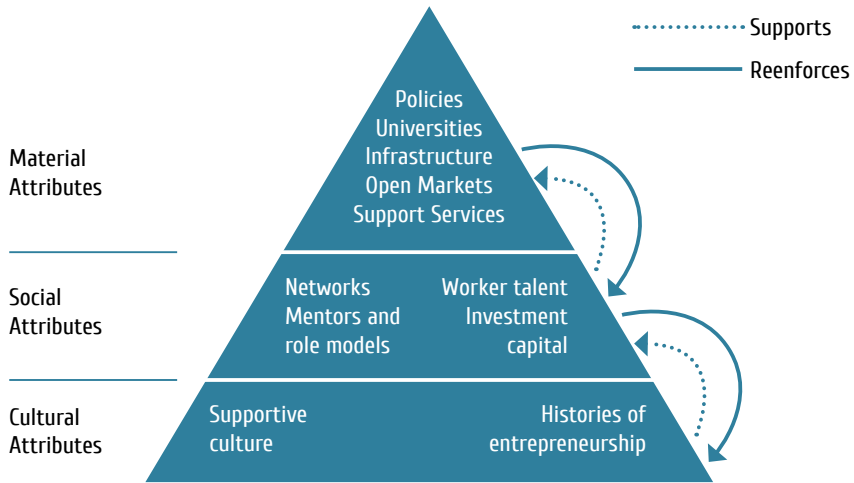


Figure 1: Mentoring value in entrepreneurial ecosystems (Spigel, 2017)

The model includes the universities as a material attribute. Entrepreneurship research shows that there is a positive link between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurship performance in an entrepreneurial ecosystem (Kuratko 2005, Harris and Gibson, 2008, Raposo and Do Paço 2011). In recent years, incubators for innovative and technological start-ups have become common tools in universities. These incubators and entrepreneurial programmes are key to the development of new projects and new products based on disruptive technologies resulting from research in the university. Universities can play a more important role to increase the value of incubators as facilitators of networking also by offering a staff of mentors and teachers for entrepreneurship in any sector.

- We are trying to improve university governance in entrepreneurship including mentoring protocols in their entrepreneurship programmes.
- Mentoring programmes for joining secondary and higher education through entrepreneurial and innovation competences.
- Mentoring to activate entrepreneurship competences in the academic curricula for all students.
- Boosting entrepreneurship mentoring programmes, especially designed for students and alumni with entrepreneurial motivations.
- Strengthening doctoral programmes with mentoring to promote the entrepreneurial spirit in the research staff and increase the creation of university spin offs.

Next, we will introduce an empirical example.



## Entrepreneurship mentoring: The experience of the University of the Basque Country

The University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) has three programmes devoted to entrepreneurship to generate innovative and technology-based firms, enabling the use of research results generated at the university and the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture among students, alumni, researchers and teachers (Saiz-Santos et al. 2017). The UPV/EHU is ranked second in terms of the creation of spin-offs in Spain (IUNE 2022). The ZITEK incubator at the UPV/EHU in Biscay was ranked 6th in Spain out of a total of 353 incubators, being the only university incubator in the top ten and ranked 4th for advanced incubation services (Blanco Jiménez F. J. 2014).

The entrepreneurial programmes at the University of the Basque Country, which support the creation of university spin-offs and promote an entrepreneurial culture between the students, teachers and research staff, are regarded as a key tool. Apart from entrepreneurial training programmes such as Hasten Ikasten, competitions for business ideas (Think Big), and competitions for the best start-ups (Abiatu), a variety of innovative activities have also been developed over the last two decades to promote entrepreneurial culture (e.g., Etorkezulan, Bus-Emprende or E-ginkana). These activities have had more than 2,000 students participating per year (Saiz et al. 2017).

The first entrepreneurship mentoring experience at the University of the Basque Country was the Youth Entrepreneurship Program. It was an entrepreneurial education pilot whose objective was to promote innovative entrepreneurship and the creation of companies by students and university graduates with special attention on those developments and initiatives based on new technologies. The main objective was to provide techniques to test the development and maturation of entrepreneurial business ideas and their materialisation in innovative business models:

- Introduce the entrepreneurial ecosystem of the Basque Country.
- Familiarise students/entrepreneurs with different techniques for the design of business models.
- Acquire the ability to assess or judge that is necessary when establishing and operating a new company.
- Familiarise students with the processes of innovation and the protection of knowledge.
- Introduce strategic and marketing principles.
- Know the specific sources of financing for entrepreneurs.

- Understand the practical structure of a business plan.

The programme offered a personalised thematic mentoring kit designed especially for the beneficiaries of the Youth Entrepreneurship Programme – students, scholarships, and leaders of innovative and technology-based business projects. The delivery of a mentoring kit (or check book) of six thematic sessions covering different areas: legal advice for establishing a business, business model, strategic planning, commercial planning, production plan, financial plan, investment sources, protection of intellectual property, industrial partners, sources of financing, etc. The goal is offer options so participants can adapt the programme to suit the different rates and degrees of progress in each of the start-ups.

Building on this experience, the University of the Basque Country has advanced to other areas of expertise though the EHU alumni.

In conclusion, we will now return and take a more detailed look at entrepreneurship mentoring in the context of the CCI.

## Entrepreneurship mentoring in the CCI

One of the specific needs of the cultural and creative industries is the lack of knowledge of trainers and professionals to implement new business models. In general, CCI training is more focused on developing specific technical skills, forgetting those oriented to the professional and labour market sphere. Most of the products and services developed by the CCI require not only creative and innovative skills but also knowledge for the organization of events in the artistic field: exhibitions, concerts, filmography, literature, and music production, among others. That is why it is important to introduce basic business knowledge in the formal curricula for CCI students to provide the competences to build new business models in the CCI sector (See also Chapter 1.4).

In most of cases, the development of new business models in the CCI demand not individuals but multidisciplinary teams to run the project (Gisbert-Trejo et al. 2021). Therefore, it is important to provide not only personal mentoring programmes, but also group mentoring methodologies or team building methods in order to exploit new opportunities in the CCI sector. A multidisciplinary mentor group allows a company to present itself to a mentor team with very diverse profiles; the advisory council can then guide it to meet different challenges.

We must not forget that the business models in the cultural and creative industries have a very important differential nuance compared to other industries. Most are born to die after finishing the artistic project: concert, film, exhibition. In addition to this reality, incubator staff are more used to promoting projects oriented to business growth and survival. In fact, some public agencies do not consider this kind of business model, where the death of the project is already programmed in, as efficient to support with public resources. Therefore, it is important to adapt the protocols of entrepreneurship mentoring programmes specifically for the CCI sector. The following summarise key suggestions:

- Mentoring programmes could join secondary and higher education in the CCI through entrepreneurial and innovation competences.
- Mentoring could activate entrepreneurship competences in the academic curricula for all students in CCI studies.
- Boosting entrepreneurship mentoring programmes, especially designed for students and alumni with start-up projects in CCI sector.
- Strengthening doctoral programmes with mentoring to promote the entrepreneurial spirit in the research staff and increase the creation of university spin offs in the CCI sector.

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## 2.4 Mentorship in a Digital World: Benefits, Challenges and Examples of Online Mentoring Practices

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### Abstract

This chapter offers an analysis of existing online mentoring experiences as well as insights from the current scientific literature on the topic. The benefits, challenges, and a comparison of online vs face-to-face mentoring are highlighted with concrete tips and advice given for anyone planning or managing online mentoring programmes.

*“If there is no distance between us, how can I approach you?”*

Pix Lax, in “Make me wait” (Πυξ Λαξ, “Κάνε με να περιμένω”)

### Introduction

Research shows that cultural managers need to be versatile and agile in today’s world (Chandler, 2000). According to Martin and Rich (2010), the aim of a cultural management course or programme is to prepare students for the complex and unpredictable environment in which cultural organisations operate. Specific to programmes in cultural management is also that they often attract students with many different study backgrounds, which makes it difficult to cater to all the different student needs. Furthermore, according to Graf (2009), internationalisation has become important in higher education, and therefore also within cultural management programmes. By making their master’s programme in cultural management more international, many programmes look at offering students an internship abroad. The different context helps them to improve their soft skills as well as gain knowledge directly from people who are already working in the sector. In the constantly changing landscape and complex interactions in the field of cultural management, learning about diversity, reflection and inclusion is therefore crucial.

In recent years, geographical boundaries have been fading even more because of globalisation. As we are confronted with the impact of global pandemics, more and more digital alternatives are being explored for learning and for international cooperation. More and more learning experiences are also being offered virtually (or in hybrid forms). Mentoring as a tool has existed for many years in an offline setting. This chapter specifically looks into the benefits, risks, challenges, and techniques of online mentorship, as well as the main differences between it and in-person mentoring meetings and relationships. However, this chapter also aims to look at the potential of online mentoring (hybrid or completely online), as we have recently learned more about this from our experience during the Covid-19 pandemic.

It should be noted, however, that remote modes of mentoring are not new, they have just gained renewed momentum with the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, they also seemed to have changed mentoring relationships. A study by Pacific Market Research (USA 2021) indicated that about a third of mentors reported that the Covid-19 pandemic led to a positive impact on their mentoring relationships, likely through more frequent check-ins and shifts in the types and amounts of support offered.

The implications of the pandemic have taught us a lot about remote mentoring relationships and online teaching by extension, and it seems that even though it is not without its difficulties, this mode is here to stay whether fully digital or in a hybrid format. But what is the added value? And what does it bring to mentoring for artistic, cultural, and particularly cultural management education programmes? In what way can communication in a virtual environment be profound? Can mentor and mentee still build a relationship of trust when they mainly communicate with each other from a distance?

## Theoretical approaches and frameworks

### What is mentoring?

Within this chapter, we base our approach to mentoring on the literature review by Laura Bierema and Sharan Merriam (2002) as well as the framework worked out in Chapter 1.1 of this book. Bierema and Merriam state that there is very little agreement in the literature as to what is and what is not mentoring. Definitions range from a career sponsor to peer counsellor to a coach to a mentor in the more classical sense of someone who facilitates all aspects of their protégé's development. Somewhere in between a career sponsor and a classi-

cal mentor is someone “who oversees the career and development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counselling, providing psychological support, protecting, and at times promoting or sponsoring” (Zey 1984: 7). Ragins and Kram (2007) described the impact of mentoring: “At its best, mentoring can be a life-altering relationship that inspires mutual growth, learning, and development. Its effects can be remarkable, profound, and enduring; mentoring relationships have the capacity to transform individuals, groups, organisations, and communities”.

Mentoring programmes often seem to serve the following purposes:

- Educational mentoring helps the mentees to improve their overall academic achievement.
- Career mentoring helps the mentees to develop the necessary skills to enter/continue a career path.
- Personal development mentoring supports the mentees during times of personal or social stress and provides guidance for decision-making.

Within the context of this chapter and by extension this book, mentoring is defined through a more **holistic lens** as an effective development tool, where a mentee learns through conversation, challenge, and reflection in a safe and non-judgemental space. The key to a mentoring relationship is that the mentor has lived experience in the sector, field or discipline and can pull on that insight and personal experience to create a reality-based learning situation. Due to its nature, mentoring enables deeper and more individualistic development. Mentoring partnerships create a relationship that supports career development and is based on mutually beneficial exchange. Attention is placed on the ‘big picture’ perspective and not on specific jobs. The idea is to enhance personal and professional growth. It is therefore a collaborative and mutual relationship that helps unlock the potential of a mentee and inspires and supports him or her in achieving work and personal goals.

### E-mentoring, online mentoring, or digital mentoring: What's in a name?

While we now have a clearer idea of the concept of mentoring, the terminology for ‘online mentorship’ is still emerging. Online mentorship as a term is also very often used synonymously with ‘virtual mentorship’, ‘e-mentorship’, ‘remote mentorship’ and/or ‘digital mentorship’. No clear differences are unanimously defined or agreed on in the literature. Bierema and Merriam (2002) define e-mentoring as a “computer mediated, mutually beneficial relationship

between a mentor and a protégé which provides learning, advising, encouraging, promoting, and modelling, that is often boundaryless, egalitarian, and qualitatively different than traditional face-to-face mentoring.” As regular mentoring, in their definition, e-mentoring may happen between peers, one-on-one, one mentor may work with a team, or students may even provide mentoring to more experienced colleagues. The virtual medium provides a context and exchange that may not be possible to replicate in face-to-face mentoring relationships. The nature of the online mentoring relationship may be qualitatively different when mediated through a computer or mobile device.

At the beginning of the internet in the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, it was thought that digital technologies had the potential to *cross barriers* of race, gender, geography, age and hierarchy that are rarely crossed in traditional mentoring relationships (Bierema & Merriam, 2002). Subsequent decades unfortunately show otherwise, and a wide array of literature turned from cyberutopia to more realistic perspectives on the possibilities of the internet to ensure a ‘safe space’. On the other hand, online mentorship allows for mentoring to extend *beyond location and time constraints* and provides greater access to a variety of mentorship traits and skills. It also provides *flexibility* for scheduling mentoring opportunities that may not be available with in-person mentoring.

Research still remains very limited on online mentoring. Generally, theory has been unable to keep up with reality and the expanding field of online learning. The available online mentoring research has struggled to show an effective online mentoring process and its impact on students (Sanyal & Rigby 2017). Therefore, we conducted empirical research on existing online mentoring programmes during the years of 2021 and 2022, the results of which we will present later in this chapter.

### Literature review on online mentoring: Difficulties and opportunities

Most existing literature on online mentoring refers to two aspects of mentoring programmes. First is the online interaction between mentors and mentees itself. Most online mentoring interactions required minimal or no additional cost from mentors and students (Halupa & Henry 2015). Online mentoring could occur through email, texting, and free web services such as Zoom. Second, there are indications that online mentoring platforms that provide organised information about mentors and mentees in a transparent way provide more efficient mentor-mentee matching models than random selection. These pro-



grammes could require fees from the higher education organisations, students, or both. In their study of an online mentoring programme, Halupa and Henry (2015: 111) highlight that “all mentors agreed it was better to do mentor/mentee matches based on a system that actually looks at personal and professional characteristics”. Other studies also shown a positive effect from using an online tool to match mentor and student characteristics (Rees Lewis 2015).

Research has shown that traditional frameworks of mentorship can be adapted for online use. For example, Hamilton and Scandura (2003) configured four mentoring models – network mentoring, multiple mentoring, team mentoring, and mentoring and learning – as internet-conducive versions that consider online affordances and constraints (2003: 398).

Bierema and Merriam (2013), however, identify some *difficulties* in regard to online mentoring:

- Virtual intimacy may be difficult to obtain, particularly if the parties have never met in person.
- Making virtual matches may also require several tries.
- Developing the levels of trust and confidence to sustain the relationship takes time, familiarity, and work.
- Miscommunication can occur on a number of levels in e-mentoring, especially if the parties have only a virtual relationship with a frail commitment.
- E-mentoring may not be a timely process if one or both parties is not conscientious about making quick responses to requests for information or advice.
- These relationships may also be characterised by less commitment. Each party can easily initialise or end virtual relationships and strike up or out.

They furthermore share some requirements to ensure an online mentoring relationship runs smoothly. In many ways these coincide with face-to-face mentorship. A first requirement is to manage expectations and to establish a formalised relationship. A *formalised* relationship means that the parties establish regular times to communicate. Frequent exchanges are recommended because they help maintain the continuity and flow of the mentoring conversation. Long periods of absence online often lead to disinterest or misunderstandings and should be avoided. According to these authors, formal e-mentoring programmes expect communication at least twice weekly to establish the relationship. Of course, it is important to meet face-to-face if possible. A blended approach therefore seems preferable. This can only serve to strengthen

a relationship that is working on a virtual level. Fostering familiarity was determined as another key determinant of success in several of the formal mentoring projects. Students in the study by Bierema and Merriam (2013) rated as most successful those relationships in which mentors were comfortable sharing their personal lives and expertise online.

The evaluation of the online mentorship project is also important and something that should be agreed upon by mentor and mentee. This could be as simple as periodic process checks between the parties to assess how the relationship is working and consider ways to improve it. Some e-mentoring programmes have formal facilitation. This is based on the experience that some degree of online facilitation and support for mentors is necessary. Online facilitators can be installed to serve as coaches who follow up with mentors, students, and teachers, monitor progress, and keep the conversation going. Finally, it is important to end the mentoring relationship on a positive note as well as to install a limited time period for the whole experience, as was addressed in other chapters on mentoring.

## Online education at universities and in cultural management

Online education has gained importance since the Covid-19 pandemic. Some academics agree that online education should not be the new normal after the pandemic (Murphy 2020) because it perpetuates class inequalities in terms of access to education for those with limited access to online tools. Yet there are also many benefits. The biggest advantage of online education is also that students who cannot attend university (due to: health, concentration problems, distance...) can still follow the courses (Schramme & Verboven 2020). In addition, it is also considered an advantage that teachers can send content to the students in preparation for or in addition to the courses.

However, according to Cacciamina et al. (2011), there are also caveats to online learning: it takes longer to learn something than face-to-face, there has to be a commitment to learn, and some difficulties with technology can arise. Research by Nistor and Neubauer (2009) among students of an online course shows that students tend to drop out of online courses more often. They also participated less in classes when they were still enrolled. These of course are older studies and technology has evolved a lot since then, but during a 2020 survey on online teaching during Covid times, the lack of interaction was still seen as a disadvantage (Verboven & Schramme 2020).

Undoubtedly, online learning will remain a permanent part of the 21st century, but online learning can be isolating for students (Dumford & Miller 2018, Gillett-Swan 2017) and it requires new skills that many students don't have, like self-regulation (Bradley, Browne & Kelley 2017, Wandler & Imbriale 2017). It is important for students who learn online to be aware of how they can learn best (Cacciamina, Cesareni, Martini, Ferrini & Fujita 2011). They should be taught to become personally responsible for the learning process. On the other hand, online learning can also be a gateway towards online mentorship as it makes students more familiar with the online context.

In 2020, the University of Antwerp (Verboven & Schramme 2020) undertook research into online education within cultural management programmes in Europe during the Covid-19 pandemic. Interviews with 9 directors of 8 different programmes were held at two stages: during the emergency remote teaching phase and later in the year when teaching staff had more experience in online teaching. The programmes represented include:

- Cultural policy and management, University of Arts Belgrade and Université Lumière Lyon
- Arts and Cultural management, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya
- Arts management, University of the Arts Helsinki
- Arts, Policy and Cultural Entrepreneurship, University Groningen
- Master direction de projets ou établissements culturels, Université Aix-Marseille
- Culture, Creativity and Entrepreneurship, University of Leeds
- Kulturmanagement, University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna
- Cultuurmanagement, University of Antwerp.

Most directors had no experience with online education before Covid-19. For those who did, this turned out to be limited: recording lessons, giving lessons via Skype, and offering opportunities to students who could not be present offline. During the Covid-19 pandemic, all courses had to be switched to online education. The approaches differed widely, although most tried to teach synchronously in a modified form. The platforms used were also diverse.

The advantage of online education according to the conducted interviews was that students and teachers could follow the lessons remotely, so that students who could not attend university physically could still follow the lessons. This is also an advantage that emerged earlier in this chapter from the literature. In addition, it is also considered an advantage that teachers can send content to

the students before or outside the lesson. In particular, the lack of interaction was seen as a disadvantage. The programme managers believed that students (and teachers) must know each other before distance education is possible. In addition, many programme managers indicated that online teaching and learning is less efficient and that more individual moments are needed to supervise the students. This is similar to what Cacciamina et al. (2011) mention, namely that online education takes more time to learn something.

Another difficulty of online education was found in terms of the internship most programmes provide. These had to become remote, which means cultural management programmes had to become acquainted with online mentoring techniques for their teaching programmes but also within the internships they offer. Many were not yet fully equipped for that, which meant that some internships did not go through in the end or were changed to research-based instead of workplace internships. Greater familiarity and a good structure for online programmes therefore might be beneficial for these programmes in the future.

### **Empirical analysis of different dimensions of online mentoring programmes in the creative industries**

For our practical component on online mentoring, we now look at examples from three mentorship programmes in southeastern Europe, all taking place online. These programmes are aimed at young practitioners, people who are already working in the cultural and creative sectors. More specifically, this part is comprised of a qualitative analysis of: (1) final evaluation forms completed by mentors and mentees in the Creative Mentorship programme (CM) in 2020/2021 and Media for All (MfA) British Council mentorship programme 2021; and (2) a focus group discussion with six participants from three mentoring programmes – MfA, CM and the mentoring programme of the Serbian Gaming Association (SGA).

The MfA and SGA programmes were planned and implemented entirely remotely, while the CM programme shifted to the remote mode halfway through the cycle because of Covid-19. Therefore, four participants had experience with mentoring only in the online mode, and two participants had both online and offline mentoring experiences. The programmes are different in terms of focus, method, number of participants and duration (MfA - six weeks, SGA - six months, CM - one year). The sampling rationale and discussion focus was on remote mentoring tools and experiences only. Consequently, the differences in the structures of these programmes is not the aim of this chapter.

The main findings are grouped into three sub-topics that focus on the main benefits of remote mentoring, challenges, and the main differences and similarities with in-person mentoring meetings. As we will see, current experiences from online mentees are very much in tune with the findings from our literature study above. The key findings are summarised in Table 1, while they are further discussed in a more detailed manner below.

**Table 1.** Summary of findings from the empirical analysis of three online mentoring programmes

Benefits	Challenges	Remote vs. In-person
Time availability and flexibility Spatial availability Relaxed communication Continuous support	Digital privacy issues Online fatigue Lack of physical interaction Technical problems	Multitude of relationships Slower bonding Freedom of choice Fundamental principles are essential

## Benefits of remote mentoring

A. Time availability and flexibility – This is the most frequently mentioned benefit of remote mentoring, important for both mentors and mentees. It was easier for mentors to find the time for meetings, and mentees felt that it is easier to schedule meetings:

One of the meetings, a very important one for one of [my mentee’s] goals, was held on my way to the vegetable market. She could meet at that time, she had challenges at that point, that was the breaking point, the moment of deciding, and I don’t know what else. So, I, with my market trolley and headphones in my ears, I had that discussion with her for hours. I did not go home, I sat on a bench nearby and talked with her as much as she needed. That was crucial for me – that [my mentee] could reach me whenever they needed to. (mentor, FG discussion)

This way of working is not for everyone, of course. It depends on the way the ‘rules of the relationship’, including the mentor’s availability and communication methods, are defined at the start of the mentoring process. However, everyone appreciated these additional options that are enabled by remote mentoring. Furthermore, the meetings were easier to organise because of the instant connectivity and the ability to skip travel preparations:

If we were meeting at 7pm, I would have to run home from work, eat quickly, run again, get ready... Like this, I just come to my room, opened Skype, and the conversation started. (mentee, FG discussion)

- B. Spatial availability – In addition to being available at more times, participants highly valued the increased geographical availability. Mentoring pairs could be formed across regions or borders, which potentially expands the possible knowledge and experience exchange. The matching options are greater, and mentoring programmes can define their aim and target audience with more freedom and specificity.
- C. Relaxed communication – For some mentees, remote communication helped them manage their expectations of the mentor and resolved the illusion of ‘a perfect professional’. Seeing their mentor in the everyday environment helped reduce perceived authority challenges and created a more relaxed communication environment:

Our topics changed and, mostly, they were ongoing topics that we could discuss in that way, on the phone and over coffee, walking, headphones, sitting on a bench. (mentee, FG discussion)

For mentors, this was helpful for understanding the context that the mentee is in, having a glimpse into the everyday life in which they could work together towards long-term goals.

- D. Continuous support – An important benefit of remote communication was being able to continuously check in with a mentor/mentee, and to feel or give support in different ways:

During the time I was working on my stories, [my mentor] always texted me to see how it’s going, so yes, I had her constant support. (evaluations; mentee)

## Challenges of remote mentoring

- A. Digital privacy issues – One of the biggest challenges was to communicate through digital tools. However, this is not a challenge that applies only to mentoring, but to all online-related activities. Mentors and mentees are challenged by the attention to their physical appearance, or the look of the space they are in:

How do I look, is my room ok, am I nervous about seeing my face on the screen all the time, will I be able to speak in a relaxed way, would I be more relaxed in-person... (mentee, FG discussion)

- B. Online fatigue – This is a result of the intense online interaction in the contemporary world; mentorship is added as one of the many online interactions:

We had enough of everything, and then we are tired of using the computer, internet, and everything. I find it really tiring, not only in relation to the mentoring programme when I have two big meetings in a day. To me, that is extremely tiring. All my energy is drained in those two, two and a half hours. (mentee, FG discussion)

- C. Lack of physical interaction – The inability to touch a person, give a hug, or communicate non-verbally was a big challenge for both mentors and mentees:

I could not hug my mentee in the moment when I feel this should happen and that it would mean a lot to her, and I can't do it... (mentor, FG discussion)

This is a very specific cultural characteristic; in Serbian culture, physical contact is culturally accepted and a way of showing affection and a friendly attitude. In some other cultural contexts, this might be seen as inappropriate.

- D. Technical problems – Losing the connection, not having internet at home, not having a private space to talk at home – these are all big challenges that also reduce access to online mentoring, especially for vulnerable and marginalised individuals and communities. This is something that should be discussed and thought about when setting up remote mentoring programmes.

### Remote vs. In-person: A comparative analysis

- A. Multitude of relationships – Remote mentoring is not a type of relationship but comprises a range of diverse relationships and experiences, just like the in-person mode of mentorship:

My experience with the first mentee I had and the second one is completely different. I believe the next one will be different from these as well! (mentor, FG discussion)

The quality of an online mentoring relationship depends on the way the mentor and mentee define it, their goals and interaction.

- B. Slower bonding – The start of the online relationship is different from in-person mentoring. It is less relaxed; one is more conscious of one's self. It seems easier to switch to the remote communication modes after a few in-person meetings.

If I would see someone 10 times for 1.5 hrs in-person, I could already say we are functioning very well as a pair [...], that we are even friends. But remotely, I have so many online meetings all the time, that I don't have the feeling of being close. And there are colleagues that I have seen only once or twice in-person, and if I went to their city, I would rather invite them for a meeting, even though we communicated less, because simply we are already like friends. (mentor, FG discussion)

- C. Freedom of choice – It is crucial to have choice about the preferred mode of communication. Due to Covid-19, people could not choose, they felt forced and constrained to shift to the remote communication mode. This made them feel disappointed and unable to perceive the remote mentoring as a positive experience:

We did not have the freedom to choose whether it suits us to shift to the online mode; we had to do it, or to stop the communication completely. I believe that my mentoring experience under different circumstances, not connected to such an extent to the global events, would be different. We cannot observe this situation outside the context. (mentor, FG discussion)

If we could choose in that period, to combine one and the other [in-person and remote mentoring], to use what suits us best, maybe my impression about the online mode would be better. (mentor, FG discussion)

The majority of the participants would prefer the hybrid form, combining meetings in-person and online:

Now, if I could choose, I would use the hybrid form – a bit of one, a bit of the other, however it suits us. (mentor, FG discussion)

To take the best from both worlds. That is always the best option, to take the best of all the worlds. (mentor, FG discussion)



D. Fundamental principles are essential – The descriptions of the remote mentoring relationships shared the characteristics of the in-person mode: the value of the mutual exchange, the good and thorough matching process, the importance of defining goals from the outset, and the focus on mentee’s needs. The challenges in the mentoring relationship were not influenced by the online mode:

I felt like I was not satisfied with my participation [in the relationship], and the online mode did not bother me in relation to my mentor, or the support I was getting. (mentee, FG discussion)

### Suggestions for online mentoring

Finally, the intention of this section is to present tools for online mentoring meetings based on the theory and the empirical analysis presented here. This is not a complete list and should be considered as a good start.

**Remote mentoring is more than video calls.** Consider video communication platforms such as Zoom, Skype, MS Teams, Google Meet, but also texting platforms such as WhatsApp, Signal, Viber, Messenger. Phone communication is an excellent mode for remote mentoring. In addition, remote mentoring is also about communication at different times: reading, exchanging, and writing documents together on cloud libraries, such as Google Drive, One Drive, Dropbox. Email exchange is not only for scheduling meetings but for sharing tasks and directions, giving advice, sharing documents, reviewing past and present projects.

**Texting is a diverse tool.** Mentors can use texts to validate the progress of mentees:

She applied much of her new professional knowledge immediately. I was convinced of that through various texts that we processed and practical exercises that we performed together. (mentor, evaluations)

To motivate mentees:

I kept sending the message that there are no unsolvable problems, and that we always have to get up and move on after a fall. (mentor, evaluations)

To keep the contact alive:

We also communicated outside of meetings and kept our contact alive at all times. (mentor, evaluations)

To respond to urgent needs, to send invitations and suggestions for lectures, workshops and webinars.

**Allow time to understand the mentoring process and aims.** It is crucial to put effort into identifying expectations and roles and communicating them:

I needed time to understand what is being asked of me and what to do there, to be honest [...] I think that to some participants this was the problem, not finding the purpose, and I was lucky that at the start we established that, and everything started running smoothly. (mentee, FG discussion)

**Strengthen your focus.** Both mentor and mentee need to practice being focused more and focused better on the remote types of relationships:

We found the time that is not conventional but works for both of us – 10 to 12 at night. In the changed life circumstances, where we are constantly in front of the computer and where private and business life mix all the time – when we sit to work from 10 to 12, that requires a lot of focus because there are all sorts of things behind you from the day. I also think that the apartment ambience, where everything is mixed, influenced us to get off topic from time to time. I needed more concentration than in the sessions where I would be meeting my mentees in-person. (mentor, FG discussion)

**Use the silence.** Do not feel uncomfortable staying quiet in remote meetings. Allow time for thinking and use the silence to deepen the focus and meaning of your conversation:

That is when I discovered online silence, that it is ok to be silent when [my mentee] says something, or when I say something, and to stay quiet, stay, stay, and stay quiet. And then it starts being uncomfortable for me and I feel like I should say something, but I decide to stay quiet for a bit longer. And then [my mentee] moves on with the conversation...! That was a huge learning curve for me, to stay quiet and enable the space for thinking for both of us. (mentor, FG discussion)

**Go for a walk.** Try walking with your mentor/mentee while talking to each other on a phone or video call. The walks can be structured and unstructured types of meetings. The unstructured walks allow for open discussion, sharing thoughts without screens and reducing the uncomfortable situation of sitting in front of the camera all the time. Structured walks work as a combination of ‘walk and talk’ and ‘sit and write’ activities. First, the discussion topic would open up and the mentor and mentee would explore different aspects by brainstorming with each other. Then, they would both stay silent for a while, while the mentee captures some notes (on a bench or in a coffee shop, for example) and the mentor thinks about other possible aspects or ideas. Then, they continue walking and talking about another topic, and so on. Pairs may also enjoy sharing pictures of their walks and places, it adds value to the shared experience.

**Plan.** Reflect after every meeting and before the next one. Write down the action points and keep a diary of questions and ideas for the upcoming meetings. This is something that both mentor and mentee should include as a necessary part of a successful meeting:

After every meeting [my mentor] would email me tasks or things to think about. [...] I read that, I deal with that, and then in the next meeting we talk about it, open new topics and work forward. That was so important for me because I knew what to expect when I see her next time. (mentee, FG discussion)

**Don’t always follow the plan.** Flexibility in remote relationships is equally important as in in-person mode. Mentors should be able to recognise when a mentee needs a safe space to talk, without pushing the agenda; especially if it is a transitional period and the goals are changing.

## Conclusion

We would like to conclude this chapter by revisiting in more detail the current pilot project of the master’s programme on Cultural Management at the University of Antwerp, aiming to implement online mentorship.

Like in the programmes mentioned earlier, connection with the professional field is the cornerstone of this master’s programme. Within this programme, the master’s thesis is based on an important practical component, as students are carrying out research into a specific management question for a cultural

organisation. In addition, they must also ‘roll up their sleeves’ during an internship. This internship lasts 3 to 6 months and offers students the possibility to gain insights into the cultural sector within their own country or abroad.

The online mentorship would connect current students of the master’s programme with alumni of the programme who are already practitioners in the field and who will be hosting their internships. An interesting dynamic also exists between the different parties that are part of these projects: the university supervisor who guides the academic part of the student’s research, the mentor (very often an alumnus from the programme) from within the organisation who oversees the day-to-day tasks of the student within the organisation and the student him or herself.

Both the university supervisor and mentor from within the company take on a mentoring role within the project: the university supervisor more in relation to knowledge transfer and the internship mentor more as instructional support (however, this relationship can also evolve into personal mentoring as the internship mentor takes on the role of career coach). In any case these roles are very often intertwined and not made explicit. Making the roles more explicit might lead to more successful mentoring trajectories and long-term impact on the students.

Apart from the internship, which programme managers believe cannot be done fully online because students gain so much from their field experience, a parallel digital platform will be set up to match students to the alumni of the cultural management programme and as an environment for the mentoring relationships to occur.

Important steps for the success of this pilot project are to evaluate the coordination process, as well as to focus on guiding the mentors. As we have seen in Chapter 1.1, this is essential for any form of mentorship, but even more so within the online context. The online platform will also be an environment for the alumni community to thrive and share knowledge through online lectures and train-the-trainer events.

The most important caveat within these is in the importance of coordination. There still needs to be a support system that can control the regularity of the online mentorship trajectory, as well as the ongoing evaluation of progress, but ideally, this platform will become a self-sustaining environment for students and alumni to find each other and engage in mentoring relationships during but also after their studies.

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## 2.5 Diversity, Equality, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI), and Mentorship in the Cultural Sector

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### Abstract

Questions of diversity, equality, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) are topical in the context of mentorship and this chapter provides practical means and ways of introducing them. The chapter underlines existing social inequalities in the European cultural sector, explains the relevance of questions of diversity, equality, accessibility, and inclusion through mentoring and gives examples of mentoring programmes across and outside Europe aiming to support socially marginalised colleagues in the field of arts and arts management. The chapter also offers guidelines for future mentoring programmes in order to contribute to diversity and equality in their local scenes or artistic fields, as well as implications for educational institutions and platforms in the arts and culture.

### Introduction

In this chapter we will discuss mentorship in the context of diversity, equality, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) in the cultural field from an international perspective. Different social groups experience different obstacles to full participation in cultural life be they people with disabilities, migrants and asylum seekers, national, ethnic, religious, and racial minorities, neurodivergent professionals, women, gender and sexual minorities, distant and rural communities, low-income families, children, youth or the elderly. This is the case not only for visitors and audiences, but also for professionals engaged in cultural production and decision-making in cultural sectors.

Are there mentoring programmes established and running in the European cultural sector devoted to improving diversity, equality, accessibility, and inclusion and if so, how? We will elaborate on this by reflecting on several examples of mentoring programmes within cultural scenes across Europe meant to empower and support socially marginalised groups.

Furthermore, how can a mentorship programme ensure that DEAI is valued in its own structures, procedures, methodologies and among participants? What should the organizers of these programmes, the mentors and mentees (know and) do in order to share these values and promote these principles within the mentoring relationship and in the cultural sector as a whole?

## Inequalities in the cultural sector

When it comes to diversity in programming and audience development there are more positive results, but in relation to personnel and staff appointments, the cultural sector is experiencing the slowest progress (Canyürek 2021). This is also rooted in the educational settings and practices. In its Strategic Focus for 2020–2024, the European League of Institutes of the Arts recognises that racism and different forms of discrimination are still present in higher education institutions in the field of the arts.

Visible effects of this are the relative homogeneity of the student populations in our arts schools, the oftentimes conservative hiring strategies for our faculties, a lack of diversity in senior management positions, and the glass ceiling that still effectively exists within higher arts education institutions in 2020 (Canyürek 2021: 4).

As we are currently living in ‘migration societies’ (Moser 2020), discrimination based on ethnicity as well as harassment and lower opportunities for foreign-born artists and cultural professionals are common in Europe. There is, “a recognized need to encourage arts and cultural institutions to more explicitly integrate cultural diversity in their everyday operations. Overall, training, mentoring, and re-evaluation of established practices are endorsed as steps towards greater inclusion” of foreign-born colleagues in the artistic sector (Lahtinen 2021). In the US, 72% of arts managers are white, even though white people form only 63% of the population, which shows that even in progressive and aware professional circles racial inequality still exists (Cuyler 2015b).

Inequalities exist even in the context of gender. In their recent report *Gender & Creativity. Progress on the Precipice*, UNESCO states that in regard to “relative pay, contractual status and seniority, women in culture and creative sectors continue to fare worse than men”, and that “more efforts are required to achieve strong and lasting results notably to enhance visibility, establish mentoring and training schemes, and improve access to funding for women cultural professionals” (Conor 2021: 4). The case of Italy shows that in this European country



83% of the leaders of cultural institutions are men, on average 70 years old and ethnically homogenous (Castellini, Marzano, Valentini 2020). The report of the Open Method of Coordination Working Group of Member States Experts of the European Union agrees that even though “women are not actively denied the opportunity to be an artist or a cultural professional – they still face systemic discrimination” (Menzel 2021: 27). In the region of south-eastern Europe and particularly in the field of music, but also in other fields, Nikolić (2022) has identified the obstacles female artists face in professional circles, as well as in the digital space, while at the same time they are engaged disproportionately in cultural projects devoted to other marginalised groups in society (Nikolić 2019).

