



# MENTORING PROGRAM

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION & PROGRAM GUIDELINES

### 1. Background

In 2015 SoCLA launched its inaugural mentoring program for financial members. Feedback received from participating mentees and mentors across Australia was and continues to be very positive and constructive. In 2016, demand for the program was strong with the program experiencing threefold growth. Demand for the program has further increased and SoCLA is very pleased to be able to offer the mentoring program again this year. The program's continued success depends upon your participation.

Thank you for considering participating in the **SoCLA Mentoring Program**. We look forward to working with you to further grow and enhance the program. As SoCLA is committed to supporting our members and their professional development, member feedback about any aspect of the program is welcomed throughout the year.

### 2. SoCLA Mentor Program Management

SoCLA has engaged Louise McManamon to manage key aspects of the program. She has considerable experience in talent management within the professional services and legal industries. Louise will continue to work with the Chair of the Young Constructors Committee and is available to advise and assist mentees/mentors with any aspect of their involvement in the Program.

### 3. Mentoring – Benefits and Concepts

For this program, a mentor is defined as a “teacher and guide” to a mentee. However, mentees within the SoCLA program have an equal responsibility to be active learners. Mentoring is widely conceived to be a two-way street, with multiple potential outcomes for both parties. The benefits of mentoring in this program might include but are not limited to:

**Mentors:**

- contribute to the growth and professional development of their mentee and in doing so, contribute to the future direction of the profession;
- gain useful insights from their mentee;
- improve their communication and teaching skills;
- transfer of skills and knowledge (often mutual);
- give back to the profession and be regarded as a respected role model;
- personal satisfaction and re-motivation at work

**Mentees:**

- develop professional skills and a better knowledge of the profession;
- build professional networks, improve confidence, have a trusted “sounding board”;
- be exposed to new areas within the profession;
- be provided with an avenue to discuss theoretical and practical issues, reflect on personal growth;
- career planning and development; and
- build meaningful professional relationships

**4. Mentor and Mentee Applications – Online via new SoCLA website**

If, having read the material provided to you in this document and on the SoCLA website, you are interested in applying to participate as a mentee, mentor or both, we invite you to submit an online application via the SoCLA website.

**Mentors:** If you were a mentor in any previous program and wish to continue mentoring, please advise the Mentor Program Manager, Louise McManamon.

**New mentors** to the Program will be asked to complete the short online mentoring application form, available on the SoCLA website.

**It is a requirement of the program that mentors have at least five years post graduate experience.**

**Mentees:** All prospective mentees for the program are required to complete an application form. Mentees who participated in previous programs are also encouraged to apply to participate again in subsequent years. In this instance, should your application be successful, you will be matched with a different mentor.

**In line with SoCLA’s commitment to lifelong learning and professional development, members at ANY stage of their career can apply to be mentored.**

Previous mentees in the Program who now wish to mentor in the program are encouraged to do so, provided they meet the criteria.

Applications to join the Program are open only to **financial SoCLA members**. For information about membership and to join SoCLA, please visit the membership page of the SoCLA website.

The Mentor Program Manager will consider all applications and invite a specified number of mentors and mentees to participate in the Program.

We give no assurance that your application will be successful and participation in the Program is at the discretion of the Co-chair of the Young Constructors Committee and the Mentor Program Manager.

### ***Matching Process - important***

We also remind members that whilst we try to meet applicant's preferences regarding the general professional profile and location of their mentor/mentee, this is not always possible for several reasons and is very dependent upon:

- who applies for the program,
- the number of mentors participating and
- where they are located in any given year.

Participants are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to be mentored and potentially be exposed to a new sector.

## **5. The Guidelines**

The purpose of the Guidelines is to make suggestions as to what participants might expect from the Program and make clear our expectations of those participating in the Program (which includes participant compliance with the 'Participation Code' contained in section 3 of these Guidelines).

## **6. What You Might Expect**

We would prefer that the relationship between mentors and mentees is permitted to develop naturally and according to participants' tastes. However, we will coordinate and monitor the Program and seek to assist should the Program not proceed in accordance with participants' reasonable expectations. We also strongly encourage participants to contact Louise McManamon if they have any queries, concerns, suggestions or positive news throughout the year.

In order to ensure that there are opportunities for the relationship to develop, we:

- ask that mentees and mentors commit to meeting in person (or remotely/virtually) at least once every 4-6 weeks over the period in which the Program will run;
- recommend that mentors and mentees discuss and agree upon a common expectation as to the nature of discussions, time commitments and mode and regularity of contact as between themselves; and
- on request, will seek to facilitate 'catch ups' if mentee / mentor initiated catch ups are not realised.

