



# MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

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## Overview and Guidelines

### *Eligibility and Requirements:*

The Alberta Museums Association (AMA) Mentorship Program is open to Individual Members in good standing. Individual Members must be ratified by the AMA's Board of Directors prior to the start of the mentoring relationship. If you are unsure if you are an Individual Member in good standing, please contact the AMA Secretariat.

While the Program is self-directed and customizable based on the individual needs and goals of the Mentee and the Mentor, participants in the Program are required to submit a Mentorship Plan to the Program Coordinator, provide Quarterly Updates summarizing the participants' status on their plan, and complete a mid-program survey and a final survey regarding the Program structure.

The AMA will use member-submitted applications to match the self-identified Mentors with the most appropriate Mentees. Participants should consult the [Professional Development Map](#) to determine the category that best matches their career stage. In the event that an appropriate match cannot be made for either a Mentor or Mentee, the Program Coordinator will inform the applicant that a match has not been made. Unmatched applicants are strongly encouraged to reapply for the subsequent mentorship year.

### *Timeline and Meetings:*

The Mentorship Program runs annually from October to August, and mentorship pairs are expected to meet at least once per month for the duration of the Program. Meetings will be most productive if the mentorship pair meets for at least one hour at a time. The timeframe and frequency of meetings within the mentoring relationship can be adjusted to serve the needs of the Mentee and Mentor.

Mentorship pairs should set dates for their first and last mentorship meetings, as well as plan the frequency of regular meetings, at the beginning of the mentoring relationship. Creating a Mentorship Plan at the first meeting will ensure that meetings will be productive and the relationship successful. Mentorship pairs will have the opportunity to follow the AMA's sample plan, alter it to their needs, or create their own tailor-made plan. Pairs should share their meeting schedule with the Program Coordinator as part of their Mentorship Plan.

As this is a self-directed program, it is up to the mentorship pairs to agree on and follow a realistic schedule and set achievable goals. It is important that participants respect the voluntary nature of the Program by meeting self-imposed deadlines and completing any tasks agreed upon by the chosen meeting date. Meetings can occur in a variety of ways, including in person, over the phone, or via a video chat service. We recommend meeting in person at least once if possible, to encourage a stronger mentoring relationship.

Participants are encouraged to continue their mentoring relationship beyond the duration of the AMA Mentorship Program, if the mentorship pair finds it beneficial to do so.

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## *Quarterly Updates:*

Quarterly Updates are evaluation checkpoints for both the mentorship pair and the AMA to review the pair's progress with their Mentorship Plan. These Updates will be kept with the mentorship pair's file and will be used by the AMA as an evaluation tool to gauge the success of the Program. The content of the Updates will remain confidential unless the AMA is given explicit written permission from the mentorship pair to share with other AMA members and / or the public (please see *Confidentiality and Ethics* below for more information).

Mentorship pairs should provide each Quarterly Update to the Program Coordinator as a brief written summary (2 - 3 paragraphs) of their progress with their Mentorship Plan. If any adjustments have been made to the plan, or if there were planned activities that the pair was unable to complete, this should be explained and any adjustments to future activities should be clarified. The mentorship pair should discuss and complete these Updates together.

When submitting Quarterly Updates, only one submission is required for each mentorship pair. These will be emailed to the Program Coordinator on the first business day of each of the following months:

- January
- April
- July

Pairs are required to submit a Quarterly Update even if creating their own plans or following a different meeting schedule.

## *AMA Involvement:*

The AMA will match participants into mentorship pairs to ensure an appropriate match is made for the mentoring relationship. The mentorship pairs should approach their relationship as a self-directed activity, choosing to follow a structure similar to the Sample Mentorship Plan (below) or creating their own plan to suit their unique needs and goals. The Program Coordinator is available for assistance and may provide participants with suggestions, discussion content, meeting opportunities, or other activities based on the pairs' individual goals or the cohort's interests and needs.

The Program Coordinator will review the Mentorship Plans and Quarterly Updates in order to evaluate the success of the Program and to ensure that the members involved are benefitting from the Program. The Program Coordinator will distribute a mid-program survey and a final survey at the end of the Program to all participants in order to evaluate the needs, challenges, and successes of the participants. These evaluations will help to ensure that the Program continues to benefit AMA members, as well as allow the AMA to make any necessary adjustments to the Program based on the needs of the participants.

The AMA will not arrange mentorship pairs' meetings or ensure individual plans are followed. The Program Coordinator will review changes or alterations to the pairs' goals and plans in the Quarterly Updates, but will otherwise rely on the pairs to moderate their own mentorship relationship.

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## *Confidentiality and Ethics:*

As Individual Members of the AMA, Mentorship Program participants have agreed to act honestly, in good faith, and in the best interests of the community; to uphold a position of trust in the museum community; and to exercise a degree of skill and diligence that can reasonably be expected from someone of their experience and knowledge. If a participant is found to be in breach of these ethical expectations, they will be removed from the Program.