Across Europe disabled audiences, arts professionals, and artists report significant barriers to full participation in culture (Panagiotara, Evans & Pawlak 2020). In the US, 12% of arts managers are individuals with disabilities, compared with 19% of the population and it is considered that the “increased visibility of people with disabilities within arts management may enhance the cultural sector’s ability to engage this population as artists and audience members” (Cuyler 2015b). Mentoring programmes can contribute by enabling role models, facilitating networking and providing additional resources, visibility and career building for emerging art managers with disability, leading to inclusion and accessibility in the cultural sector on a larger scale. Mentoring programmes, if adequate and adapted, are also proven to support both mentees with disabilities and positively influence their mentors, as shown in a study of the mentoring experience of autistic performing arts professionals in the UK (Buckley, Pellicano, Remington 2021).

### Why is this relevant for mentoring programmes?

Ensuring maximum inclusion of younger colleagues contributes additionally to innovation in and sustainability of cultural practices and programmes, while being a substantial dimension of the notion of cultural rights (Balta Portolés, Dragičević Šešić 2017, Clammer 2019). On the other hand, elderly people are important participants and creators of social and cultural life and the potential of senior colleagues that are “irreplaceable as transmitters of culture and the knowledge” needs to be better used institutionally in the cultural sector (Jakubowska, Klosiewicz, Mekarski 2015). Morris (2017) even writes on the untapped resource of reverse mentoring in academia as well as in professional work. In music education contexts, peer-mentoring facilitated and support-

ed by music teachers contributes to building resilience among LGBT students (Goodrich 2020).

Mentoring has also been shown to be a proven facilitator of the change of organizational culture and identity in cultural institutions in a study of the experience of directors in British National Museums (Paquette 2012), and a tool of informal support to push back against patriarchal structures in the case of mothers at the academy (Yngvesson, Garvis, Pendergast 2020). Practices, practitioners and networks of stakeholders around organizations that influence their knowledge, approach and behaviour, are not always explicit, transparent and clear, not even to the employers and participants themselves (Tomka 2018). In line with this, as some of the important elements of improving inclusion in the performing arts, IETM underlines recognising “the privilege’s blind spot for discrimination”, conversations with “the other”, as well as the privileged stepping back from power and making room for the unprivileged to take part and even lead the decision-making process (Shishkova, Polivtseva, Richardsdottir 2020: 5–6).

Mentoring is also relevant as a tool of support for those who experience microaggressions due to their marginalised identity, while in this case mentors particularly benefit from relevant training and capacity building (Nair, Good 2021, Norman et al. 2021). Among the most important traits and competences of mentors for arts entrepreneurs, Hanson (2020) found the following in the top 15: Open-mindedness and Non judgement, Exposing and Discussing Assumptions, Empathy and Openness to Learning – these being crucial in striving for diversity and equality. Traditional mentorship structures according to some authors are seen as inherently misogynistic and racist, while alternatives can be constructed as power mentoring or mentoring with (Goerish et al. 2019), or as part of the feminist ethics of care.

The current conjunction of white supremacist and free-market ideologies makes the need for mentorship approaches, that foreground anti-racist, transnational and decolonial approaches to questions of embodied knowledge, subjectivity and power, even more urgent today (Mullings, Mukherjee 2019: 15). Henze (2020) writes that cultural managers and other professionals “will never really be able to [completely] understand what someone of, for example, a different origin, gender, religious belief, or ethnicity wants to express”, but also that “this is an amazing chance if we are willing to learn as much as we can by working out these differences. Being sensitive to these differences and learning from them is surely a valuable quality to foster relationships, shared beliefs, and common goals” (Henze, 2020: 75). Managing artistic projects with societal

impact demands these competences (Anttonen et al. 2016) and based on all presented evidence, there is a clear need for the cultural sector to engage more proactively in ensuring diversity, equality, inclusion and accessibility among cultural producers, audiences and stakeholders, and on the potential of mentoring programmes to contribute to these aims. Next, we shall present some examples of how this can happen in practise.

### Examples of mentoring programmes for diversity and equality

Globally there are different mentoring programmes that are focused solely on underrepresented groups. They often aim to offer support and empower professionals from marginalised social groups to fulfil their full potential despite systemic obstacles, discrimination, and oppression, and to gain personal and professional development resources that are otherwise out of reach for them because of practices of social exclusion. There are those designed for women, people with disabilities, racial minorities, and so on. Peer-mentoring was shown as useful for enhancing the resilience of members of marginalised communities, such as refugees in southern Spain (Paloma et al. 2020). On the other hand, research also shows that matching mentees with mentors from the same demographic is not a necessary precondition for the success of the relationship or positive outcomes for mentees, but that using a “social justice framework to guide mentors from all backgrounds may be key...” (Albright, Hurd, Hussein 2017: 6). Such mentoring programmes should aim beyond avoiding further marginalisation within the programme, but at empowering mentees to become agents of social change themselves (ibid: 2), create better conditions for their mentees in the environment thus impacting the environment (ibid; Paquette 2012, Norman et al. 2021) as well as increasing understanding and awareness in mentors of the obstacles the mentees face and making them active allies (Goodrich 2020).

Some mentoring programmes aimed at diversity and equality also belong to the cultural sector, either supporting professionals regardless of the exact fields of cultural production, or for specific fields of the arts, such as music or cinema. In the USA, there is a specific mentoring programme implemented by the Arts Administrators of Colour association, founded in 2016 initially as a Facebook group, focused on black, indigenous, and racial minority arts professionals that are underrepresented in positions of decision-making, power and visibility. This association further recognises the intersection of identities and oppressions, as well as the need for safer spaces and exchanges, and systematically

provides a platform called Affinity Spaces for Latinx and Hispanic arts leaders, Black arts leaders, Indigenous arts leaders, Asian arts leaders, LGBTQ+ arts leaders, arts leaders with disabilities, Middle Eastern arts leaders etc. White professionals willing to actively support black, indigenous and colleagues of colour have joined this organization and the programme called Accomplices as per the most contemporary communications in the anti-racism movement, and even though they are not participants in the programme, there is an Accomplice Leadership Institute intended for them, and they are also invited to support the programme in other ways. Their programme has been 10 months long, focused on students or entry-level professionals, with the aims of “building a well-rounded cadre of emerging arts leaders, increasing a sense of connection, providing support and developing relationships, creating a pipeline / pathway of emerging arts administrators and artists of colour”. Their application procedure is rather simple since they “want to make sure there are no barriers in place for anyone” and there is information on four annual cohorts of mentees and mentors with between 5 and 15 mentoring couples per annual cohort. Han and Onchwari (2018) describe another mentoring programme aimed at supporting academy staff of colour and providing recommendations to others interested in “improving retention, recruitment, and satisfaction of employees of colour in their respective higher education institutions”.

To focus on the European cultural space, the Flemish government in Belgium conducts a counselling platform in the Dutch language for Flemish artists that speak Dutch – Cultuurloket. Even though it is not quite the case there, since the dominant population in Belgium is Flemish, this example of an online platform with professionals engaged as consultants and advisers to the cultural sector is inspiring when thinking of designing support structures for cultural professionals of national or language minorities, or communities of foreign or immigrant professionals in different countries in Europe.

The French National Association of the Independent Labels FELIN has implemented a mentoring programme known as MEWEM since 2018 to “encourage women in the music industry to become more entrepreneurial” and promoted it as “the first mentorship programme for women in music”. It is five months long, targets primarily female and trans music entrepreneurs, using mentorship as a tool to “identify female models of success” and “develop and sustain businesses”. This programme includes monthly gatherings for educational and networking purposes. It has been implemented four times at the time of writing this chapter (2019–2022), with approximately 15 mentoring couples per generation. The second edition was supported by Creative Europe and was actually

implemented on a European level including participants from Germany, Austria, Belgium, Spain and Romania. The fourth edition in 2022 for the first time had a male music professional as a “sponsor” / “patron” of the programme, a choice which could be debated. This programme produced a white paper (in French) aimed at institutions and organizations included in the struggle for gender equality in music, advocating the use of mentorship as a tool in this struggle. Existing analysis of the female-only mentoring programmes aiming to change gender power relations within the tourism and events industry of the UK (Dashper 2019) or higher education in the Netherlands (Leenders, Bleijer-bergh & Van den Brink 2020) discuss the limitations of those schemes and how and when this format can actually be successful in changing the status quo. In line with these findings is the approach of the Swedish organization Fifti, which has implemented mentoring programmes for women in the music industry – Power over Music (Makten Over Musikens - MOM) – recognising additional obstacles faced by women in some of the sectors in the cultural and creative industries, and implementing mentorship in order to overcome them.

The mentoring of young professionals sometimes is instrumentalised as a tool in a cultural organization or institution to renew their audiences and/or their staff, more often to model their associates or interns in response to needs and the usual *modus operandi*. A mentoring scheme in cultural management was introduced in Serbia as part of the Youth Board programmes in the Creative Europe project Take Over, implemented within four different cultural institutions and organizations in Europe with different outcomes: Youth Cultural Center Bios in Athens, The Kolarac Endowment in Belgrade, the annual Teatro Della Limonaia festival in Florence and Chorea Theater in Lodz.

The mentoring scheme in the Kolarac Endowment in Belgrade meant that staff started working with the newly founded Youth Board members, selected through an open call to serve as an advisory body / task force for decision-makers in this organization and support its audience development and programming innovations. This has been a flagship project in Serbia with bold evaluations and conclusions: the organizers underlined that it needed more preparation and that mentors do not always know “how to transfer their knowledge, include trainees into daily operational routines and provide appropriate support to develop their ideas.” This project showed that there is a limited awareness about the value of mentorship within cultural institutions, as well as a feeling that such mentoring threatens the hierarchy of decision-making (British Council 2017). In this case, emerging professionals were those seen as threatening, while the adult, experienced professionals turned out to lack the capacity to

mentor them, including capacities for understanding, flexibility, inter-generational dialogue and support.

Having in mind the possible complexity, duration, and the diversity and scope of stakeholders, numerous milestones in managing a mentoring programme require the consideration of the different obstacles that possibly prevent some colleagues from taking part due to existing discrimination, oppression and inequalities in the wider society. Programme managers should ensure that programmes are as accessible and welcoming to difference as possible by acknowledging those obstacles and proactively designing support mechanisms. Given that mentoring relationships are inherently hierarchical, it is worth investigating the extent to which mentoring interventions attempt to reduce power hierarchies so as not to replicate processes of oppression and marginalisation that protégés are often subject to in their daily lives (Albright, Hurd, Hussain 2017: 2).

Since the existing cultural mentorship programmes can be significantly diverse, we will base the following guidelines on the model based on the Creative Mentorship programme.

### **Guidelines for managing a mentoring programme for diversity and inclusion**

Creative Mentorship, a mentoring programme for prospective professionals in culture, the arts and creative industries active in Serbia and the Western Balkans region was initiated in 2012 and significantly developed since. In early 2022, at the moment of writing this chapter, the Creative Mentorship alumni network consisted of 300 professionals from 6 annual programme cycles, coming from different parts of Serbia and the Balkans, working as independent artists and creators, but also employed in cultural institutions, as entrepreneurs, activists and others.

This model of a mentoring programme includes, for example, processes of opening the call and selecting participants, matching mentees and mentors, goal-setting, monitoring and evaluation procedures, educational programme and if appropriate, communications, finances, logistics of events and so on (for further details see the Case Studies in part IV of this book).

Viewed from the bottom up, it all starts with including diverse colleagues in the managing teams, advisory boards, and all the decision-making processes,

but also among the mentees, mentors and other participants, such as lecturers. During the open call and selection process, we should bear in mind that when someone from a discriminated background has a poor application it is probably because they have had less opportunities and support. This approach of the privileged stepping back from power and being sensitive to difference is already mentioned in the section “Why is This Relevant for Mentoring Programmes”.

At the beginning of the programme, for example, at the kick-off or annual start-up event, but also throughout the regular events and communications, it is important to be as clear and explicit as possible about the organizational culture that aims for equality. Nothing is to be implied and taken for granted – we live in unequal societies and cultural communities are not excluded from that, so it is necessary to be transparent, explicit and repetitive about how an organization, institution or a programme stands in support of those who are underrepresented and marginalised. As soon as possible establish procedures for when manifestations of sexism, ableism, racism, homophobia and other forms of oppression happen in our spaces. Even more in the US, but also in the European cultural space, there exist a number of experts who can support as external facilitators and consultants in designing these procedures. How do we intervene in these cases in order to prevent them from repeating, reduce the harm and restore justice? Zero tolerance towards behaviour that goes against the explicit values of equality and inclusion, or adopting an approach closer to restorative justice, including dialogue and mediation between the victim and the offender. Even though the Creative Mentorship team has discussed these questions on several occasions, significant work is yet to be done in this field, precisely with the support of an external facilitator. More about relations between restorative justice and arts and culture in integrating migrant communities in Europe can be learned from the Erasmus+ project CA4RJ.

Cuyler (2015a) advocates for allowing young professionals to choose their own mentors through non-formal gatherings rather than assigning mentors and encouraging mentor/mentee relationships that will form naturally, but only if ensuring that the group of selected mentors include arts managers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Creative Mentorship, on the other hand, carefully selects mentors for each mentee individually, based on their application, oral interview, goal-setting training and written description of their needs and objectives, aiming to avoid misunderstandings and disappointments rooted in unrealistic and idealistic images of mentors when chosen by mentees based on their public appearance. Both approaches to pairing have positive and negative

sides, but one of the most important dimensions of mentoring is having a role model, which in broader terms facilitates representation (Belfiore 2018).

If there is an organized educational programme consisting of lectures, workshops, presentations, and debates on topics relevant for cultural workers and artists, it is important to pay attention to who is being engaged as the lecturer and speaker, who is ‘getting the mic’ and whose voices we are amplifying. It is easy to fall into the trap of inviting ‘just the most relevant speaker’, when actually it is the responsibility of the manager to reflect on who is traditionally considered ‘the most relevant’ and if we are allowing a diversity of voices to be heard on our platform. It is also relevant to pay attention to which topics are chosen as relevant for the educational programme, and which values are publicly demonstrated and advocated for by the activities we organize.

In regard to communications, programme managers should be careful about the privacy and dignity of all participants, including carefully portraying the diversity of the mentees and mentors in their external communications in order to encourage diverse participants to apply in the next programme cycle, but at the same time avoiding the practice of tokenism, misusing the rare representatives of minority groups in order to present the programme as more diverse than it is. It also means that the programme / platform is an active ally for the struggles of the underrepresented colleagues in the public space, and public policies contributing to their aims.

Best practices in relation to finances mean, among other things, paying attention to how we are funding the programme. Cuyler (2019) also points out the potential and the responsibility of the foundations and funders, to “lead the cultural sector in practicing an approach... that is disruptive to social inequalities”. On the other hand, it is relevant to reflect on who is getting paid and who we are sharing financial resources with, as well as if we are aware of all the (hidden) costs of participating in our programme and whether these are preventing someone from taking part because of the material conditions. This is why some of the above-mentioned mentoring programmes ensure that there are no participation fees, or if there are, they are on a sliding scale, and stipends may even be offered to support participation, covering travel and accommodation costs and per diem costs. Finally, the budgeting and financial planning of the implementation of the programme should include possible equipment hire or personal assistant or sign language interpreter fees.

The demand for physically accessible venues for events is among the most visible, but it is also up to the managers to pay attention to whether activities are



generally physically demanding or if there are options and formats that suit the different bodies and different physical abilities of the participants. Breaks should be possible whenever an individual needs them, and general flexibility about moving in the space is also recommended. Can we offer activities and content to colleagues with hearing or sight impairment, or adapt our activities so that they are also accessible? Creative Mentorship has always had difficulty ensuring accessible venues for its activities in Belgrade, since the local venues are really are not truly accessible for colleagues using wheelchairs or other support for movement. A change is happening, but it is very slow and so far having accessible events usually means renting an expensive conference room in a fancy hotel, which is not at all in line with the idea of cooperation and solidarity with other cultural operators and their venues, but a solution needs to be found. Even the amazing coworking place that CM is using has stairs that prevent or make it harder for a CM employee with a mobility impairment to manage and this is something we need to reconsider.

Our activities should be trauma informed and pay attention to the possibility that some of the participants have more baggage than others, thereby ensuring that our programmes, communications and expectations are not triggering for some in a negative way. Jokes, examples, stories, questions and comments show whether we really are inclusive and, for example, an LGBTQ+ friendly space, and stating our pronunciations when introducing ourselves, in languages where it makes sense, makes it easier for trans individuals to participate. Our programmes should show and increase awareness of mental health issues, point out the importance of mental well-being but also accept colleagues with disorders, and make sure to prevent more damage for colleagues that are marginalised in society, at least within our programme and instead to empower and support them.

Accessibility is also about responding to the small children of participants, especially single parents and if there are no other places the children could stay during our programmes, that the children are welcome and we should aim for spaces that are baby or child friendly. By combining our efforts with other mentees and mentors, we can help parents participate better and contribute to changing the norms.

Language barriers exist when we are targeting diverse communities of cultural professionals and different options for translation should be considered. Mentees are not always willing to explicitly state their language limitations but rather will avoid an activity or just not fully utilise it. When we are coordinating a larger group with diverse participants, we could encourage them to gather in

subgroups based on identity and background and to offer safer closed spaces for them to further network, exchange and mutually share.

The timing of our events and the way we distribute content or set expectations should be inclusive for colleagues who work precariously or live in distant areas, which often means they have much less time at their disposal and more obstacles to successfully participate. Even better, we should aim to organize events in different parts of the community we serve whenever possible, so that we make them more accessible to different attendants and support them by increasing the visibility of their community and their work in a positive manner.

When organizing events for our mentees and mentors, inclusion, accessibility, and diversity means that we, for example, also care about the food we provide, the allergies that our participants might have and that there are always vegetarian and vegan options. Girls Rock Camps Alliance even implements a no-perfume policy, ensuring the accessibility of their venues and programmes for participants with smell sensitivities. Access to menstrual products in the toilets at our venues expresses a basic understanding and avoidance of taboos in regard to female bodies and their reproductive functions.

What is important is to avoid secondary victimisation – no one likes to be passive victims nor to draw attention to themselves in terms of gender, sexuality or disability. The problem here is that managers, cultural practitioners and employers of cultural institutions do not have the time or the routines to reflect, either among themselves or with the participants (Tomka 2018, Jancovich, Stevenson 2021), which is a prerequisite for successfully implementing and maintaining some of these practices and principles. At the same time, it is necessary to make mistakes in this process and learn from them. This idea must not freeze us and prevent us from working further. There is no one single solution for everything, but we need to be able to adapt to everyone, and to openly discuss, learn and improve.

## Implications for educational settings in the arts and culture

Capacities for understanding, improving and implementing diversity, equality, accessibility and inclusion, as well as capacities for mentoring, should be built among cultural professionals and professionals in the creative industries already during their higher education, if not earlier. Higher education institutions in cultural management and related professions could adopt some of the above guidelines for mentoring programmes, and apply similar approaches in

classrooms and throughout their different formats of teaching and learning, as part of their societal engagement (Ateca - Amestoy et al. 2019).

DEAI needs to become a (much bigger) part of the official agenda and methodology of higher education for cultural managers and other professionals, as previously shown by Heidelberg and Cuyler (2014), Cuyler (2018), Durer (2020), Nisbett (2020) and others, in order to provide tools to emerging, but also teaching professionals, to engage with these topics as well as to recognise their own privilege. The First International Survey on the Motivations and Experiences of Arts Management Graduates also “indicates the need for arts management educators to address the lack of diversity among graduates by actively recruiting a more diverse student body, and to explicitly address access, diversity, equity and inclusion through their teaching and learning methods” (Cuyler, Durrer & Nisbett 2020).

Furthermore, in understanding DEAI as one of the priorities of contemporary cultural policy on the European but also global level (Robins 2008, among others), it is important to underline the possibilities but also responsibilities of cultural policies at the local and national level in Europe, to introduce and support mentoring programmes as tools for improving DEAI in their respective cultural organizations, institutions and sectors.

Among many others, Dragičević Šešić and Drezgic wrote how “public cultural institutions should approach their social role more seriously... and responsibly” (2018: 42). “Since most of the public resources (infrastructure and finances) go to the public cultural sector, their responsibility in the cultural sphere should go beyond *activities* and routine services” (ibid: 43), aiming for a territorially (community) driven cultural policy instead of a traditional nation-building one (ibid:44–46). Belfiore writes “Have a focus on equality, social justice, inclusion, diversity and fair access to the means of cultural production but go beyond a perfunctory celebration of difference that fails to lift itself above a box-ticking exercise” (2018).

Therefore, to conclude and summarise, this chapter argues for necessary interventions in the education and capacity building of cultural and artistic professionals, led by cultural managers and cultural policy decision-makers, in order for the values and principles to be more successfully integrated in the core of cultural production and management in diverse institutions, organizations and practices.

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## 2.6 Ethics and Empowerment

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### Abstract

This chapter focuses on possible ethical questions that can arise in the context of mentorship. The various examples give the reader a means to understand the delicate nature and sensitivity of the mentoring relationship. Having highlighted the ethical dilemmas, the chapter proceeds to present key issues and questions for reflection as well as ways to cope.

### Introduction

In the previous chapters we have already described the nature of mentoring in cultural management and arts education as well as different tools and how mentoring can contribute to the formation of professional identity. We have also dealt with the key factors that are necessary for a mentoring relationship to succeed. However, what if the relationship is breaking down or if there is evidence of inappropriate behaviour? What are the boundaries? And what can we do to avoid such an outcome? In general, there should be a balance between transferring particular skills and ‘world skills (life wisdom)’. Mentoring is not only a one-way street but is also about empowerment and reciprocity. The mentor is sharing his or her experience with the mentee but can also learn from the mentee’s view of the world. This relationship takes place in an atmosphere of intimacy and can become very personal. However, there should always be a balance of power, and boundaries should be respected. Ethical behaviour and confidence is crucial. Therefore, we ask ourselves: To what extent is an ethical code necessary?

The ethical dimension of mentorship will therefore be the focus of this chapter. First, we will look at what ethics in the context of mentoring means. Why is it important and what are common ethical issues that can arise in a mentoring relationship? We will illustrate these ethical tensions by offering some fictional and some actual examples. In the second section we will briefly compare online and offline mentoring in terms of ethics which is explored further in the specific chapter on online mentorship in this book. Finally, we look at some tools for

coping with ethical dilemmas and reflect on the need for a separate ethical code as part of the governance process in cultural organisations.

### What do we understand by ethics in mentoring?

To understand what ethics in mentoring means, let us start with an example. As we have seen, mentoring is the process of helping another person in his or her personal and professional development. But what happens if a mentor leads their mentee down the wrong path? This can happen within different forms of mentorship (peer-to-peer, mentoring in the workplace). For example, Jenny recently started mentoring David, who is applying for a management position in a theatre company, where they both already work. Jenny is arrogant, and willing to do anything to get the job. She tells David that as a manager all he needs is strength and the ability to tell others what to do. David takes her advice and behaviour very seriously, so when he is interviewed for the job, he answers the way he thinks Jenny would. As a result, he doesn't get the job. Of course, although there may not have been any bad intentions from Jenny's side, her mentoring had negative consequences for him.

This leads us to the conclusion that mentoring relationships are complex, fluid and can also be dysfunctional in some ways. To quote Daniel Levinson (Levinson et al. 1978), "the mentor relationship is one of the most complex and developmentally important a person can have in early adulthood". But what makes this relationship so potentially dysfunctional? First and foremost, a mentoring relationship usually needs to be quite long in duration for it to be effective. But this also results in a relationship that, after a while, becomes automatically more reciprocal, bonded and intimate.

Mentoring by design also heavily relies on the chemistry between the mentor and the mentee. Even from the start, we could say this is a requirement for the relationship to go well. Therefore, matchmaking is such an important part of setting up a mentorship programme. But that can also become a problem of course: what if the relationship becomes something more than strictly professional? The mentor also acts from a position of power over the mentee, which can be problematic. Furthermore, mentor and mentee take up numerous overlapping roles throughout the process as their relationship is always evolving.

Of course, not all mentoring relationships are mutual and equal. One could say they all move on a continuum (Johnson 2014). On the one hand, we have lower degrees of mentoring where the relationship is more transactional, based on



a simple exchange of knowledge. On the other hand, we have relational mentoring where mentor and mentee are a lot more closely intertwined and the relationship can be transformational. However, given these different degrees of mentorship, there are also different risks involved.

Most research on this topic can be found in the context of psychology students entering mentoring relationships as well as mentorship in the academic world. The American Psychology Association (2002) identified the following most common ethical tensions. The first involves a lack of formality, which as we already discussed can evolve when a mentoring relationship starts out strictly professional and becomes more of a friendship or something else.

The second relates to the competences of the mentor. Not every person is as well equipped to be a mentor. Many features can be lacking. On a basic level, it can be the case that the mentor lacks the necessary skills, virtues, and traits to guide the mentee down the path he or she envisages. This can be about intellectual competences as well as emotional ones. Some people manifest low E.Q. or toxic personality features, which also does not make them suited for a mentor position.

Being a mentor also involves a wide range of competences. Johnson (2003) identified the following:

- Student development
- Relational phases
- Relationship structure
- Mentor functions
- Boundary maintenance
- Recognition of dysfunction
- Cross-Cultural skills
- Gatekeeping
- Respect for autonomy
- Self-awareness

A mentor needs to be **self-aware** about the values he or she is imposing on the mentee, and thus also needs the necessary **cross-cultural** skills. This is especially the case if we look at international mentoring relationships. In *Every Experience is a Moving Force: Identity and Growth Through Mentoring*, Kimberly A. Johnson (2003) describes her experience of mentoring within the field of teaching. She mentored a teacher-mentee from an Islamic background while she herself came from a white, non-religious background. During this men-

toring relationship, she kept a journal of her experiences. In the journal, she reflects how on a professional level she was able to mentor the teacher-mentee; however, there were cultural differences that made her reflect on her responses to the mentee in this situation and whether these stood in the way of a good mentor-mentee relationship. The article gives no concrete answers to this; however, it is interesting how such tensions are described and managed. Similar tensions can arise in cross-gender mentoring relationships.

Furthermore, a mentor also needs to be able to install boundaries in terms of timing but also emotional involvement. A mentor is not a therapist and vice versa. However, the same is true on the mentor side: he or she also needs to respect boundaries in terms of his relationship with the mentee. Mentors are often drawn to talented, motivated, articulated, and engaging students. It is therefore not particularly surprising that various degrees of emotional and romantic attraction sometimes enter the mentoring experience. Roles and boundaries are therefore extremely important. Especially within the context of the arts where mentees are often mesmerised by the status of their mentor. There is a duality and a risk involved in glorifying ‘the master’. The fragility of power relations within the cultural sector and the glorification of masters is maintained at a high level of competition within the cultural sector. Within the crafts there is also still a master-apprentice attitude. Mutual expectations are often not made explicit. This very much depends on the context.

Another mentoring competency involves intentionality with respect to forming and managing mentorships with students. According to Johnson (2003: 140), when forming a mentorship, mentors should give attention to the following:

- Matching – Are the participants well matched on important variables?
- Expectations – Is it clear what the mentee and mentor each hope to gain from the mentorship?
- Orientation – Does the mentee understand the mentoring concept, including the behaviours expected by the mentor?
- Frequency and duration – Is it clear to both parties how often and for what period the dyad is expected to meet?
- Goals – Have the mentor and mentee agreed upon both long- and short-term goals for the mentee’s development?
- Termination – Have the parties discussed an expected time frame for termination, and the possibility of a ‘no-fault’ termination before graduation, if either party requests this?
- Assessment – Has the mentor considered alternatives for the periodic review of the mentorship’s efficiency?

It is important to note, however, that all these competences are not necessarily static but can change over time. Someone can be a perfect mentor to one mentee, but not to another. The right match with a mentor depends also on the right timing. For example, compassion fatigue can occur when a mentor, due to circumstances in their own life or career, feels less empathic towards the mentee. Burnout can also come into play as well as other life tribulations, like illness or cognitive decline as, for example, a mentor gets older.

Returning to **other ethical tensions**, another may be the tension between advocacy and evaluation. Mentors often become the mentees strongest supporters, as they guide them in their professional career and give them feedback on their work and choices. However, in many mentoring programmes, at some point the mentor must also evaluate the mentee's work. This, for example, can be the case in a university context. A good example comes from our own programme at the University of Antwerp, where students do an internship during their Cultural Management master's programme. For 3 to 6 months, they conduct management research within a company while also getting on the floor with experience of what it is like to work within a cultural organization. At the end of the internship, the mentor – who is the person within the cultural organization who is guiding the student – also needs to evaluate the student on his or her progress regarding certain skills, such as social skills, communication skills, professional skills, teamwork etc. This very often results in very positive scores because mentor and mentee have been working so closely. Or sometimes it is the other way around: if the working relationship was not ideal, this is often reflected in the grades. Therefore, the grades are not only given by the mentor but also by the supervisor in order to balance the score. A self-evaluation report from the student is also taken into account for the final grading.

Through a focus group with programme directors and mentoring coaches at art schools we could also observe problems in the way in which feedback is sometimes given in mentoring relationships in arts institutions. In the performing arts, for example, some schools still use the methodology of breaking down their personality in order to build a new artistic and professional identity. Successful mentorship, however, focuses on a balance of power and how the expectations between the two parties are communicated and aligned.

Finally, we also want to discuss the concept of **cloning**. Good mentoring involves a process of apprenticeship, in which the mentor trains and prepares the mentee to successfully pursue a career trajectory often very much like that of the mentor. That is usually also the reason why there is a good match between the two parties. However, this can lead to the mentor leading the mentee down

the same path he or she took in the past instead of guiding the mentee away from making the same mistakes. This may not always be in the best interests of the mentee, as both remain different people and what was a good decision for one person, isn't necessarily a good decision for the other. The context can also be very different.

This can also create potential future problems because if the mentor leads the mentee down the same path, mentees can also become a potential competitor for the mentor. This is especially the case in an artistic environment. This concept of cloning may therefore have a backwards effect, where the mentor limits the progress of the student to secure their own position instead of helping him or her to grow.

In summary, what are the potential traps for the mentor?<sup>7</sup>

- Being too dominant, always knowing best.
- Solving problems and saving the mentee instead of cultivating the independence of the mentee.
- Taking too much responsibility for the well-being and performance of the mentee.
- Crossing the line between mentoring and therapy.
- Taking the bad performance of the mentee personally, showing disappointment or anger from too much personal involvement.
- Being too personal, sharing his or her problems with the mentee and seeking advice.
- Getting too involved in the personal problems of the mentee.
- Falling in love with the mentee.
- Showing jealousy when their mentee outshines them.
- Always giving the mentee high grades, and favouring him or her.
- Being narcissistic or having another personality that makes him or her unfit to understand or be considerate of the needs of the mentee.

Similarly, what are the traps for the mentee?<sup>6</sup>

- Seeing the mentor as a guru or master who has all the right answers.
- Being overly dependent on the mentor, needing micromanagement.
- Needing to please the mentor, being afraid of letting him or her down.
- Being afraid of disagreeing with the mentor or asking advice from other teachers.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: <http://www.musicmaster.eu/ethics-and-mentoring>

- Being in a passive role of receiving wisdom from the mentor and not taking responsibility for his or her development.
- Falling in love with the mentor.
- Seeing the mentor as a therapist and wanting him or her to solve personal problems.

### Ethical behaviour in online mentoring relationships

As we have seen in the chapter on online mentoring (Chapter 2.4), the internet provides another medium for interpersonal communication and information exchange that has the potential for delivering forms of career counselling and mentoring services. The challenge lies in discovering what type of services are appropriate and in delineating the potential advantages and limitations inherent to this communication format.

Online mentoring may have the potential to relieve some of the ethical tensions explained above, however, it can also bring others to the fore. There are some basic requirements for online mentoring to succeed (Pateli 2009):

- Reliability and validity of the service: The platform that is used must be reliable for both the mentor and mentee.
- Mentee-oriented interface design: The design of the platform must be fitting for mentoring relationships.
- Computer literacy of the mentor/mentee: The mentor and mentee need to be sufficiently familiar with digital means for the mentoring relationship to not be impacted by potential technical difficulties.
- Intimacy of online communication
- Equity of access: Not everyone has the same access to online media in all areas.
- Confidentiality and privacy: Since mentoring relationships rely on confidentiality, the platform must also be able to secure this.

Studies have shown (Boyle, Single & Boyle 2005) that the benefits associated with e-mentoring very often mirrored the benefits associated with mentoring: informational, psychosocial, and instrumental. In addition, research also supports some additional benefits of e-mentoring: the value of impartiality and inter-organizational connections, which are facilitated using electronic communications.

In an e-mentoring environment, therefore, the issue of partiality is (partly) erased (Rowland 2011). Hamilton and Scandura (2002) suggest that “e-mentoring can provide options that counteract these effects and improve the situation by allowing protégés **access to a larger, more diverse pool** of mentors. Further, the virtual nature of e-mentoring does not rely on visual cues or proximity for the relationship to succeed” (388). Facilitating this type of mentoring, especially if limited to the written word can also foster relationships that will create the absence of partiality, gender, and ethnicity issues that can often occur in informal or formal traditional mentoring programmes.

However, on the flip side, trust and communication are vital elements within a virtual environment and would need to be obtained in an e-mentoring setting. This is often more difficult than in a face-to face setting, especially if the online mentoring is limited to email. Communications can become strained in an online mentoring relationship, especially if the interactions are brief or irregular. It also lacks or diminishes the nonverbal cues (body language) which can lead to the slower building of trust. Leck and Wood (2013) state that in order to establish trust in e-mentoring, certain factors such as ability, benevolence, and integrity must be perceived by the mentee. Other hypotheses that contribute to building trust in online mentoring include how often communication takes place, how appealing the online content is, the types of tools used for e-mentoring, the level of personal information shared, feedback from others, and gender. These hypotheses are based on previous research on online trust.

### Tools to cope with ethical issues

The mentoring relationship, whether acting as a mentor or a mentee, can thus come with a number of issues or dilemmas. Often, there are no easy or obvious solutions and there may be no clear-cut sense of right or wrong. Some simple guidelines can highlight a set of behaviours which might impact the mentoring relationship or, indeed, when using mentoring or coaching techniques in other situations. Below we try to suggest some guidelines and the possibility of developing an ethical code for mentoring. Of course, we are aware that the chapter here is written from a mostly Western perspective. Hence, it is desirable to adapt the recommendations and terminology below to the specific context.

Above all, the suggestions made below aim to be a tool for discussion and reflection, a manual, a guideline, a means of preventing bad practices and conflict, and a means for resolving impasses.

A basic code, therefore, could be based on the following principles:

- **Responsibility:** Both mentor and the mentee must be aware that their behaviour has the potential to negatively affect the mentoring relationship.
- **Confidentiality** of the mentoring conversation: Both the mentor and the mentee have great responsibility to maintain and respect the confidentiality of the mentoring relationship, as they may hear sensitive and personal information. However, if such information is dangerous or illegal, an appropriate approach for the mentor is to encourage the mentee to take appropriate action themselves. If he or she does not do that, there should be the availability for the mentee to speak confidentially to someone within an organization that is especially appointed for that.
- **Boundary management and roles:** Those working in a mentoring relationship may develop friendships over time. It is important to have a clear mentoring relationship and not allow personal relations to become more important than the professional. A clear understanding can also be formalised in the form of a contract. This can include clarity over the length and frequency of the sessions, agreement on whether it is permissible or not to make contact via email, telephone or text concerning mentoring issues between the main mentoring sessions, defining who is responsible for finding a suitable location for the mentoring session etc.
- **Competences:** Mentors need to be conscious of their own levels of mentoring competence and experience and to never overstate them. Based on the case study by Kimberly Johnson (2003), an appropriate approach for mentors might be to use a journal or a similar approach to reflect on their own competences. Mentors should also refer mentees to other more appropriate partners if they do not feel equipped to continue the mentoring relationship or the conversations start to take on more the form of counselling.
- Dealing with **self-distractions:** Mentors need to recognise that bias, pre-conceived ideas, initial impressions, opinions, and stereotypes can all influence the ability to pay full attention and be present and focused on those being mentored.

We see these same principles also in existing codes that have already been developed (APA 2002, Johnson 2014), such as:

- **Beneficence.** Promote the best interests of your mentee whenever possible.
- **Nonmaleficence.** Avoid harm to mentees (neglect, abandonment, exploitation, boundary violations).

