

# **ASPA Mentorship Program:**

## **A Guidebook for Mentors and Mentees**

**Developed by the ASPA Mentorship Working Group**

**May 2025**



## 1. Description of the ASPA Mentorship Program

The ASPA Mentorship Program is a union-led initiative designed to foster professional growth and development, to connect with experienced ASPA members, share knowledge, and build meaningful professional relationships.

The program is open to all ASPA members at various stages in their careers. Mentors and mentees are matched based on common skill sets and/or goals. Mentees and mentors will meet approximately once a month over a six-month period, during which they'll have access to resources and check-ins from members of the ASPA Mentorship Program Working Group.

## 2. Goals

The goals of the ASPA Mentorship Program include the following:

- Develop ASPA mentees professionally, and support personal, professional, and spiritual growth.
- Help mentors hone their leadership skills and help build community among ASPA colleagues.
- Engage our members and build on the strong sense of ASPA community and solidarity.

## 3. Benefits of Participating

Participating in a mentorship program can include numerous benefits for both mentees and mentors, such as the following:

- **Knowledge Transfer:** Facilitate the sharing of knowledge, which is often gained through personal experience and may not be available through formal training or undocumented processes.
- **Employee Well-being:** Boost employee well-being by providing emotional support and guidance on managing personal and professional priorities.
- **Exposure to New Perspectives:** Gain insight into different ways of thinking and problem-solving.
- **Professional Development:** Gain valuable skills and knowledge among mentees, while mentors benefit from the reciprocal nature of the relationship, enhancing their own communication and leadership skills.
- **Personal Growth and Fulfillment:** Grow personally through the development of new skills, expanded professional networks, and increased job satisfaction.
- **Expanded Professional Network:** Open doors to new connections, increasing exposure to opportunities, and collaborative ventures.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

### a. Mentee

- Take initiative to drive the relationship and be responsible for career development and planning.
- Ask questions of the mentor to help in understanding their role.
- Develop by using the learning from discussions and interactions with the mentor.
- Participate in the pilot project evaluation activities to ensure the mentorship program meets the needs of ASPA participants.

### b. Mentor

- Share your experiences.
- Ask questions of the mentee to understand better their concerns or areas where they would like to learn more.
- Aid in the mentee's development by becoming a trusted resource from which they can learn.
- Participate in the pilot project evaluation activities to ensure the mentorship program meets the needs of ASPA participants.

### c. ASPA Mentorship Working Group

- Provide training and resources for mentors and mentees.
- Make suitable matches based on the intake forms completed by mentors and mentees.
- Be available for questions, guidance, and general support for the program.
- Collect feedback from pilot project participants to assist with designing an ongoing ASPA mentorship program.

## 5. Suggested Program Phases and Questions

Below are questions and a timeline to help guide your meetings and conversations. Please note that these are suggestions only, and the focus of your conversations will be determined based on the specific goals of the mentoring relationship (e.g., navigating being a new employee at USask, seeking out guidance for specific skill development, etc.).

### a. Kickoff/Getting to Know Each Other (Month 1)

#### For Mentors to Ask Mentees:

- What motivated you to join this mentorship program?
- What are your short-term and long-term career goals?
- What topics do you want to cover in our conversations?
- Is there a specific project or task that you're currently working on that I could provide guidance on?
- What are the biggest challenges you're facing right now professionally?
- What would success look like for you at the end of these six months?
- When is the best time to meet, and do you prefer in-person or virtual?
- How do you prefer to communicate between meetings (e.g., email, teams, via the mentoring app)?

#### For Mentees to Ask Mentors:

- Can you share a bit about your career path and how you got to where you are today?
- What lessons did you learn early in your career that still guide you?
- What values are most important to you in your professional life?
- How have mentors helped you in your own journey?
- What's one thing you wish you had known at my career stage?

### b. Goal Setting and Planning (Month 1-2)

- What specific goals would you like to work on together during this mentorship?
- How will we measure progress toward these goals?
- What resources (books, articles, tools, people) can help support these goals?
- What timeline or milestones should we set to stay on track?

### c. Skill Development and Growth (Month 2-4)

#### Questions for Both:

- What skills do you think are essential in my role or industry today?
- Can you help me identify gaps in my current skillset?
- How do you stay current in your field?

- What habits or routines have been most helpful for your growth?
- How can I become more effective at communication, leadership, or decision-making?

#### **d. Career Strategy and Advancement (Month 3-5)**

- How do you approach career planning and pivoting?
- What's your advice on navigating office politics or organizational dynamics?
- How should I advocate for a promotion or new opportunity?
- How do you evaluate whether a job or project is right for you?
- What strategies have helped you build a professional network?

#### **e. Reflection and Feedback (Throughout the Program)**

##### **Mentors to Mentees:**

- What's something you've learned since we started working together?
- Where do you feel you've made the most progress?
- Is there anything we need to adjust in our mentorship approach?

##### **Mentees to Mentors:**

- How am I doing from your perspective?
- Are there any blind spots I should be aware of?
- What would you do differently if you were in my shoes?

#### **f. Wrap-Up and Looking Ahead (Month 6)**

- What are the key takeaways from our mentorship relationship?
- What will you focus on after this program ends?
- How can we continue to support each other beyond this program?
- What would you recommend as my next steps?
- Would you be open to staying in touch periodically?

## **6. Contact Information**

If at any time you have questions about your role as mentor/mentee, or you encounter issues with your mentoring relationship, please do not hesitate to contact the ASPA Mentorship Working Group, [MentorshipWorkingGroup@aspasask.ca](mailto:MentorshipWorkingGroup@aspasask.ca).