

IR Society Mentoring Programme (in partnership with Equitory)

Introduction

The IR Society, in partnership with Equitory, is launching a virtual pilot mentoring programme in January 2021, with a view to developing a full online mentoring programme in the future. This mentoring programme reflects our commitment to supporting you and your personal and professional development throughout your investor relations career.

Our pilot mentoring programme has been designed to introduce experienced mentors working in corporate investor relations roles with mentees at varying stages of their IR careers and provide a framework and supported environment to enable the facilitation of a successful mentoring process.

We are delighted to be working with Equitory, the investor relations consultancy on this initiative.

Objective of the scheme

The primary objective behind the scheme is for the IR Society to provide a support mechanism to assist IR society members to achieve their career ambitions in IR and expand their IR skills and knowledge to benefit themselves and their organisation. We believe the scheme will help connect our member network further, creating more member advocates and delivering more value to our members. It is also an opportunity for more experienced members to give something back to their profession.

Overview of Pilot Mentoring Programme

The pilot mentoring programme will be run as a virtual-only programme from March-September 2021, ensuring we can run the pilot irrespective of any social distancing restrictions which may still in place due to COVID-19. The pilot will be run with a limited number of corporate IROs over a six-month timescale, with detailed feedback and a review on completion to inform the full online programme design.

For the pilot programme, we will invite corporate IROs to register their interest in taking part in the programme, either as mentors or as mentees, by completing a simple online application form. We hope to make the mentoring scheme available across the membership in the future.

We will run an information and training webinar in January 2021 for all those interested in applying, providing more details on the scheme, guidance on making a virtual programme a success, setting realistic expectations and enabling you to ask any question you might have.

Role of the Mentor

Mentor (An experienced professional who will conduct the role of a trusted adviser)

A mentor will agree to share with the mentee information about his or her own career path, provide guidance, motivation, emotional support and role modelling. He or she may help with exploring career opportunities, setting goals, developing contacts and identifying suitable learning resources. They will meet with the mentee as established by the mentoring programme structure and maintain confidentiality within the mentoring relationship. The mentor will help the mentee to establish an Individual Development Plan.

Effective mentors will have the ability and willingness to:

- 1) develop mutual trust and respect;
- 2) value the mentee as a person;
- 3) maintain confidentiality;
- 4) listen both to what is being said and how it is being said;
- 5) help the mentee solve his or her own problem, rather than give direction;
- 6) focus on the mentee's development and resist the urge to produce a clone

Role of the Mentee

Mentee (A professional who is advised, trained, or counselled by a mentor)

A mentee will be motivated and feel empowered to plan and manage the direction of their own professional life. They will initiate the mentoring relationship and will be open to coaching, feedback and guidance by the mentor. They will meet with the mentor as established by the mentoring programme structure and maintain confidentiality within the mentoring relationship. The mentee will create an Individual Development Plan with the support of the mentor.

Choosing a mentor that has the right skills and experience that will benefit you is important so take some time to think about whether you want a mentor that can help with short term challenges or longer-term career development. Or both!

Applying

The online application form on the IR Society website will provide us with enough information to match potential mentees with suitable mentors, based on our matching criteria.

This online form will ask for information such as:

Mentors:

- Current role (Job title, industry sector, company size / Index, etc.)
- Length of IR experience
- Specific career experience (e.g. M&A activity, activist investors, ESG etc.)

Mentees:

- Current role (Job title, Industry sector, Company size / Index, etc.)
- Length of IR experience
- Career aspirations short/mid/long term
- Desired outcomes from mentoring programme (e.g. are they looking to improve in one specific area, or more general career development)

Matching

Getting the matching right is a really important stage in running a successful mentoring programme. Matching will be done with our expertise and experience, whilst also allowing participants to have input to the final pairing. Following the matching of mentors and mentees, we will share details of the pairing to each participant. Should they accept our selection we will then make an introduction. Mentors and mentees will then arrange an introductory video meeting to ensure there is a rapport and mutual compatibility. If for any reason they are not compatible, then we will attempt a new match. If we are unable to successfully match anyone, we will give them priority during the next intake for the programme.

Up and running

Assuming the mentor and mentee are a good fit, the first meeting will be used to set the mentee's Individual Development Plan – what the mentees wants to achieve and setting some steps along the way.

The mentoring arrangement will last for six months and will be based on regular monthly meetings between the two parties. We recommend at least a one-hour meeting each month for the next six months, but each individual mentoring pair can agree their own schedule. We recommend holding meetings via video call, details to be agreed between the parties. Meetings will be supported by a meeting log to assist both parties. Once a mentoring arrangement is set up the onus will be on the mentee to arrange meetings and keep the process flowing.

At the end of the programme the mentee will have completed their Individual Development Plan and both parties will provide feedback on their partner, and their experience of the mentoring programme. This feedback will be entirely confidential and will only be used to assess the pilot and inform the design of the full mentoring programme.

Setting realistic expectations

The scheme is a voluntary, consensual process which relies on the input of all the parties to make it work successfully. Setting measurable, specific and achievable goals will help both parties during the programme and improve the outcome for the mentee. We will provide you with tools to aid this process, but it requires a mutual understanding on the part of the mentee and mentor from the outset.

Pilot Programme Key Dates

Invitations to participate	December 2020
Applications open	December 2020
Launch webinar & training event	15 January 2021
Closing date for applications	End January 2021
Matching process	February 2021
Pilot programme invitations sent	End February 2021
Pilot programme starts	1st week March 2021
Pilot programme ends	End September 2021

Feedback

All participants in the IR Society Mentoring Programme will be asked to provide structured feedback at the end of the mentoring programme, but if

you would like to provide additional feedback at any time please send them to mentoring@irsociety.org.uk.

Disclaimer

All Mentors and Mentees are asked to agree to a standard disclaimer as follows:

"I acknowledge that I understand that The IR Society has no role in the IR Society Mentoring Programme other than providing a means for IR Society members to connect as mentors and mentees. I represent and warrant that I will comply with all United Kingdom laws and regulations, as well as the ethical and licensure requirements of my profession, directly or indirectly applicable to me and my participation in the IR Society Mentoring Programme and any mentoring activity that follows. I acknowledge that I have sole responsibility for the decision to engage in any mentoring activities I undertake and expressly disclaim any liability by the IR Society for any causes of action or liability related to my participation in The IR Society Mentoring Programme and/or any relationships or activities it generates, including, but not limited to improper use of data, information or other information transmitted or received."

Complaints

The IR Society has no role in the IR Society Mentoring Programme other than providing a means for IR Society members to connect as mentors and mentees; however, we accept that from time to time your experience may not be as expected. Mentors and mentees should contact mentoring@irsociety.org.uk if any exceptional circumstances occur.

The IR Society reserves the right to remove any mentor or mentee who does not exhibit the characteristics outlined in this guidance.