- **Autonomy.** Work to strengthen the mentee's independence and maturity.
- **Fidelity.** Keep promises and remain loyal to the mentee.
- **Justice.** Ensure fair and equitable treatment of all mentees (regardless of cultural differences).
- **Transparency.** Encourage transparency and open communication regarding expectations.
- **Boundaries.** Avoid potentially harmful multiple roles with mentees and discuss overlapping roles to minimise the risk of exploitation or bad outcomes.
- **Privacy.** Protect information shared in confidence by a mentee and discuss all exceptions to privacy.
- **Competent.** Establish and continue developing competences.

However, as these studies also conclude, a generalised ethical code cannot guarantee a solution for every ethical issue that may arise in the mentoring situation. An ethical code is meant to serve as a guideline.

The #metoo movement has shed light on how widespread and deeply rooted the problem of sexual harassment and misconduct is at all levels of our society and within many professional fields, especially in the cultural sector. Within the film and music industry, in politics, the field of media, healthcare and education, many stories of the abuse of power have surfaced. More and more cultural organisations and educational institutions are aware of the issue and are introducing a code of conduct. Until now less attention has been given to the ethical dimension of mentoring as part of the overall governance of the organisation. However, this is an important step forward in preventing unethical and unacceptable behaviour and to empower the mentees in the future.



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## 2.7 Mentorship for the Transmodern World: Towards a Transformative Mentoring Relationship

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### Abstract

This chapter is presented in three parts. First, we outline the current emerging understandings of transmodernism and offer a framework for understanding and engaging with mentorship from that perspective. Second, focusing on the role of mentor and mentee, we present perspectives that may serve to create greater comprehension and preparation for entering a mentoring relationship mindfully and conscientiously. Lastly, a handful of common challenges in mentor/mentee relationships are presented and addressed through the lens of the transmodern paradigm to help mentors navigate potential pitfalls and weak points in establishing and co-constructing mentoring relationships.

*“You cannot transit wisdom and insight to another person. The seed is already there. A good mentor touches the seed, allowing it to wake up, to sprout, and to grow.”*

Thich Nhat Hanh

### Defining transmodernism

Western society has steadily been transitioning to the period of transmodernity. As a movement, transmodernism emphasises (among others) spirituality, ecology and transpersonal psychology. And “...while many different labels and models exist to describe the global shift in culture, consciousness, society, economics, politics, and human relations, they all similarly point to the same intuitive aspirations for inclusivity, diversity, partnership, sacredness and quality of life, deep play, sustainability, universal human rights, the rights of nature and peace on Earth.” (Ateljevic 2013: 21)

The spirit of this transmodern mentality as we call it and the culture that we believe is yet to come can be described through various terms. Among them

are the following: a spirit of hopefulness (Eisler 2002), a desire for wisdom, a concern with transcendent and spiritual exploration, a rediscovery of the importance of truth, beauty, goodness and harmony, a concern with simplicity, and the quest for a mature and balanced understanding of experience. Not so much a spirit of new theories or ideologies, but of an integration of existing valid intellectual approaches, including those from pre-modern traditions, a mentality of synthesis. Rifkin (2005) states that “(...)transmodernism is critical of modernism and postmodernism while at the same time drawing elements from each. In a way it is a return to some form of absolute ‘logic’ that goes beyond the Western ideology and tries to connect the human race to a new shared story, which can be called a global relational consciousness.”

Pragmatically, transmodernism is influenced by numerous philosophical ideas. Its emphasis on spirituality is influenced by the mystical traditions and transcendentalism. It places an emphasis on xenophily and globalism, promoting the importance of different cultures and cultural appreciation. It seeks a worldview on cultural affairs that is anti-Eurocentric and anti-imperialist. Sustainability and ecology are important aspects of the transmodern movement. It embraces environmental protection and stresses the importance of building communities. It accepts technological change, yet only when its aim is supportive of life, human as well as non-human. It takes strong stances on feminism, health care, family life and relationships. In the context of education, transmodernism enhances the knowledge economy by shifting the emphasis from material capital to less tangible assets of human capital (Elliot, Cavazos 2021). It also introduces the notion of ‘democratic educators’ and a pedagogy of hope (Eisler, 2002), urging educators to resist oppressive structures by exposing their dehumanisation, and to embrace instead values that motivate progressive social change – spirit, struggle, service, love, and shared learning (Ateljevic 2013: 20).

“(Transmodernism)...not only seeks to examine the world as it is, but to reflect on the world as we make it, proactively searching for strategies and practices to legitimise professional, emotional and spiritual responsibilities to those with whom and for whom we co-create knowledge, to students and also to ourselves.” (Ateljevic 2013: 21)

Given this time of rapid and emergent changes and the new realities of the transmodern world, we need structures that are relevant and able to assist us in navigating these changes. This is why we see the mentorship practice as a potentially rich and fertile ground to further cultivate transmodern paradigms. For this to happen, mentorship ought to be reflected from a new perspective,

one based in co-constructed relationships that are more clearly aligned with this new reality.

The traditional paradigm of mentorship seeks to carry a mentee into established sociocultural narratives (Roberts 2000). Assuming the role of mentor and mentee comes with pre-existing expectations and understandings about these roles that are central to traditional mentorship practices. Predominantly, mentorship relationships are driven by the needs of the mentees, creating a hierarchical and unidirectional relational dynamic, wherein mentors are expected to do all the teaching and mentees do all the learning. Unfortunately, this omits a critical and equally important element of the mentor-mentee relationship: the mentor's learning journey and the mentee's identity as a mentor-to-be (see also reverse mentoring in Chapter 1.1).

Mentoring is by nature mutual and requires the efforts and dedication of mentor and mentee to be successful. Mentoring relationships may be spontaneous or naturally occurring, they may also be planned and purposefully orchestrated (Damaskos & Gardner 2015). In any case, mentoring represents a relationship with implications for professional development and training. Still, it is not simply the student who engages and profits. As mentors assist their mentee in learning practice-oriented skills, dealing with emotional and psychological distress, and navigating the job market, they too stand to reap material, psychological and emotional gains. Mentoring professionals constantly reflect on their own practice and feel reinvigorated in their work and the advancement of the field (McLaughlin & Grantz 2012). Mentors invest in their students in a holistic manner, building a relationship of networking, teaching and encouragement, as well as providing all-encompassing support, empowerment and resources (Barnett et al. 2001, McLaughlin & Grantz 2012).

The conservative model of mentorship, which emphasises a master-apprentice dynamic, is a process of learning and reifying what has been done before so it may be repeated, improved upon and adapted (Roberts 2000). Such practices may stifle innovation and outside-the-box thinking at a time when they are needed to meaningfully address any number of critical ails experienced in the world today. Beyond the threads of conservative approaches to mentoring, mentorship programmes as systems, especially those situated in higher education institutions, frequently fall victim to a neoliberal agenda that favours an instrumental approach to education (Ergas 2017) with an overemphasis on attainment and dualistic thinking (Nhât Hanh & Weare 2017). With the emergence of transmodernism, we hope that this ever-present itch for task-orientation, accountability and measurement can finally be addressed.

Since transmodernity not only seeks to examine the world as it is, but to reflect on the world as we make it, proactively searching for strategies and practices to legitimise professional, emotional and spiritual responsibilities for those with whom and for whom we co-create knowledge, for students and also for ourselves (Cole 2005), it fosters opportunities for mentor and mentee relationships to be mindfully concentrated so that the relationship is not only one dimensional, not dyadic but triadic (mentor, mentee and the realities those two are embedded in, be it professional, community, or private ).

Thankfully, modern approaches to mentorship have opened up this conservative conception, allowing space for the mentorship relationship to be co-created by both parties, while acknowledging and harnessing mutual benefits for both mentor and mentee.

In the light of the transmodern paradigm, it is worth questioning the implicit and explicit function of a mentor-mentee relationship as dictated by social constructivism and commonly understood roles. According to Ateljevic (2011), “transmodernity also moves away from vertical authority toward ‘flatter’, more ‘horizontal’ organizations (...) It downsizes the concept of experts in order to raise the self-awareness, self-knowledge and individual accountability of all.” This is particularly important in the context of the mentorship relationship that could possibly adopt a non-hierarchical and synergetic structure for that relationship.

At this point we could ask the question: Is the sole purpose of a mentor-mentee relationship to assist a lesser positioned student in gaining professional and social capital? Is professional success the end goal? How might this relationship help both parties become better humans? It is these questions and more that we seek to address in the following pages.

As mentioned before, mentorship can serve as a means of developing a mentee into greater stations of professional success. However, if this is our primary understanding of the intent and goal of the mentor-mentee relationship, and the essential metric by which we judge its success or failure, it is our position that we have touched upon a mere fraction of the available potential of that relationship. Furthermore, we may be doing more harm than good by promulgating an ethos of positioning career advancement above relational depth, social and environmental responsibility, and personal spiritual, emotional and mental enrichment. Put another way, the intangible and soft returns of a transmodern mentor-mentee relationship have the potential to far outweigh the tangible and hard outcomes of a more traditional mentor-mentee relation-

ship model. The unidirectionality of traditional mentorship models, however, inhibit, if not prohibit, this greater transformative process. Hence, aiming for understanding and approaching the mentorship relationship as bidirectional, dyadic and established by two individuals with consequences and rewards for both (Hernandez, Estrada, Woodcock & Schultz 2017, Leidenfrost, Strassnig, Schutz, Carbon & Schabmann 2014, Mullen 1994), both mentor and mentee are able to freely occupy the positions of activating or restraining, engage in authentic dialogue to achieve reconciliation, and ultimately synthesise the experience as innovation.

Within the transmodern paradigm the nature and scope of the relationship between mentor and mentee, which we aim to introduce here, has the potential to be more life-affirming and widely impactful than mere gains in the professional and market realm. We argue that mentoring relationships cultivated mindfully and consciously have the potential to influence individuals in more holistic ways, such that further interactions and relationships beyond that of the mentor-mentee relationship can be more fulfilling, transformative, and ultimately more life-affirming. Simply put, there is a power in establishing lasting relationships between two professionals that can be transformative not only for those two individuals but for the communities in which they are embedded.

We propose that a new way of looking at mentorship through the lens of the emergent transmodern paradigm may be founded first and foremost in a spirit of exploration and curiosity – a sense that neither mentor nor mentee may know what will come fully from their relationship. Hence, transmodern mentorship aligns itself with mystery, a sense of the numinous, exploration and a potential that is greater than the sum of its parts.

### Transmodern mentoring

There is much discussion in the mentoring literature about the various conditions and factors that must exist in order to achieve successful mentoring outcomes (Grover & Furnham 2016, Nieuwerburgh 2014). However, it appears that the discussion on the degree and extent to which a mentor knows themselves and the potential impact this self-knowledge has on the mentee has been limited. Even in this volume it can be noticed that there is an extensive emphasis on the journey of the students and their readiness for the mentorship relationship and the mentor's internal processes are not so well outlined. Nevertheless, mentors seldom investigate their own inner landscape and per-

sonal orientation towards the relationship and often are unaware of their own constraints and how these constraints may impact their mentees. Conversely, others have engaged in self-observation or creative approaches to remove barriers and support the “unlocking of a person’s potential, or trigger for ‘A-ha! moments” (Gormley and Van Nieuwerburgh 2014:120). As mentors assist their mentee, in learning, dealing with emotional and psychological distress, and navigating the professional ecosystem, they too stand to reap material, psychological and emotional gains but are also subject to pitfalls. Mentoring professionals should reflect on their own practice to approach it with more consciousness and find ways to feel reinvigorated in their work and the advancement of the field (McLaughlin & Grantz 2012).

Understanding how a mentor’s self-awareness supports the mentee’s insights could possibly contribute to understanding how to achieve successful mentoring outcomes. Building an understanding of the impact of the mentor’s knowledge and experience of themselves adds to both mentoring literature and possibly to the training of future mentors.

Careful analysis of mentoring literature reveals a number of different functions of mentors in the learning processes of mentees. One of the prevailing functions is facilitating insights into the world of their given profession (Sarabipour et al. 2021).

However, little is discussed about the occurrence of such insights and what those insights actually are. With little research into the phenomenon, the study of insights has devolved into a rational endeavour, reducing insights to a cognitive process that overlooks the possibility of transcendental modes of knowing.

Because in this chapter we try to present an alternative to existing mentoring practices, following the paradigm of transmodernity we propose a perspective from the lens of transpersonal psychology.

The philosophers Schelling and Hegel both expressed that in order to understand that mind and nature are merely two distinct modalities of one absolute spirit, a spirit that shows itself in its own progressive stages of unfolding, we must go beyond reason (Wilber, 2000). Following this line of thought, insight is considered to originate from sources other than the self, including unity awareness, the non-dual tradition, something that transcends thought, and the transpersonal (Wilber, 2006). These philosophers and scholars see a strong connection between Eastern traditions, spirituality, and transcendental modes of knowing, as well as the importance of consciousness, awareness, and insight.

Derived from the Buddhist tradition, mindfulness engages the position of being open, receptive, and present as a way of being (Keng et al. 2011). Psychiatrist Daniel Siegel (2010) defines this state as ‘mindsight’ – “focused attention that allows one to see the internal workings of one’s own mind.” He further explains that presence allows people to shift to a place of their choosing. When awareness shifts from the internal to the external world, it enables the exploration of possibility that may facilitate an environment for insights to emerge (Siegel, 2010).

There are a number of ways in which a mentor can be present in the emerging relationship. In transpersonal psychology, being present is expressed as a notion of the ‘held space’. Dangeli and Geldenhuys (2018) say that the ‘held space’ includes “energetic resonance and rapport, a participatory perspective, mindfulness, intentionally cultivated attitudes of acceptance, compassion and interconnectedness, and induction of a state of awareness of wider perspective and receptivity”. As for now, the dialogical approach prevails in the mentor-mentee relationship (Perunka, Erkkilä 2012). Schooler et al. (1993) investigated how language overshadows insight and discovered that verbalisation can disrupt inchoate processes that are fundamental to achieving insight. Scholars have previously suggested that creative thoughts, particularly insights, are distinct from language processes.

Longhurst (2006) and Pert (1997) believe that the unconscious mind, which is necessary for achieving insight, is accessed through the body, expressing the body’s role as an agent for insight. Perhaps then we mentors could, beyond traditional word-based interactions, look into elements of building relationships based on somatic and body-based interventions. Some supporting behaviours could include (but are not limited to):

### **Helping Your Mentee Feel Grounded**

Ask yourself:

- What do I bring to this situation from my personal history and current experiences?
- How does the mentee perceive me?
- What else might be going on in the environment around that is influencing the situation?
- What does the nature of interaction tell us about a mentee’s needs or skills that need to be developed?



**Take care to:**

- Be flexible in responding.
- Adjust interaction based on the mentee's needs.
- Be aware of mentee's perception of your voice/presence/interactions.
- Know what you are bringing to the situation.
- Be a calm, attentive presence.

## Aspects of transmodern mentoring

We can't possibly know how to respond in every situation, especially if they are complex. Our comprehension of any situation is limited by our previous experience and the extent to which we apprehend what is occurring or being transmitted to us (Berger and Luckmann 1967). Therefore, being open, receptive, and present in a complex and unfamiliar situation requires a different quality of attention than mere cognition (Holleman et al. 2020). Techniques for facilitating a space for processes to be co-constructed, to unfold more freely, are largely present in transpersonal psychology (psychotherapy) as well as positive psychology. One such technique is known as Open Awareness and is a critical component of 'holding the space' (Dangeli 2015).

'Holding space' refers to a primarily metaphorical container that is co-constructed between two (or more) individuals. It has been adopted as a useful term across practitioners of transpersonal (but not only) healing and caring professions (Powietrzynska 2021). Despite the popularity of this term, its exact meaning remains anecdotal and somewhat vague, creating difficulties for academic inquiry and leaving the whole concept fairly elusive. The held space is a co-constructed medium in which the relationship – in this case, between a mentor and mentee – occurs and facilitates exploration, discovery, and the gaining of insights. That (held) space includes rapport<sup>8</sup> and mutual resonance (Bandler & Grinder 1976, Siegel 2013), a participatory perspective (Ferrer & Sherman 2011), mindfulness (Siegel 2010) and intentional attitudes such as unconditional acceptance and beneficence (Watson 2004). "In resonance we open ourselves to the adventure of connecting two as part of one dynamic whole by tuning in to others (Siegel 2010: 55)." Mindfulness of what is going on inside both the mentor and mentee, and in the co-created space between them may mean the difference between a random, chaotic, or perplexing outcome from a mentoring session and a more guided, applied, and beneficial one.

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<sup>8</sup> Rapport could be considered an unconscious empathetic relationship and the ability to relate to others in a way that creates trust and understanding (Overdurf & Silverthorn, 1995).

Another concept that seems useful to the notion of transmodern mentoring is Open Awareness – a calm and receptive state of applied mindful awareness with aspects of introspective, extrospective and somatic awareness, accompanied by a sense of interconnectedness, compassion and a presence in the space-in-between (Dangeli 2015). Open Awareness is the conscious observation of one’s thoughts, feelings, judgements, preferences, and sensorial experiences in the present moment by widening the aperture of one’s awareness. Open Awareness involves becoming attentive to the energetic and relational links between oneself, others and the environment, in addition to detecting the subtleties of one’s interior experience. Individuals feel varied degrees of expansiveness and connectivity as a result of disidentification from their limiting self-concepts. Open Awareness is more than a technique; it is a natural state of being that may be purposefully fostered.

Open Awareness is a distinct state of awareness characterised by Dangeli (2015) as:

- A mindful mode of perception.
- A calm and receptive emotional and mental state.
- Metacognitive introspective awareness in which the mind can observe its own state and activities – an awareness of the mind itself.
- Extrospective awareness – heightened sensory and somatic perceptions.
- A reframing of one’s current experience of oneself, placing perceived phenomena within one’s frame of reference (as opposed to these being experienced outside of oneself) leading to a sense of interconnection and compassion.
- Balance and adaptation between conscious focused attention and peripheral sensory awareness.
- A flexible, fluid and dynamic state, enabling one to access a variety of channels of perception through intent and appropriateness to the current context.

Although Open Awareness is not a meditation technique per se, it shares properties of awareness and attention with various forms of mindfulness meditation (Lippelt et al. 2014).

“Holding Space and Open Awareness” are merely examples of tools that can come in handy in the process of co-creating a mentorship intervention by both the mentor and mentee. Both of these tools share mindfulness as a backbone, which allow mentor and mentee alike to enter the relationship with presence. It

allows mentors to deepen their self-awareness in the very moment of the process while at the same time prepare a fertile and safe ground for the mentee to participate in the mentoring co-constructing process.

## Elements of transmodern mentorship

Recognition of the potentially divergent and equally valid contribution of each individual in a mentorship relationship seems crucial to maximising the positive impact of the relationship. The challenge then is how to ensure that the mentor and mentee constructions of mentorship cooperate with each other.

In order to create the conditions for transmodern mentorship to thrive, we offer ways for both mentors and mentees to consider. We identified four important (but by no means exhaustive) elements of mentorship offering insights from a transmodern perspective. At the same time, in review of some of the extensive writing on common challenges experienced in mentor-mentee relationships, we have identified common but sometimes hidden challenges in mentor-mentee relationships that could put constraints on the quality of those relationships. With the section below we aim to provide some gentle guidance through those common challenges while, in the spirit of transmodern mentorship, posing questions to consider as a means of inviting readers into the transmodern perspective. Issues tackled in this section are also more broadly discussed in the chapter “Diversity, Equality and Inclusion” in this volume.

### 1. Engagement and Expectations

In the case of both mentor and mentee, a frequently cited challenge was that of misaligned engagement. For example, a mentor may be more preoccupied with their own personal and professional life to adequately engage with a mentee. Mentees may experience a similar degree of preoccupation. It seems, however, an underlying factor for both parties may be an inability to connect with a sufficiently compelling reason to engage more fully. In other instances, “mentors identified that difficulties arise in the relationship when the mentee is not open to receiving mentorship” (Barrett, Mazerolle, Nottingham 2017: 158), and further “...the case with our population [w]as mentees’ resistance or lack of initiative and mentors’ time commitment were the 2 biggest challenges identified” (Barrett, Mazerolle, Nottingham, 2017: 160).

Time constraints and preoccupation with private life are all too well known to almost every one of us. Personal and professional lives can and will remain

full; yet, when one is able to clearly identify with a purpose an avenue of service and have a sense of how the relationship is mutually beneficial, the likelihood of enthusiastic engagement increases. Put more plainly, when the ‘why’ of the relationship is personally and collectively understood and explored, the value of it increases. The identification of the ‘why’ could be the starting point of the mutual relationship and the first co-creational exercise that also opens up both mentor and mentee to experiences of each other.

## 2. Power

Power dynamics within a mentor-mentee relationship play an inevitable and profound role. Unfortunately, its prominence lends itself to potentially dysfunctional and even harmful outcomes. Beyond obvious visible power, this also includes the lack of awareness regarding the impact of one’s privilege (or lack thereof) and sociocultural location (Bourdieu, Wacquant 1992). Scandura (1998: 455) describes how the “stereotypical tyrannical mentor who must have everything his or her way is described by Myers and Humphreys (1985) as the type of mentor that is exploitative and/or egocentric. Here, the power differential between the mentor and protégé is consciously reinforced by the behaviour of the mentor”.

In the absence of the possibility of a truly egalitarian or equilateral relationship, perhaps power dynamics made explicit and conscientious are the next best thing. What might that look like? Open dialogue about what a mentee is hoping to receive, what their expectations may be, what their assumptions may be. An awareness of the inherent power dynamic of the relationship paired with a willingness to create a horizontal relation is paramount. This means that there is consistent attentiveness to how the relationship can be reciprocal. What can both mentor and mentee learn from the relationship? When the power dynamic presents itself, what degree of awareness is there of its expressions and impacts? Here, vulnerability becomes a means of breaking down barriers of power and creating more relational equality. A power with horizontal rather than vertical orientation.

So, how can we handle these mentoring relationship concerns? First and foremost, trust is essential for successful mentoring, especially in cross-gender and cross-cultural partnerships. Mentors must recognise their authority as mentors and be mindful of their mentees’ vulnerability as a result of this power imbalance. They must also acknowledge the confidence that mentees place in them for guidance and assistance. Mentors and mentees must openly and honestly acknowledge biases – racial, gender, or other stereotyped notions – held by

mentors, mentees, but also the organisation (HEI). These notions may appear to be intangible to the relationship, both internal and external, but they have a direct influence on the quality of the support and assistance provided to the mentees (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero 2002).

Another potential outcome of unexamined power dynamics is the submissiveness of mentees as a strategy to curry favour with their mentors. This is described as a form of benevolent deception (Scandura 2016), a means of shaping oneself to the projected or explicitly stated tastes and expectations of the mentor: "...mentor-protégé relationships imply an imbalance in power, and some proteges may offer submissive behaviour in exchange for relationship and organizational rewards mediated by more powerful mentors" (Scandura 2016). Unfortunately, what is lost in this dynamic is a healthy expression of agency on the part of the mentee and an opportunity for more reflective and critical engagement for both parties. The avoidance of contentious topics or areas of conflict render the relationship essentially neutered, devoid of authentic engagement, and missing opportunities for greater mutual growth and exploration.

What is more, a mentee who has adopted this more passive relational approach with their mentors will be less likely to address concerns in the relationship and bring attention to ways in which it might better serve them.

### 3. Humility

The mentor does not have, nor should they have, all the answers. The ability to say, "I don't know but let's find out together" or direct the mentee to where the answers may be found, is paramount. This willingness links back to the reciprocal nature of the relationship – there is learning for the mentor to engage in as well. Service, too, connects to humility. This is not about the ego or personality of the mentor. Ideally these are kept in check, which requires a developed sense of self-awareness. In the case of culturally or socially diverse mentorship relationships, there is an opportunity to employ a more specific cultural humility. At base, cultural humility means opening up a conversation in a way that genuinely attempts to understand a person's identities related to race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, social needs, and others. An awareness of the self is central to the notion of cultural humility – who a person is informs how they see another. Awareness may stem from self-reflective questions such as:

- Which parts of my identity am I aware of? Which are most salient?
- Which parts of my identity are privileged and/or marginalised?

- How does my sense of identity shift, based on context and settings?
- What are the parts onto which people project? And which parts are received well, by whom?
- What might be my own blind spots and biases?

With this understanding, a mentor can raise questions regarding how the mentee is received: Who is this person, and how can I make sense of them? What do I know and understand about their culture or background? What ideas and feelings do I have towards them?

At its core, cultural humility entails engaging in a discussion that truly seeks to understand a person's identities relating to race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, social needs, and other aspects. Cultural humility is founded on the realisation of one's own identity, which impacts how one views others. It is possible that awareness will emerge as a result of self-reflective questions, such as: What components of my identity am I aware of? Which ones are the most noticeable?

#### **4. Service**

Mentorship is fundamentally about service. How can the mentor be fully in service to the growth and development of the mentee? This means addressing expectations, hopes, goals, growth, and proclivities at the onset of the relationship, and continuing to be in dialogue as the relationship progresses. How does the mentee best receive and integrate information? It may not be through a traditional didactic method. Other means may be more useful. Furthermore, in what ways is the mentor served in the relationship?

Service also links directly to the relevance of the mentorship processes. How is the service offered relevant to not just the mentee, but the struggles and challenges of the communities of which we are a part? The mentor-mentee relationship managed with transmodern awareness could help to clarify and strengthen this connection.

## Conclusions

Mentorship is a powerful tool for personal and professional development. By combining traditional mentorship strategies with principles of transmodernism, mentors and mentees can create relationships that are rooted in mutual respect and understanding. The transmodernism perspective on mentorship relationships encourages mentors and mentees to look beyond the surface level, to explore the depths of their shared experiences, and to create meaningful connections that have the potential to have a lasting and positive impact on their lives. This, however, requires a shift in our approach to mentoring relationships and mentorship programmes. By embracing the principles of transmodernism, such as a flat hierarchy, sustainability, and transpersonal psychology, mentors and mentees as well as mentorship programme managers can foster relationships that are more meaningful, impactful and lasting. Transmodern mentorship can lead to greater engagement, collaboration and understanding between the people involved while also allowing space for self-exploration and growth. Mentorship can be a powerful tool that can transform lives and create meaningful change, and a transmodern approach to mentoring can help us unlock its full potential.

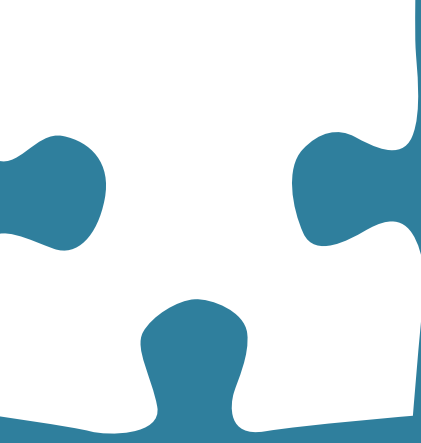
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**Part III.**  
**Conclusion**

## 3.1 Summary

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This volume presents a three-year-long process of work by researchers and practitioners in the cultural management field trying to define and understand in-depth the processes that occur before, during and after the mentoring relationship in the context and scope of the creative sector. Owing to the diversity of the members of this research consortium, the outcomes here represent different perspectives and experiences of mentorship, giving the reader an opportunity to look at these complex and rich processes from different, sometimes non-traditional angles (see Figure 1 for illustration).

However, as rich and diverse as these experiences and perspectives are, we were able to identify common axes that occur in most mentorship relationships and that could serve as guiding points in how organise or enter an individual into a mentorship relationship in the CCI. These axes are presented below (Figure 1):

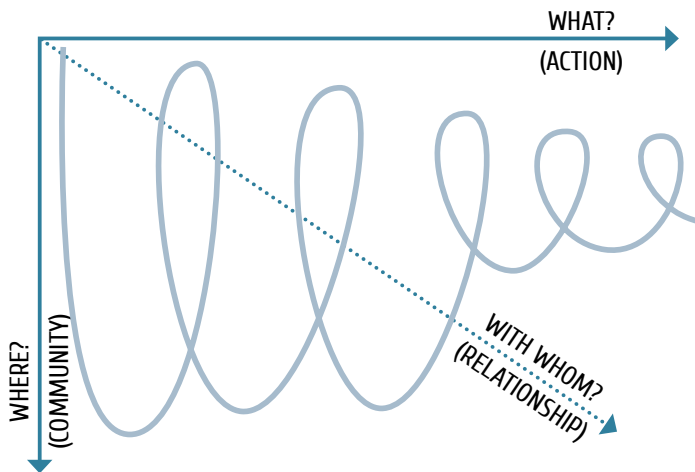


Figure 1. Common axes that occur in most mentorship relationships.

### The phenomenon of mentorship

#### What?

Mentoring is a two-way interactive process of exchanging knowledge, resources, perspectives and experience between a more experienced professional – the mentor – and often but not always a less experienced professional – the

mentee. Mentoring relationships can be spontaneous or arise organically, but they can also be planned and carefully organised (Damaskos & Gardner 2015). Mentoring in any scenario is a connection with significance for professional growth and training. However, it is not only the student that engages and gains. Mentors likewise benefit professionally, psychologically and emotionally, as they support their mentees in developing practice-oriented skills, dealing with emotional and psychological distress, and navigating the job market. Mentoring professionals are, similar to mentees, continually reflecting on their own practice in order to be updated about their job and the growth of the industry (McLaughlin & Grantz 2012). Mentoring encourages growth and motivation, improves productivity and engagement, facilitates connection between mentees and mentors, strengthens the community, helps expand the network of professional contacts, creates opportunities for cooperation and the exchange of ideas and contributes to strengthening self-confidence. In this way, mentoring also strongly influences and helps to build the professional identity of the mentee, and the mentors themselves. The mutuality of the mentor-mentee relationship, also known as reverse mentoring, is also discussed in chapters 1.1, 2.2 and 2.7.

## The mentoring relationship

### With whom?

The mentor and mentee co-construct their relationship together, including principles of conduct (respect, confidentiality, ways of communicating, regularity of meetings, readiness to step out of the comfort zone, etc). A new way of looking at mentorship can be founded first and foremost on a spirit of exploration and curiosity – a sense that neither mentor nor mentee may know what will come fully from their relationship.

The preconditions for a successful mentoring relationship include (but are not limited to): trust, respect, honesty and openness, vulnerability and a desire to learn and develop. We observed that in order for a mentoring relationship to function well, it is important to set expectations early in the mentoring process, define the mentee's needs (developmental direction and/or goals), find the right mentor (the matching process is highly important), agree on the mentor and mentee roles, create a container where the interaction is honest and constructive. Current mentorship programmes also focus on the alignment of both the competences and personality features of those entering the mentorship relationship.

Our focus is on creative and cultural industries (CCI) and cultural management master programmes that entail specific features for the relationship between the mentor and mentee. For example, professionals in the cultural and creative industries are manifold and the combination of creative and artistic competence with the necessary soft and managerial skills is something quite difficult to achieve from educational programmes alone, but often requires engagement with the professional communities of practice. The various examples of successful mentorship programmes within CCI presented in Chapter 1.2 highlight its importance. The CCI includes small and medium-sized companies, micro-companies and freelancers working individually, emphasising the networked way the sector operates. The need to facilitate the creation, access to and functioning of these networks arises as a policy task. Mentorship is suggested as one means to tackle the gap as elaborated in Chapter 1.3.

In addition, as discussed in the chapters of this book (e.g., 2.1, 2.2, 2.6) mentoring and building (professional) identity are also strongly related to power relations that shift during the mentoring process. In the absence of the possibility of a truly egalitarian and equilateral relationship, perhaps power dynamics made explicit and conscientious are the next best thing. Chapter 2.7 suggests open dialogue about what a mentee is hoping to receive, what their expectations may be, what their assumptions may be. Awareness of the inherent power dynamic of the relationship paired with the willingness to create a horizontal relation is paramount.

There are various topics a mentee could discuss with their mentor. Some examples are:

- Setting priorities – how to focus energy, attention, and action;
- Specific topics related to the mentee's profession;
- Planning, initiating, and managing projects, organizations, institutions;
- Creating and maintaining partnerships;
- Fundraising;
- Audience development;
- The role of culture and arts in society;
- Goal-setting;
- Decision-making;
- Working in a team, forming, and leading teams, motivation, delegation;
- Personal management, motivation, and learning;
- Balance between professional and private life;
- Using new technologies; etc.

But mentoring also has an opportunity to influence both mentor and mentee in ways that are beyond the profession. For example, the transmodern perspective on mentorship relationships encourages mentors and mentees to look beyond the surface level, to explore the depths of their shared experiences, and to create meaningful connections that have the potential to have a lasting and positive impact on their lives also after the conclusion of the mentoring process. By embracing principles of transmodernism, such as flat hierarchy, sustainability, and transpersonal psychology, mentors and mentees as well as mentorship programme managers can foster relationships that are more meaningful, impactful and lasting.

Although the focus of the book is mentoring relationships in the university and professional context, often these relationships go beyond the professional sphere. Mentoring may occur formally or informally as noted elsewhere in this volume. For example, mentorship is often seen as explicit in the project work within universities, especially in cross disciplinary and collaborative settings where the roles of, for example, administrative staff as mentors often remain unrecognised. Moreover, we often come across people that are an inspiration for us, and due to their personality, they become mentors informally, sharing their knowledge and experiences. Therefore, the border between mentor and mentee blurs, and an individual can serve as a mentor while being a mentee themselves simultaneously depending on the situation and context. Identifying informal mentors benefits the sharing of knowledge and learning. It is worth noting that seeing several potential futures in one's professional career can also happen because of mentoring relationships. These potential futures are often based on the diversity of interaction and experiences. Therefore, it is worth highlighting the importance of multiple mentorship relationships and the implications of these choices towards career and professional development (see e.g., chapters 2.1 and 2.2.).

## The community – the space for mentoring

### Where?

Communities can act as places for sharing knowledge and learning, as places for both informal and formal mentoring, and universities are ideal examples of such communities largely due to their functions and roles. The potential for mentorship integrated within higher education in cultural management as a curricular element has not yet been fully explored. Chapter 1.4 focused on the

context of higher education institutions, and cultural management master programmes in particular, drawing attention to the potential benefits of mentorship, but also the precarities involved in implementing the mentoring process in such an environment. Mentorship programmes in universities ensure and strengthen ties with practitioners in the sector and the communities of practice, enabling universities to re-create their positive impact and connectedness to society. In many ways, mentorship binds universities and the CCI and is a tool for new co-created knowledge, with both mentors and mentees gaining knowledge, new skills and insights, and new connections among many other benefits. How communities, or places of knowledge co-creation facilitated by formal or informal mentoring occur in universities or the learning context was further elaborated in Chapter 2.1, pointing out the multiple roles for mentoring in the university context that often occur implicitly through everyday activities but would also benefit from being explicitly recognised.

Moreover, as described in Chapter 2.3, mentoring brings together personal, professional and business development for entrepreneurs, and allows universities to consolidate their Third Mission<sup>9</sup> and contribute to the ecosystem of creative entrepreneurs. All in all, the implementation of a sustainable mentoring programme in a university setting requires human resources for management and material resources to maintain the network of alumni, practitioners and stakeholders, ensuring regular communication, feedback, as well as organizing specific training and networking events. Mentoring relationships across the creative sector could be seen as a grassroots movement, improving the condition of the field as such, and the professionals involved within it.

Another form of connecting within the community could be remote and online mentoring. More and more learning experiences are being offered virtually and in a hybrid format, including mentoring practices. As discussed in Chapter 2.4, remote mentoring is not a ‘type’ of relationship but rather a ‘form’ that comprises a range of diverse relationships and experiences, and different tools of communication including video calls, phone communication, and asynchronous ways of connection, such as writing and texting. Online interactions enable greater time availability and the flexibility of both mentors and mentees, increased geographical reach when matching mentoring pairs, more relaxed communication and more opportunities for continuous support. Equally, remote mentoring offers a variety of challenges, including the invasion of privacy,

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<sup>9</sup> The Third Mission represents the economic and social mission of the university and its contribution to communities and territories they act within (Compagnucci, Spigarelli, 2020)

online fatigue, lack of physical interaction, which is seen as important in co-creating in-depth mentoring relationships.

As noted earlier, starting and managing mentoring programmes requires (human) resources. Beyond the practical requirements in the implementation of such programmes, ethical issues concerning (but not limited to) power relationships, diversity, equality and inclusion also need to be addressed. Chapters 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 provide multiple perspectives and solutions on designing and managing a mentorship programme aiming to contribute to diversity and equality. These include a whole spectrum of activities and tasks, including recruiting diverse staff, mentees and mentors and building everyone's understanding and capacities on these social issues in the arts sector, paying attention to whose voices are being heard within the programme and who gets to benefit from the shared resources, discussing and preparing procedures in case of the unacceptable, discriminatory behaviour of stakeholders, and finally, clearly communicating an adequate organizational culture, while avoiding tokenism and the misuse of anyone's agency.

