

WOMEN in Transport

2023 Mentoring Program

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The Mentoring Program

The Women in Transport (WiT) Mentoring Program is creating an empowered, enduring and energetic future for women in Victoria's transport industry.

The program is designed to foster supportive relationships and actively encourage mentees to identify and realise their professional goals. The aim is to give mentees a fresh avenue for development as they progress through their career in transport, and to give mentors an opportunity to share their experience and discover just how much they have to offer.

The program is a six-month, industry-wide initiative and includes networking opportunities, professional development, plus regular guidance to help structure monthly mentee-mentor meetings.

Participating in the Women In Transport (WiT) Mentoring Program is your opportunity to make the transport industry great for women.

Whether mentee or mentor, you will benefit from personal and professional development and contribute to a culture of positive learning that will support the capability of women in transport now and in the future.

The WiT program was the first of its kind in Australia back in 2017 and takes a strategic approach to shifting the dial in a sector typically dominated by men. Since then, we have welcomed the introduction of the Victorian Government's Gender Equality Strategy (2020) and the

launch of the new WiT 2021-2024 strategy. The mentoring program continues to be a key focus area of the WiT strategy, in improving access to employment and career advancement for women and people of diverse gender identities.

WiT Mentoring is delivered by the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) on behalf of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). It is part of WiT, a multi-million package of initiatives and business improvements to encourage more women to enter and stay in the transport industry.



Benefits of the Women in Transport Mentoring Program

For Mentees:

- Experienced guidance and support from within the transport industry, in a structured program
- Learning from industry experts, leaders and peers
- Networking opportunities across different levels, fields and sectors of industry
- Receiving feedback and developmental guidance
- Identifying professional growth and career planning

For Mentors:

- Pay it forward by supporting women to advance in their careers and help fill the gap of women in senior positions
- Contribute to a culture supporting the capability of women in transport
- Mutual benefit from personal and professional development
- Stay abreast of emerging issues relevant to the industry
- Further development of mentoring skills such as listening, asking questions, guiding, providing feedback, communication and interpersonal skills

What is meant by mentoring?

mentor: (noun) an experienced and trusted adviser.

Mentorship is a developmental relationship in which one person, usually more experienced or senior, takes time to assist the career, professional or personal development of someone else, who is known as a mentee, or protégé. Mentoring is most often a one-on-one relationship but is sometimes done in groups.

A mentoring relationship is one that is built on trust, in which there is an exchange of knowledge, experience and goodwill.

What do past participants have to say?

It was extremely valuable for my career journey. The events were very interesting. It made me feel more included and welcome in the transport industry.

Mentee 2022

I've been involved in many different mentoring programs over my career and this one was well managed, well supported and allowed enough balance between structure and flexibility to make it work well.

Mentor 2022



PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM

Who can apply?

Mentees and mentors can work in any role in any Victorian government department or agency or private business in Victoria's transport industry. You can apply to be either a mentee or a mentor. **Mentees are women only, but we encourage and welcome men as mentors.**

We encourage applications from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, those with disability, people who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), and those who identify as LGBTIQ+ people.

The WiT Mentoring Program is open to all women (including transgender women) and non-binary and gender diverse people.

Self-definition is at the discretion of the individual. We recognise that gender is a self-identification, and that there is a range of language that people may use to articulate their experience of gender.

To join as a mentee, you must be:

- a woman, a transgender woman, non-binary or gender diverse
- employed within Victoria's transport industry
- able to commit to a six-month program
- able to attend monthly meetings, training sessions and events
- comfortable driving the mentoring relationship
- clear about your goals and what you want to achieve
- respectful of your mentor's time
- prepared and responsible for your own program outcomes.

To join as a mentor, you:

- can be any gender
- can be at any level – you don't need to be a senior manager or expert
- must have upwards of five years' experience in your field
- must be employed within Victoria's transport industry
- must be able to commit to a six-month program
- must be able to attend monthly meetings, training sessions and events
- must be available to listen and willing to guide.

What's involved?

- The WiT Mentoring Program is a six-month program.
- Mentees and mentors will be asked to complete a short application form to assess their eligibility for the program and to collect details about what they are looking for in a mentoring partner.
- Mentors and mentees will be matched into pairs according to the details provided in the application form.
- Pairs are expected to meet at least one a month and attend the scheduled networking events and training that form part of the program.
- The program uses a mentoring software platform provided by Art of Mentoring. Mentees and mentors will be expected to complete Art of Mentoring online training to prepare them for their mentoring relationship.
- During the program, you will receive frequent communications from the WiT team, giving you helpful tips and information about mentoring, and access to other relevant materials available on the platform.
- Throughout the six-month program you will be invited to provide feedback about your experience via surveys.
- Participants who complete all training and feedback surveys will be eligible to receive a program completion certificate at the end.



Expectations

Clear expectations and commitments are important for supporting successful mentoring relationships and a productive mentoring program.

The WiT Mentoring Program is a 6-month commitment. Mentees and mentors must agree to:

- meet at least once a month
- negotiate meeting locations and time commitments
- ensure that discussions remain confidential
- prepare for meetings and read the program resources provided
- participate in the professional development sessions
- access further support from the program coordinator when required
- keep their contact details up to date via the Mentoring Platform
- notify the WiT Mentoring Program team if either party is disengaged or not contactable or if you are concerned about their welfare.