For example:

- mentors and mentees might agree that all discussions are confidential;
- mentors might provide constructive feedback to mentees;

- mentees should take responsibility for their own personal and professional development and respect mentors are giving up their time;
- mentees should prepare for catch ups with questions, topics to discuss;
- both mentee and mentor should be realistic about their expectations of each other;
- topics for discussion might comprise career planning, goal setting, current construction law issues and/or upcoming lectures / seminars; and
- mentors and mentees might expect to 'meet' every four to six weeks via Skype, teleconference or, if mentor and mentee reside in the same State, at a coffee shop or café; and
- mentors might, if appropriate, introduce mentees to colleagues or other professionals, maximising networking and professional development opportunities for their mentee.

Mentors should expect that mentees may be apprehensive approaching their mentor, particularly if the mentor is very senior and well-regarded in the profession. Accordingly, at least for the first 'meeting', mentors should assume responsibility for arranging the initial meeting. In relation to arrangements for subsequent meetings, mentees should assume responsibility. **It is important mentees are mindful of and respect that mentors are busy professionals and volunteering their time to mentor.** It is strongly recommended that future meeting dates be discussed and booked well in advance and that if unable to attend an appointment, the other party is notified. This is an important courtesy.

To facilitate the above, **it is important participants should not expect that:**

- arrangements for meetings will never change (indeed, meetings may need to change on occasion but both parties should try to avoid rescheduling with minimal notice and/or adopting a habit of rescheduling);
- mentors will arrange or facilitate paid or unpaid employment or work arrangements for mentees;
- mentors will provide advice or tutorials in their field of expertise or counselling / psychological services;
- mentees will perform paid or unpaid work for mentors;
- mentees are experts in their field or have the degree of knowledge and expertise of the mentor;
- they will form a friendship; and/or
- the mentoring relationship will necessarily continue beyond the formal conclusion of the program (whilst encouraged, this needs to be a mutual decision).

## 7. SoCLA's Expectations

SoCLA expects that participants will:

- comply with the [Participation Code of Conduct](#) contained in these Guidelines (section 8);
- behave in an ethical, professional and responsible manner at all times and be mindful of the professional integrity and reputation of the person they are matched with;
- remain committed to the Program;
- be sympathetic to the reasons for any communication breakdown (refer further below)
- if experiencing difficulties impacting on your participation in the program, advise the Program Manager, Louise McManamon as soon as possible. This is very important;
- advise their mentor/mentee and the Program Manager if they have relocated for work, are travelling for a lengthy period etc.

We request that participants please be mindful that, if communications do slow or cease entirely, there may be legitimate, personal (and other) reasons for this. The reasons may relate to the health (physical or mental), work or personal circumstances of the participant and it may be that the affected participant is reluctant, unwilling or embarrassed to share the reasons with their mentor/mentee.

We ask that, in these circumstances, the unaffected participant please avoid forming negative perceptions about the affected party's character, opinion, commitment to the program (or their mentee/mentor) or professional integrity. For instance, it is well documented that an increasing number of professionals experience periods of anxiety and depression. If you are concerned that your mentor/mentee is exhibiting physical or emotional withdrawal from your pairing, please contact the Mentor Program Manager.

## **8. Participation Code of Conduct**

Participants in the Program must:

- behave ethically and professionally at all times;
- treat other participants in the Program – particularly their mentor or mentee, as the case may be – with respect and courtesy;
- comply with any relevant laws, including privacy and occupational health and safety laws;
- maintain confidentiality of contact details and any other information or discussions which the participants agree are of a confidential nature;
- not improperly use the Program to gain or seek to gain a financial advantage or to cause detriment to another participant;
- at all times, behave in a manner that promotes the objectives of the Society of Construction Law Australia; and
- if they encounter or experience any grievance, behave with respect and integrity and advise the Mentor Program Manager, Louise McManamon.

## **9. Grievances and Discontinuance**

Should a participant be unable to continue participating in the Program or have a complaint, grievance or other issue with the Program, participants should contact Louise McManamon, Mentor Program Manager, in the first instance:

Louise McManamon  
Mentor Program Manager  
[mentoring@scl.org.au](mailto:mentoring@scl.org.au)

Young Constructors Committee Chair  
[chair\\_ycc\\_subcommittee@scl.org.au](mailto:chair_ycc_subcommittee@scl.org.au)

Participants should expect to provide an explanation for their desire to discontinue participating in the Program. This information will assist the Program Manager to address the issue and where appropriate, arrange an alternative mentoring relationship.

*Thank you again for considering the Program.*

*If you have any questions about these Guidelines or the Application Form, please contact Louise McManamon by email [mentoring@scl.org.au](mailto:mentoring@scl.org.au) or 0411 854 849*