Having pointed out that mentoring does occur in both formal and informal settings, where (differing) values, power issues and ethical issues may arise, the strategies for coping with these ethical challenges relate, however, mainly to formal mentoring. Nevertheless, in the informal context, there can be other challenges that could include, for example, nepotism, the creation of internal hierarchies and exclusion, serving a narrow group of friends or colleagues rather than seeking the benefit of the entire cultural ecosystem. As diligently pointed out in Chapter 2.5, sexism, ageism, racism, ableism and different forms of discrimination and exclusion are still present in the cultural sector, impacting diversity and access in the cultural workforce, as well as decision-making. On the one hand, mentorship can perpetuate these social inequalities and echo stereotypes, but on the other, it could also serve as an additional tool in mitigating the challenges created by unequal social structures. Emphasising the cultural and social humility elaborated in Chapter 2.7 can enable mentorship interactions to offer support and empowerment in complex and diverse relationships. Currently in and outside of Europe, a group of mentoring programmes exist that focus solely on the artists and cultural professionals that are underrepresented in the sector, with examples in the fields of music, arts administration, the tourism and events industry, venue management and others, as discussed, for example, in chapters 1.2 and 2.6



## Closing

Having discussed *what*, with *whom and where* in mentorship, what naturally comes to mind, is to ask the questions: *why* and *how*. We intentionally left these out of our axes (Figure X). The *why* originates from the starting point for the book, Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Project Reinventing Mentoring in Arts Management (REMAM), aiming to co-create a new comprehensive understanding of cultural management mentorship as a framework for professional lifelong learning, as well as part of academic education. The recognised need to cope with our changing society, acknowledging that knowing current practices and ways of working is no longer enough for higher education institutions to fulfil their role as educators and providers of professional skills and professional identity. Work is changing rapidly due to digitalisation, globalisation and the use of artificial intelligence, and life itself is changing due to advancements in technology and challenges created by climate change. These challenges affect all of us and cultural and creative industries are no exception. Therefore, it has become vital for cultural management master programmes alike to provide their students capacities to face these changes, with the help of professional networks, field-specific expertise and contacts, in addition to academic and transferable competencies. We see mentoring as one of the tools to provide these.

In response to the question *how*, one of the main findings of our project was the idea that there is no universally right way of doing things in a mentorship relationship. That is also the reason why this volume presents guiding questions rather than normative suggestions or advice on how to implement a mentorship programme as an organization and how to participate as a mentor or mentee in a mentorship relationship or programme.

We wish to emphasise the multiple ways mentoring may occur, both through formal mentoring programmes explicitly organized, as well as in informal settings within both educational, professional and unexpected contexts. However, even if organic and natural, similar to formal mentoring, informal mentoring also needs openness, stamina and time for relationship building, which implies the need for motivation and (personal) resources not bound nor supported by the frames of a formal mentoring relationship. We recognise that values play an important role in shaping mentoring relationships. This in turn creates potential ethical issues, often stemming from value conflicts. Even though there are several identified challenges and solutions for mentoring provided throughout this book, we wish to highlight that there is no one way of resolving challenges

or implementing solutions. The set of questions under every chapter aims to open up self-reflection and discussion, and serves as a thought provoking tool to help practitioners answer questions like: What else do we not see here?

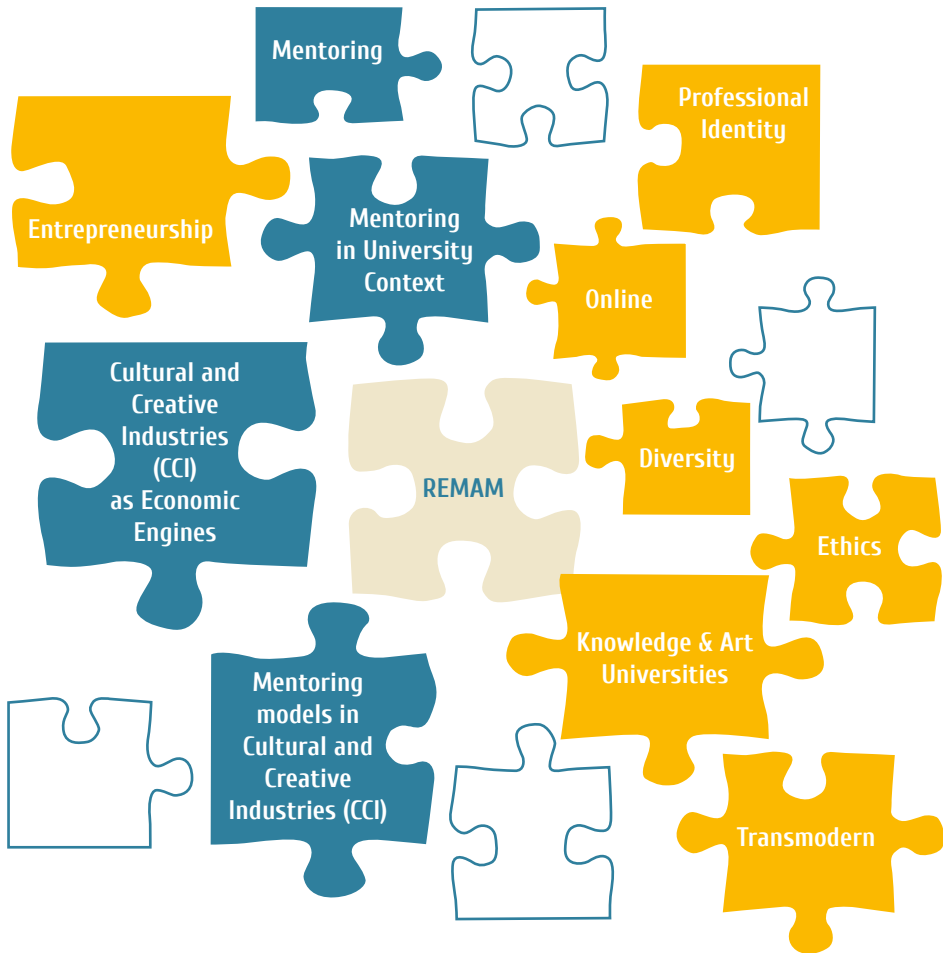
As in every relationship, every mentoring experience is also one of a kind, serving different purposes, occurring in different settings and in different ways, lasting for different amounts of time and dissolving in many different ways. We honour this diversity and highlight the importance of the attitude that is necessary for those relationships to occur, with a nurturing approach, trust, care, vulnerability, humility, and a co-creative mindset helping this relationship to happen positively. All the rest is the matter of the uniqueness of human experience.

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## 3.2 Key Issues – An Overview

### Play of key words



#### Reinventing mentorship : Different perspectives

The different perspectives presented through this book are like an image in a puzzle aiming to build full image of mentorship in arts and cultural context – yet we recognize that are still pieces missing or price that will only emerge in the future

Each piece of puzzle in itself includes its own image; Each piece integrates different insights, questions and topics for further reflection. Here we aim to capture one view of these - building one image of the puzzle or an image in a kaleidoscope that changes with each reader and in time



Mentoring is a two-way interactive process of knowledge, resources, perspectives and experience exchange between a more experienced professional, mentor, and a less experienced professional, mentee. Mentor supports mentee in his/her professional and personal development, and the pair jointly works on discovering and developing mentee’s capacities, talents, and skills.

Mentoring encourages growth and motivation, improves productivity and engagement, facilitates connection between mentees and mentors, strengthens the community, helps expand the network of professional contacts, creates opportunities for cooperation and exchange of ideas and contributes to strengthening self-confidence.

Preconditions for a successful mentoring relationship are: trust, respect, honesty and openness, and a desire to learn and develop.

In order for a mentoring relationship to function well, it is important to set the expectations right early in the mentoring process, define mentee’s needs (developmental direction and/or goals), find the adequate mentor (matching process is highly important), agree on mentor and mentee roles, create space for honest and constructive feedback, and create jointly the “rules of the mentoring game” (respect, confidentiality, ways of communicating, regularity of meetings, readiness to step out of the comfort zone, etc.).

There are various topics mentee could discuss with the mentor. Some examples are: Setting priorities - how to focus energy, attention, and action; Specific topics related to the mentee’s profession; Planning, initiating, and managing projects, organizations, institutions; Creating and maintaining partnerships; Fundraising; Audience development; The role of culture and arts in society; Goals setting; Decision-making; Working in a team, forming, and leading teams, motivation, delegation; Personal management, motivation, and learning; Balance between professional and private life; Using new technologies; etc.



## Mentoring models in Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI)

Soft skills and knowledge about the field practices are transferred in a mentoring relationship.

Mentoring occurs through the career: higher education institutions and continuous personal and professional development.

Challenges: when biases and difficulties in accessing professional networks matter.



## Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) as Economic Engines

CCI, Knowledge Economy and mentorship are intertwined.

CCI, innovation and territorial development play a role in providing the context for mentorship.

CCI, barriers relating to the characteristics of industry, such as large amounts of small and middle sized companies, freelance working, affect innovation and mentorship.

CCI, Technological Innovation, Non-technological Innovation and Mentorship each play a role in advancement of the industry practices.



The potential of mentorship integrated within higher education of cultural management as a curricular element has not yet been fully explored.

Mentorship programmes in universities ensure and strengthen ties with the sector practitioners, enabling universities to re-create their positive impact and connectedness to the wider society.

Mentorship binds university and CCI fields and is a strategic tool for NEW CO-CREATED knowledge, with both mentors and mentees gaining knowledge, new skills and insights, new connections and other positive effects.

Involvement in a mentorship relationship supports professional and personal identity growth, development, and behavioural changes of the participants

Implementation of a sustainable mentoring programme in a university setting requires extra human resources for management and material resources for maintaining the network of alumni, practitioners and stakeholders, ensuring regular communication, feedback as well as organizing specific training and networking events.



## Knowledge & Art Universities

Communities can act as places for sharing knowledge and learning, as places for informal (and formal mentoring) – communities reach beyond university.

Identifying the informal mentors benefits the sharing of knowledge.

Mentorship is often seen as explicit in project work, especially cross disciplinary mentoring.

Informal mentoring needs openness and time for relationship building.



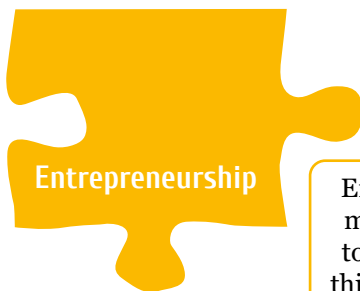
## Professional Identity

Mentoring and building (professional) identity are strongly related to power relations that shift during the mentoring process.

The role of values, and potential value conflict is one of the ethical issues at play.

Importance of seeing several potential futures in one's professional career because of mentoring.

Question of one dedicated mentor or several role models and implications of these choices towards a career.



## Entrepreneurship

The role of entrepreneurship mentoring in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Entrepreneurship mentoring: a tool to consolidate the third mission in the Universities.

Entrepreneurship mentoring brings together personal, professional and business development for entrepreneurs.

Benefits of group entrepreneurship mentoring: board of directors model.

Entrepreneurship Mentoring in CCI.



More and more learning experiences are being offered virtually and in a hybrid format, including mentoring practices.

Remote mentoring is not a type of relationship but comprises a range of diverse relationships and experiences, and different tools of communication including video calls, phone communication, and asynchronous ways of connection such as writing and texting.

Remote mentoring enables greater time availability and flexibility of both mentors and mentees, increase in geographical reach when matching mentoring pairs, more relaxed communication and more opportunities for building continuous support.

Challenges of remote mentoring include invasion of privacy, online fatigue, lack of physical interaction and technical problems.

The quality of an online mentoring relationship shares the characteristics of the in-person one, and depends on the way the mentor and mentee define it, their goals and interaction.



The ethical dimension of mentorship: There are some ethical issues in a mentoring relationship. These should be part of a larger academic or organizational culture in which respect and diversity are important values.

Importance of a competence based selection on the part of the mentor. Not just in terms of academic and/or practical skills, but also in terms of personality features.

There is a need for a toolbox to cope with ethical dilemma's: an ethical code - as part of a more general code of conduct at HEI- can offer a framework for possible solutions and clear boundaries.



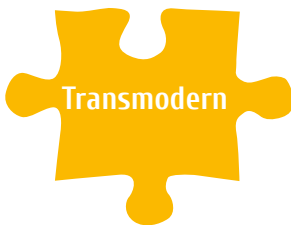


Sexism, ageism, racism, ableism and different forms of discrimination and exclusion are still present in the cultural sector, impacting diversity and access in the cultural workforce as well as decision-making.

Mentorship can perpetuate these social inequalities and echo stereotypes, but could also serve as an additional tool in challenging these structures and offering support and empowerment.

Currently in and outside Europe a group of mentoring s exist that focus solely on the artists and cultural professionals that are underrepresented in the sector, with examples in the field of music, arts administration, tourism and events industry, venue management etc.

Designing and managing a mentorship aiming to contribute to diversity and equality in arts and culture includes a whole spectrum of activities and tasks, including recruiting diverse staff, mentees and mentors and build everyone's understanding and capacities on these social issues in arts sector, paying attention to whose voices are being heard within the and who gets to benefits from the shared resources, discussing and prepare procedures in case of unacceptable, discriminatory behaviour of stakeholders and finally clearly communicating adequate organizational culture, while avoiding tokenism and misuse of anyone's agency.



Mentoring is a two-way interactive process of knowledge, resources, perspectives and experience exchange between a more experienced professional, mentor, and a less experienced professional, mentee.

Mentor supports mentee in his/her professional and personal development, and the pair jointly works on discovering and developing mentee's capacities, talents, and skills.



## PART IV Cases

Part IV presents a variety of cases as examples of different types of mentorship programmes. The cases can be used to find inspiration for creating a mentorship programme, as study cases to reflect on mentoring in different contexts or as practical insights into the process of mentorship.

The cases are divided into two main categories as follows:

### **Mentorship as the focus of the organization, or as part of the organisation's services**

- 4.1 Creative Mentorship** presents the non-profit organization at the very heart of the REMAM project, a mentorship organization focusing on the creative and cultural sector.
- 4.2 The mentorship programme of the Association of Estonian Career Counsellors** analyses a pilot mentorship project in the context of the network of career counsellors.
- 4.3 Cultuurloket** looks at mentoring as part of a non-profit organization providing advice and assistance to cultural organizations.
- 4.4 Music Estonia** describes an extensive mentoring programme focusing on the field of music and aiming to enhance the professionalism of music managers and agents.
- 4.5 PROJECT 33 – Strategic Planning for Public Cultural Institutions in Novi Sad** presents a unique case of mentoring in the context of regional development involving cultural organizations, and aiming to build strategic plans for organizations in a specific region.
- 4.6 BEAZ-Bizkaia Mentoring Network** provides a concise introduction to mentoring as part of a support programme for start-ups.

### **Mentoring in the context of creative or educational institutions**

- 4.7 Estonian Theatre for Young Audiences (Eesti Noorsooteater)** reflects on practices within a theatre that relate to mentorship and offers ideas on how to build on informal mentoring practices to form mentorship programmes.
- 4.8 Master's in Cultural Management at University of Antwerp** provides a good example of mentoring in the context of practical company-based project work with a supervisor-mentor and student-mentees in a university-cultural organization collaboration.
- 4.9 Mentorship Programme in the Latvian Academy of Culture** presents a step-by-step analysis of a mentoring programme in the context of master studies, and reflections on necessary improvements.
- 4.10 Peer-to-Peer Mentoring** provides a brief description of a mini-case of mentoring in the context of the course – Growth in the Creative Industries.

## 4.1 Creative Mentorship

Dragana Jevtić, Daša Moschonas

### Introduction

*“Transforming society, one conversation at a time”<sup>10</sup>*



#### What?

Creative Mentorship (CM) is a mentorship programme in Serbia, targeting current and future professionals in culture, arts, creative industries and media from the public, private, civil sector, or acting independently. It affirms and promotes mentorship as a tool for lifelong learning, and personal and professional development. A year-long cycle gathers 25 mentoring pairs that work on a broad range of topics and projects, guided by the needs and goals of the mentees. They are further supported by the educational programme and core-workshops that run in parallel with the mentoring meetings.

#### Why?

In general, CM has two main long-term goals. First, to strengthen and support the capacities of the cultural sector in Serbia (and across the region), ed-

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<sup>10</sup> CM's slogan

educating and involving young professionals in the broader network of projects, programmes and connections. Therefore, the decentralisation of culture is one of its main principles, making sure that every cycle includes 25 mentees from various communities and locations across Serbia and the region (mentees in the 2020 cycle came from 11 cities in Serbia). Second, to create a community for promoting mentorship as an everyday practice. This is achieved through the core programme, the public promotion of mentorship and supporting other organisations to start mentorship programmes.

The important characteristic of CM is its strong valuing of diversity and difference. The specific needs and development of individuals as well as the evolution of each specific mentorship relationship are deeply embedded in the programme's principles and modes of delivery. The team strongly believes that each mentoring pair has its own development path and dynamics.

### How?

The programme was started in 2012 by a diverse group of experts brought together through the Creative Society project run by the *Embassy of Sweden* and the *Museum of Science and Technology* in Belgrade. Motivated by sharing the idea of the exchange of knowledge and experience beyond academia (where it traditionally takes place), they started the CM pilot programme. Since then, CM has organised six mentoring cycles, working with 25 mentors and mentees in each. The programme has been developing organically, led by the needs of the mentees and the cultural sector. It started as one-on-one mentorship, and today it has a more complex structure.

Today, CM supports mentees and mentors on five levels:

1. One-on-one individual mentoring meetings.
2. Core-workshops, tailor-made educational programme and mentoring tools.
3. Comprehensive monitoring and support by the CM team.
4. Connecting and networking.
5. Promoting the work of its participants.

One of the main assets of CM is its strong structure, comprised of six components:

Management team – currently consists of the following team members: Dragana Jevtić (founder and director), Katarina Vojnović (programme coordinator), Višnja Kisić (founder and *Development* adviser), Tatjana Nikolić (programme associate), Daša Moschonas (programme associate), and Katarina Mitić (PR manager).

**Advisory board** – consists of 8 local and foreign experts from the field of mentorship, cultural diplomacy, cultural management, cultural heritage and marketing. They meet with the management team once a year to evaluate the programme and contribute to strategy-making and development for the following year. Members rotate every 2 years, which adds to diversity of knowledge and expertise.

**Pool of Mentors** – consists of more than 150 experts from Serbia and abroad that have expressed their motivation to be involved in CM.

**Alumni network** – consists of more than 300 mentors and mentees that have participated in the CM programme.

**50 participants** – in the current mentorship cycle.

**Partners and sponsors** – long-term supporters of the programme, either through skills and expertise, or through funding. Also, through two Erasmus+ the project organisation has new partners and projects throughout Europe.

## **Funding**

CM is a non-profit organisation. It is funded by a group of sponsors and partners; sponsors have the option to sponsor the programme or support a mentoring pair. The CM management team also provides knowledge and services to organisations in exchange for funding for the core programme.

Participation in the programme is free for mentees, and all mentors contribute to the programme pro bono.

## **The mentorship process**

Each phase consists of a few steps that are explained below. The core-workshops and education programme is an integral part to this process, and runs in parallel.

### **Initiating**

#### **Open call for mentees**

Each cycle starts with a strong PR campaign, promoting the programme through cultural and educational institutions, local and social media. Importantly, it also involves a tour through Serbia, in order to reach interested young professionals outside the capital. In each town, the management team organises an open discussion about mentorship, usually with the help of the alumni

network. They invite people to apply, and usually also meet professionals interested in the role of mentors (they join the pool of mentors through a Google form). People interested in the role of mentees also fill in a Google form with their personal details, professional and personal skills, motivation and a potential project they would like to work on during the CM cycle, and a mentor they imagine as a match. They attach their CV and contact details for a referee.

#### Selection of mentees

Mentees are selected through a rigorous process of evaluating the applications. All applications are independently evaluated by a minimum of three people, usually from the management team and alumni network (6 people evaluated applications in the 2020 cycle). Shortlisted candidates are invited for an interview.

#### Goal-setting workshop (core workshop 1)

The selected mentees meet for a group workshop with the management team and experts in professional development, who guide them through a goal-setting process. They re-evaluate the projects they proposed in their applications. If necessary, there is an option for individual, one-on-one coaching sessions for mentees that have difficulties defining their year-long goals.

#### Matching process

The management team uses the mentees' applications and their refined goals to target the right mentors. Similar to the mentee selection process, management members convene with selected alumni members to discuss and propose the matches. Some mentors are selected from the pool of mentors, while others on the basis of recommendations from the matching team. A mentor is found to match the needs and goals set by the mentee. The suggested mentors are approached individually through one-on-one meetings, in order to present the CM methodology, core values and to discuss their commitment.

#### Kick-off workshop (core workshop 2)

Kick-off is organised over two days, and consists of various presentations and workshops by the CM management team and invited presenters. This is the first time that mentor and mentee meet each other, get to know the whole cohort, and are introduced to the mentoring tools and programme structure. Presentations focus on the techniques and mindsets of learning, mentorship values and principles. In a separate session, alumni members share their experiences and provide tips.

## Developing

### Monthly meetings

Individual meetings are organised between mentor and mentee. Their duration, content and frequency vary between the pairs, but the programme's recommendation is to have at least one meeting each month.

### Education and development programme

The education programme is primarily focused on the mentees, even though some sessions are open to wider public. Sessions take part every month, and they include soft skills training, lectures and debates on relevant topics in cultural sector – discussions on cultural policy, guided tours of cultural organisations and initiatives, workshops on communication skills, time management, fundraising, project writing, etc. They also present a great opportunity for networking both within the cohort and with the broader community. Every year, this programme is tailor-made to suit the needs of the cohort.

### Monitoring and ongoing evaluation

During the cycle, there are four written and two phone evaluations with all mentors and mentees, as well as a written evaluation after every education/development session. Phone evaluations are organised with mentees and mentors individually. They serve to check the functioning of the mentorship pair, and the progress in developing the goals set by the mentee. Written evaluations focus on the CM programme and mentoring relationship. Written evaluations of the education programme are shared with the CM team and trainers and serve to improve its quality.

### Supporting mentors

Mentors are supported through specific workshops in the kick-off and mid-term meetings, mentoring tools and consultation sessions. The workshops cover mentoring principles and techniques. Consultation sessions are organised two times per cycle, in the form of a group meeting. Mentors gather with an experienced professional development trainer and the CM management team to share their experiences, doubts and successes, and discuss these in a group setting. These sessions are an opportunity to learn about good practices, support each other in difficult situations, and get to know each other better.



### Mid-term workshop (core workshop 3)

This is the second (of three) group meetings, attended by all mentors and mentees. It includes workshops about mentoring, feedback and networking activities.

### Social networks

Visibility and the promotion of the participant's work as examples of good practice and inspiration also happens over social networks. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr and YouTube, as well as the CM newsletter are the main channels for supporting the work of the mentees, mentors and alumni, and for sharing the process of the ongoing CM cycle.

### Closing

#### Final workshop (core workshop 4)

The third and final joint workshop for all mentors and mentees. This involves a reflection on the past year, an exercise on rounding up the mentoring relationship, and a wrap-up celebration.

### Final meeting

At the end of each Creative Mentorship cycle, there is a final mentoring meeting between mentor and mentee. Motivated by the last workshop, they usually reflect on their work together, re-evaluate the goals set by the mentee a year ago, and provide feedback to each other in relation to their learning and relationship. They are also motivated to discuss the continuation of their communication, and ways of continuing and spreading the culture of mentorship.

### Mentoring tools

Mentoring tools and a Mentorship Manual publication are developed as graphic and textual reminders of the key principles, and a selection of learning and communication strategies for pairs that need support in their meetings. Some of the tools are available on the CM website as part of a mentorship promotion strategy ([link](#)). A few tools are only available for mentors and mentees of the CM programme.

## Mentorship process expectations

### Motivations for mentors and mentees

Mentors take part in CM to learn more about this specific relationship, to share their knowledge and advance their field, and to see mentees grow. They also highlight the importance of learning about other generations and their interests. Through CM, they connect with other experts and young professionals, hear and generate new ideas and take part in new projects. Mentees see CM as important for their professional development. They are often confused, lost, in transition, and need support in finding direction. They see CM as a group of influential and key people in the cultural sector.

Both the mentors and mentees stress the importance of the good reputation of CM. As one mentor stressed, *“I was taken by the ambition and overall fundamentals and foundational role of CM”*. This is important for them because the mentoring relationship brings a lot of responsibility, and they need to trust that someone will support them in that process.

### Expectations from the programme

The programme’s expectations are embedded in the selection process. CM seeks mentees that engage in projects of strong societal impact. Importantly, there are no expectations of meeting a specific goal at the end of the cycle. Mentees set up their own goals and the programme leads them through that process with care and genuine support; goal shifts are expected and embedded through the principle of open and truthful communication and sensitivity.

### Mentorship experiences – now

What?

In CM, there are three main roles in the mentoring relationship: mentors, mentees and co-mentors.

Mentors are active listeners, able to reflect on their decisions and experiences in great depth. They do not impose their ideas, they are not authoritative, and do not dictate their worldview to their mentee. They are critical, able to question and change the perspective of the mentee. They do so with genuine care and respect.

Mentees lead the process by asking questions, shaping meetings and being aware of their areas for development. They are present and active. They seek

to define what they want and openly communicate their expectations from the mentor.

Co-mentors provide additional support within the mentorship pair. They are suggested by the CM management, mentor or a mentee, usually in relation to a specific need of the mentee in a specific area of expertise. Their role can be very significant for the pair's success.

Other roles in the programme provide a range of support: peer mentees, peer mentors, alumni, CM team, and the advisory board and partners through their extended networks.

The mentoring relationship is a complex and unique one, and the next section will describe some of its specificities.

### Why?

The specificity of CM is that it involves a holistic approach. The focus is on both the person and their work, instead of only on the project or organisation. As noted by one mentor: *"I would say that to ignore the personal side would neglect the professional side, you would not get the full picture"*. This is reflected through a specific attitude towards the final goal; CM develops professionals, instead of evaluating their projects: *"The real success is that my mentee felt comfortable to tell me what her career path would look like, and not only about a skill, but think how you will adapt in weird situations like [Covid-19]"*. Furthermore, mentors and mentees define a successful relationship as a long-lasting one, beyond the programme's boundaries.

The mentoring relationship is mostly impeded by a lack of trust and communication: avoiding meetings, a cold and rigid (professional) approach from the mentor's side, mentees that do not communicate their expectations. Sometimes, external life challenges can have a significant impact. Over the course of the programme, mentees might lose their motivation, which is one of the biggest challenges for the management team.

Mentors question their approach to a great extent: *"I was hesitant at the beginning, I felt... the idea and role of mentorship – there is some weight to it. Trust and responsibility, you need to have the best interests of everybody in front of mind all the time. There was pressure – am I ready to do something like this?"* This pressure of responsibility is an often-encountered challenge. Mentors also mention the fear of not knowing whether the relationship will even work: *"What if we are just totally out of sync?" [...] "The thing that made me most nervous, and the biggest challenge is the thought that we might not*

*get anywhere and that we might not have any learning at all*". They struggle to find the balance between too much and too little support, or to define adequate support: *"Am I useful enough to my mentee? Would she develop in the same way without me? This is something that I cannot measure"*. The biggest challenge for mentors is in finding the right balance between being clear, direct and critical and at the same time letting the mentee lead the process: *"It took me a while to understand that my mentee solves the situations differently than how I would" [...] "The mentor should not tie the mentee to themselves"*. They define the solution to this in learning to truly listen and to ask the right questions. This process enables them to learn that they do not need to know all the answers or to solve the problems of a mentee, but to develop a discussion about the problems. In this way, they learn about themselves through exploring their mentee's pathways: *"There is a power in being fine with your own limitations and just being there for the ride. So that you can help other people get there with you as you find the way for yourself"*. They arrive at the realisation that this vulnerability is a positive thing.

Besides these internal questions, they are challenged by the difference in values between them and their mentees, the lack of honesty in the mentee's work, and the lack of the mentee's own initiative.

The mentees are challenged by a lack of commitment from their mentors: when they are not present at the core-workshops and when they do not answer emails. Some mentees mentioned that they struggle to define the right level of communication with their mentor – they are not paid to work with mentees, and therefore these boundaries need to be agreed upon. Mentees struggle when they cannot see immediate results from the mentoring relationship.

They also question themselves, mainly through defining their goals: *"This is the hardest part – to formulate your goals. A mentor cannot read your thoughts, you have to know to communicate them"*. They learn to face their challenges, position themselves in their own goal-seeking, and adopt a direction for their own development, empowered. Mentors help them to understand the landscape of cultural projects and opportunities and to adjust their work narrative according to that. They learn to accept mistakes and failures as learning. They value that mentors can offer a structured approach to their ideas. Finally, mentees share what they have learned in their mentorship with their immediate team, so knowledge sharing happens in many ways: *"My mentorship experience was also an experience for all my colleagues in the museum – through me"*.

## How?

In the CM approach, these are the mentorship principles:

Trusting relationship as essential principle No. 1 – mentioned by all interviewees.

Mutual listening as essential principle No. 2 – mentioned by all interviewees.

Genuine support versus instructional approach.

Commitment to learning together; reliability.

Adequate support, not too much and not too little; constructive criticism.

Open, direct and honest communication; being vulnerable in the process.

Holistic approach – personal and professional development together.

Equal and reciprocal relationship – there is no power imbalance between the roles.

Focus on the needs of the mentees – on the person and on the project.

Exchange of knowledge and experience, support, recognising capacities, empowering, collaboration, lifelong learning.

Mentors need to develop a genuine desire to support their mentee, and mentees need to develop genuine curiosity about the mentor's advice. Mentors need to ask good questions, mentees to communicate their needs and goals. The mentoring relationship requires commitment and time from both sides.

## **Mentorship looking back**

### What? and Why?

Mentors stressed the importance of the CM programme in helping them to learn about and establish their own mentoring approach. Mentees spoke extensively about the support they received from the management team and peer mentees. They spoke about the importance of the feeling of belonging, of establishing a safe space for sharing ideas and doubts. All mentors and mentees interviewed are still in contact and continue collaborating. Some mentees looked for other mentors, or entered into a mentor role themselves. The mentors stayed active in this role in other mentoring programmes or within their organisations.

The following section will outline the key aspects of the CM programme they consider as essential for developing a successful mentoring relationship and community.

How?

Development of the structure of CM

Mentor's development – CM puts a lot of emphasis on the development of both mentors and mentees. It is essential to provide them with the support to be able to engage with the mentoring principles and to distinguish this relationship from an academic one. The significance of this can be seen in the deep reflection provided by the mentors.

Education programme – seems to be the essential form of support, in four ways. First, it provides essential knowledge and skills for working in the cultural sector in Serbia (and wider). Second, it relieves the mentoring relationship from some common themes, so the pair-time can be used for specific discussions. It reduces expectations that would otherwise be imposed on mentors. Third, it structures the programme, by establishing check-points, and the feeling of progress. It provides an opportunity to open specific questions and tensions. This is highly valued by both mentors and mentees; they stressed how this increased their confidence and motivation. And fourth, the programme is very important for connecting the mentees, enabling them to feel the peer support – they are all going through the same process. According to the evaluations, these events were valued more than the networking events.

Monitoring – vital for support in moments of doubt. Phone evaluations and spontaneous check-ins during events helps maintain the feeling that the person is not alone in this process. Written evaluations are also perceived and used as a tool for personal reflection – their structure works as a way of checking the relationship and as a reminder of the main mentorship principles. In CM, evaluations are the focus for both mentors and mentees; this highlights any potential miscommunication between them.

Process duration – through interviews with mentors, mentees and the management team, it was clear that the programme should be between 8 months and 1 year, and preferably longer. All respondents agreed that the first 4 months are important for building the relationship, and that the actual development starts after that.

Mentorship as a practice – both of the programme's managers have mentors, and one of them is also in a role of a mentor in another programme. They both

find this essential for their work with mentors and mentees and for their approach to CM in general.

### **Key events in the CM programme**

**Initiating phase** – selecting mentees, mentors and the matching process is critical for the programme as a whole. This stems from the main vision and goals of CM.

**Kick-off** – this is the most important event for the mentorship pair. It sets up everyone's expectations, introduces mentors and mentees, provides initial guidance and eases entry into this specific relationship.

**Midterm** – evaluation of progress, goals and relationships. Something concrete to work with, as opposed to matching which is blind – includes re-evaluation of expectations from both sides.

**Mentee's context** – both mentors and mentees stressed the importance of the immersion of a mentor in the mentee's context, meeting 'on the ground'. One of the main challenges for the relationship is the difference in the understanding of the mentee's situation, and the lack of empathy. As explained by one mentee: *"When my mentor came to my place, she taught me to speak her language, the language of projects, and I started to understand"*.

### **The main challenges for CM**

Online mode of communication brought many opportunities (lowered costs, easier access), but also a lot of challenges (networking was really difficult).

Alumni activation is difficult and requires a specific approach.

Stronger promotion of the organisation would contribute to better fundraising.

It is important to have people in the organisation to take on the financial and administrative roles, so that managers can focus on the programme's structure, monitoring and evaluation.

Evaluations are very important but exhausting.

## Summary of key findings

The main tensions for discussion:

The influence that the programme's structure and financing can have on the type and quality of the mentorship relationship (e.g., Should mentees pay? How would this affect the accessibility and inclusivity of the programme? What about using stipends?).

Goal-oriented support as opposed to a goal-focused programme.

Structured programme as opposed to an emerging process (i.e. CM approach vs only mentorship meetings).

Support for the mentors – how does this influence the quality and development of the relationship? Academic vs CM mentorship.

Holistic vs professional development.

Modes for learning about mentorship: How useful are the written and graphic tools in comparison to the workshops and ongoing support (e.g., consultations and evaluations by the CM team)?

[www.creativementorship.org](http://www.creativementorship.org)

<https://www.facebook.com/creativementorship>

[www.twitter.com/create\\_mentors](https://www.twitter.com/create_mentors)

[www.instagram.com/kreativnomentorstvo](https://www.instagram.com/kreativnomentorstvo)

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/creative-mentorship/>



## 4.2 Mentorship Programme of the Association of Estonian Career Counsellors

**Kaari Kiitsak-Prikk**

### Introduction

The Association of Estonian Career Counsellors (AECC; also cited below according to the Estonian abbreviation KNÜ) is a non-profit organisation founded in 2002. It unites specialists who are interested in developing the career guidance system in Estonia. Its members can be private individuals and public or private organisations based on voluntary membership. The goal of the association is to protect the occupational interests of those who work in the career counselling field, as well as to emphasise the importance of career specialists (AECC Website, 2021).

The AECC unites 127 members (as of March 2021), including members from all over Estonia who are working for the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, and at different levels of education as counsellors, teachers or lecturers. Some members work as human resource specialists or managers in companies, while others as freelancers or entrepreneurs in the counselling and training field. Becoming a member of the AECC is voluntary on payment of a symbolic annual membership fee.

The AECC is governed by its members' annual general meeting. Its daily operations are managed by the board consisting of 4 people selected by the members. The board operates mainly on a voluntary basis. The association is funded by membership fees, donations, income from publishing revenue, income from running courses, sales of merchandise and other similar items. It does not have permanent government or local municipal funding.

The main activities of the AECC include organising continuing education in the career services field, creating and distributing methodological and informational materials, and issuing qualifications for practice. It also initiates and participates in public discussions in career services with the aim of developing a high quality and accessible system for career services in Estonia.

The AECC has been a certified organisation for awarding and re-certifying occupational qualifications for career counsellors since 2006 and career information specialists since 2013. Therefore, it is responsible for issuing the occupational qualification certificates of career counsellors and career information

specialists. The Association organises informative seminars on how to apply to be certified in the career services field and to coordinate the examination procedures and the work of the qualifications committee..

The AECC has several internal working groups, such as for the code of ethics in counselling, and for career training at all levels of education. It partners in several research projects exploring occupational qualification systems. It also organises various events, such as annual prizes for the best student research in the career field, and summer days for its members.

One of the internal working groups of the AECC is the mentorship group (initially in 2015–2017, and as a pilot programme since 2019), which aims to offer broad support and create opportunities for its members to support their professional development. The mentorship programme concept, principles and administrative setup is described in a [12-page document](#) in Estonian (KNÜ mentorluse töörühm, 2020), which clearly defines the goals, content, volume, terminology, division of responsibilities, the principles of the mentorship relationships, the principles for selecting and matching the mentorship pairs, support structures, expected benefits and the coordination of the programme. The guiding document is available for the public on the website of the AECC. This document is accepted by the board of the AECC, and all members of the AECC had an opportunity to comment and make suggestions. The document has been commented on by the private partner Fontes.

## The mentorship programme

The mentorship programme for career specialists started the pilot season in September 2020. The pilot programme was designed for members of the AECC exclusively – career specialists who work in counselling centres, educational organisations in both the private and public sector and whose job is to support their clients in decision-making and career development (including occupations, jobs, training and education).