Throughout the mentoring relationship, participants may become privy to private or confidential information. As the mentorship pairs will not be anonymous, Program participants are expected to treat the information shared in meetings as confidential unless explicit permission to disclose information is given by the other member in the relationship. Any information shared with the AMA will be kept confidential unless the AMA is given explicit written permission to share the information with other AMA members and / or the public (e.g., in the AMA's Annual Report, on social media, in *INFOrm* articles, etc.).

Participants are expected to treat each other professionally and with mutual understanding and respect. A successful partnership between a Mentee and a Mentor is based on trust, honesty, and confidentiality. Growth and development require both parties to be open to constructive feedback and to be willing to support new ideas that may be out of their comfort zones.

If serious conflicts arise, and direct communication between the participants is unable to resolve any issues, please contact the AMA as soon as possible. Another pairing may better suit the participants in the mentoring relationship.

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## Sample Mentorship Plan

*October:*

Get to know each other and outline your expectations for the mentoring relationship. What are your individual goals and how do you believe your mentorship partner can help you to achieve them?

Set up your Mentorship Plan. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- Will you follow the AMA Sample Mentorship Plan or create your own?
- What structure will your mentoring relationship take?
- What is the time commitment each person is willing to put into the mentoring relationship?
- What are your goals for each meeting? What are your goals for the mentoring relationship overall?
- What will the frequency of meetings and mode of contact be?
- What work might need to be completed between each meeting?

***AMA Recommendation:* Prioritize your meetings. It can be beneficial to arrange and commit to the mentorship meeting dates and times at the beginning of the Program. If this is not feasible for your schedule, plan to arrange your meetings at least a month in advance.**

**Don't forget to send your Mentorship Plan to the Program Coordinator!**

*November:*

Mentees, interview your Mentor and learn more about how they developed their career. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- What was their career path?
- What are some challenges they faced at your stage in their career? How did they overcome these challenges?
- Who inspired them in their career? Did they have a mentor of their own?

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## *December:*

Mentees, share with your Mentor who your role models are (inside or outside of the museum field), and explain why. Discuss with your Mentor how the work of your role models aligns with your career goals. Work together to determine how you will accomplish these goals.

Mentors, help your Mentee expand their field of knowledge by suggesting work by other individuals and potential role models that may benefit your Mentee's career goals.

## *January:*

Mentors, work with your Mentee to help them identify three competencies from the AMA's [Competencies for Museum Leadership](#) that need development. Work together to determine an action plan for how your Mentee can achieve these competencies.

***AMA Recommendation: Remember to establish checkpoints to review and evaluate your progress.***

**Don't forget to send in your Quarterly Update to the Program Coordinator!**

## *February:*

Select a book or a small selection of articles relating to current issues in the museum sector for both the Mentee and Mentor to review. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- What are your individual takeaways from the reading?
- How does the reading support or impact the Mentee's goals?
- How does the reading challenge or benefit the Alberta museum community?
- What benefits does the Mentor find in continuing individual professional development?

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## March:

Complete your mid-program surveys. Participants should complete the survey individually.

Discuss the changing landscape of museums, both locally and within a global context. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- What are some upcoming changes in the field that you will need to be prepared for?
- How do you plan to adapt?
- How can museums become more sustainable?

**AMA Recommendation:** Review the AMA's [Sustainability Working Group Recommendations Report](#) and use the facets of sustainability to help you determine the impact of the changing landscape, and what must be done to ensure sustainability.

## April:

Look at cross-sector networks outside of museums that have innovative practices. Research some of these practices and analyse how they can be adapted for success in museums.

**AMA Recommendation:** Looking for cross-sector inspiration? Check out organizations that are

- Working in the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, & Museums) Sector
- Working towards reconciliation and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Calls to Action*
- Working in environmental sustainability
- Working in health care
- Working in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math)
- Working in the arts (humanities, language arts, dance, drama, music, visual arts, design, and new media)

**Don't forget to send in your Quarterly Update to the Program Coordinator!**

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*May:*

Introduce your mentorship partner to two other people in your professional network. Before the meeting, discuss the advantages of building a strong professional network. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- What do you think each contact can provide to your Mentee / Mentor?
- How does a strong and diverse network support an individual's career path?

*June:*

Have some fun and go to a networking event together!

*July:*

Mentees, work with your Mentor to develop the resumé required for your dream job.

**Don't forget to send in your Quarterly Update to the Program Coordinator!**

*August:*

Discuss how your mentoring relationship has developed since the beginning of the Mentorship Program. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- What have you learned from each other over the course of the program?
- Did you meet the goals set out in your Mentorship Plan?
- How will you move forward once the Mentorship Program is over?

Complete your final surveys. Participants should complete the survey individually.

**AMA Recommendation: Discuss with your partner whether you will continue your mentoring relationship beyond the duration of the AMA Mentorship Program.**