

## **Output 4.2. including output 4.2.1.**

# **Report on transferability of best practices in mentoring and coaching programs**

## **SELECTION OF MENTORSHIP AND COACHING PRACTICES BASED ON CORPORATE BEST PRACTICES**

**NEsT Europe Nonprofit Ltd.**

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## I. Introduction

Social enterprises (SEs) are important drivers for inclusive growth and play a key role in tackling current economic, environmental and societal challenges. Recent years have seen a burgeoning interest in social enterprises across Europe. However, still one of the biggest among the generally identified problems is the lack of proper business knowledge and experience, and shortages of connections and business networks, which would give enterprises access to not only narrow, local markets, but also to sustainable operations and growth. The available courses and training programs still cannot effectively reach the target group, and in many cases where they can, their effects are only short term. Opportunities for social entrepreneurs to get ongoing professional support from experts are limited. In recent years, socially responsible multinational corporations, companies, banks and consulting firms have started special projects where they provide mentoring and/or coaching programs for social enterprises. They have been using the expertise of their staff members, focusing on specific fields of their respective industries, or providing general advice on a long-term basis to social enterprises.

Mentorship and coaching are generally key instruments in providing guidance and tips to the entrepreneur and the management team to increase competencies regarding personal development and technical and business management. Mentorship can begin after analysis of entrepreneurs' skill gaps and needs for growth. Mentors possess expertise and experience to share and often feel a desire to impart insights and transfer knowledge. The process may be mutually beneficial for the parties gaining new perspectives and can provide essential input in the scaling of a social enterprise.

The following report presents various programs that connect social enterprises with mentors. These are drawn from the SENSES project partner countries and other European countries. All project partners were responsible to collect and summarize the existing programs and projects in their countries. The original intention was to collect information about successful internal mentoring and coaching programs in relevant multinational companies and corporations to extract adaptable methodology for social enterprises. However, we have found that these programs were very specific and were adjusted to the internal needs of the companies, and were not possible to be shared in detail. However, existing programs tailored to the target group, i.e. social enterprises, provided us more relevant and useful information to identify the key success factors and methodologies which can improve the business side of the social enterprises in the long run. This report covers

- programs for social enterprises that cooperate with traditional enterprises,
- programs that focus specifically on social enterprises and have an available pool of mentors,
- networks to connect mentors and mentees, and/or

- programs and awards that are pro bono or in-house functions of corporate social responsibility.

Best practices for structuring a mentoring program are recommended based on patterns in the findings.

The findings of the report based on the evaluation of the existing programs, techniques can be applied by SENSES partners to develop a tailored mentoring and coaching system, including the selection and preparing the applicant pro bono mentors and coaches in the SENSES project. This way the pro bono mentoring and coaching will be adjusted to the needs of the social enterprises. The methodology will serve as a pilot implementing it with the participation of the target group successfully accomplished the self-learning training sessions. This way the capacity building of the trainees will be ongoing, providing long term support to those who have a viable business plan, and those whose entrepreneurial activity have been already validated by the market.

Additionally, as part of the Deliverable 4.2. we have developed a practical guide in the form of slides. It can be used on an introduction workshop of preparing the pro bono mentors and coaches, this way supporting their work to be more effective and tailor made. We suggest to incorporate into the workshop the introduction submodule of the on-line e-learning course, which can provide the mentors a better understanding about the social entrepreneurial eco-system and the characteristics of the social enterprises.

## II. Social entrepreneurship capacity building programs – cooperating with traditional enterprises

Ashoka notably supports and incubates social entrepreneurs worldwide with a variety of programs. Its ventures often receive support from traditional enterprises through investment or pro bono activities. Enterprises such as Accenture GmbH, DLA Piper, Red Bull or PwC are in the pro-bono network of [Ashoka Austria](#). They provide their know-how and core competences and open up their networks to support Ashoka Fellows in the development of their business concepts. In Switzerland, Ashoka Social Entrepreneurs benefited from a mentorship program with J.P. Morgan, “[Experiencing Social Entrepreneurship](#)”. Over a six-month engagement beginning in January 2016, 51 J.P. Morgan employees mentored 15 social entrepreneurs to solve a specific challenge faced by the entrepreneur. Together, they worked on business plans, brochures for donors, budget and impact measurements, and communications and marketing strategies. The program allowed for the exchange of best practices. At the end of the program, the mentors presented their conclusions and lessons learned in JPM’s Geneva office.