The principles of the programme were built with support from the Professional Board of Education and the Estonian Association of Career Counsellors, and reference to documents like the Professional standard: Career Specialist, level 6 (2017) and the Code of Ethics for Career Counselling (2014). The programme developers also used documents prepared by the Innove Foundation on mentoring programmes for career coordinators in pilot schools promoting career

training.<sup>11</sup> The final stimulus for establishing the programme was formed at the general assembly of the association in 2019 as a co-creational process. Interest in the initiative was raised by members and strongly supported by the personal interest of Mrs. Teily Allas, who became the leader of the working group for mentorship (7 people). The programme was not initiated by any external legislative power. The idea to establish the working group and the programme emerged from the need for support in the career specialist field.

The main aims of the mentorship programme are:

1. To enable career professionals (who are members of the association and who have expressed an interest) to receive support and guidance through a mentoring relationship with a colleague who has been active in the field for a long time, is experienced and prepared to be a mentor.
2. To allow more experienced members of the association to test themselves as mentors and to raise their professional level.

The AECC has also clearly stated that the expected outcome of the mentorship programme will be as follows:

- Preconditions and conditions are to be created so that the members of the association can participate in a coordinated mentoring programme according to personal needs and opportunities.
- The mentoring career professionals have acquired the relevant competences.
- The mentee who has participated in the programme is able to define his or her development needs more effectively than before and plan his or her professional level as a self-directed learner.
- Through mutual exchange, the mentor couple has established important values and attitudes for the work of a career specialist (KNÜ mentorluse tööriühm 2020: 4).

The pilot programme in the 2020/2021 academic year was developed to collect feedback and analyse the actual interest of the members of the association and the need to participate in the mentoring programme. The pilot programme also

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<sup>11</sup> Foundation Innove is an education competence centre that coordinated and promoted general and vocational education in Estonia, created by the Ministry of Education and Research. <https://www.innove.ee/en/about-organisation/>.

explored questions like what is the optimal number, frequency, length of meetings for the mentorship pair? How can we identify whether the expected results of the mentoring programme have been achieved and the sustainability of the mentoring programme has been ensured?

The pilot programme was carried out on a fully voluntary basis: there was no fee for mentors, no participation fee for mentees, the training for both mentors and mentees was delivered by partner institutions as charity and the organisers contributed without a salary. But the mentorship process is clearly regimented and formal.

## Definitions

Within the AECC pilot mentorship programme, **mentorship** is defined as a partnership in which the mentor supports and develops the mentee. Mentoring is a collaborative relationship that helps unlock the mentee's potential and inspires and supports him or her in achieving professional and personal goals. Mentoring is a process with a specified beginning and end, where the expectations, rights and obligations of both parties are clearly agreed upon. The leader of the mentorship working group, Mrs. Teily Allas confirms that the programme follows this definition, and it fits the reality of interpreting the concept.

**A mentor** is defined as a career specialist with experience and necessary training, who is a reliable supporter of the member of the association in need of support; the mentor helps the mentee to develop both professionally and as a person. The mentor challenges the mentee, encourages, asks questions without giving quick answers, and reflects. With a mentor, one can discuss work-related issues and ideas that are important, and therefore discover and develop oneself.

Within this AECC programme, a **mentee** is understood to be a person already working or starting work as a career specialist, who wants to develop him or herself and receive support from an experienced career specialist (the mentor). Mentees contribute to their own purposeful self-development; for example, by learning how to be self-directed, maintaining their professional working principles and dealing with difficult cases. Mentees can gain experience, learn different approaches, and thereby reach the best solutions with the help of an experienced specialist and grow into a guide for self-development.

## Mentorship process

The AECC mentoring programme lasts 10 months (September – June). The duration of the mentoring relationship is 8 months (September – April).

The process of selecting a mentor is set and described in the main document of the programme. The preconditions for being a mentor are:

- Consent and motivation to participate in the programme.
- A valid professional certificate in the following professions: career specialist, career counsellor, career information specialist, personnel specialist, personnel manager.
- At least 5 years of work experience as a career specialist.
- Completion of mentor training organised within the mentoring programme before starting the mentoring relationship.
- Fully paid membership of the AECC.

The personal qualities and skills are also listed as pre-conditions for becoming a mentor: one must be a reliable and responsible person; committed, balanced, and goal oriented; able and willing to develop and guide others; able to listen, ask, analyse, and give feedback. It is also noted that those wishing to be mentors should be transmitters of the values and attitudes of a career specialist and have a strong foundation in the principles of counselling ethics (KNÜ mentorluse töörühm, 2020: 9).

The pre-conditions for participating as a mentee include being a member of the AECC and working or starting to work as a career specialist. The mentee can be a person who:

- Wishes to receive support and guidance in the form of a mentoring relationship from a colleague who has been active in the field for a long time, is experienced and prepared for the role of a mentor.
- Has set goals for professional development and is able to describe them to the mentor.
- Agrees with the principles of cooperation in the mentoring programme.

Recruitment into the programme occurs through several events and communication activities. The programme is introduced to members by email, via the newsletters of the AECC, at the AECC summer days, and at the general assembly of the association. In addition, a separate online seminar is organised where partnering company experts share their experiences of mentorship.

To participate in the mentoring programme, those who want to become mentors and mentees fill in a registration form. Information about the mentoring programme and the dates for registration are sent to the members of the association via a mailing list and also published on the AECC website. If it is not possible to register via the registration form, the applications are mediated offline via the programme coordinator (KNÜ mentorluse töörühm, 2020: 5).

## Matching process

Matching the mentorship pairs is the task of the working group and the coordinator of the programme. This collegial entity carries out the matching process by:

- Processing information from registrants, including the expectations and experiences of mentors and mentees.
- Contacting the applicants to clarify information if necessary.
- Matching the pairs.
- Informing the parties of the mentoring couple.
- The mentee will then contact the mentor to arrange further appointments.

Matching is based on the application forms, expectations from both sides and personal contacts through their membership of the AECC (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021). The main criteria for matching pairs is that the mentee/mentor expect to be working in the same or a similar role.

Mentoring pairs are recommended to meet at least 6 times during the programme. The time and manner of the meetings will be agreed upon between themselves as either face-to-face meetings or online meetings.

The AECC has fixed in the programme documentation a set of very specific principles for the mentorship process. For example, it clearly states that the cooperation is based on mutual trust and open communication. A precondition, in principle, is also that both the mentor and the mentee take responsibility for the success of the cooperation, accepting each other's values and principles and that it is recommended that one mentor have no more than one mentee at a time.

The following main principles also outline how the process works:

- At the beginning of the mentoring relationship, the mentor and the mentee agree in writing to the Mentoring Programme Cooperation Agreement.

- Mentor and mentee meetings take place face-to-face or via video call.
- At the beginning of the process the parties discuss their expectations, the number of meetings, and an initial schedule, which is agreed upon and later confirmed.
- The mentor and mentee provide each other with ongoing feedback during the cooperation and summarise the process at the end of the mentoring relationship.
- Both the mentor and the mentee provide feedback on the mentoring programme to the programme facilitators.
- If the cooperation between the mentor and the mentee does not work or there are other problems, then both parties have the right to terminate the mentoring relationship (KNÜ mentorluse töörühm, 2020: 8–9).

After the first meeting of the mentorship pair, the working group asks the participants to fill in a preliminary feedback questionnaire to ensure the programme and process are clear and understood. The mentors are provided with self-reflection worksheets based on suggestions from Fontes. Mid-summaries and overviews of the programme process are then reported to the general assembly of the AECC. The leader of the working group sends a couple of newsletters to programme participants, to support and motivate people to participate in the co-vision groups and remind them how the process has been planned. Communication throughout the process is encouraged by the working group within each newsletter, email, and meeting: questions are welcomed by the programme coordinators and working group.

A final celebration of the programme is organised after the mentorship, and all mentorship pairs will tend to stay in contact as members of the AECC.

## Supporting elements

The mentorship working group and coordinator support the mentors and mentees throughout the process. All participants may ask for help and support from the programme coordinator and working group members as they start the cooperation, to resolve formal issues, change mentors or other issues.

Mentors undergo one day of intensive training organised by the association, which provides the common principles, skills, and tips for being a mentor. The training discusses the format of the programme, how to build the relationship and what to focus on. It also covers the expectations of the mentees and men-

tors, the need for co-vision groups and how to evaluate the results and impact. The training covers the concepts of mentoring and mentoring opportunities. Participation in the training facilitates settling into the role of mentor. In addition, the requirements of mentors are covered based on local occupational ethics, the requirements of The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) and the Global Code of Ethics for Coaches and Mentors.

Mentee candidates go through a workshop organised by the association, which will introduce the basics of the mentoring relationship, the role of mentees and the support that a mentor can provide. This includes guidelines for setting goals when working with a mentor.

The training materials are not available publicly, but only for the participants of the programme.

To support mentors and mentees, a co-vision is organised at the initiative of the mentoring programme working group. This is a group meeting where issues raised during the programme and cases are discussed in confidence and methods are shared. During the programme, at least two co-vision meetings for mentors and two for mentees will be conducted (or more often as necessary). The meeting is led by one of the participants on a rotating basis.

The training for participants and the overall preparation of the programme was supported by the private company *Fontes pro bono* because it has facilitated mentorship programmes for over 13 years and one of their leaders is one of the founding members of the AECC and another person from Fontes is a long-term member of the AECC. This partnership with Fontes is not officially formalised. During the development of the programme, the working group also consulted the *PARE* (Estonian Human Resource Management Association) mentorship programme.

## Mentorship process expectations

The AECC has clearly stated the expectations towards all partners within the mentorship process. Who is supposed to take which role and who is responsible for what are pre-set in the main mentorship document. The Association itself (the board) informs the members of the association about the possibility of mentoring, including information on the association's website and other information channels and provide recognition for mentoring programme participants.



The mentorship programme working group agrees to be responsible for launching, developing, and maintaining the mentoring programme; provide full support for the coordinator's activities; prepare programme documentation; assist in involving mentors and forming mentor pairs; prepare an action plan for monitoring the mentoring programme and prepare a feedback questionnaire (KNÜ mentorluse töörühm 2020: 6)

The coordinator of the mentorship programme carries the role of key mediator. She gathers and shares information between mentors and mentees participating in the programme to form mentorship pairs; coordinates the activities of the mentorship pairs; leads and facilitates the matching process; coordinates the mentoring and mentoring workshop with the mentoring programme team and the AECC board; and gathers feedback and prepares a summary.

From the programme management's perspective, mentees should be active learners and be working as career specialists on a continuous basis and engaged in self-development and self-analysis. Mentees are expected to be open to new approaches and ideas and set their own goals and move towards achieving them.

The programme documentation clearly states that mentees are expected to be the more active partner in the mentoring relationship, initiating the meetings with the mentor. According to the leader of the programme, Teily Allas, there is no fixed expectation for the length of the mentee's work experience – the mentee could be a novice or more experienced but should be working in the career specialist field. Ideally, the mentee could be someone wishing to move from being a career information specialist towards a counsellor, but this is not set as a precondition. The programme is not meant for those who have not entered the professional field of career guidance yet or who wish to enter in the future, but for those already working in the field.

The expectation of a mentor is to share one's experience and develop the mentee's competences. The mentor oversees planning the process, maintains focus, provides feedback, support and encouragement, and inspires the mentee. The mentor is expected to raise mentoring issues and a wider range of discussions with the association, as necessary. The role of a mentor does not include teaching the skills needed to work as a mentor (KNÜ mentorluse töörühm, 2020: 8).

The expected benefit for the mentor is outlined as an opportunity to:

- Perform meaningful work that supports the professional development of career specialists.

- Acquire knowledge about the nature of mentoring, the principles of acting as a mentor or to further develop the personal mentoring experience.
- Develop the skills and increase the professionalism of career specialists.
- Obtain new ideas and fresh energy.
- Increase one's professional contacts;
- Be an active member and contribute to the activities of the association (KNÜ mentorluse töörühm, 2020: 10–11).

One of the participating mentors described the value of the programme as follows: “With the help of the mentoring programme, you can develop yourself professionally, support your colleagues with know-how and contribute to the development of career counselling in Estonia.” (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021).

In parallel, the expected benefits and outcomes of the process for mentees are listed as:

- Smoother adjustment when starting or continuing counselling.
- Safe and supported learning under the guidance of an experienced career counsellor.
- Faster professional development and more effective and efficient operations as a career specialist.
- Cooperation with members of the association, establishing and mediating contacts, and involvement in the activities of the association (KNÜ mentorluse töörühm, 2020, p 11).

The mentor also pointed out that each mentee has their own specific skills, knowledge or competences that need to be developed during the mentorship. These needs are all mapped in the application procedure and at the beginning of the mentorship relationship. Therefore, concrete and specific target competences are not fixed before the programme. In general, the professional competences, knowledge, and skills listed in the occupational guidelines for professional career specialists are expected to be the focus. At the same time, as personal development aspects are not explicitly mentioned as the focus of the programme, this still goes hand in hand with professional growth. For example, insecurity as a personal trait can be related to lack of feedback on one's work, and therefore professional mentorship in work-related matters supports personal development (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021).

## Mentorship experiences – now

The self-reflection worksheets for mentors and feedback survey for mentees are sent to participants after the end of the programme. The pilot programme engaged 20 mentorship pairs.

The wrap-up of the experience between mentor and mentee is not strictly prescribed; each pair has the freedom to choose how they reflect on their experience between themselves. The association and the mentorship working group then ask how they did it afterwards in the feedback survey.

One of the additional experiences for mentees has been leading the co-vision groups, as this is designed on a rotating principle, two-thirds of the participants experienced the role of leading a co-vision group for the first time. It was revealed that participating and leading co-vision groups turned out to be more challenging for mentees than for mentors as the latter are used to this format (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021).

The ‘external’ perspective will also be surveyed to find out what the members of the AECC not participating in the programme think of the programme.

The experiences within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic are both positive and also slightly negative: to gather people from all over Estonia to start the programme would have been tricky, but the crisis forced the adoption of a hybrid format, which benefitted the participants. On the negative side, the restrictions meant not being able to have the first meeting face-to-face, making it a bit more challenging to adjust to each other. Many participants felt sorry they could not meet offline, but the mentors were able to support their mentees in this issue (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021). The experience of conducting an online mentorship programme has positively supported career specialists to also work with their clients online.

### **Story of my journey as a mentee:**

I noticed the invitation to the AECC mentorship programme in one of its emails and felt an immediate interest in joining. I consider myself still a novice in the field and I lack opportunities to discuss matters related to my role as a career counsellor inside the organisation, as I am the only career specialist here. I expected to discuss my doubts with a more experienced colleague, but I also wanted to experience new tools and techniques to guide this kind of conversation. So, I wrote in the application that I wanted someone to reflect with; to raise my confidence in my work; to discuss concrete ideas and strategies to im-

prove the services I provide as a career counsellor. I hoped to reach a new clear goal for my work and knowledge from a professional. My expectations for the mentorship relationship included openness, honesty, and confidentiality. I also noted that even though I work for a higher education institution, my mentor would not have to be from the same focus field; I was open to a mentor from other sectors, like an entrepreneur or personnel manager. I was prepared and ready to have the mentorship meetings online only and this was never a question or problem for me.

The questionnaire to apply as a mentee made me think thoroughly about my aims for the mentorship. It forced me to focus and formulate questions and goals. Even more, I had to do this twice, as the first round of this pilot programme didn't succeed in finding enough mentors (which I learned only later). The second time I had to re-formulate and had a chance to redefine the challenges stated in the first letter to my mentor where I provided background info, my expectations, and specific questions for the mentor. This letter framed our mentorship process very nicely. It helped to keep us focused and the discussion over the set questions and topics filled our 6 meetings throughout the 8 months. So, I revisited the letter with the set goals, questions, and challenges several times during the mentorship journey.

We “clicked” with the mentor from the first seconds – she was absolutely everything I had hoped for, and we are similar types. Even though she is not from the exact same field as me, and working in another setting as a career specialist, we understood each other's reality and felt common ground in many of the aspects we discussed. Our relationship was very friendly, sincere, open, and caring, but we also kept it professional and didn't descend into 'girlfriend' talks.

The fact that I knew everybody was contributing voluntarily to this mentorship programme, made me take the process very seriously. I didn't want to waste my mentor's time, so I prepared the application very thoroughly and never showed up to my meeting unprepared. I also took the initiative to send notes and summaries of each of our meetings. I was eager to set concrete specific tasks and assignments for myself to move forward with solving the challenges I had defined with my mentor. Before each meeting I sent my 'report' or overview of what I had done meanwhile concerning the agreed tasks and what questions had emerged. So, the meetings were constructive as we had

an agenda ahead already about what to focus on. My inner motivation was very high to devote the time purposefully to work on the challenges I had defined for myself. My mentor was always professional, she facilitated the conversations so that we always knew where we were starting from, what we were aiming for with our session and what we concluded. She used a variety of methods from counselling practice, coaching practice, and just shared her knowledge (like concrete names, authors to check, training to attend etc).

I was like a sponge, taking in everything from her! But the main benefit is that she just offered me the reflection and helped me formulate the easy solutions I had sensed intuitively but hadn't recognised before.

Of course, there were some backflips as well. After the second meeting we had a slightly longer gap between the meetings (a bit more than a month), and I felt overwhelmed – the tasks we had set for me seemed very difficult, I struggled to find my way out. I was discouraged by the mess that was revealed when working with my challenge – one problem led to another etc. It is still hard work to be on the path of learning, growing, and developing as a professional! Knowing that it is normal and getting out of one's comfort zone is not easy, but it is useful and helped me to stay on track.

Another challenging episode on my journey was an ethical dilemma: I was applying for a new job where my mentor used to work, and she was supposed to be also one of the recruiting/hiring committee members. I knew it goes beyond the limits of our mentorship relationship, but I needed background info about the job. After deliberating over this for a long time, I asked her if she was ok to 'switch hats' for this topic and not to answer me as a mentor but as an ex-employee of this organisation. As a mentor, it was not supposed to be her job. Still, she did it very professionally, openly by clearly defining the 'hats' we were wearing. And it did not affect our relationship as mentor-mentee at all. We had the conversation about this other topic between our mentorship meetings, in another format and we didn't touch upon this matter in our mentorship session later. I was glad and grateful we managed to solve it so that my mentor didn't feel 'used' and the mentorship process was maintained in its formal frames.

In parallel to unfolding my challenges with my mentor, I was constantly observing the process from aside and found myself thinking

I could never be such a professional mentor as she is! I learned a lot while noticing how she guided our discussion, what kinds of active listening tools, supportive models, and suggestions she made. I also realised more and more as time passed that some of my struggles are not so much to do with my role as career counsellor, but about my other roles in life. We did touch on these issues to some extent, but we also tried to keep the focus still on the career specialist field. I realised I need a coach for my other jobs and roles as well. I would have liked to discuss all the other work and life related matters with her, but it felt like going over the limits and cheating a bit. Perhaps it is just me, as I am not a 100% career specialist and this is just my side job, but in the future, I need the mentor/coach programme for holistic professional development, not just this specific profession.

### Mentorship – looking back

The pilot season of the AECC mentorship ended in May 2021. The feedback from all partners was collected and analysed via anonymous surveys on the Google Forms platform separately for mentees and mentors. One survey was carried out in the first phase of the mentorship process, the other one at the end (KNY 2021). In addition, some of the mentorship pairs reflected on their experiences between themselves and wrapped up the process for themselves.

The report states that 56% of the mentors were very satisfied and 44% were satisfied – 65% of the mentees were very satisfied with the programme (KNÜ 2021).

From the programme working group perspective, there were a few aspects to learn from.

The questionnaires and application forms with very specific questions for potential mentors and mentees was the main tool to help in the matching process. The questions outlined the expectations, needs and background for both. Teily Allas pointed out the current occupation and length of experience as a career specialist could have been included as a question for the mentees (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021).

The first round of recruiting mentors revealed that having narrowly defined pre-conditions for mentors might hinder mentors from joining: when the mentor profile was described so narrowly based on the professional certification

system, there were not so many people identifying themselves as potential mentors (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021). Second, the success of recruitment relies on the communication, which must be persistent, wide-reaching and well-planned.

The experience from the pilot season revealed the need to provide training or guiding materials on how to lead the co-vision groups. Finding the leaders for the co-vision groups turned out to be a challenge (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021). The execution of co-vision groups varied in quality because many mentees lacked experience in this (KNÜ 2021). The co-vision groups were considered very useful and supporting, yet the timing was hard and could have been pre-set earlier and take place more often.

The length of the programme at 8 months is optimal (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021) and meeting 6–8 times was also considered to be optimal (KNÜ 2021). The leader of the working group reflected that as the pilot was all voluntary and it was a test period, not all things were agreed on in advance (e.g., how to wrap up the programme) but organised step-by-step. Whether to follow up with the first mentorship pairs after some time and how has not yet been considered by the working group (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021).

One of the mentors in the pilot season, Küllike Oja, has said that the basis of success is mutual contact, and expressed gratitude that the mentor pairs have so skilfully brought together two completely unfamiliar people. She recommends everyone who is still doubting about whether to become a mentor or mentee to take this opportunity. It is a great experience. (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021). Another mentor commented: “I learned to listen better, to analyse myself. I also developed cooperation skills and I was able to practice patience.” (KNÜ 2021).

Furthermore, the reverse mentoring aspect was pointed out by one of the mentors: “The whole process was like an analysis of my own professionalism, which was full of realisations, discoveries and surprises about what baggage I actually carry with me on a daily basis. It definitely made me a lot more confident and brave. In addition, I received new tools from the mentee, which I have started to actively use in my daily work” (KNÜ 2021).

The mentees were mostly motivated to contribute to the field of career specialist, to give something back to the community. The main drive was to offer added value to the community and at the same time develop professional mentoring skills of their own. Mentors who wanted to re-apply for their occupational cer-

tificate as career specialists benefitted from the gained competence as a mentor (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021).

The importance of this programme relies on profession-specific support and mentoring. The details of the work of a career specialist vary among career information specialists, career consultants and career coaches. Most of the participants did not mind having a mentor from a different level or position, but some expected the pairs to be from the same position. One of the mentees said that participation in the programme provided courage and confidence, and as a result, the mentee is more effective in advising clients (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021).

### **Story of my journey as a mentee:**

Looking back at the mentorship experience, I can say with all my heart that I am grateful for this opportunity: it was useful for me as a career counsellor, but more, it helped me grow as a person. I figured out many things I was doubtful or confused about, or even unaware of. Mobilising myself and focusing my thoughts on strategic planning in one area of my professional life gave me clarity, confidence and saved a lot of time just worrying, guessing, and doubting. I found a clear vision, goals, and ideas to take with me and it has helped me to plan my priorities, schedule, and energy. My mentor helped me realise a very simple and powerful tool in my professional life – hybridisation or crossing professional roles.

I learned that whatever opportunity there is to focus on self-development, this is worth full commitment and focus. The keyword I would use to describe the benefit from this process is: realisation. I realised many things: my real challenges, my real goals, my real opportunities, and my real motivation as a career specialist. I have a concrete strategic plan in these terms and even though the execution is on hold, I know when and how to use this plan.

My mentor was more of a coach for me, supporting me; proposing options that helped me define and decide my needs. My mentor was completely honest, open, and trustworthy – just as I had dreamed. One thing I learned from her is to appreciate the systematic approach and thoroughness in these types of conversations. I used to lack these in my work but now I am constantly putting my focus on following the lead of my mentor.



I miss the mentorship and wish there was an opportunity for mentorship in the same format (8 months) but also during summer or spring school break, a shorter, intensive mentoring session for 1 or 2 very concrete specific professional challenges. The power of mentoring would help us all to be less wasteful in our work and lives – wasting less time figuring out how to do things, wasting less energy doubting ourselves and our ideas, wasting our clients' time on ineffective tools but relying on our community knowledge.

## Key findings

The key stages in this case are expressed by the leader of the programme, Teily Allas:

1. The emergence of committed and determined leaders.
2. Efficient managing to design the principles and guidelines of the programme.
3. Engaging members (potential participants) early and persistently.
4. Initial recruitment of participants using sufficient communication.
5. Engaging external partners to motivate and communicate the programme to our members.
6. Rephrase the conditions.
7. Coordinators of the programme start working.
8. Second recruitment.
9. Matching the mentoring pairs.
10. Intensive training day for the mentors.
11. Workshop for the mentees.
12. Individual meetings and commence the mentorship relationships.

The success factors for the programme were its novelty and actual need. The AECC had never done this before and there was a real need within the members (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021). The timing in relation to Covid-19 was important:

*“The mentoring programme started just in time because the world of work has changed at such a rapid pace that more and more people need career counselling. The corona crisis has brought in more people who have lost their jobs day in and day out, and limiting face-to-face meetings has its consequences. Our specialists also need support.”* (interview with Teily Allas 23.03.2021).

## Dimensions to discover

The biggest question concerning the AECC programme is how to continue and how to guarantee the sustainability of the programme. The report from the first round confirmed that the majority of the participants will recommend this to others and would like it to happen on an ongoing basis. The pilot season happened on a voluntary basis, based on pro bono contributions, but in the future the funding of the programme should be considered. Mentees are probably not able to cover the full cost of the programme and mentors probably cannot contribute pro bono in the long term. In the 2021/2022 round of the programme, mentees paid a participation fee of 50 euros to cover the administrative costs, while the mentors are still contributing pro bono (KNÜ Homepage).

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## 4.3 Cultuurloket

Nathalie Verboven, Laura D'Hoore

### Introduction

*Cultuurloket* is a non-profit organization that offers legal and management support for the cultural sector. The organization has a management agreement with the Flemish government and is largely funded by the government. Cultural organizations or individuals working in the cultural sector can contact Cultuurloket for advice on financing, legal issues, business modelling, etc. Cultuurloket has to support all cultural and creative actors within the Flemish region. Their mission states that they want to promote entrepreneurship and professionalisation in the cultural sector. They want to facilitate guidance to additional financing and to stimulate and support sustainable entrepreneurship. In doing so, Cultuurloket provides advice for cultural and creative actors free of charge. In addition, they also offer counselling programmes, information sessions, webinars and training on various themes within the legal, business and business economics side of the cultural sector. Some services are free, others are not.

On 1 January 2021, Cultuurloket had 12.9 full-time members, of which 6.9 were engaged in knowledge work. In addition to the permanent staff members, Cultuurloket often works with freelance consultants. This was even more common in 2020. Because of the Coronavirus, 10 more freelancers were engaged. These consultants are paid by Cultuurloket with the money they receive from the government for their services. As a result, the service remains free for its clients.

Cultuurloket aims to evolve with the needs of the sector. As previously mentioned, the number of freelancers has increased during the Covid-19 crisis. Furthermore, crisis counselling was also set up at that time. This type of counselling was financed with additional resources from the Emergency Culture Fund of the Flemish Government and was more hands-on than their regular programme. Where consultants from Cultuurloket normally only offer advice, during crisis counselling they also offer their help developing a correct business model. Since mid-November 2020, 19 crisis counsellors have been active in both our first and second-line of advice. First-line advice means they are available for direct questions on call. Advice on concrete legal or management problems that could arise can be sought from the counsellors. Second-line advice is less ad hoc, has a longer trajectory and involves guidance for young cultural entrepreneurs in setting up their practice through classes as well as personal advice.

The regular counselling programme has further expanded since 2020. This is especially the case for the longer trajectories. Consultants from the first line work with the client to develop a process of advisory talks with various experts from the second line. This service will be discussed further in the case study. From 2021, all forms of advice have also been provided fully digitally. This switch was planned before the pandemic, but the Covid-19 crisis accelerated this change. The advisory talks are conducted by telephone or video call and all training courses are digital. Cultuurloket is also investigating options for implementing immersive technologies (AI, VR) for the provision of advice.

## Mentorship process

### Matchmaking and process

One of the tasks of Cultuurloket as an organization in the cultural field is to provide information. A very important tool for this is the extensive website, where a lot of information is available in the knowledge database. The website is structured in such a way that it is very easy to look up information within various themes. This database is a work in progress that is constantly updated and refined when necessary. It is an open knowledge platform. Cultuurloket is also very present on social media, recently launching a series of client testimonials through these channels.

Cultuurloket's website is also the gateway to their advisory function. People can get in touch with a consultant by filling in the contact form on the website. In this form, the client indicates the theme of his/her specific question. Based on this, an expert with knowledge in that domain is assigned for an initial one-on-one telephone conversation of 15 minutes. For simpler legal questions, 15 minutes is usually sufficient to solve the problem. But for more strategic questions, 15 minutes is often too short. In such cases, a follow-up appointment via video call will be scheduled for one hour. During that follow-up meeting, the mentor or consultant examines whether it is necessary to make further appointments, possibly with other experts. This builds a bridge to the longer counselling programme. Cultuurloket always looks for a consultant or mentor with the right expertise for the case. Coordination between different experts is done by the consultants themselves or by the support desk. The experts deal with questions within their own expertise and see whether there is a need for a new appointment with another expert. Each consultant files a report of his or her intervention. That way, the next expert is aware of the client's story.

During the counselling programme, clients are regularly asked to prepare for a follow-up meeting by doing some homework. When the mentor feels that the organization can continue independently, no further appointments are scheduled. This programme is limited to first-line advice. When a customer needs more in-depth guidance or hands-on support, they are referred by Cultuurloket to private organizations.

The crisis counselling that came about during the Covid-19 crisis goes further than first-line advice. Here Cultuurloket is working with a SPOC (Single Point Of Contact) or a file manager. Organizations can contact Cultuurloket by telephone with a request for crisis counselling. The consultant who then conducts this first conversation with the organization automatically becomes the file manager of that case. This consultant detects the difficulties during the intake interview and then engages the right expert to help the client further. On average, there is a budget for 10 hours of counselling per client for crisis support. In addition to various consultations, an expert can also work on, for example, the start of a financial plan. In this way, the file manager engages various experts who each help the client within their own expertise.

## People involved in the mentorship programme

### Mentors

At Cultuurloket, the mentors are the consultants who provide the advice. Each consultant has his or her own area of expertise. Consultants are recruited based on their expertise and are then trained within Cultuurloket to transfer that knowledge to clients. At the start of the job, they follow coaching consultations from the side-lines. After that, telephone appointments are handled independently and, if necessary, first discussed with an internal supervisor. The next step is for a consultant to also develop training courses and lead webinars. New consultants are guided step-by-step by mentors with experience.

Since the workplace restrictions due to the corona crisis, internal contact between the consultants takes place via Microsoft Teams. Before, consultants had a lot of spontaneous contact at the workplace. Now this is done through group chats. For example, there is a group chat for “quick questions” and there are chat groups for each area of expertise.

A consultancy meeting is organized every two weeks and there is also an in-depth knowledge afternoon session every month where certain themes are dis-

cussed. Every three months there is a knowledge network day where external consultants are present and best practices and questions can be exchanged.

### **Mentees**

The mentees in this programme are the organizations and individuals who turn to Cultuurloket for advice. Feedback from mentors suggests that the services of Cultuurloket are still not very well known by people in the cultural sector. Although, Cultuurloket tries to reach people in various ways, the website is the main tool to let people know what the organization can mean for them. Furthermore, Cultuurloket also aims to be present in arts and cultural education and at cultural events.

### **Cultuurloket and its staff**

Apart from the mentors, mentees also meet other staff members at Cultuurloket. This is mostly to schedule appointments or arrange other administrative things. Cultuurloket strongly profiles itself as a solid organization that stands behind its staff members.

## **Evaluation**

Mentees receive a feedback form via email upon completion of a coaching process. They are asked to indicate on a scale from 1 to 10 how satisfied they are with the advice received. They are also asked to briefly explain why they give this score. Not all mentees complete the evaluation form. There is an average response rate of 30%. The answers to this email are screened by the support desk. The scores are reported to the team every month, and action is taken if necessary. For example, when a new appointment is scheduled for a client or the advice is further clarified. The annual average of these satisfaction scores is always included in the annual report. In 2018, the annual average was 8.91, in 2019 8.83 and in 2020 8.8.

About three months after a process has been completed, another email is sent to the client. This email is intended as a reminder and asks whether the client has any doubts or other questions.

## Mentorship process expectations

We asked the mentor how she defines ‘mentorship’. To her, the one-on-one relationship between the mentor and the mentee is very important. It is a question of trust. The exchange of knowledge works both ways. She believes that as a mentor you can also learn from your mentees. What’s also important is that mentors adapt to the needs of the mentee. From there the mentor must provide the necessary information little by little so that the mentee can work with this information in that specific phase of the problem. A mentor must be able to monitor how the process progresses and when a mentee is ready to move on to the next step. It is important for our interviewed mentor that it is a customised process. It is a process that ultimately makes you redundant as a mentor so that organizations become independent. The aim is to provide mentees insights into the sector so that they have the knowledge to solve problems themselves in the future. Cultuurloket is an organization where people expect answers to very concrete questions or help with specific problems. The service is solution oriented.

## Mentorship experiences

### Method of mentorship

The method of mentorship differs for the various services within Cultuurloket. Building a personal bond during the short telephone appointments is of course highly unlikely. At that level Cultuurloket offers something more resembling advice rather than actual mentorship. As we have already discussed, there is not one mentor associated with an organization, there is no exclusive mentor-mentee relationship. There are various reasons for Cultuurloket not to have just one consultant guide an organization. The main reason is that not all consultants have the same knowledge about all topics. Furthermore, not all consultants are always available. A final reason is that Cultuurloket’s goal is to make the organizations more independent, they do not want to make the organization dependent on one person. However, according to our interviewed mentor, the fact that an expert works for Cultuurloket already evokes confidence among the mentees. We could say that a relationship of trust is not so much built up between the people, but that the mentee builds a relationship with Cultuurloket as an organization.

It is important to note that Cultuurloket does not really work on a personal level or with soft skills. They focus on advice and legal and strategic guidance. For example, when a mentor identifies a need for leadership guidance, the client is referred to a personal coach. During crisis counselling during the corona crisis, the mentors noticed that there is often a great need for psychological support. However, it was decided not to include this in the advice provided by Cultuurloket. Of course, the mentors are often a first listening ear for the clients, but Cultuurloket certainly does not profile itself as an organization that can offer psychological help.

### **Role of the mentor**

The interviewed mentor indicated that in that first telephone appointment it is important for the mentor to understand what the real problem is. It sometimes happens that a client asks a question that does not really cover the actual problem. It is then up to the mentor to know how to solve the core problem and to see whether additional help is needed. In the interview, the mentor also indicates that connection is very important. It requires vulnerability on the part of an organization to come to Cultuurloket with a question. The mentor explains that if the coaching was allowed to continue physically, the gratitude of the mentees was sometimes very clear. It happened that a conversation could be so enlightening or reassuring to a mentee that they ask, “can I give you a hug?”. For a mentoring process to be successful, a mentee must be able to show his or her vulnerability. That is why that relationship of trust is so important. A mentee must feel that the mentor will not betray this trust. This is not always evident at Cultuurloket, as the role of the mentor is regularly taken on by someone else.

The way the mentors interact with the mentees has not been established. The extent to which a personal bond is built between the mentor and the mentee depends on the approach of both parties. For our interviewed mentor, the first phone call is the most formal. When there is a good connection with the clients, the conversations become a bit more informal. When there are clients who present themselves more formally, the mentor goes along with this.

The transition to a fully digital operation has not changed much in this regard, according to our mentor. The method is different, but she has the impression that the mentees see the benefits of this digital way of working. The online counselling takes less time than when there is a physical appointment. She also says that she has the impression that the mentors also appreciate this digital switch. However, after the Covid-19 crisis, it would be good to be able to combine both methods and to meet clients physically when it is relevant or has added value.



It sometimes happens that the collaboration between mentor and mentee does not go well. This is usually due to different expectations on the part of the mentee. For example, if a project is not yet planned out enough in terms of content, Cultuurloket cannot always help. According to our mentor, this sometimes occurs with art projects. It sometimes happens that the artist feels misunderstood. It also happens that organizations come with a question that is improper in a legal sense. This is something that Cultuurloket will of course not participate in.

### Summary of key findings

Cultuurloket is an organization with many different activities that support the cultural sector. This case study focuses on activities that revolve around providing immediate advice at the request of organizations and individuals in the sector. It is also mentioned that the online presence of Cultuurloket plays an important role in this and functions as a first step towards concrete advice.

In the case of Cultuurloket, mentorship is focused on business aspects of the cultural sector. The personal development of individuals is not included in their services. In the short telephone appointments and in the longer counselling programme, the advice is also limited to first-line advice. Yet providing this basic information can make a big difference to the functioning of an organization. Since Cultuurloket works on concrete questions and problems, clients can be helped efficiently, and the duration of the counselling programme is limited.

Even though the longer counselling programme does not involve building a close one-to-one mentor-mentee relationship, a relationship of trust can nevertheless develop between the mentee and Cultuurloket as an organization. An important finding here is that it works well for this organization to have different mentors operating in their own area of expertise. For the clients, this means that the face of Cultuurloket changes regularly, but they receive customised information and can rely on the knowledge of the mentors.