Mentors should:

- be open and honest in sharing their knowledge, expertise and experiences
- offer honest feedback in a constructive manner
- be able to listen and provide guidance to mentees, allowing them to make their own decisions.

Mentors should be committed to:

- the development of their mentee
- demonstrating leadership by championing collaboration across teams and organisations
- understanding the opportunities and barriers that women face at different levels in the transport industry
- developing their individual skills by contributing to the development of another

- self-reflection, where sharing experiences allows mentors to learn new insights about themselves
- providing a culturally safe and inclusive environment for their mentee (resources are provided to assist with this).

Mentees should:

- be the drivers of the mentoring relationship, proactively contacting their mentor, setting up meetings and establishing meeting agendas
- demonstrate a commitment to personal learning and development and follow through on all actions agreed with their mentor
- have a positive attitude and be open to developing self-awareness, personal growth, seeking feedback

- take responsibility for their decisions and actions
- be clear about their goals throughout the program.

Mentees should have a desire to:

- develop a wider knowledge of the transport industry
- build self-confidence
- support their career and personal development by developing greater insight into skills and behaviours needed to be effective in their roles

- build and grow a strong professional network
- learn through shared experiences.





What would I be committing to?

Activity	Time required
Networking/professional development events, online training, reading resources	10-12 hours in total (spread over 6 months)
Mentoring conversations (including preparation & follow-up)	1-2 hours per month
Program surveys	1/2 hour in total

A detailed program of events will be available early 2023 via the [WiT Mentoring Program website](#).

Key Dates 2023

Activity	Date
Applications open	6 March 2023
Applications close	6 April 2023
Applicants advised of matching	24 April 2023
Program commences with launch event (networking / professional development)	10 May 2023
Various networking and professional development events	May to Nov 2023
Program concludes with networking / professional development event	1 November 2023

How to apply

Applications are open from 6 March 2023 until 6 April 2023.

[Click here to apply](#)

Frequently asked questions

How can I apply?

Applications will be open from 6 March 2023 until 6 April 2023.

[Click here to apply.](#)

Mentees will be asked questions about their background and what they would like to achieve by working with a mentor for six months. Mentors will be asked about the areas in which they feel comfortable mentoring. Please give as much information as you reasonably can to assist the matching process.

What if I am not matched?

We will endeavour to match all mentees that apply, provided we have a suitable/available mentor. Some mentors may not be matched if their expertise/ experience is not suitable for any applicants. If we don't have a suitable match for a mentor, we won't pair you for the sake of putting you in the program, but we will carry your application across for consideration in the next round.

Why do you need me to provide so much information on my application form?

The information you provide will help us 'match' the right mentee with the right mentor, based on experience, skills and what you both want to achieve from the program.

Can I be a mentee and a mentor?

Being a mentor or mentee is a big responsibility, so we encourage people to take on one role only.

When will I know if I've been successful, and if so, who I've been matched with?

Providing you have submitted a complete application form, you will be notified by 24 April 2023 to confirm whether you've been accepted into the program and who has been selected as your mentoring partner. It's important to note we won't 'match for matching sake'. If a suitable match is not available, your application will be carried over and considered for future programs.

What will I have to do if my application is successful?

If your application is successful, you are encouraged to attend all the program events as scheduled.

You will also be asked to complete a one-hour online training. The training will help provide you with the knowledge and skills to have a successful mentoring relationship.

It will be up to each mentee/mentor pair to establish their own timetables for their one-on-one meetings, which should take place on a monthly basis at least.

Will discussions between mentees and mentors be confidential?

Absolutely! Great mentee/mentor relationships are based first and foremost on trust. Your participation in the program is confidential and you will agree with your mentoring partner how you will handle confidentiality between you.

What if I'm not suited to my mentee or mentor?

If one or both parties don't feel comfortable with the match, we will do our best to find another existing or new mentee/mentor so that you can continue with the program.

What happens if my role changes or I leave my organisation?

As long as you remain in the Victorian transport industry you can continue with the program.

Does my employer need to endorse my participation?

No, this is a voluntary program that strengthens your personal career development. However, they may be notified of your participation should they ask for it. This can help them to better support your involvement or inform their own programs.

What if I decide to leave the program?

Participation in the program is a six-month commitment. However, if you believe the relationship is no longer productive, or there are other reasons for leaving early, please contact witprograms@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au to discuss.

Do we have to end the mentoring relationship after the six-month program?

No. Pairs are encouraged to continue their mentoring relationship beyond this program. It is a great way to build a dynamic professional network and we hope that the mentoring relationship continues throughout your career.

Can I be part of future WiT Mentoring Programs?

Yes. You can reapply to be part of future programs, but you will be matched with a new mentee/mentor.

First time mentees will need to be prioritised, depending on available mentors.

Where do I go for more information?

If you would like to learn more, or if you are unsure if this program is suitable for you, you may like to attend an information session during the application open period in March 2023. Information session dates will be published in February 2023, so please keep an eye out.

Alternatively, you can contact the WiT Mentoring team via witprograms@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au

Contact

Please email queries to

E: witprograms@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au