[Business Skills Academy Program](#) is a Smart Kolektiv (Serbia) program that transfers business knowledge and skills to social enterprises. The needs of the enterprises are assessed and they benefit from professionals from member companies of the CSR Forum who voluntarily transfer knowledge, expertise, and experience. The program involves lectures,

consulting and mentoring. Some of the areas covered by the Academy are: presentation skills, social media campaigns, business partnerships, communications and media relations, sales skills, digital communications, basic accounting and tax regulations for non-contractors, sales and negotiation, business communication, setting goals techniques, use of IT tools for exchange of information and team work. Companies such as Coca-Cola, EY, Delta Holding, Eurobank, Victoria Group, Telekom Srbija, Delhaize, CRH etc. provided their consultations and mentoring to social entrepreneurs.

NESsT Hungary, an expert in the social enterprises sector, has shared relationships with firms whose employees have offered mentorship. The "Step With Us!" program in Hungary and "Power of Social Enterprises" program in Romania with UniCredit Foundation and UniCredit Bank engages top management in mentoring three winners. Through time spent working with the three enterprises, NESsT gathers a list of needs and matches them with managers with corresponding skills. Mentors and mentees have a clear goal to work toward. NESsT has also partnered with Accenture, which has a budget to cover employees' time spent volunteering. IT staff advised one enterprise in recruiting a new IT specialist, for example. HR from Accenture helped another enterprise with capacity building. Another partnership with Citi Bank involved employees volunteering to help with business plans and pitching. Lastly, a coaching company called Project Coach offered pro bono workshops to NESsT. These eight, two-hour workshops allowed enterprises to address altogether a different problem in each session, using the actual issues encountered by the enterprises. This was mutually beneficial as it allowed the coaches to gain more experience while transferring knowledge.

### III. Focused social entrepreneurship programs — capacity building with mentors

iSE is a social enterprise development organization in the UK providing start-up and growth support together with research and consultancy services. Its [USE IT! Challenge](#) connects social entrepreneurs with mentors. Mentors commit to three sessions/meetings during a six-month period but are encouraged to maintain the relationship if there is a good connection. The program speaks to both parties to evaluate needs and skill areas early on to try to secure the right match. It recruits and asks for applications online from mentors, while also drawing upon its Soho Social Enterprise Network. They argue the value of mentors is that they understand what it takes to overcome challenges, can help them network or can provide support or a sounding board for ideas.

The British Council's [Global Social Enterprise Program](#) is active in the UK and 29 other countries. Since 2009, the program has trained 17,590 social entrepreneurs. For capacity building, the program provides social entrepreneurs with business mentoring, skills training, and access to funding opportunities to help them enhance the beneficial impact they

deliver. It works closely with a range of UK stakeholders who deliver mentoring and training. As a case study, in Thailand and Indonesia, UK consultants supported social enterprises working in the creative industries. The pilot Business and Investment Readiness program (BIR) matched nine intermediary partners in the UK with counterparts in participating countries, who together provided consultancy services to strengthen the capacity and ability of social enterprises to bid for grant and investment funding.