## 4.4 Music Estonia

Annukka Jyrämä, Anna Maria Ranczakowska

### Introduction

In 2014, Music Estonia was founded by 23 organizations active in the music field in Estonia. Today, it has become a versatile competence centre that provides services to the music sector, represents Estonian music, musicians, and companies internationally, creates and mediates new contacts, develops cooperation opportunities between different sectors, participates in international projects, workshops and organizations, initiates and conducts research, seminars, and workshops, and more.

### Mission

Music Estonia’s mission is to make the Estonian music industry a professional, innovative, profitable, and internationally operating industry that markets and exports Estonian music and related products and services and creates high value-added jobs.

### Visions

Music Estonia’s activities range from marketing and mentorship to development projects and music export support. In connection with its multiple tasks and origins building from several organizations it has several visions in connection with its aims. The following table combines these visions and their connection to the focus of the case – mentorships. These connections have not been given by Music Estonia, but represent our interpretations as researchers.

Vision	Main context in ME	Connection to mentorship
Music Estonia has developed into an internationally networked competence centre that represents the interests of Estonian music entrepreneurs and amplifies their activities both domestically and globally.	For the organization	As a competence centre engages with mentorship activities to share and enhance competences.

Vision	Main context in ME	Connection to mentorship
<p>Estonian music companies, which have fully established themselves in the global digital music market with the help of innovative business models, offer Estonian music creators and performers many opportunities to perform in economically sustainable ways, thus creating both financial and cultural value for the Estonian state.</p>	<p>For the sector</p>	<p>The sense of community among Estonian music companies with Estonia, allows finding mentors with experience</p>
<p>Estonian music is internationally visible, audible, and conscious. Estonian musicians – authors, performers, ensembles, producers – have created good conditions in Estonia to develop their creative and market potential. The Estonian music ecosystem has become uniform and comprehensive, providing the necessary and internationally competitive environment for the development of local talent. The Estonian music sector cooperates with other (creative) economic sectors, creating added value for them. Estonian cultural and creative industry policy supports the development of the music sector as a complete ecosystem, strategically contributes to the development of all elements of this value chain based on need.</p>	<p>The outcomes of Music Estonia</p>	<p>There are several aspects that relate to mentorship activities, for example building consciousness, building up the ecosystem and its competence and creating both local and international/global networks</p>

## Development / Mentorship programmes – introduction

In addition to the more general visions on the future of Music Estonia as an organization and its activities in general, special attention will be given to the programmes now and in future, as the vision of Music Estonia is to realise its objectives through several projects and programmes, of which many are directly or indirectly related to mentoring activities. Next, we shall open the main programmes related to mentorship.

### Internship programmes

**INTRO:** The aim of the INTRO programme created by Music Estonia is to develop the time-sensitive employees necessary for the functioning of the Estonian music industry. It offers the opportunity to solve practical tasks in cooperation with artists and companies.

Within the framework of the structured development programme INTRO, one of the important parts of which is supervised internships, Music Estonia supports the development of the necessary skills and experience of interns and helps export-capable artists and companies to solve current tasks, thus further supporting their development.

**Music Moves Interns** is a programme led by Music Estonia that aims to significantly contribute to improving the availability of on-the-job internships in music companies for young music professionals in Europe.

Within this programme we test 5 traineeship cycles, with 2 Facilitator Organisations involved (Music Estonia and WHY Portugal) and capture all new knowledge in a comprehensive and transferable Facilitated Traineeship Programme model that can later be implemented in other such organisations, thereby increasing the network and market for traineeships.

During the 3-month programme, the interns work closely with selected artists organizing music-related events or other relevant tasks that contribute to their skill-set and to the field.

### Programmes with mentorship embedded

**SÜNKROON** is a 3-month development programme that includes presentations, seminars, workshops, one-to-one mentoring sessions, and networking

events. It is aimed at music creators and producers or their representatives – managers, record labels, publishers – who already have experience in creating or mediating music for audiovisual media or a strong motivation to do so in the future.

**VOLÜÜM** is an export accelerator programme for Estonian artists and managers providing them with a personal mentor for half a year and new skills through seminars and workshops.

**BUUSTER** is Music Estonia's 3-month development programme dedicated to artist managers. During the programme, we will cover the most relevant topics each manager faces when working on an international scale. Programme mentors will help to analyse each participants' current plans and activities. We will enhance peer-to-peer learning by encouraging the group to share their work experience with one another. The programme consists of three 2-day seminars led by a mentor and three group meetings run by Music Estonia. At the end of the course there is an opportunity for an individual consultation by the programme mentor.

Next, we shall focus on the mentorship in more detail.

## What is the mentorship?

To understand the mentorship in the context of Music Estonia, we will first elaborate how we view the mentors and mentees by discussing the mentorship as an activity, a process or path with some insight on the outcomes of the mentorship process and the competences and enablers for a (successful) mentorship path.

How Music Estonia understands mentorship has developed over time, so that it is more a result of needs-based activities and processes, rather than carefully curated actions. Only some time into the operation of the organisation was the idea of establishing a mentoring programme born. The role of a mentor as an active witness to the process resurfaced by itself from other activities.

### Mentors

Music Estonia sees a mentor as someone with experience in the field as well as personal competences and character that allows good interaction, listening and the ability to reflect on the topic from another's perspective.

Marii Reinmann describes the mentor as an actor who steps into the daily operations of the mentee with less than concrete tasks. It can be seen more as a sparring partner for the self-development of the mentee, as opposed to a direct teacher or consultant who either passes concrete knowledge or steps in answer to concrete questions in a very limited amount of time.

The role of the mentor would therefore be to offer reflective feedback, help the mentee to grow through their own actions and understand how to manage their problems and how to overcome challenges and internalise new knowledge in this process.

In the case of Music Estonia, the mentors are selected based on the analysis of the needs of the mentees. Music Estonia managers contact their personal networks and known actors who have the skills needed to achieve the aims outlined by the mentees. Usually, the mentors are people with experience in the field or genre of the music industry related to the mentees so that they can build on their own networks, experience and directly relate this to the needs of the mentees. It has been mentioned that sometimes mentors from, for example, large companies might not meet the needs of Estonian mentees, as they themselves do not have the experience of starting from zero, but have had the support of large organizations throughout their professional careers. However, sometimes a successful mentor-mentee relationship requires more of an external point of reference; for example, in a recent mentor-mentee relationship, the mentor from a different music genre was beneficial and opened up new avenues for the mentee.

In addition to the (focused) knowledge and experience of the music industry, Music Estonia aims to recruit mentors who have good personal skills in communication, relationship management and reflection. The skills described as ‘mentorship skills’ related in general to their understanding of mentorship as a relationship and as a joint process with reflection and listening. Some of the mentorship skills or character traits include the capacity to commit long term, guide the mentee throughout the process, co-reflecting, asking questions to allow the mentee to discover critical issues and answering them when needed.

These skills might differ in how they are manifested from person to person. In the matching process, personal chemistry should also be considered if possible. However, Music Estonia has had only one case where this personal chemistry and failure of character skills resulted in aborting the mentor-mentee relationship and finding a new mentor for the mentee.

To summarise, we can note that a mentor is someone that joins you in the mentorship path, with an enlightened ear from experience, the capacity for empathy and sharing knowledge by enabling the mentee to act and discover. The mentor is someone who by sharing their experience becomes a sparring partner for a mentee on their path towards becoming a better thinker.

### **Mentees**

The mentorship programme at Music Estonia focuses on specific contexts and the common theme is the (Estonian) music ecosystem. Music Estonia seeks mentees that are committed and highly motivated to become market actors in the music ecosystem, and who are committed to learning. Music Estonia receives a huge number of applications for each mentee placement, and so they try to find out who has a professional interest and wishes to build a career in the music industry rather than just a passing interest. Commitment is one of the most important aspects in the selection of mentees. A more focused interest can indicate their seriousness and commitment to learn, and in some cases experience is also shown through volunteer experiences. If their aim is to promote and export Estonian music, previous experience or activities either in international fields or in promoting Estonia are considered.

In the mentorship process it is important that the mentee knows where he or she wishes to go, and already has some career plans. This allows them to ask more relevant and informed questions, use the time in a focused way rather than for finding their way. As a metaphor, the mentee should know which city they aim to reach through the mentorship path even if they do not know yet exactly which building or district they are aiming for.

Participating in a mentorship programme as a mentee is an investment in time and personal resources, hence personal commitment is important. For the mentees to build enlightened decisions, ask relevant questions and take the best out of the programme they need to be aware of the programme's context, be able to state their personal aims and wishes and, like the mentors, be able as a person to listen, take and share knowledge, be open to new ideas, and have the capacity to build relationships. However, the main criteria mentioned by Music Estonia managers is commitment, to commit to the process and be motivated to learn.

To summarise, the mentee is seen as someone with professional aims in the music field that has some form of experience that allows them to focus and express relevant questions. The mentee needs to be highly motivated, commit-

ted, open minded and have a long-term view of his or her own mission in the context of the Estonian music ecosystem with the ability to be flexible and open to new ideas and opportunities.

## Mentorship

Mentorship is perceived in Music Estonia as a process or a path, where there is a clear beginning and different elements and milestones along the way. However, it is not a process or relationship that is pre-planned or anticipated. Mentoring is a journey over time built on a relationship which has a characteristic that is created for every single mentorship process through the mentoring tandem (mentor and mentee) and is always one of a kind. Sometimes mentees come with vague objectives, but the mentorship allows them to shape and enter the trajectory, and sometimes there is already a clear mission in view from the beginning.

For Music Estonia, the mentorship programme started as a set of troubleshooting processes answering the most common issues the organisation was challenged with, the lack of a strong music ecosystem and exporting activities for Estonian music. One of the main objectives was to help young professionals in Estonia to gain a knowledge and understanding of the field and the skills to manage their music, gain entrepreneurship proficiency, and knowledge for how to operate internationally. The first ways to achieve these aims were built on seminars and traditional teaching. But somewhere along the way it became evident that the artists need a method beyond traditional education to gain that kind of knowledge. Typically, the artists or other actors entering the programme would not have a network, would not know the ecosystem, and would not know how to implement new knowledge into their business idea. It was evident that there was a need for more hands-on methods, like the services of an incubator under the careful eye of someone more experienced. Someone who could go through the experience and feedback with the artist, point out the challenges that were met in the process and nourish the young professional to find solutions. A mentorship programme was seen as the ideal solution to respond to these needs.

Mentorship at Music Estonia is currently seen as a journey or process that includes learning, but learning in a format of tailor-made discussion, and knowledge that meets a specific need. Connecting the networks of the field through site visits and meetings, and questions and answers that arise from the mentee.



And most of all, not just learning in a traditional manner, but learning that includes action, implementing and experimenting with the new knowledge through real assignments and support from the mentor.

### The mentorship process

The mentorship process at Music Estonia consists of more open seminars with specific content and knowledge shared. The main activity, however, involves mentor-mentee encounters, where knowledge is shared, and objectives and practical assignments are tailor made for the needs of the mentee. These events follow each other in a cyclical way, depending on the mentorship programme in question over longer or shorter periods.

The joint activities for larger groups of mentees can include seminars, site visits and international visits to meet experts or actors important for that group. For example, a visit to Thailand to build relationships with local key actors was organized in the context of one mentorship programme.

The mentor-mentee encounters include discussions, reflections and mutually set questions and answers. In addition, emphasis is put on implementing the new knowledge by setting assignments. These assignments include implementing in practice in a safe way knowledge from seminars or expert visits. For example, making marketing materials, branding, or preparing to meet key actors within the field. This makes it possible to bridge the gap between the mentorship process, periods of learning and actual real-life implementations with the support of your mentor.

Sometimes Music Estonia includes an internal manager as facilitator to participate in these meetings to ensure that the relationships and content follow the aim focusing on career building. Having this ‘meta-mentor’ has been found to be most useful; it facilitates smooth guidance towards the right questions, and follow up on sessions or monitoring the development of the mentee.

Below the detailed steps in the mentoring process used by Music Estonia are presented:

## Open Call

The open call for the mentoring programme invites applicants to complete an application form that gathers information about their work and readiness for the mentorship process (description of the project, main objectives, challenges, main expectations from the mentoring, etc). Applications are open for a period of 3 weeks to a month.

## Review

Applications collected through the open call are reviewed by the Music Estonia team. The selection of mentors is fully driven by the needs of the successful mentees, and therefore the application review is a fundamental element of the process.

## Searching for mentors

Based on the applicants' profiles and needs, mentors are sought one by one from the Music Estonia network, through personal contacts. Ideally, the mentor is selected within a month, but at times it could take several months. There is no fixed group of mentors to select from, even though previous mentors may be contacted.

## Period of mentoring relations

The mentor-mentee relationship is established, the parties are introduced to each other, and common goals are set. The mentee presents the idea and motivation behind participation in the programme and, together with the mentor, formulate draft objectives. There is relative freedom in the process of establishing the relationship; it is not curated by the organization. However at times a facilitator from Music Estonia may be being present to help the tandem formulate plans and follow up on them.

The VOLÜÜM programme had 5 mentoring sessions, one (or two) of them in physical proximity (mentors from abroad would come to participate in local events such as Tallinn Music Week, etc). The remaining sessions happened online. The coordinator of the programme facilitates scheduling and contacts, making sure all the relevant information and materials are sent to both parties.

The period of the mentoring relationship as a rule lasts 6 months, but in many cases, this period is informally extended. Very often the last meeting takes place a lot later. The reason for that can be found in the need for more time to reflect and realise some ideas and activities. The realities of the music sector are so that processes take more time than the mentorship programme would allow.

## Feedback

Feedback is collected after the mentoring period has concluded using a survey for the mentees, and a final discussion with the mentors.

The VOLÜÜM programme has been conducted three times and no overall structural changes took place, the improvements (not only feedback, but also self-reflection) led to some fine detail adaptations. For example, the design of the call (what to ask applicants) and how to better manage expectations.

The figure below presents the lifecycle of the mentoring process in Music Estonia programmes.

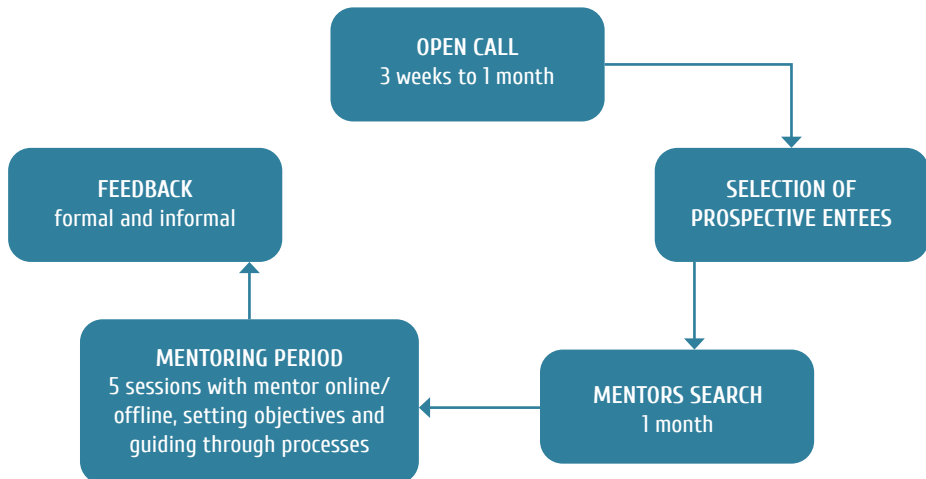


Figure 1. Lifecycle of the mentoring programme VOLÜÜM at Music Estonia

## Summary of key findings

Through the analysis of mentoring processes and mentoring programmes at Music Estonia, several important findings have come to light – the most important of which are presented below.

The focus of the mentoring process lies in **the interplay between the individual and the collective**. The individual focus is manifested through a tailor-made approach to the mentoring process crafted throughout the programme to fit the participants' needs. On the other hand, the collective dimension is implicitly integrated as mentees meet with practitioners and are integrated into the field of music exports or markets through the mentorship programme; for example, during site visits and meetings with key actors in the field, and individually through the mentee-mentor relationship and the given assignments.

Since the mentorship process is also seen as a path into the community, the context (i.e., music in Estonia and globally) is a major emphasis. The process focuses on discovering and granting the mentee access to fields and subfields of the music market, and the Estonian context. This may include, for example, how to cope when entering global markets from a small country without large resources.

In the case of **mentoring in the cultural sector** (unlike other settings that also employ mentorship activities, i.e., start-up environment), the mentees come from a variety of contexts and levels of experience and have different motivations for taking part in the programme. Hence **this diversity and multifaceted nature** of mentees and mentorship needs to be taken in account in the mentoring process.

It can be observed that the relationship between mentor and mentee is driven by the mutual objective of the career development of the mentee, but also the mentor's need to share their experience and thereby improve the entire sector. The professional match is highlighted as the main driver, but matching character, working style and even temperament were also mentioned as important elements to be reflected upon when selecting mentors.

One of the aims of Music Estonia is to strengthen the Estonian music ecosystem. This is achieved primarily via a highly hands-on approach to enhancing the capacities of music actors. Through programmes such as VOLÜÜM, the aim is also to contribute indirectly at a broader cultural policy level. Therefore,

mentoring as a tool serves to also strengthen the environment in which it is operating from both a top-down and bottom-up perspective.

One of the important findings of this analysis is the emergence of the “**internship facilitator or meta-mentor**” role – a person that while organizing and coordinating activities related to the programme is also responsible for nurturing the relationship between the mentor and mentee, facilitating contacts, information, and material exchange, and keeping up with plans, assignments and agreements between the mentor and mentee.

The mentoring process at Music Estonia, with its emphasis on implementing assignments, seems to implicitly follow **the learning cycle** proposed by Kolb (1984) and the **experiential learning perspective**. Such learning entails not only an adaptive process to cope with change and to survive, but also the capacity to create and focus on experience, rather than waiting for and learning from it (Gibb 1997, cf. Deakins & Freel 1998, cf. exploration and exploitation in organisational learning by March 1991 ref Jyrämä and Äyväri 2002) (See Figure 2).

The mentees are selected on the basis of concrete experience, and through further experiences and assignments, they reflect with the mentors. Along this path they aim to learn from the experiences at a more general level (i.e., engage in abstract conceptualisation in an implicit manner), followed then by further experimentation and more experience and reflection. In this way the cycle continues through several iterations through the mentorship relationship.

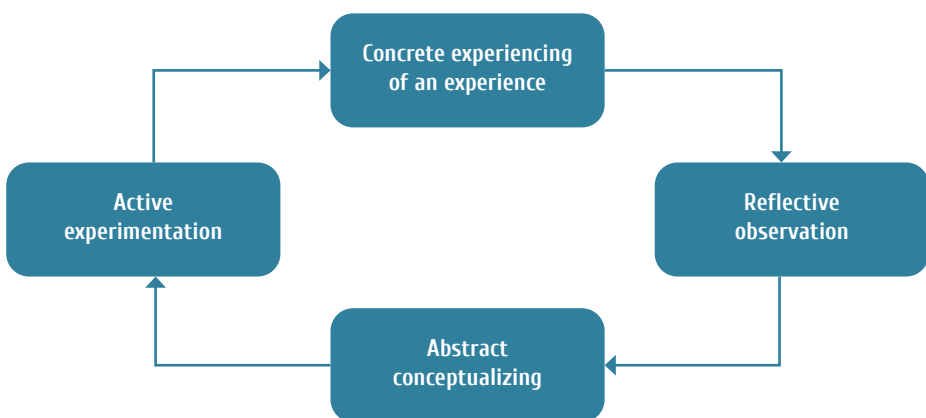


Figure 2. Kolb's experiential learning cycle (Kolb 1984, ref. Moon 2000: 25)

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## 4.5 Project 33 – Strategic Planning for Public Cultural Institutions in Novi Sad

Višnja Kisić, Jelena Mihajlov

### Introduction

This quite specific one-off mentorship programme has implemented mentorship as a method within a larger capacity building, educational and policymaking project – Project 33: Strategic Planning of Public Cultural Institutions in Novi Sad. The project was a pioneering cultural policy and management effort to create a 5-year strategic plan for each public cultural institution in the city of Novi Sad, Serbia. By testing methods other than having external consultants who deliver strategic plans, the project engaged in a wide ranging four-month educational programme as well as mentoring support over 5 months for all 33 public cultural institutions on the territory of Novi Sad, established both by the City of Novi Sad and by the Province of Vojvodina of which Novi Sad is the administrative centre.

### The wider context as an impetus for the project

The project was implemented in the context of preparations for Novi Sad to be European Capital of Culture 2021 (the title year was then postponed to 2022 due to Covid-19), which as a unique “cultural policy event” has created a particular policymaking ambience within the city, in which culture has been pushed to centre stage. This meant that numerous issues kept under the carpet for years could now be addressed, and that numerous new initiatives could gain impetus, funding and support.

As part of the bidding process for ECoC back in 2015–2016, a group of researchers and experts from Novi Sad, led by Dr Goran Tomka, worked on developing the first ever Strategy for Cultural Development in the City of Novi Sad 2016–2026. This occurred through research into the cultural field and civic participation in cultural life, as well as through a series of consultations and workshops with public cultural institutions, the independent cultural sector, artists and the city administration. One of the policy mechanisms envisioned in the strategy was to initiate a process of long-term strategic planning for public cultural institutions as a way to work on their democratisation, international-

isation and involvement in wider city life. As a consequence, the Action Plan in 2016–2017 defined that all public cultural institutions in Novi Sad should create strategic 5 year plans, and that this process should be an opportunity to strengthen the capacities of cultural institutions and their employees, open up the institutions to international and regional cooperation as well as develop a more dynamic relationship with citizens and different audiences. This was a pioneering idea because at the time no public cultural institution in Novi Sad had a strategic plan, nor had they engaged in writing one because this was not set as a requirement by the city or provincial government. The Gallery of Matica Srpska as a public institution located in Novi Sad is the only organisations that has been obliged to have a strategic plan and has had experience developing two such documents so far.

The first step was to engage a group of experts to work as consultants to deliver strategic plans for each institution, and the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management was invited as a reputable partner to think about doing this work. However, because development of strategic plans was not seen as a goal in itself but as the impetus for wider capacity building, cooperation and re-thinking institutional positions, the representatives of the UNESCO Chair (Dr Goran Tomka, Dr Visnja Kisić and Dr Milena Dragičević Šeši) suggested that this is an opportunity to give agency and responsibility to the employees of the cultural institutions and support them through a well-designed programme. This was quickly understood and approved both by the Novi Sad ECoC 2021 Foundation as well as the City of Novi Sad, and this is how the idea of a project that consists of long-term educational and mentoring support was initiated.

## Organizational arrangements

The organisation of the project was quite complex, involving the public administration at the city and provincial level, a public foundation and a public university, each having their responsibilities but also agendas. The City Secretariat for Culture of Novi Sad has been the main funder and responsible government body in the process of strategic planning for the cultural institutions. They handed funds over to the publicly established Novi Sad ECoC 2021 Foundation, to coordinate the whole process of the development of the strategic plans. A public procurement procedure was implemented by the Foundation and the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management, and the University of Arts Belgrade won the procurement and was chosen to conceptualise and imple-



ment a one-year programme (known as Project 33) of professional capacity building in support of the cultural institutions to develop their strategic plans.

However, none of the funders solely fulfilled a funding role, but also engaged in facilitating and steering of wider institutional transformation. Therefore, the Unit for Culture at the City of Novi Sad and the Provincial Secretariat for Culture of Vojvodina, together with the NS ECoC 2021 Foundation were in charge of meeting, motivating and informing the directors of cultural institutions about the process, and ensuring their involvement. The NS ECoC 2021 Foundation was responsible for providing space for educational programmes, filming workshops and organising workshops and meetings, as well as for maintaining contact with the City of Novi Sad and the Provincial Secretariat for Culture of Vojvodina.

The UNESCO Chair was in charge of conceptualising and running the educational and mentoring programme, providing learning resources and evaluating and monitoring the process. On behalf of the UNESCO Chair, Dr Višnja Kisić and Dr Goran Tomka functioned as project leaders and managers, creating the educational and mentoring programme, teaching materials and guides, and the evaluation and monitoring framework, as well as leading the communication with all participants, writing materials for the programme, selecting and briefing all the lecturers and mentors and following the overall project and development of strategies. They also acted as lecturers on some topics and mentors for some institutions. Other professors as well as collaborators from the UNESCO Chair were engaged for particular workshops and lectures. Many of them also acted as mentors together with other professionals from the cultural sector who are collaborators or alumni of the UNESCO Chair. The legal and finance departments of the University of Arts were engaged in the financial and administrative follow-up for the project.

## Funding

Since the project was aimed at building capacities for strategic planning in all public cultural institutions located in the city of Novi Sad and its wider area, the project was funded by the Unit for Culture of the City of Novi Sad and the Provincial Secretariat for Culture of Vojvodina. The funds and public procurement were administered by the NS ECoC 2021 Foundation, within the framework of preparing Novi Sad to become a European Capital of Culture.

## Resources available

The overall budget for the project was around 40,000 euros, with 20,000 euros for the mentoring phase, resulting in 27 mentoring processes through which 27 institutions developed 5-year strategic plans.

Each mentor was paid a fixed fee of 500 euros gross for 10 hours of mentoring, as well as travel expenses to and from Novi Sad, plus a gross fixed rate of 170 euros for a one-day workshop with all employees of the mentee institution. As this was a part of a larger project, resources included a monthly salary for project managers (420 euros gross per month), as well as for experts from the administrative, legal and financial units at the University of Arts (380 euros gross per month).

Since 6 out of the 33 institutions already had strategic plans or were established by the state (and not the Province or the City) they took part only in the educational programme and not in the mentoring and development of strategic plans. Therefore, part of the funds that remained due to their lack of involvement in the mentoring phase was used to report on the project after October 2019 – creating a joint publication in Serbian and English in which summaries of all strategic plans are presented. The funds were also used as to create an annual programme planning and annual report form for all cultural institutions, so that the City of Novi Sad and Province of Vojvodina could have a uniform way to follow the annual work and progress of the institutions they are funding through their public budgets.

## Structure and timeline of the process

The educational and mentoring support within Project 33 lasted from October 2018 to September 2019.

### Phase I – October 2018 to December 2018

The first phase consisted of an educational process lasting from October 2018 to December 2018 and included day-long seminars and workshops each week, for two employees from each of the 33 cultural institutions in Novi Sad.

### Phase II – January to March 2019

The second phase, after the educational process, was the individual work of the participants, in which each pair of employees from each institution, who had

gone through the educational process, conducted a strategic analysis of their institution from January to March 2019.

#### Phase III: April to August 2019

In parallel with Phases I and II, the project managers prepared the mentoring process and began matching mentors and institutions – as mentioned above, two employees from each institution were selected as mentees. The third phase was the mentoring process aimed at supporting the development of strategic plans for the cultural institutions from April to August 2019.

#### Phase IV: September 2019

Evaluation and reporting took place in September 2019. Throughout this process, learning tools, guides and materials were provided to support the development of the strategic plan and the mentoring process.

## Mentorship process: aims, roles, structure and key steps

### Aims, vision and motivation for the mentorship programme

The key aim and motivation was to support the employees of the public institutions in Novi Sad to build their capacities in strategic analysis and planning and produce a 5-year strategic plan for their institution.

### What is a mentorship?

The mentorship process within Project 33 was defined as providing professional or expert support by a mentor towards an entire institution as the mentee, represented by two employees responsible for leading the process of strategic planning within their institution. Mentorship in this case had a very specific focus on developing a strategic plan for a cultural institution, following the Guide to Strategic Planning and the mentoring framework provided by the University of Arts in Belgrade.

### Key roles in the mentoring process

Since the mentorship aspect of Project 33 was linked to the purpose of developing capacities and supporting strategic planning in public cultural institutions in Novi Sad, there were no open calls for either mentees or mentors, and the role of the mentees was unusual.

## Mentees

There was no direct reference to participants as ‘mentees’ in the project because those receiving support from a mentor were long-term professionals and employees of public cultural institutions in Novi Sad. They were also not selected through an open call, but were delegated in the beginning of the project. Each institution delegated two employees – preferably one with a more managerial profile (deputy director, organiser, etc.) and one who is more content related (curator, actor, editor of cultural programmes, etc).<sup>12</sup> They were the ones who attended the educational programmes, and were supposed to create a strategic plan for their institution with the support of their mentor. Therefore, in this way, it was not only these delegates that were in the role of mentees sharing one mentor, but the whole institution was in that role.

The richness as well as complexity of the project was in part related to the immense diversity among the cultural institutions, both in their area of work (libraries, museums, archives, as well as cultural centres, performing arts centres, theatres, etc.) as well as in their organisational capacities (ranging from a children’s cultural centre with 1 employee only, or cultural centres with 2–3 employees on the outskirts of the city, to large institutions such as the Serbian National Theatre with 300 employees). Both the educational programme as well as the mentorship process had to be flexible enough to adapt to the different circumstances.

## Mentors

The mentors were professionals in diverse areas of culture that could respond to the particularities of such a diverse group of institutions, and were also chosen based on their previous experience in strategic planning within cultural institutions and organisations. The project managers invited professionals whom they thought fitted these criteria, and created an initial list of over 30 mentors, indicating their biography and expertise. Then, institutions could choose the most appropriate three choices, and were then matched with the mentors through discussion with the project managers. Some mentors were professors and lecturers from the UNESCO Chair, some were directors or employees of public cultural institutions, some were professionals working in the independent cultural scene. Most of the mentors were from Serbia because knowledge of

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<sup>12</sup> As directors are not permanent staff of the institution and they are subject to appointment through elected political parties, and the project focused on long term capacity development of institutions, they were not eligible to participate, but were regularly informed about the process.

the context, as well as proximity to the institution was an important criterion. However, there were several mentors from the wider SEE region, and professionals from France and Sweden who participated as lecturers in the educational process.

### **Project managers**

The project authors and managers were Višnja Kisić and Goran Tomka, who performed both managerial as well as content-providing roles. They created the educational and mentoring programme, teaching materials and guides, and evaluation and monitoring framework, as well as led the communication with all participants, and selected and briefed all lecturers and mentors. They performed the role of lecturers for some topics, and were also mentors for two institutions each during the mentoring phase, but also supported other mentors in the development of the strategic plans. This meant that the content and expertise was coming from the managers and facilitators, which made it easier to adapt the process when needed, introduce new methods of support and have direct contact with both mentees and mentors.

Besides the project managers on the side of the UNESCO Chair, an important role was played by the project coordinator from the NS ECoC 2021 Foundation, Vuk Radulović, who coordinated this process with the Unit for Culture at the City of Novi Sad and the Provincial Secretariat for Culture of Vojvodina from the very beginning, including the administration of the public procurement. His role was crucial in maintaining relations with decision-makers and sometimes balancing different priorities and agendas, as well as meeting, motivating and informing the directors of the cultural institutions about the process to ensure their involvement. One more person from the NS ECoC 2021 Foundation, Vladica Conić was responsible for organising venues, catering and filming for the educational programme, and the PR department was in charge of communicating with the media.

### **Specific motivations and expectations**

Because mentees did not apply to participate in a mentoring programme, but were delegated to carry out the strategic planning in their institutions, their motivation varied considerably. In many cases, there was suspicion and mistrust before the project started, since some saw it as yet another empty obligatory attempt for capacity building, an obligation to produce yet another irrelevant

document or to participate in ECoC activities, which many disliked. However, because of the dedication and energy put into the project by the project managers, the reputation of the UNESCO Chair and the quality of the programme, after the first few seminars trust and motivation was established.

For some mentees the motivation came from **personal learning and equipping oneself with new perspectives** on their own institutions, by **gathering managerial knowledge and skills**. As one mentee mentioned:

The lectures were interesting, diverse, and our brains started working and were triggered to think differently. Because we used to do management, but more instinctively, without knowing the methods, theories, or specific tools, because we did not have time to educate ourselves in that direction.

For others, it was more about **the opportunity to change and shape their institution**, as one mentee reflected:

I was quite sceptical at the beginning because I thought that transformations here in my institution are hard and slow, and I was not sure how we would do this in practice. But I was motivated because I saw this as a big opportunity to change two things: work in our cultural sector, to transform something on a more systematic level, to start planning for culture in a contemporary manner.

The motivation factors for mentors were much more straightforward and clear because they were asked to participate instead of being delegated. For the mentors, this engagement was about **accepting a professional challenge**, as one mentor reflected:

The challenge was key, there are offers which you cannot reject because through them you are stepping outside your comfort zone, to something in between excitement and passion and fear, and you hope this will bring you something.

For others, it was about the **opportunity to learn from the case of other institutions**, to **apply theoretical knowledge in practice** or to **get inspiration** by working with new colleagues and new institutions. Furthermore, the underlying motivation for all mentors was the idea that they are **contributing in some way to the wider institutional and cultural policy transformations** in Novi Sad and Serbia, experimenting and setting a precedent.

## Timeframe of the mentoring process

The whole educational and mentoring support within Project 33 lasted from October 2018 to September 2019, with the educational process lasting from October to December 2018; the individual work on strategic analyses in each institution and the matching process for mentoring lasted from January to March 2019, while the mentoring process and the development of the strategic plans lasted from April to August 2019, and evaluation and reporting took place in September 2019. In regard to the mentoring process, the selection of mentors, matching and creation of support materials took place from January to March 2019; the initial meetings/workshops with mentors and mentees took place in late March and early April 2019; while the mentoring process took place from April to August 2019, and in some cases extended to September 2019. At the end of the process, a joint conference was organised by the City of Novi Sad to share experiences.

## Steps and elements in the mentorship process

### Phase I: Educational programme, October–December 2018

As the mentoring process was part of the wider professional capacity building project, mentees received a substantial educational programme before engaging in the mentoring process. The educational programme on strategic analysis and planning lasted from October 2018 to December 2018, and involved one-day weekly seminars, taking place each Tuesday 10:00–16:00. Each seminar included both lectures and workshops and featured a particular topic, including the basics of strategic planning, cooperation, networking, the internationalisation of work, fundraising, audience relations, teamwork and internal organisation, programming and the strategic restructuring of institutions. After each seminar, the presentations, additional literature and materials were shared with participants and a focus assignment was given. In this way, all participants and mentees were involved in detailed training and acquired knowledge as well as basic skills for strategic analysis and planning so that they could coordinate that process within their own institution.

### Phase II: Individual strategic analysis of each institution and Preparation for mentoring, January–March 2019

After the educational phase was finished, meetings were organised every few weeks to keep track of the work of the mentees, share experiences and prepare the mentoring phase.

Once the matching was finished a meeting with mentees took place dedicated to the mentoring process and the expectations and responsibilities of each side, and a similar meeting took place with all the mentors.

- **Matching process: key steps, criteria, pairing of couples**

Mentees were already selected or nominated at the beginning of the project, since each institution participating in the project was supposed to select two employees – preferably one with a more managerial profile (deputy director, organiser, etc) and one who is more content related (curator, actor, editor of cultural programmes, etc). They have already gained a substantial level of knowledge in strategic planning before the mentoring phase started, and have also started working on the strategic analysis within their institution with other employees.

Potential mentors were invited by project managers, based on the mentor’s previous experience with strategic planning, specific expertise in the cultural field, as well as their attitude towards sharing knowledge in a collegial manner. In February 2019, a list of over 30 potential mentors with their biographies and expertise was compiled and sent to the mentees together with a Questionnaire for the Institutional Needs in the Mentoring Process”.

Institutions had to fill in the questionnaire in March 2019 and would also indicate three primary preferences for mentors from the list, as well as someone outside the list if they found that person a better fit. The project managers then analysed all the needs and suggested mentors, and prepared a final matching, taking care that certain mentors are not burdened with 3 or more mentees. This was done in consultation with the employees from the institutions as well as potential mentors. The final selection and matching was concluded at the end of March 2019.

- **Preparation of mentees and mentors for the mentoring process: tools, materials and workshops**

Since the mentoring process focused on developing a strategic plan for each cultural institution, the basic materials for support were threefold.

Guide to the process of strategic planning in cultural institutions

Besides the already mentioned educational programme on strategic planning, the project managers produced a *Guide to the Process of Strategic Planning in Cultural Institutions*, which is a detailed guidebook for the process, methods of strategic analysis and planning, and concrete examples. This provided



a framework for the mentees to analyse their institution as well as to work on developing a strategic plan, but also provided the mentors with a foundation and direction for supporting the mentees. In all the interviews this guidebook has been repeatedly cited as a “crucial tool for structuring the process”, “bible to go back to”, “a guideline without which one might feel lost in some stages”. This was useful for both mentees in summing up the strategic planning step-by-step, as well as for mentors because it provided them with a structure for the mentoring process, which they could then complement with their specific knowledge. Both mentors and mentees highlighted that this is a resource that they continue to come back to for different purposes even today.

#### Guidebook on the mentoring process

The second tool was a *Guidebook on the Mentoring Process* explaining what mentoring is in this particular case, detailing the timeframe, and explaining the roles and responsibilities of both the mentors and mentees. This was a crucial tool for establishing expectations and responsibilities on both sides, and highlighting the agency and ownership of the strategic plan itself within the institution for the mentee and not the mentor, who is just there to support.

