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The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities

DASSH Mentoring Program

Guidelines

Overview

The DASSH Mentoring Program is open to Mentees who are incoming or hold leadership positions such as Program or Centre Directors, Heads of Schools, Discipline Leads, Associate, Deputy and Assistant Deans and Pro Vice-Chancellor roles from member institutions in Australia and Aotearoa.

Our Mentors are experienced leaders in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (HASS) across both countries. They may hold senior leadership positions including Pro Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean and Dean. We maintain an active mentor database outlining their disciplinary backgrounds and leadership portfolio.

DASSH facilitates the administration of the Mentoring Program including connecting Mentors and Mentees together based on applications.

Mentors and Mentees manage the relationship themselves. DASSH is available to provide support throughout the program to both parties.

The DASSH Mentoring Program is a voluntary, community-based initiative. It operates on reciprocity and shared professional commitment to the network.

Duration and commitment

In 2027, the Mentoring Program will run between March to December. DASSH recommends Mentors and Mentees meet a minimum of four times within this timeframe. The final decision about the number of meetings rests with the Mentor and Mentee.

Mentees are requested to fill out a pre-briefing form before the first session to provide the Mentor with some background about their motivations and goals. We encourage Mentors and Mentees to use the initial session to outline key expectations and goals so that both parties feel supported. We also advise deciding on the number of sessions for the duration of the program.

Mentors and Mentees can adjust the frequency and number of sessions across the year if agreed to by both parties.

Mentees are invited to opt in to an informal network of Mentees participating in the program. There is an option to meet throughout the year to share experiences, challenges and benefits.

At the end of the year, DASSH facilitates a voluntary online discussion where Mentors and Mentees are invited to provide feedback. This feedback is used to design the following year's program.

Objectives

The DASSH mentor program intends to support leaders in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities. Potential areas of Mentoring include (but are not limited to):

- Management
- Academic promotion
- Succession planning
- Professional development
- Developing strategies
- Capacity planning
- Leadership
- Career pathways and progression
- Grant applications
- Navigating change
- Research leadership or impact
- Confidence and visibility
- Transitioning into new roles and portfolios
- Sector-wide opportunities

Our application form seeks to help us understand which area the Mentee would like to be supported. DASSH facilitates the administration process of connecting Mentors and Mentees based on the information provided in this form.

We prioritise area of support ahead of disciplinary alignment when pairing Mentors with Mentees. If you would prefer to be paired with someone from the same discipline, please state this in the application form.

Parameters

Mentors have committed to a minimum of four one-hour sessions with Mentees over a six-month period. To respect this commitment, DASSH recommends using the initial session to establish key goals, topics and meeting schedule. All sessions should have clear goals and discussion topics.

The Mentor is not committing to reading or reviewing material outside of these sessions.

The Mentee is not obliged to perform any tasks suggested by the mentor.

DASSH recommends maintaining clear communication throughout the program to manage evolving expectations and goals. However, we advise to keep communication between Mentor and Mentee at a minimum between sessions unless both parties agree otherwise.

The Mentor and Mentee relationship focuses on professional goals and development. For assistance regarding the Mentoring Program please contact DASSH. For other matters outside of this remit, please contact your university support or HR team.

Privacy and confidentiality

All matters shared in the context of the Mentoring Program remain private and confidential between the Mentor and Mentee. Any part of discussion to be shared outside of this relationship must be agreed to by both parties in advance.

During the Mentor and Mentee sessions and separate sessions facilitated by DASSH, any information shared needs to be anonymous or approved by all parties in advance.

Any information shared during the program should remain internal to the individuals participating in the program.

DASSH is available to support both Mentors and Mentees throughout the program. Any information shared with us will remain confidential and private.