[Startery](#) is an initiative of SAP and Social Impact in Germany. SAP employees mentor scholarship holders from social impact programs. SAP employees provide the skills-based mentoring and coaching in a wide variety of subject areas. SAP has a large mentor and supporter network within as part of its CSR for young social startups. Mentor and mentee are matched by program manager for compatibility. Social Impact gGmbH supports social entrepreneurs in their business start-up together with SAP. The program provides a support structure with scholarships, regional offices (for workplace, coaching, networking, etc.) and mentoring by SAP mentors. A SAP mentor can impart broad and specialized experience and knowledge: in dealing with decisions, partners, team, corporate processes, etc. Mentors give professional support in various areas of competence while also giving general critical feedback on the business idea and the business model. SAP argues that mentoring has the power to change perspective of both mentees and mentors. Rather than the professional advisory role of consultants, the mentor can be an "ally" and can develop a passion for his mentees and their project.

[Impact Academy](#) in the Czech Republic, implemented by Ashoka Czech Republic with the support of the European Social Fund and Institute of active citizenship, aims to empower social enterprises to prioritize an impact-oriented approach. The six-month program has modules on theoretical approaches to impact assessment, practical strategy development, tailor-made tools and indicators. Enterprises receive 25 hours of mentoring along the way, with mentors and experts from the Czech Republic and abroad to address specific needs. Mentors also aid in presenting to potential investors and the public.

Another accelerator program in the Czech Republic is [Edison](#), implemented by RegioHub part of the Impact Hub network, and financially supported by the European Social Fund Employment Operational Program. It offers up to 1800 hours of support for teams which have created an innovative solution to a social problem and have the ambition to scale up this solution across the country. A specific form of support is being tailored for every team with professional mentors.

In the Czech Republic, [#třidvajednaakcelerátor](#) (in translation #ThreeTwoOneAccelerator) is a six-day accelerator program of Karel Janeček Foundation. It offers mentors from traditional fields experts and it follows up with programs focusing on social impact investments. Enterprises receive up to 10 mentors "devoted exclusively" to them.

Founded in Finland, the European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL) is the international federation of benchmarked Living Labs in Europe and worldwide. It is active in 20 EU member

states. It promotes social innovation in areas such as energy, media, mobility, healthcare, agrifood, etc. It hosts a [European Social Innovation Challenge](#) across Greece, Italy, Finland, Sweden, Finland, Hungary, Poland, Norway, Ireland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Israel, Slovenia, Armenia, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, or Croatia. It [calls for coaches](#) to apply for participation first for a summer period at least two hours a week but further into autumn for ten hours if the candidates they coach are selected as finalists. The program matches them by country and by needs and skills. It asks coaches to report back to the organization throughout the coaching relationship. Criteria for coaches are clear. They should be well-connected in a local social innovation network to allow teams to access resources. They should be experienced in coaching or guiding teams through the processes of development. They should have strong "intrinsic motivation" to build relationships with innovators and promote social change, while also showing genuine interest in the year's specific topic. Beyond this personal interest, coaches are compensated for their time.

NESsT Hungary's approach in mentoring brings mentors and mentees together by first collecting the needs of the social enterprises. Mentors provide the content. In its Business Advisory Network, it matches the skills of advisors/mentors with the needs. NESsT attends at the start of their meetings as a facilitator. It has about fifty mentors. Mentors and mentees are expected to meet six times, about once every two months. BAN is built usually through word-of-mouth and networking. At NESsT's retreats for enterprises, knowledge transfer is encouraged, and BAN helps in its workshops. The retreat involves a pitching session, for which BAN mentors prepare the entrepreneurs.

#### IV. Platforms/networks that facilitate mentorship

The UN Global Compact is the voluntary association of the representatives of public, business and civil sector who aligned their business operations with ten universal CSR principles in the fields of human and labor rights, environmental protection and fight against corruption: over 10,000 organizations from 160 countries. The UN Global Compact Network in Serbia was established in 2007, and today it counts more than 100 members, representatives of private sector, non-governmental, labors and faculties who may benefit from networking. Meetings are held in the premises of CCIS, where social enterprises present their products, problems and needs, and they are connected with companies who are members of this network.