#### Preparatory meetings with mentors and mentees

In addition, an initial meeting with mentors only and mentees only took place to go through the process and expectations in detail and discuss any doubts and questions along the way.

### **Phase III: Mentoring process and development of strategic plans, April–August 2019**

The process of mentoring lasted from May to August 2019, even though in some cases it extended until September 2019.

#### **• Arrangement of the mentoring process**

Mentors were assigned 20 hours of mentoring with the employees of a cultural institution leading the process of strategic planning, plus a one-day workshop with the whole collective of the institution. Some of those hours were spent within the institution, while some were spent online mentoring, reading the versions of strategic documents, sending useful resources, or motivating the mentees. Even though most mentors spent more than 20 hours supporting the institution, this limit was useful in creating the mindset in which the mentor is not constantly available within the four to five month period, but is to be con-

sulted when some stage of the work has been implemented by the employees or when there are new dilemmas and doubts along the way.

- **Monitoring the process and support for the mentoring couples**

Both mentees and mentors compiled short reports on the meetings through which basic monitoring was taking place. At the same time, the project managers were in contact via phone with both mentees and mentors in cases when there were doubts, questions or issues with how to proceed, and therefore helped resolve issues as they appeared along the way. Unlike in one-to-one mentoring processes, the most common problems included tensions between the two team members or mentees assigned to develop the strategic plan, issues or problems with the director or the managing board of the institution and their relation to the process, as well as the involvement of other employees.

#### **Phase IV: Evaluation and reporting**

The evaluation was conducted as each specific part of the project was implemented, in order to be able to adapt and change what is not working. During the educational phase, on site evaluation in the form of questionnaires was implemented and analysed after each educational seminar. Throughout the mentoring process regular meeting evaluations were completed by mentors and mentees and phone support by project managers was offered when needed. Monitoring and evaluation occurred throughout the mentoring process via online meetings, short surveys and phone contact, plus the final evaluation on the entire mentoring process.

### **Mentorship looking back**

#### **A clear outcome as a form of pressure or a benefit – Reflections on the expectation of creating a strategic plan**

Unlike mentoring programmes which are not goal and output oriented, Project 33 had a very clear aim of supporting the process of strategic planning with clear deadlines on when the strategic plans need to be written by the employees/mentees and adopted by the Management Boards of each institution. This is why it was important to explicitly reflect on whether the mentors, mentees and project managers thought this added unnecessary pressure that obstructed the learning and mentoring process, or was it a beneficial driving force for

engagement and learning. Interestingly, even though some interviewees mentioned that they usually like things that are not so strict, all of them stated that in this context having a focus on a strategic plan as an output was seen as a positive thing.

Mentees claimed they have learned more because they had to apply what they learned to a specific exercise, stating that:

What I do not use stays latent and passive and easily forgotten, but the knowledge I apply practically is internalised. Without that, education and support are dead capital, so this was the best option.”

Mentors comparing this mentoring experience to some others which are not output oriented, stated

...this was more practical, and gave possibility to support mentee in a concrete way

or that:

...this was more concrete, with theoretical frameworks and methods and a guidebook through which I could know what I am doing, and this for me was rewording also in the sense of my professional development and interests. This requires more knowledge, and I was preparing a lot for the sessions, but I got new experience and knowledge about cultural policy or the work of some cultural institutions from behind the scenes.

The project coordinator on the side of the ECoC 2021 Foundation was also quite explicit in preferring the result driven approach, stating:

Definitely the result. We would not have even this many applicants applying and would not have had the inspiration to work on this – they knew the final goals, deadlines and what is needed to be delivered, and this was perfectly explained that education and mentoring are a function to achieve this. This was important for their responsibility, seriousness, and their obligation, so it has a purpose in this final document. And when this is something to have political power this leads to results.

Therefore, it was **this result orientation that at the same time contributed to more intangible outcomes**, such as professional development and acquiring of new skills and knowledge, learning and taking both mentors and mentees outside their comfort zone, the development of new contacts and

solidarity among the institutions and employees, as well as new contacts with mentors and professionals outside of one's usual circles. And at the same time, it seems to be **crucial for maintaining the motivation to be engaged in the process**, because there was this final expectation and goal towards which everyone was working. So in this case, the focus on the final product or output did not impede the process or diverse outcomes, but have directed them.

**The impact of the mentorship component on the whole project – or, what would not have been achieved without mentoring?**

Since the project was about wider institutional and policy transformations in the cultural field in Novi Sad, this could have been imagined without the mentorship component. However, all interviewees reflected on the specific benefits that the mentoring aspect brought to the whole project, indicating that it would be harder or sometimes even impossible to achieve these specific results or to maintain the motivation.

First, the mentors had a **specific distance from the everyday institutional work and could observe it from a new perspective**, indicating potential solutions, examples and changes needed. As the mentors indicated:

“I’m coming from the outside, so I can have a clearer overview...” ; “I brought distance which gave a new perspective, and I was unencumbered by what the institution thinks is possible or not.” Or, as some mentees stated: “For me personally, the role of the mentor was important because she answered my doubts and dilemmas, opening new perspectives, fitted certain things together, giving me back my wind.”

Second, because of the **mentors’ specific authority as professionals, they acted as an encouraging force for the employees** in explaining the significance of the process, especially in relationship with the directors and management boards. The mentors were in a position to **use specific tactics, even diplomatic skills**, as some of them mentioned because they were advocating for and defending certain ideas and transformations during the meetings with the directors as well as the overall collective. As some mentees stated: “

The mentor attended two meetings of the expert council and both times this had a positive impact on building the awareness that strategic planning is important... She was also in meetings with the management board and did not have to persuade them a lot”; “The mentor had the authority to explain issues and be listened to in a way that we

could not as insiders in the institution”; “the role of the mentor who is an expert was a very important psychological moment for the whole collective, and gave us encouragement to work on strategy as well as the encouragement to other colleagues to participate in this process.”

Third, the engagement of the mentor was highly important for **building confidence in the mentees’ capacities, as well as some kind of verification and quality assurance** that the strategy was being developed in a good direction. As one mentee stated:

“The mentor is the one that gives a particular stamp that what we did is valid. She was not saying what we should do, but was able to pull out ideas from us and materials that we were making. She encouraged us to get to the results on our own.” Or, “I think I would not have had enough confidence to take up this work without a mentor, and even if we succeeded in writing the strategy on our own as employees, this would not be accepted by the director or adopted by the Board.”

These are aspects that the project managers also highlighted, underlining that this **position of authority and expert knowledge, on one hand, and dedication and proximity on the other** was directing the process in a way that would be impossible to achieve if the two employees were left alone to work on the strategic plan, or if the institution engaged an external consultant. The project coordinator from the side of the ECoC 2021 Foundation reflected:

The mentoring process was extremely important and it was carefully and successfully planned because I do not think that even after education the results could be achieved. It was good that institutions could choose which mentor they wanted, and sometimes this was a personal attachment, sometimes a matter of special skills to help them. It could not be delivered by institutions themselves and they needed someone to guide them, and needed someone who was also internationally connected.

### Ingredients of a (non)successful mentorship relationship

Reflecting on the specific styles, values or approaches to mentoring which lead to more or less successful relationships, the project managers highlighted that in fact, there was no mentoring relationship that did not work in the end, but the quality of the relations have varied. Interestingly, in the case of this pro-

ject, the quality of the relationship was not only dependent on the mentees and mentors. Issues such as bad interpersonal relations between the two employees working on the strategy, pressures and challenges from other employees, or the lack of commitment of a director influenced the mentoring process. This is why project managers and project coordinators from the side of the Foundation mentioned that there was a need to intervene sometimes, balance these relations or make sure there is a proper space and setting for mentoring relations to happen. They underlined that what made the relations successful was the **devotion and precision of the mentor, replying on time, being present within internal meetings and having the curiosity to understand the internal institutional context better.**

Specific mentors underlined the **importance of trust** that has to be built despite the fact that the first meetings are always challenging; **the honesty in terms of mentors sharing both positive and negative examples** from their own experience and giving honest feedback; as well as the **persistence as a mentor** to go back to the assignments which have been skipped and discuss them anew. For others, in this particular context, it was about **the openness of the communication, being focused on the assignment, and the shared belief in the process** and possibility of positive changes, as well as the **readiness to learn from one another.** What was also highlighted is **responsibility and dedication and a professional attitude** towards the joint goal, including the readiness of the mentor to go back to particularly sensitive or unanswered issues.

The mentees stated that what they appreciated was **the directness, focus and stating key things which were useful for them,** underlining that:

“The mentor knew **how to target the right things,** and say them very concretely, without much philosophising.”

Others highlighted the **mutual responsibility and commitment to the relationship** as a key ingredient:

“Dedication on both sides. It is a **match of two different sources of knowledge,** one from the outside and one that knows the context deeply. But a mentor has the **motivation only if he or she has someone with whom to work. And the mentee has motivation if the mentor guides her in the right way,** with a pedagogical approach that lets the mentee do the work, and then helps.”

### Outcomes of the project and mentorship component

The fact that all institutions engaged in mentoring processes and created strategies that were all adopted (except for one) by the management boards, is a positive outcome that contributed to long-term planning and restructuring of cultural institutions in the city. The quality of the strategies varies, but the interviewees underlined that these were the first strategies ever written and adopted by their institution, and that even though they do not represent the most progressive vision they could imagine, they are realistic and based on discussions and consensus making.

All interviewees highlighted that the development of strategies served to bring employees together to think about their institutions. Even though this participation was difficult at times and it needed some persuasion and motivation from the mentors and project managers, it created space to face one's own capacities, think introspectively and in relation to the context, and foster the feelings of collective action and dedication to one's profession and institution. Many important future changes have been debated and inscribed in the strategies: new organisational structures and divisions of work; mechanisms for teamwork and long-term professional development; new approaches to audiences and the wider public; the internationalisation and regionalisation of work; and cooperation with emerging artists.

The project managers and coordinators highlight that the most successful part is the capacity building process, as well as the networking between the institutions and institutions and experts, and the direct and honest approach during the whole process which led people to speak about their problems within the institutions and work to find solutions to them collectively. They particularly highlighted that this was the first time that all cultural institutions in the city were sharing the same space week by week, the outcome of which was a new level of cooperation, new understandings and new solidarity between them. After the project ended the NS ECoC 2021 Foundation built on this and started organising meetings to encourage sharing institutional resources, coordinating activities, venues and technical equipment, working on projects, etc.

The mentees benefitted both through the educational process and mentoring, learning new approaches to different aspects of institutional management and thinking strategically. The interviewees mentioned that this experience encouraged them to plan to continue going to education and training, or that they learned that they could always do better and even do things they could not imagine doing a few months before. Some also mentioned the newly created belief

that systematic action in culture is possible, even though it required a lot of effort.

The mentors also highlighted how important the project was for their learning and development. Some stated this was a professional challenge through which they learned a lot, or were able to reflect and use this experience for strategic planning in their own organisations and institutions. Also, as the project coordinator highlighted, the mentors from non-government sectors had an opportunity to see what is going on in the public sector, to understand the problems, complex administrative procedures, problem of salaries, and lack of motivation for work.

Finally, some unexpected outcomes also emerged. Half a year after the project ended one of the mentees was selected as the new director of her institution, and highlights how important this whole process of education and strategic planning has been for her deeper understanding of the institution and for establishing a clear programme that they now follow. Another mentee has been so inspired by the new knowledge and process, that she has decided to write her PhD thesis on the topic of strategic planning in libraries, as well as to organise meetings and seminars with her colleagues from small libraries in the region to share knowledge and the methodology of strategic planning.

### **Follow-up and desirable changes**

The project was a one-off year-long intervention, that the City of Novi Sad, NS ECoC 2021 Foundation, and the Province of Vojvodina follow partly through different mechanisms. Some mentors and mentees have stayed in contact, with some developing friendships, others maintaining professional relations and check-ups, and some cooperating. As a follow-up or wrap-up of the whole project, a joint publication which brings together short versions of all the strategic plans has been designed a year after the project ended, in both Serbian and English. A large promotional event involving all the participants was planned to launch the publication, but this was not implemented because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Another form of follow-up that everyone interviewed has highlighted, is the desire for this experience and method to be made available and promoted to other cities and that Novi Sad should be an example for wider cultural policy changes in Serbia.

Another aspect of follow-up that is in the process of being adopted is a unified form for annual planning and a programme of work, as well as a form for



annual evaluation to be followed by all cultural institutions as a way to unify and monitor the implementation of strategic plans annually. These forms have been created by the project managers in 2020, but are still in the process of being integrated into the city administration and cultural policy. These, as interviewees have mentioned, would significantly increase the chances that the strategic plans are actually implemented year by year and not forgotten in a drawer somewhere.

Reflecting on what they would change if they would start the project all over again, the mentors and mentees did not have much to say, highlighting that they felt the programme was well structured both in terms of content, methods and timeframes, and that they have highly benefitted from the support and dedication of the project team. The project managers and coordinators all reflected on the fact that it was an even more successful process and project that they had hoped for in the beginning, and one of the most inspiring to work on. However, if they could change something, that would be the time for deeper reflection with the mentors after the process has ended, and time to not just celebrate the end and success of the project, but that each institution presents its strategic plan and the main steps forward, so that this can trigger the next cycles of exchange, learning and discussion in the future. The project coordinator from the Foundation, highlighted that the only aspect he would not introduce would be some kind of systematic cooperation with schools, especially related to young audiences.

### Summary of key findings

This mentoring programme was driven by the context of Novi Sad – its policy-making and cultural strategy, as well as preparing for the ECoC due to which increased funding and commitment to the cultural sector was possible. It had particular public focus, developed through cooperation between the city and provincial government, a public foundation, public institutions and the public university sector. Even though the mentees and institutions were all local from Novi Sad, the lecturers as well as some of the mentors came from other cities in Serbia, as well as from Bulgaria, France and Sweden, which gave the programme an international dimension. As a framework and model, this programme is transferable to other cities and other contexts with smaller adaptations.

The programme represents an example of mentorship for capacity building and concrete cultural management skills for established cultural professionals working for public institutions. Moreover, unlike mentoring programmes that are more flexible in terms of the outcomes of the process, this is a good example of a programme with a clear goal and outcome of education and mentoring (i.e., development of 5-year institutional strategic plans). At the same time, this development of strategic plans has facilitated intensive learning and capacity building through the process of a year-long mobilisation of resources and focus on cooperation, learning, mentoring and rethinking the positions and futures of cultural institutions at the city level. Unlike individual mentor-mentee relations, this is a model in which the mentors were mentoring two employees responsible for the process of strategic planning in their institutions, but were actually at the same time mentoring the whole institution.

Since the programme was implemented prior to Covid-19, it benefitted from face-to-face, collective educational processes and meetings, while the mentoring process was both face-to-face and online, depending on the needs of each institution.

Project 33 webpage: <https://projekat33.wordpress.com/>

Foundation Novi Sad ECoC 2021: <https://novisad2021.rs/en/>

University of Arts Belgrade: <https://www.arts.bg.ac.rs/en/>

## 4.6 BEAZ – Bizkaia Mentoring Network

Maria Saiz, Beatriz Plaza

### Introduction

BEAZ manages a network that encourages contact between business mentors and start-ups developing projects with high growth potential. The mentoring aims to accelerate their growth potential. Project partners: BEAZ, Cebek Bizkaia Business Confederation, EU-SKALIT Quality Agency and Deusto Business Alumni.

### Initiator and main facilitator – aims and vision

Created in 1987, BEAZ is a public development agency of the Provincial Authority of Bizkaia, which aims to support enterprises and entrepreneurs in their efforts to create new innovative projects that have high growth potential and are internationally scalable.

BEAZ participates in the definition and management of aid programmes granted by the provincial authority to support an entrepreneurial path in which the starting point is the creation of new companies and their consolidation towards the final objective.

In this process, BEAZ manages various public policy instruments, which support the implementation of innovative enterprises, the development of projects with high added value, technological or not, through innovation, internationalisation and investment.

BEAZ also offers a range of services to support entrepreneurship, which are based on the experience and constant work of internal innovation within BEAZ, aiming to add value to businesses and entrepreneurs from Bizkaia. Within this context, BEAZ promotes partnerships with other organisations and networks of incubators, intra-entrepreneurship, acceleration processes, mentoring or inter-company collaboration, without forgetting information and dissemination services, including mentoring.

**Table 1.** Services offered by BEAZ

Fiscal rating reports	BEAZ issues reports – free of charge – for tax deductions for technological innovation: [1] Tax certificates for deductions for technological innovation; and [2] Tax certificates prior to seeking funding for R&D projects.
Seeking funding (64bis)	Tax certificates prior to seeking funding for R&Di projects.
Innovation fund	Technical eligibility reports to apply for European funds to promote innovation.
Financing – Aid Map	Apart from financial grants, which BEAZ directly manages, BEAZ informs and advises on other additional funding sources. Its aim is to source better co-financing schemes for entrepreneurship, innovation and internationalisation projects.
Intra-entrepreneurship	BEAZ facilitates and accelerates the creation of new businesses from organisations, as a means to increase the implementation of new competitive and sustainable business initiatives. The services include training activities, networking and expert support.
Open Innovation	The opportunities that external ideas may bring to a company's innovation process mean that more and more open innovation initiatives are promoted.
<b>Mentoring</b>	<b>Bizkaia Mentoring Network</b>
Acceleration	BEAZ identifies companies with growth capacity projects and facilitate their acceleration with support from an external consultant.
Business model	The aim of this service is to identify, create and enhance opportunities for competitive improvement in companies through innovation in their business models.
International hubs	Acceleration programmes for start-ups in international nodes: The Provincial Council of Bizkaia has signed an agreement with Cambridge Innovation Center (CIC) and Masschallenge of Boston that will connect entrepreneurs and local start-ups with markets, networks and investors in the global innovation network.

Prestaekin	<p><i>Prestaekin</i> is a free training programme for entrepreneurs who have had the support of the 2017–2018 Provincial Creation Programmes.</p> <p>The aim of this initiative is to improve the support given by the Provincial Council to people who have created a new company or developed an innovative project, providing knowledge on topics such as business models, digital marketing or communication.</p>
EEN Network	<p>As members of the Basque Node of the Enterprise Europe Network, BEAZ supports the internationalisation of Basque companies, promoting business and technological cooperation and the optimisation of R&amp;D programmes funded by the European Union.</p>
Telematic constitution of LLC	<p>BEAZ constitutes Limited Liability Companies (LLC) electronically through the Single Electronic Document (DUE), bringing together all necessary formalities for registration into one service, through the relevant appointment of a selected notary.</p>
Spreading of business projects	<p>BEAZ supports companies through our communication channels with the aim of contributing to the knowledge and dissemination of their work and their projects.</p>
BEAZ spaces	<p>BEAZ offers networking spaces and meeting facilities available to companies and entrepreneurs.</p>
Public Innovation Purchase	<p>PIP allows companies to develop innovations and to test them in real environments, bringing public administrations new solutions for their needs that could not be satisfied otherwise, and encouraging innovation and development in high added value markets.</p>
Financial diagnosis	<p>The objective of this service is to analyse the variables that affect the economic-financial situation of the company and to detect opportunities for improvement in terms of cashflow, liquidity, costs, financing strategies, reports and management indicators.</p>
Mathematical Modelling	<p>BEAZ, in collaboration with BCAM – Basque Centre for Applied Mathematics, provides mathematical support to SMEs.</p>

Source: BEAZ (2021)

## Motivation for the mentoring programme: Bizkaia Mentoring Network

**Starting point:** After a study on entrepreneurship in Bizkaia, the lack of a mentoring network was noted.

**Target Group:** Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with both a high innovative component and very clear potential for growth. The network is designed for SMEs up to six years old, or up to 10 workers.

**Purpose:** To facilitate the development of projects with high growth potential. The aim of the mentoring is to accelerate this growth potential. BEAZ manages a network that encourages contact between business mentors and start-ups in order to facilitate growth.

The Bizkaia Mentoring Network is non-profit.

## Mentorship Process

**Content:** Mentors and mentees share skills, knowledge, and contacts so that the mentee can analyse situations from different perspectives and make better decisions.

**Formats:** eMentoring Online Platform plus face-to-face meetings through individual and group sessions. Initially, the programme was fully online. As the eMentoring Platform was not sufficient for generating and transferring *Soft Skills*, the Bizkaia Mentoring Network moved to a hybrid online and face-to-face format, as follows:

Annual call every November.

**Individual mentoring:** 12 months, 4 sessions. Mentor is selected by Bizkaia Mentoring Network and matched to the mentee and his or her innovation project.

**Group Mentoring with the advisory board:** 12 months, 4 sessions. The group sessions allow the SMEs to present their project to a team of mentors of very diverse profiles, an advisory board that will guide them in different ways.

**Duration of the programme:** 12 months individual mentoring plus 12 months group mentoring (4 sessions per year).

**Mini-mentoring:** If necessary, for example, the mentee lacks specific business related networking skills, then the mentee can benefit from a mini-mentoring process with a senior consultant in innovation (Nestor Guerra).

## Expectations of the Mentorship Process

The aim of the mentorship is to help develop projects with high growth potential. The expectations for the mentor and mentee can be summarised as follows:

- To boost their innovation project to reposition their SME
- To strengthen their Network Economics
- To achieve a turning point in their SME in order to increase their billing threshold

## Key takeaways

This mentoring programme is limited to scalable projects with a vocation for growth. We should underline the introduction of multidisciplinary collective mentoring that emulates a professional board of directors that trains start-ups for their future growth process.

## References

BEAZ (2021). Interview with Lucia Graña and Javier Garcia Barcina. 02.22.2021. Bilbao: Beaz.

Infobeaz (2021). *Bizkaia Mentoring Network: sesiones de miniaceleración*. URL: <https://info.beaz.bizkaia.eus/noticia/mentoring-grupal-nuevas-sesiones-de-miniaceleracion/>

## 4.7 Case: Estonian Theatre for Young Audiences

Hannele Känd

To discover what mentoring could be in a theatre context, this case looks at three identified practices in the theatre that involve similar approaches to mentoring or that are often considered a mentor-mentee like relationship. The case builds on three interviews with theatre personnel with long experience. The questions that guided the analysis were:

- Are there any forms of mentoring in the theatre?
- What are the forms? Who is involved?
- What kind of help do mentors get in preparation for the mentorship?

Next, the case is presented by introducing the theatre, providing a description of situations followed by a comparison of experiences. The case ends by highlighting some of the best practices.

### Introduction to the organisation

The Estonian Theatre for Young Audiences is a theatre for young viewers that shapes young people's cultural space, broadens their senses, reflects their perception of the world, and helps them to get to know themselves and the world. The theatre also comprises the museum of puppetry arts and the international visual theatre festival Tallinn Treff, which together form a synergistic whole with the theatre.

In its creative work, the Estonian Theatre for Young Audiences follows the belief that theatre can help young people understand their place in the world or inspire them to change themselves and the world. Through theatre, young people can see and value relationships with all that is around them – family, friends, society, nature and different cultures – but also see what is unhealthy or dangerous about these relationships. Growing up in the sphere of influence of such a theatre, they will hopefully enter adulthood as empathetic, open minded and inspired individuals.



## Aims and vision

Youthfulness and a desire to learn are above all a matter of inner disposition and may characterise children and adolescents as well as adults. Our theatre's task is to awaken this disposition that is present in everyone and to use it as a means for communicating with its audience.

## Towards a mentorship programme

Currently, the theatre does not have an official mentorship programme. However, in what follows, some practices and ways of approaching the work are discussed as they contain elements of mentoring and could be considered informal mentorship. In order to understand mentorship within the organization, we will first take a look at current views on what mentorship is.

- Mentoring is a relationship where a knowledgeable person gives guidance and leads a person who has less experience. It is a partnership where one would like to teach and the other to learn.
- Mentoring happens when an accomplished colleague or leader helps a person who is new or less experienced. Mentoring is a chance to learn and grow within a new position.
- Mentoring is a process of learning from each other's experiences and ideas with the aim of reaching set goals and for both partners to grow personally and professionally.
- Mentoring is a relationship where the more experienced are present for the less experienced. The mentor listens, guides, and helps the mentee see the bigger picture or to find their way. A mentor is not to give solutions but to share knowledge and experience – to discuss and help. Mentoring is a long-term relationship, continuous and regular. It is important to set goal(s), create plan(s) and summarise.

These views on mentorship all include knowledge sharing and learning in different formats. Even though there is no formal mentoring programme at the theatre, there are several practices that can be considered mentoring or informal mentoring.

- Some employees have personal mentors, but it was their personal choice, not an official requirement nor provided formally by the theatre.
- Some people have recently taken steps to be part of some mentorship programmes/training workshops as a means of self-development; these activi-

ties are not organized by the theatre but are encouraged and work time can be used for them.

- Most commonly mentoring activity occurs through internship programmes when a student or person joins the theatre for work experience. These are usually organized through educational institutions. Some theatre employees will then work with them as mentors.
- There are also examples of peer-to-peer and master-learner experiences, where a new employee learns the ropes from an elder.

Usually, there is no extra funding for the above-mentioned activities; everything is done within the frames of the regular payroll and working hours. On one occasion, an employee received economic support through an external training system that sent in for internships and compensated the mentor during the trainee's work experience. The current practices and ideas for the further development of mentoring will be discussed in different contexts within the theatre.

### **Mentoring and the work experience/tutelage process at Noorsooteater**

As identified previously, informal mentoring occurs during (a student's) work experience at the theatre. Over the period of 2014–2020 about 25 people have completed work experience at Noorsooteater. Most (75%) have come in through studies from a university or vocational school. Half of them have worked in administrative, and half in the production/creative sides of the theatre.

Usually, work experience and internships are an obligatory part of an education programme. The theatre employees engaged to mentor the students in their work experience see it as part of their everyday work. They were interested in educating inexperienced people who will later work in their field. Some of them have also had previous experience with mentoring in a similar context either in previous jobs or during their own studies. There is a positive attitude towards mentoring and interest in further experience and knowledge about mentoring.

The mentoring activity happens informally and there is no actual mentoring structure for the work experience process. A theatre employee acts as a mentor and usually uses a work experience guide to working with the students provided by the higher education institution as the main method of measuring achievement. A lot of the mentoring is based on the mentor's previous personal experience or intuition, as described by the interviewees, often using a 'go with the flow' and 'what feels right' mentality. The student's (mentee) perspective

is included, as it is common practice to base the work experience activities on personal interests and needs stated by the student.

Currently, the informal mentoring within the work experience does not have a feedback system other than what might be provided by the higher educational institution. Feedback for the theatre after the work experience is infrequent. It was felt that the learning path for mentors was not very intense because the process was not systematic or helpful.

All the interviewees agreed that a general structure and guidelines on how to mentor is necessary when dealing with any kind of mentoring. It seemed like everybody deals with their own little corner of work and their work experience students; there is no common ground. Despite these observations, they would continue mentoring even without the guidelines.

As long as the practical side of theatre work is part of the curriculum in theatre studies, professional theatres will receive work experience students, hence (informal) mentorship practice is likely to continue.

### **The on-boarding or new worker mentoring process at Noorsooteater**

The interviewees emphasised that new employees are one of the main reasons to engage in mentoring as a more formal method, as on-boarding the newcomers in a good manner is vital for the theatre. Through mentoring a faster, smoother convergence, the continuation of work and progress can be achieved. Currently, informal mentoring a new employee depends on whether the newcomer is entering a completely new position or an existing one. The new employee's knowledge, needs and wishes are taken into consideration and influence the on-boarding and mentoring process.

Currently, on-boarding through mentoring happens differently for different positions. The theatre has many specific jobs that can partly or completely be learned only by doing the job. For example stage, lights, sound technicians, puppet designers, set designers, stage managers, chief operating officers, head designers, and artistic directors. The technicians, designers, and stage managers – all related to the hands-on preparation of shows and running shows – often get their on-boarding through a trial-and-error method alongside colleagues and heads of department. This practice is well established and occurs in the same way in many other Estonian theatres.

There is less mentoring support for on-boarding people into unique positions (e.g., artistic director, chief operating officer) or jobs recently created, and the person entering the position seems to learn the work independently, often through learning-by-doing. Sometimes it is possible to create some common work time with the person leaving the position to provide mentoring for the newcomer. However, this is rare as the leaving person usually lacks the motivation and time due to new commitments. Some new employees have found a guide or mentor outside the company but these relationships are not common or long-term.

Usually, new employees come to the theatre with the following different backgrounds (in no particular order):

- Graduate of a school (university, vocational school, high school).
- Within the theatre, internal recruitment.
- From the theatre field (from another theatre or theatre related organisation).
- From another culture organisation.
- From another field of work (e.g., manager in another field enters the field of theatres).

The interviewees felt that the current informal on-boarding system did not enable a smooth entry and sometimes the learning-by-doing caused challenges. A formal systematic approach to mentoring for all involved (the theatre, new employee, head of a department, and colleagues) would enable a better entry.

The previous personal experience of the interviewees on formal mentorship processes and systems had been positive. Formal in this context, does not necessarily mean a legal contract covering a mentoring process, but certain terms and conditions are set for the employer-employee relationship as are goals, management and deadlines for the mentoring process. Some key questions were identified to reflect the different positions and various needs for the mentoring programme.

**Questions to think through before on-boarding or mentoring:**

- Is it a single position in the company?
- Is it a new position (just created)?
- Is the work to be done by the person already established in the company?
- Are there any other specialists in the company for the same work?

- Does a colleague or head of department have knowledge and skills they can pass on? Do they have the time and skills to do that?

To further reflect on the question of who can act as a mentor, and how to find mentors, some suggestions were created:

- When the company has another specialist (of the same job description or head of a department) then they can function as the mentor.
- Collaboration between theatres could be useful.
- Mentoring programmes run by vocational unions (technical theatre worker's union, actor's union etc).
- Use freelancers (problem: lack of mentoring skills).
- Use an outsourced mentorship programme (currently non-existent).

The following obstacles were also identified:

- Not enough knowledge and skills about mentoring (and not enough mentors).
- Lack of instruction or no system for mentoring.
- No habit of formal mentoring.
- Lack of motivation (on all sides, especially among specialists).
- Specialists (such as hands-on theatre technicians) do not have enough time.
- Insufficient organisations (or none at all) who could manage mentoring programmes.
- All of the above can apply to most positions and departments in a theatre, including some of the creative positions (dramaturg, art designer, literary editor).
- A different analysis must be conducted looking at positions such as actors, stage directors and head set designer.

### Employee development at Noorsooteater

Another perspective for mentoring in the theatre is the employees' wish for self-development. In recent months, a few employees have had the chance to apply for a mentor through the Culture Ministry. Taking this opportunity shows the interest of the employees. The possibility for a mentor through the Ministry of Culture was only offered to the management level employees, otherwise, interest could have been even higher.

In the above situation, the trigger for mentoring came from outside the theatre. The need for progress and development for an employee through mentorship can be an inner desire but could also derive from the need of the employer (re-structuring the work, new challenges, specifics of the new job etc).

The content of mentoring for employee development is affected by the employee's current knowledge, skills, experience, wishes and needs, but also their position, the structure of the company, general development or the specific field (e.g., finance, legal etc). Some needs were identified from the interviews (see below).

**Some examples of needs identified by theatre employees:**

- General development of a field through more experienced specialists; for example, development of communication manager in modern communication issues through more experienced colleagues.
- Development in very concrete issues; for example, theatre manager learns finance management or technical manager learns leadership skills. Both need an experienced mentor who understands the skill-set but also understands the field itself.
- Mentoring in mental issues. Needs deeper analysis.

To respond to the needs identified above, mentors could also be specialists from different fields, outside of theatre, who nevertheless might have good mentoring skills. The expectations, problems and perspectives for mentoring in the context of employee development are similar to on-boarding new colleagues discussed above. It was emphasised that professional theatre employees need to update their skills and hands-on experience constantly. Mentoring could be an essential part of meeting that need but it is not currently defined as such.

### **Inside Mentoring Creative People at Noorsooteater**

Next we will look at some key issues when mentoring creative employees, based on reflections on past experiences and observations. The insights gained and listed as topics are raised from experience, and the key elements are highlighted.

- The mentoring relationship is organic. There were no precise goals nor was there any formal structure. They did have regular meetings and the mentor

observed the process of rehearsals. He did not intervene in rehearsals but met with the mentee later.

- The mentor gave feedback on the mentee's activity, and the overall development of the performance. The mentee was able to ask questions.
- The mentoring relationship did not focus on artistic views but rather on the technical side of the job. How to direct, how to give ideas, realise ideas, how to work with an actor, how to hand out tasks and how to give feedback. Everything was very practical.
- The mentor did not offer solutions but helped the mentee reach them. He did give his opinion when necessary and he also shared experiences.
- The mentee deemed this relationship essential and positive. The mentor-mentee relationship has grown into a long and constant conversation, they have built upon trust and respect, they give each other counsel etc.
- These wholesome relationships are not common in Estonian theatre. We could even say this is exceptional.
- Many theatre directors/actors may have someone with whom they can discuss things, but a general network or a system is not present.
- The situation starts already at theatre school, where the relationship between a student and course instructor could be more tight-knit and structured during the process of learning how to direct a show. A separate mentor for this process is probably the best solution.
- An actor's mentor could be the director who they work with for one production, but this could create potential conflict – it could affect the process of the show.
- The mentoring discussions follow themes such as goals, development, feedback, mutual expectations, and guidance. In addition, the mentor may follow each actor's development, challenges, business, and if need be, there can be additional discussions.

**The main obstacles identified were:**

- Lack of motivation. Those who are experienced either do not want or cannot be bothered to share their knowledge.
- Beginners want to achieve on their own.
- Different views on art and different schoolings come up when asking for help.
- Lack of skills for mentoring.
- Lack of time.

Raising awareness, organisational help, and creating a habit and motivational tools can help resolve these issues.

## Summary of key findings

Overall, a full-on mentoring system does not exist at Noorsooteater. What has been done is inconsistent and dependent on personal interest or is sporadic when it comes to certain skill-sets. Some mentoring can be attached to on-boarding employees and to an employee's development within the theatre. A few have had the chance to work with a mentor in a formal context, but that has been a personal choice and has not been related to the organisation. The informal practices described and analysed create a layer of (informal) mentorship that could be used to build more formal mentorship processes. The analysis pointed out that what matters most in terms of building a mentor system is growing a set of skills for mentoring for many, not just a chosen few.

In general, Noorsooteater is a small-scale example of the theatre field in Estonia. Through previous experiences in other theatres and some discussions for this project, other theatres face the same issues and situations. Mentoring has never been an aim, although its potential is considerable. However, the process of analysing the current practices has created new aims for the theatre that every employee at Noorsooteater who is either leading a process or people must obtain at least elementary knowledge of and tools for mentoring. The theatre field could benefit from a 'one system, two toolboxes' approach:

A simple layout of general rules and helpful materials for those who do not go deep into mentoring but are connected at some level.

In-depth training with a collection of materials for those who constantly take on mentoring tasks (on-boarding, work experience, heads of department).

Creating a relatable and working mentoring system that could be scaled up for the wider theatre field could be a long-term aim.



## 4.8 Master Cultural Management at University of Antwerp

**Annick Schramme, Nathalie Verboven**

### Introduction

Since 1999, the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Antwerp has organized a master programme in cultural management. Since the beginning, the cultural management programme has been known for its strong connection with the professional field. During many courses, students meet with practitioners, but they also gain more hands-on experience through an audit exercise. All this knowledge and practical skills come together in the master's thesis and practical project.

As a practical project (3 ECTS), the students are required to do an internship. This can either be a practical – in a cultural organization from the cultural or creative sectors or within a public organization – or research-based within the Competence Center on Cultural Management and Cultural Policy at the University of Antwerp. This last option is only available for students striving towards a PhD in the future, all other students fulfil their practical project in a cultural organization.

As mentioned, the practical project in essence is an internship that includes a problem-oriented assignment on which the master thesis is based. The thesis can relate to one organization or company or can be research at the sector level. The problem addressed is always a management problem.

The practical project is the most important part of the master's programme, in which the student has to prove that they can apply in practice all the knowledge they have learned. It must run for between 9 weeks and 6 months and can also be carried out abroad.

During this project, the students are guided by a supervisor from the university as well as someone (a mentor) from the organization where the project is carried out. In this case study we will discuss both roles.

To show not only the perception of the practical project from the academic side, we also interviewed 4 mentors from 3 different organizations. In recent years, these organizations have collaborated once or several times with students from our master's programme. We also held a focus group with 9 students (now alumni) or mentees from the programme. The first focus group consisted of

5 students. Some of them were confronted with the difficulties of the Covid-19 crisis during their project. The second focus group consisted of 4 students who all completed their practical project before the Covid-19 crisis.

## Mentorship process

### Matchmaking

How does the practical project at the University of Antwerp start? The first step in the process is finding interested partner organizations. This is a task performed by the master's programme manager, who attracts potential organizations in different ways. First of all, the alumni network is important, as through this practical project long-term relationships are maintained with our alumni who then become mentors in the programme. Second, thanks to the years of experience and the reputation of the programme, it often happens that organizations themselves take the initiative to contact the programme management with an internship proposal and a potential research topic.

Subsequently, all the proposed internships and topics are collected on a list, which is made available to the students from the beginning of the academic year. It is then up to students to select which project interests them and contact the organization where they want to carry out their practical project. Most of the students choose an organization from this list; however, students are also free to make their own suggestions, perhaps if they want to do their project in an organization that is not on the list, or they are starting their own company and would like to dedicate their practical project to that.

The next step is the matchmaking. In this step most of the responsibility lies with the students. As mentioned, it is the students themselves who contact the companies based on their project proposal. During the focus group we held with our students and alumni, some students indicated that this is not always a simple task: organizations do not always reply quickly to an email, a topic might have become less relevant for them over time, and so on.

After making the first contact with an organization, the research topic for the thesis must be further defined. In some cases, defining and refining this research topic takes a lot of time.

However, after the selection of the project, a third party comes into play: each student is also matched to a thesis supervisor from the university based on the topic of their research. After the students have selected an organization they

would like to work for during their practical project as well as an idea for their research, they need to contact a professor from the master's programme, who has expertise in that specific field. They can request guidance in this matching process from the programme coordinator.

In general, the extent to which the university interferes in the matchmaking process mostly depends on the needs of the mentees.

### **Process**

At the start of the practical project, students are required to have a conversation with their mentor as well as their thesis supervisor. The student, mentor and university supervisor then have to come to a final agreement on the subject of the master's thesis and they must also discuss the details of the practical component: when will the student be at the office, what tasks will he or she perform, and so on. All agreements regarding responsibilities, duration, insurance, etc. are then written down in an internship contract.

During the practical project itself, it is the student's responsibility to keep in touch with their mentor as well as their supervisor to discuss research results, internship tasks, problems and so on.

The students are entitled to a number of contact hours with their thesis supervisor, but must take the initiative. The supervisor clearly communicates when and where he or she is available for individual interviews and/or common sessions (thesis circles). The student must maintain regular contact with the supervisor. Responsibility for the timely completion of the master's thesis lies with the student.

Throughout the process, the supervisor has to evaluate the progress of the students at two points in time. These contact points are mandatory (also called 'process evaluations') and count for 20% of the final grade. They serve to support the process and provide the student with feedback on his progress.

We also strongly recommend students schedule a second meeting with the thesis supervisor and mentor at the halfway-point in the practical project to make sure everyone is still on the same level and to manage expectations.

### **Evaluation**

At the end of the practical project, the student has to present the results of his/her research during the thesis defence in front of a jury that consists of the thesis supervisor, the mentor and a third evaluator from the university. After a

15 min presentation, the third evaluator has an opportunity to ask critical questions about the written thesis. Then the mentor can give feedback about the internship and can ask additional questions about the findings from the research.

The written thesis is evaluated for academic accuracy by the thesis supervisor and the third evaluator, who is also a colleague from the university. That part of the evaluation counts for 12 credits (separate from the practical project, which is 3 ECTS).

The mentor is also asked to evaluate the student based on:

- Problem orientation of the thesis
- Activities during the practical project
- Realisation of the tasks
- Social skills
- Communication skills
- Relevance of conclusions and recommendations in the thesis

For the final grade, the mentor and supervisor have a discussion and seek a consensus. This part counts for 3 credits.

The students must also write a short report about their experiences during the practical project in a self-evaluation report. As mentioned, the practical project is not just about participating in an organization. It is also an exquisite opportunity for the students to further develop their soft skills. That is why from the beginning of the project, we ask students to keep track of their progress through a self-reflection tool: <https://forms.office.com/r/XBHxz6Ynop>

Before the start of their practical project, we ask them to do an initial self-reflection exercise. This is a strength-weakness analysis. They are supposed to be able to assess themselves on a range of soft skills. Based on this analysis, they determine which aspects of these soft skills they want to work on during the practical project.

During their first introductory meeting with mentor and supervisor they can also bring this list of aspects. That way you they also receive certain tasks that are aimed at further developing these skills.

During the first half of the project, students will reflect further on these soft skills. They need to note for themselves some experiences they have had related to the chosen soft skill. What was their role? How did it make them feel? What was the result? What challenges have they experienced? During the interim evaluation with the supervisor and practical supervisor, these experiences can

be discussed. Finally, at the end of the internship the students need to look back. Did they manage to tackle the challenges? What have they learned and how did the organization help them with this? This results in two deliverables on top of the master's thesis.

## An internship report (about 1000 words)

Where they describe critically:

1. The purpose/mission and activities of the organization,
2. What was their role within the organization and what tasks did they take on?
3. Were they part of a team or did they mainly work independently?
4. How do they assess the corporate culture within the organization?
5. Have they been involved in the decision-making process within the organization?
6. Have they had to come up with creative solutions to a problem?
7. What did they learn from the internship?
8. What impact do they think this experience will have on their future career?

Self-reflection report (1 to 2 pages + self-reflection tool) which reflects on:

1. Their social skills (interaction with others, both colleagues and external)
2. Communication skills (internal and external, written and oral)
3. Professional skills (respecting deadlines, etc.)
4. Creative Skills (Coming up with creative solutions to problems)
5. Which skills do they want to develop further?

## People involved in the mentorship programme

### Mentors

The mentor is the practical supervisor in the organization where students carry out their practical project. As explained earlier on the topic of matchmaking, every year we have a diverse group of cultural organizations where students can carry out their project. On the one hand, these are organizations whose mentors are part of our alumni, who have already completed such a project themselves and are familiar with how it works. It also happens that organizations register for several projects during one academic year or for several years. In this way lasting relationships of trust can be created. On the other hand, there are

completely new organizations that register. To ensure that the process runs as smoothly as possible, the following agreements are made with the mentors at the start of the project:

At the start of the project, the mentor will meet with the mentee and the UA supervisor to discuss the problem definition, the research method and the agreements regarding the practical part of the project.

The mentor involves and advises the mentee and provides the necessary documentation for a proper performance of the mentee's tasks in the organization and for the research regarding the management issue.

The mentor involves the student in the functioning of the organization. The mentee is given the opportunity to take on tasks within the daily operations, to attend meetings, and to gain insight into the management of the organization.

The mentor is present at the defence of the master's thesis and, together with the UA supervisor, the mentor evaluates the practical component.

### **Mentees**

In this case, the students of the master in cultural management are the mentees. Every student – that is registered by default – who wishes to complete the master's programme must carry out a practical project. The intensity with which the student is supervised during this project depends on the student's request and the supervisory method used by the mentor. As mentioned, there are two mandatory process evaluations.

### **University supervisor**

The academic research component of the project is supervised by a university professor that is teaching in the cultural management programme and is an expert in the topic that the student is going to research. From the first joint meeting, the university supervisor is also in contact with the organization. He or she ensures that expectations from all parties are aligned, and the project runs as intended. When there are difficulties within the practical part (internship) or in the communication with the organization, the student can also contact the university supervisor.

## Programme management

### Programme manager

The role of programme management is varied. Students can ask advice for various matters: the choice of the topic, the connection with the supervisors, and so on... The programme manager also manages all practical issues related to the final projects. She keeps the students informed about upcoming deadlines, registers each student when they wish to submit their thesis and coordinates the organization of the thesis defence.

### Academic director

The programme manager forms a team with the academic director of the master's programme. The AD gives a presentation at the beginning of the academic year to the students about the practical project. When the students have officially submitted their research topic, the AD oversees the equal distribution of theses among the supervisors. After submitting the theses, she also follows up the organization of the defences at the end of the academic year.

## Mentorship process expectations

### Learning outcomes expected by the university

The official learning outcomes for the master's thesis and its practical component are described in the study programme. For the master's thesis, these outcomes are as follows:

1. The student is able to independently analyse a management problem in the daily practice of an organization and come up with policy recommendations.
2. The student develops a clear problem statement based on scientific knowledge and skills, and a critical attitude. He or she is able to work independently, to take the initiative, to work efficiently and to respect the timing set when working out this problem.

In these outcomes there is a strong focus on the development of an independent working habit.

For the practical component, the following learning outcome is added:

3. The student is open to input from the employees of the organization regarding the practical project and he or she can deal with critical questions and

remarks. The student has the necessary communication skills to ask the right questions and to answer the research questions.

This additional outcome focuses on the development of soft skills during the practical project.

### **Expectations of the organizations and mentors**

As mentioned at the beginning of this case description, we organize focus groups with our mentors as well as students and alumni to see how they evaluate the practical project. We first ask the mentors about their motivation to offer students an internship within their organization. All mentors indicate that the practical project of the Master's in Cultural Management is an opportunity for them to have research carried out for which there is normally no time or knowledge within the organization. They expect the students to have the knowledge to be able to conduct this research, but they are also aware that the mentee is still in a learning process, and therefore needs guidance and support.

However, there are also differences in the motivations of each organization. One of the organizations within the heritage sector mentioned that they see mentoring students as one of their responsibilities. By guiding students, they can support young people who are interested in the heritage field. As a training institution in the field, it is a conscious choice to see the training and support of upcoming talent as a priority. Another similar organization also found it important to get in touch with the future generations in the field through this project.

On a more personal level, most mentors also state that it is a pleasure to temporarily have a student in the team. Since young people are often part of their target audience anyway, it is interesting to know how students experience the organization.

All mentors indicate that the student's personal growth is more important to them than delivering useful research results. They find it important that the mentee has learned something on a personal level or that his or her knowledge of the sector has grown. It is of course an added value if the organization can use the results of the research afterwards, but this is not always the main priority for the organizations. The mentors care more about the experience that the mentee gains during the project.

Various mentors indicated that they also learn from supervising the practical project. For example, it sometimes happens that the students use theories or



literature that are not yet known within the organization. On a personal level, mentors also gain a sense of satisfaction from guiding the students.

### **Expectations of the students/mentees**

During the group discussions with the students, it becomes clear that before the start of the practical project, the students often have few concrete expectations of the project. Most of them find it important to be able to really participate in the organization in a practical way. They hope to be of service to the organization both in practice and through the research they conduct.

The majority of the students do not really have a detailed goal in mind regarding the skills they want to develop during the project. The students mainly state they want to discover which tasks they enjoy doing most. They want to experience what it is like to work in a cultural organization in order to get a better idea of what they want to do in their professional career after graduating. When it comes to specific skills, some students say that they expect to learn how to network during the internship. They count on the organization to connect and expand their network. Several students indicate that they want to experience how an organization works on a day-to-day basis. They want to see how things go during meetings and/or study days. They want to understand the sectors that interest them and that they might want to work in.

Most students have similar expectations regarding the organization's mentor. They mainly expect guidance in the research they are conducting. They expect the mentor to put them in touch with the right people, that the mentor provides the necessary information from the organization to conduct the research and that the mentor reviews the thesis and provides feedback before it is submitted. Several students indicate that they would like a certain degree of freedom/autonomy during the project. They would like to determine themselves the way in which they work on their research. For them, a mentor mainly provides support when they need it and ask for it.

## **Mentorship experiences – now**

### **Method of mentorship**

During our interviews with the mentors, we asked them how they would define “mentorship”. The answers to this question were quite similar. Mentors all indicate that “mentorship” has a distinctly personal dimension to them. A mentor

is described as someone with a certain experience, who guides a younger person to find their way. A mentor, together with the mentee, looks for strengths and weaknesses, both on a professional and personal level. A mentor helps a mentee to set and achieve his goal.

According to our interviewees, a mentor within the practical project must clarify the functioning of the organization to the mentee. It is the role of the mentor to assist the student in refining his research topic and to create a framework in which the student can conduct this research. Apart from this contribution to the research, the mentor has a very important role within the practical part of the project. The mentor supports the mentee in his introduction to the professional field. Students often choose an organization in a sector that has been appealing to them for quite some time. The mentor gives the student the opportunity to learn more about this subsector and to further develop his/her ambitions for the future.

The way in which mentorship is carried out within the practical project is not determined by the university. Only a few mandatory aspects are placed on the course of the practical component of the project. At the start of the practical project, there is a meeting with the student, the mentor and the supervisor from the university. During this meeting it is discussed how both, the practical part and the thesis research, will be conducted and completed. Due to the great variety of organizations where students can carry out their project, there is also a great variety in the way this internship is carried out. This variation also depends on the way of working of the mentors and the motivation of the students. The practical project/internship is very difficult to standardise, because of the variety of the projects. For example an internship in a creative start-up is something completely different from an internship in the opera house. However, from the interviews we discovered that more attention could be given to the guidance of the mentors and the projects by the university.

This is also reflected in the conversations with the students alumni. There are students who indicate that it was not always clear for the organization what exactly the purpose of the practical project is. Although the mentors receive a document with the concept of the practical project, the goals, the expectations and the practical guidelines, mentors were still not always well informed about the content and purpose of the internship. The same counts for the students apparently. Although there is an information session at the beginning of the academic year and the students receive a document in which everything is explained, it is not always clear to the students themselves, they say. It is therefore very important that the objectives, expectations and possibilities of the theo-

retical and practical component are clearly stated, for both the mentor and the mentee, from the beginning of the project.

### **Role of the mentor**

There is no fixed method imposed by the programme on how a mentor should fulfil his or her role. A manual is made available describing how the practical project proceeds. It briefly mentions what is expected from the mentor when going over the procedure. The manual describes the following points:

4. At the start of the project, the practical supervisor sits together with the student and the UA supervisor to discuss and define the problem and method of approaching the management issue, and agreements regarding the practical part of the project. You will evaluate the progress of the research half-way through the project. The student takes the initiative for this.
5. The mentor involves and advises the student and supplies the necessary documentation for the proper performance of the tasks in the organization and within the framework of the management issue.
6. The practical supervisor must be present at the thesis defence and, together with the UA supervisor, assesses the progress of the practical component.

Recently, we made a short video with this information, which is made available to the mentors before the start of the project.

During the project, it is up to the students to take the initiative to consult with their mentor and their supervisor as often as necessary. Students are expected to indicate when there are difficulties or problems.

The focus group with the students shows that the relationship between the students and the mentor cannot be described clearly. This relationship is different for everyone. However, all students have so far indicated that the contact with the mentor was good and pleasant. For all students, this contact took place in a natural, rather informal way.

As already discussed, the mentorship can differ a lot between all organizations and projects. There are students whose supervision was fairly superficial. The mentor guides in a personal way and makes sure that the student feels good within the organization. In these cases, the mentor acts more as a motivator and as a kind of mental supporter for the student. For some students, this is a good way of working. One student, however, indicated that he expected more substantive guidance from the mentor. This student felt he was missing clear

feedback about the research process and confirmation about the direction of the research. In some cases, conducting the research within the organization is described as working on your own island within the organization. The mentor then plays the role of intermediary between the researcher and the organization. On the other hand, there have also been students that indicated there was close collaboration with the mentor on the content of the research.

This lack of clarity about the role of the mentor is also difficult for mentors. It turns out that it is not always clear to the mentors themselves how they should fulfil their role. This stresses the importance of interim meetings with the student, mentor and thesis supervisor.

Another mentor indicated that it was not really clear to her to what extent she had to interfere in the process of the thesis research. Due to an internal change of staff, this mentor did not attend the meeting at the start of the project. Her desire for more guidance from the university is also related to this. The mentor and/or the mentee can always contact the AD or coordinator if there are problems but apparently this is not enough.

### **Roll of the university and the thesis supervisor**

As discussed earlier, the thesis supervisor mainly supervises the progress of the academic research assignment. Students can contact the supervisor for guidance and feedback on their research. The focus group with students shows that the expectations of the mentees correspond with this. Some students indicated that the mentor was more accessible than the thesis supervisor because they met them on a daily or weekly basis. In these cases, the research was therefore discussed more with the organization than with the university supervisor.

Mentees have the feeling that they have considerable freedom during this assignment. This is experienced both positively and negatively. There are students who like to be autonomous during this process, but there are also students who need more guidance from the university. The mentors also indicate that they need more contact with the supervisor during the process. More contact is needed to ensure that everyone is working towards the same goal and that everyone expects the same outcome.

## Mentorship - looking back

In this case, mentorship is partly determined by the way in which the practical project is organized in general. We therefore asked both mentors and mentees what they thought of the design of the practical project.

The interviewed mentors were generally satisfied with the design of the practical project. The combination of a research component and a practical component is experienced as positive. One of the mentors indicated that there would be too little work in their organization for an intern to work on a full-time basis. The combination with the research ensures that the student can still spend his or her time usefully within the organization. Another mentor indicated that the combination of the internship with the thesis ensures that the student can perform useful tasks within the organization and that he or she is not only left to do rather meaningless tasks.

The mentors had a few tips for the future of the practical project. One of them indicated that she had good experiences with another programme where the tasks that a student must perform during the internship are specified in advance. For example, they had to lead a brainstorming session and solve two small practical questions. Making demands on the tasks that a student must perform ensures that the mentors also have greater motivation to take the internship seriously and to look for interesting tasks that the students can perform. Another mentor suggested continuing internships in organizations where there are specific peak times; for example, when they are organizing a festival. In this way, according to this mentor, it could be properly assessed whether a student is developing skills. Of course, this last tip is very difficult to implement in the course of the academic year because of the timing of the programme.

According to two interviewed mentors, other points for improvement lie in paying more attention to the supervision of the soft skills. There is a need for clear guidance on how to measure this. One of the mentors also points out that working in more detail on personal development can be very helpful when applying for jobs. The better a student gets to know him/herself, the better he or she can select suitable job offers and the more credible his or her story is when applying for a job. Currently, the university does not really focus on mentoring personal development during the practical project.

### **How was the mentorship experienced by the mentors?**

Despite the positive experiences with the combination of the research component and practical component, the mentors still indicated that the balance

between the two is sometimes difficult to find. As mentioned earlier, it is not always clear what exactly can be expected from the student in practice. When it comes to the thesis, mentors are not always fully aware of the extent to which they need to be involved.

Something that could help mentors and mentees in making the process run smoothly is an evaluation interview during the process. Currently, there is only mandatory contact with the student, mentor and thesis supervisor at the beginning and at the end. An extra mandatory meeting with all parties in the middle of the process would be a good idea, according to several mentors. Here the personal evolution of the student can also be discussed and adjusted if necessary.

### **How was the mentorship experienced by the mentees?**

Finding a balance is the biggest challenge for the students throughout the practical project. Various mentees indicated that it was not really clear to them what was exactly expected from them.

Because of the variety of internships, we don't use 'a one size fits all' approach. There are students who are present every day within the organization and who contribute a lot in the organization, but there are also students who have almost never been allowed or able to do anything within the organization. In the focus groups, it is noticeable that the students who were given many tasks do not think this is really fair, as they have had much more work. There are also students who have not been able to cooperate much and who find it a shame that they have not been able to gain real work experience. This last fact is also due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to government regulations, for the past two years, students were not able to gain hands-on experience and most internships were conducted from home. Therefore, it was difficult to satisfy all the outcomes of the practical project.

Another topic is the timing of the project. The students who wanted to finish the master's programme in 1 year and had only 9 weeks of work experience, found the timing of the research project very tight. Several students indicated that they would not have been able to meet the deadline if they had also had to participate in the organization in a practical way. A lack of time therefore ensures that students are less motivated to gain experience outside the research project.

Three of the nine students who were interviewed, carried out the practical project during the Covid-19 crisis. They clearly indicated that this crisis had a major effect on the practical component. For two of them it became almost impossible to really participate in the organization. Because they were only allowed to

work from home, interaction with other staff members was almost completely eliminated. Contact between the organization and the students was severely limited. This is of course very unfortunate for the students' experience of the project. In these cases, mentorship is almost completely reduced. For the third student, the corona crisis provided even more opportunities to cooperate. The changes in the needs within the organization ensured that this student could use knowledge in a useful way.

### Summary of key findings

This case study showed that both mentors and mentees generally experience the practical project as good and pleasant. In most cases, the project creates a good relationship between the students and the mentors. The study confirms our suspicion about the mentorship method. Due to the great variety of organizations where the project can be carried out, every mentor trajectory is different. Few concrete guidelines are given by the university on how the mentorship should be conducted. This makes the mentor dependent on their own insights and experience. The feedback from the mentors teaches us that a bit more uniformity could be imposed here. There is a need for more clarity about what is expected from the project, the mentoring, and the supervision.

For the students, the balance between the research and the practical component is the biggest obstacle. Within the given time, it is very difficult for most students to conduct qualitative research and to participate in the organization in a practical way (here we must bear in mind that the variability between the 9-week and the 6-month format is critical). Nor is it possible for every organization to find tasks that can be outsourced to students. These elements ensure that the practical component is in some cases far too minor. Evaluating the practical component also becomes very difficult due to these large differences. The evaluation of the students is in no way comparable.

The most important finding of this study is that more uniformity can be introduced into the project. This is true both for the content of the practical component and for how to approach the mentoring. However, it is important to still give the students freedom in how they approach the project.

## 4.9 Mentorship Programme in the Latvian Academy of Culture

Vita Dumpe

### Introduction

There are currently about 650 emerging professionals in the cultural field enrolled in various study programmes and sub-programmes offered by the Latvian Academy of Culture (LAC).

In recent years LAC has purposefully engaged in more activities strengthening its ties with players in the cultural and creative industry sector. LAC understands that by working closely with the sector there is a much better chance of improving the content of the studies LAC is offering so that it responds directly to what knowledge, skills, and competencies the market needs. One of the tools for matching theory with practical experience is the internship that is part of the curriculum. **The mentorship programme is yet another valuable tool students can use to have an opportunity to go ‘behind the curtains’, get individual attention to their needs from an experienced industry professional, experience unique opportunities and expand their contact network.** At present the mentorship programme at LAC is not part of the curriculum, it is voluntary and open to approximately 25 motivated students each year.

The idea of involving industry players – professionals with years of experience in the field – as mentors in LAC was first put forward in a project proposal financed by the European Social Fund “Efficiency of Governance of the Latvian Academy of Culture and Modernization of Its Study Process” (Project No. 8.2.3.0/18/A/020). The Covid-19 pandemic slowed the beginning of the implementation process; nevertheless, the pilot programme was officially started in February 2021 with two separate online kick-off events, one for the mentors and the other for the mentees. The duration of the programme is 5 months from February to June.

Below is a table with a detailed description of the implementation steps, where LAC as coordinator is involved. If we compare the pilot project (in 2021) and the next season of the programme (in 2022), there have been slight changes in the implementation, and as valuable experience is gathered with each season the programme is implemented, as the network of LAC mentors grows, and as LAC analyses the feedback from the participants and takes the suggestions for improvements seriously, more improvements are planned in 2023.



## Preparation for the mentorship process / coordination

Pilot project (2021)	Season 2 of the programme (2022)
<b>Step #1 Approaching mentors and their application process</b>	
<p>At first the official invitation for mentors to apply was issued and published on the LAC webpage and social media. The main target group were LAC graduates. Simultaneously, the heads of departments/ study programmes and sub-programmes were asked to approach potential mentors individually.</p> <p>The graduates were thought to be very easy to approach, however, LAC did not want to limit its mentors to graduates only; hence, some departments approached highly regarded professionals (non-graduates of LAC) and asked them to agree to take part and they did. Participants were asked to submit their applications by 10 January 2021, they were given 2 weeks to send in their applications. The LAC coordinator of the pilto then organised all applications received.</p>	<p>The best timing for starting the application process for mentors was reviewed and it was decided that the best timing is mid-November. Mentors were given 2 weeks to apply by sending a letter of motivation, short professional bio, and a photo (during the pilot project a CV was also asked but then it was realised that without editing it's of no use, so CVs are not requested anymore). Three weeks are needed because (as always) there are latecomers.</p> <p>Observation: Alumni with not so much professional experience are eager to apply and they do; however, to get experienced mentors, it is still crucial to involve the heads of departments and programmes who personally know professionals and can approach them directly. Often, the industry professionals are too busy to notice such a call for applications and are not willing to go the official route (no motivation letter, no professional bio or photo). In such cases the coordinator completes the files on behalf of those potential mentors.</p>
<b>Step #2 How information is offered to students</b>	
<p>When the applications were all received, they were looked through and heads of departments decided which mentors would be offered in which courses/ groups of students (e.g. cultural managers matched with students of cultural management).</p>	<p>It was decided to promote interdisciplinarity and allow all students to apply for all mentors (i.e., no restrictions or divisions based on study programme or subprogramme and the background of a certain mentor).</p> <p>When all the information had been collected from the mentors, the coordinator processed it and prepared it visually so that all business bios look the same within the LAC mentoring project.</p>

Pilot project (2021)	Season 2 of the programme (2022)
Step #3 Approaching and inviting the students to participate in the programme	
<p>The names of available mentors were published on the LAC webpage and sent to students via the Latvian Higher Education Institutions' Information System – the information went to their email addresses. Students were given 2 weeks to apply for a certain mentor of their choice. The required documents were CV and motivation letter. Unfortunately, the application time coincided with a study session and exam time in January; therefore, interest from the students was low, as a result the heads of study programmes and sub-programmes were asked to help and speak to students and invite them to take this opportunity. In addition, the deadline for applications was extended for 1 week.</p>	<p>After analysing the flaws in the pilot project, the timing of applications for students was changed and organized before the examination period. The call was posted on 13 December and the deadline was 30 December (i.e., 2 and a half weeks for sending in applications). In addition, shortly after the call was posted, an online event was hosted for those interested to apply. During the info event students were briefed about how to better understand and set individual goals and how to better prepare a motivation letter for the application. A reminder to apply was sent to everyone before the Christmas holidays on 22 December. Only a few students applied early during the application process, the vast majority sent their applications shortly before or on the deadline date. Again, the heads of programmes and subprogrammes were asked to remind and approach individual students inviting them to apply and seize the opportunity.</p>

Pilot project (2021)	Season 2 of the programme (2022)
Step #4 Pairing process	
<p>After the students had sent in their applications, they were forwarded to the mentors the students had chosen. If the mentors had several applicants, they had to choose who to work with. Mentors were given 1 week to choose and to have the first meeting with the chosen student or students (some mentors chose 2) to find out if they would make a good match. That is, to talk to the student and see what their aims and expectations are from the programme and see if that matched with what the mentor is capable of offering. When the choice was made – the mentor was expected by the coordinator to communicate the final choice (i.e. the students name they would like to work with).</p>	<p>Several hardships were faced during the matching/ pairing phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some of the students applied to several mentors, LAC as a coordinator had to intervene to avoid chaos. In most cases the student applicants who had intended to approach several mentors simultaneously, were directed to only 1 mentor chosen by LAC.</li> <li>some of the mentors had no applicants at all and eventually had to be turned down which was a very inconvenient situation LAC would like to avoid in the future.</li> <li>some of the students applied to just one mentor and when a particular mentor was very popular, there was a chance that they would not be chosen and not enter the programme at all, even though they had initiative and were motivated.</li> <li>some 'celebrity' mentors had many applications whereas mentors who were not so well known had none.</li> </ul> <p>To solve these issues, LAC as coordinator tried to intervene, for instance, when the complete list of mentors and student applications to each of them was ready, it was sent to the heads of the departments and heads of programmes and sub-programmes to see if they had any suggestions for matching. As a result of these suggestions several students were asked to consider applying to at least one more mentor and specific suggestions were given to direct them towards those mentors who by that time had not been chosen but would be a good match, taking into account the student's needs.</p>

Pilot project (2021)	Season 2 of the programme (2022)
	<p>Taking this experience into account it has been decided that in 2023 the idea that mentors choose a mentee (making sure that there is positive chemistry between mentor and mentee) should be sacrificed. Instead, the main entrance point in the programme will be student goals. The students and mentors will be matched not so much as personalities but taking into account student goals and the capabilities of the mentors. That will reduce the number of participants we have to turn down on both sides.</p>
<b>Implementation</b>	
<b>Step #5 Kick-off meeting</b>	
<p>When the mentor/mentee pairs were finalised, LAC officially launched the programme. Since spring 2021 was a time of Covid-19, the kick-off event was organized as an online event and was divided into two parts – one for students and one for mentors, the content being different for each group. During the students' part, the main focus was on goal-setting, during the mentors' part, the mentors were instructed on the basic principles of mentoring and briefed about what students have been doing in their part. As the students had set 3–5 goals for the programme, it was presumed that it could be a good starting point for the 1st official mentoring session. Presentations and brief info materials about mentoring were sent out to mentors after the kick-off meeting.</p>	<p>As the pandemic was still there, the same principle was maintained as during the pilot project: 2 separate kick-off events with different contents were provided where students were empowered as the driving force of the mentoring process, while mentors were introduced to the main principles of mentoring and provided with a step-by-step guide for each session (to use if needed and if unsure of how to better structure the mentoring sessions). As per the request of participants in the pilot project, significantly more theoretical material was provided to mentors this time.</p>

Pilot project (2021)	Season 2 of the programme (2022)
<b>Step #6 Mid-term event and feedback</b>	
<p>Originally, it was intended to do the mid-term networking event in the middle of the 5-month programme (i.e., April); however, because of the pandemic there was a choice between another online event or a collection of written responses. When the participants were approached via email, there seemed to be no enthusiasm for an online meeting. Consequently, LAC as coordinator asked everyone to send feedback about how their individual process was going. Most participants responded that the process was going well and that they were satisfied with the programme. Only a couple of mentors said that they were not quite sure how to proceed and seemed to be out of ideas with the mentees.</p>	<p>From the feedback from participants in the pilot project it was gathered that the networking and training events were very important for mentors. Taking this into account, in 2022 a mid-term event for mentors was organized. At the beginning, it was planned in person, however, the pandemic was still there, and a small enquiry indicated that more mentors will be reached if a meeting could be organized online. LAC also found out the themes the mentors wanted to discuss. As a result, a professional coach was invited to cover them. Afterwards the content of the mid-term event and additional informative materials (presentation on most popular pitfalls for less experienced mentors) was sent to all participants of the programme. For the students the mid-term feedback was organized as previously – via emails and thanks to an individual approach, feedback was received from almost every student, most of the responses were positive.</p>

Pilot project (2021)	Season 2 of the programme (2022)
<b>Closure</b>	
<b>Step #7 Rounding up, finalising and collecting final feedback</b>	
<p>In June 2021, an email was sent to all mentors reminding them that June is the last month of the programme and that they should plan and carry out the last session and evaluation. The initial idea of the closing event was to host it in June or July; however, June is always extremely busy at the academy (exams, leaving parties etc.), whereas July is already a time for vacations and is not good either. As a result the closing event of the programme took place at the beginning of September. During the summer a questionnaire – evaluation was sent to students and mentors and valuable feedback with suggestions for improvement was received.</p>	<p>This part has remained identical. Evaluation forms on the programme are usually sent out during the summer so that before the new season is planned and organized, there is time for analysing the evaluations and suggestions for improvements.</p>
<b>Step#8</b>	
<p>A final event was implemented in September, inviting all the participants plus students who are interested in the new season of the programme. During the event the rector thanked everyone for participating and contributing and the participants shared their experiences.</p>	<p>The closing event for the mentoring programme in 2022 was organized at the beginning of September. Participants of the programme and students interested in taking part in the next year took part. The rector thanked all the participants and experiences and ideas for future improvements/ changes were discussed.</p>

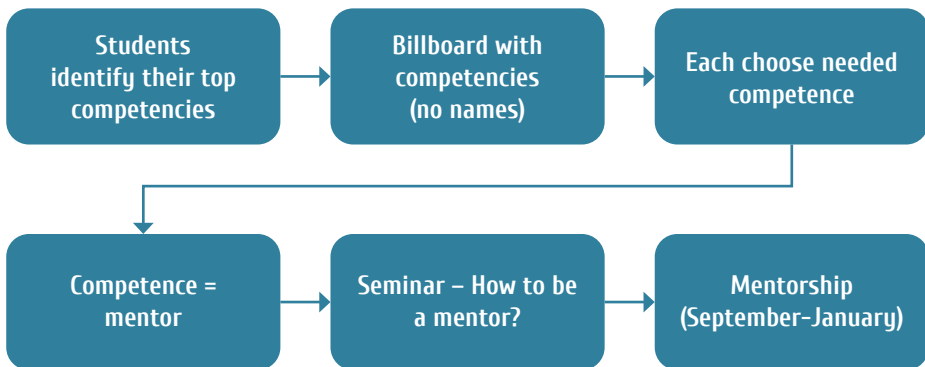
It is clear from the path described in the table that the process is ongoing and further analysis will be conducted. However, the lessons learned so far will hopefully provide some useful views and knowledge for planning and implementing mentoring programmes in educational institutions.

## 4.10 Peer-to-peer mentoring among students

Ieva Zemīte

The course Growth in Creative Industries offered at the Latvian Academy of Culture shows that peer-to-peer mentoring achieves advanced results. Students strengthen their ability to analyse and reflect on their professional career and promote professional development in the CCI by playing the roles of both mentors and mentees.

A simple diagram of the key steps in the peer-to-peer mentorship programme shows how the first semester MA students were involved in the process.



The peer-to-peer mentoring process was organized within the course Growth in Creative Industries during the first semester of their studies. Students were asked to meet at least three times. No administrative support was provided. The evaluation of the process was done during the final presentation in the course, where students shared what they achieved during the semester and stressed whether the mentoring process was useful.

The evaluation of this case showed that peer-to-peer mentorship within a course tackles both task-oriented and wider professional development by targeting a broad professional field and a narrow niche, as well facilitating personal growth.

The students mentioned the benefits of the connection between personal and professional development, which are: applied creativeness, organizational learning, improvement of creative and strategic thinking skills, cooperation capacity, raising awareness of talent and lifestyle management, creative entrepreneurship.

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scientific activity at LAC, the development of the competencies of academic and managerial staff and others.

Vita has studied at the University of Latvia (MA in Philology) and at Randolph Macon Woman's College, USA. Prior to joining the Latvian Academy of Culture she has worked in an NGO advocating better access to medicines and rational use of medicines in Latvia.

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developing the curriculum content and the organisation of studies. She primarily teaches project management, career planning, creative entrepreneurship and leadership not only to cultural managers but also music students and arts practitioners. Her research focuses on governance and the institutional setting in the cultural sector, the societal impact of the arts, societal engagement of HEIs, entrepreneurial training, and mentorship in the cultural sector. She is a career counsellor at the academy and member of the Society of Estonian Career Counsellors.

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Since 2018 she has acted as Education and Development Adviser for the organisation, and is active in other non-formal educational programmes for the cultural sector, leading “Project 33 – Educational and mentoring support in strategic planning for cultural institutions in Novi Sad” (within Novi Sad European Capital of Culture 2021) and International Summer Academy on Managing Historic Urban Landscapes, among others. She is assistant professor at the Faculty of Sport and Tourism Novi Sad, lecturer at UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management at University of Arts Belgrade, and at the international MA on Cultural Policy and Management at the University Hassan II in Casablanca and University of Hildesheim, and a guest lecturer at University Lyon II and Upsala University.

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**Tatjana Nikolić** received her bachelor (2009) and master's degree (2013) in cultural and media management in the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade, where she is currently a PhD candidate in the field of cultural policy. Tatjana has been a member of the Creative Mentorship team since 2014. From 2014 to 2016 she was a member of the managing board of the National Youth Council of Serbia. At the moment, she is also a junior researcher and teaching assistant at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts.

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Tourism Research, International Journal of Arts Management, European Planning Studies, Urban Affairs Review, Tourism Economics, Proceedings of the ICE-Municipal Engineer, Aslib Proceedings, and online. She has also coordinated international and national research projects on the societal impact of cultural events and infrastructures.

Her presentations include Akademie der Künste Berlin (2012) Kultur als Zweck oder Mittel, Stern Business School – New York University (2009) Architecture and Urban Development as Engines for Economic Growth Panel, SDA BOCCONI MAMA (2018-2020) Arts and Culture: What's the Impact They Generate and How Can We Measure It?, Sibelius Academy/University of Arts Helsinki, and the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, among others

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Ieva is an experienced mentor – since 2016 mentoring at the University of Latvia Student Business Incubator. She has implemented mentorship principles in the MA study courses Cultural Entrepreneurship and Growth in the Creative Industries. Ieva is a member of the Association for Cultural Economics International (ACEI).

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The book *Perspectives on Mentoship* offers a unique exploration of this subject by presenting different perspectives, raising thought provoking questions, and examining ways to manage a mentoring programme. It is important to remember that mentoring does not happen by itself, and that it requires management and intervention in order to be sustainable.

University students interested in arts management will find the book invaluable in obtaining a better understanding of how mentoring could be approached and help them in the development of their professional identity. It does not present one universal truth or method, but instead is about sharing experiences.

From the academic perspective, the book encourages readers to approach mentoring with an open mind, offering tools to reflect on the process of building programmes around the core of mentoring – a dynamic human relationship which affects the identity of both parties – and then to build on the different layers around that foundation.

The book seeks to provide insights into the different layers that are created during the mentoring process. It poses a variety of questions that can apply to specific programmes and helps readers understand how to effectively manage and sustain mentorship relationships.