Euromentor's MYNNOVA project in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Germany, Romania, and Slovenia is implemented under the framework of the European Commissions' Program Erasmus. It asks potential mentors and mentees to register for an online platform so they may be connected. It gives competences framework and [guidelines](#) for mentors and mentees, which aim to provide the necessary tools and enable efficient participation in the mentoring process. See here for the [detailed framework](#) based on European Qualification Framework, with images below this text. The framework outlines development of depth in knowledge, skills, and competence in 4 levels along the process of mentorship. For example, the mentee may begin with motivation and business planning but grow their own resourcefulness and strategic

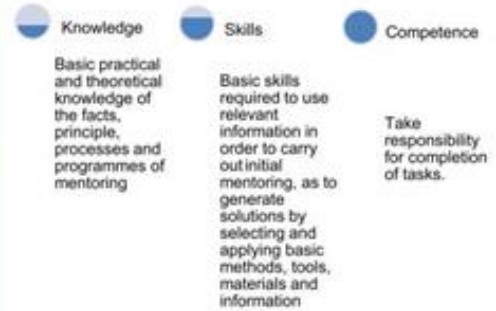
planning and management and results orientation. The mentor may begin with active listening and market environmental awareness but grow their own critical observations and project management.

**Level 1**

- **Knowledge**
  - Concept and role of mentors
  - Communication techniques in mentorship
  - Principles of social entrepreneurship
  - Principles of management
  - Principles of marketing
  - Principles of accounting and finance
- **Skills:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hard skills</b></li> <li>• Differentiation and selection of mentoring programmes</li> <li>• Obtaining information on the mentee's goals</li> <li>• Applying solutions to social problems</li> <li>• Market research</li> <li>• Business plan elaboration</li> <li>• Mapping of business activities</li> <li>• Understanding financial reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Soft skills</b></li> <li>• Sensitivity</li> <li>• Commitment</li> <li>• Positive attitude</li> <li>• Open mindset</li> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Assertiveness</li> <li>• Communication skills</li> </ul>
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- **Competences:**
  - Building mentoring relationship
  - Identification of social problems and appropriate solutions
  - Market environment analysis
  - Business ideation and initial business plan

# MENTORS



**Level 2**

- **Knowledge**
  - Management of business strategy
  - Management of time and resources
  - Financial models and management
  - Investments management
  - Principles and mechanisms of fundraising
  - Social innovation design
- **Skills:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hard skills</b></li> <li>• Work organisation techniques</li> <li>• Utilisation of resources</li> <li>• Elaboration of business strategy</li> <li>• Creation of marketing strategy</li> <li>• Human resource management</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Soft skills</b></li> <li>• Training skills</li> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Decisionmaking skills</li> <li>• Problemsolving</li> <li>• Patience</li> <li>• Multitasking</li> <li>• Advancing Presentation skills &amp; public speaking</li> </ul>
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- **Competences**
  - Understanding of mentee's needs
  - Awareness of boundaries and confidentiality
  - Business Plan Elaboration
  - Marketing planning
  - Management of all business resources

# MENTORS





### Level 3

- **Knowledge**
  - Social innovations management
  - Strategic positioning of social enterprises
  - Corporate social responsibility
- Public relations and partnerships (use rather PR principles since referring to knowledge)
- **Skills**
  - **Hard skills**
    - Digital and social impact of business
    - Partnerships management
    - Financial management
    - Benchmarking techniques
  - **Soft skills**
    - Emotional intelligence
    - Influence
    - Creative thinking
    - Networking skills
    - Observing & complex thinking
- **Competences**
  - Persuasion
  - Management of mentoring programme for social entrepreneurs
  - Marketing (already in level 2 "marketing planning")
  - Sales management

## MENTORS

Knowledge Skills Competence

Advanced knowledge of mentoring in the field of social entrepreneurship involving a critical understanding of theories and principles

Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in mentoring field.

Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decisionmaking in unpredictable work or study contexts

### Level 4

- **Knowledge**
  - Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of business process
  - Sustainability of social enterprises
  - Brand design
  - Building transnational networks
  - Crosscultural awareness
  - Management control
- **Skills**
  - **Hard skills**
    - Risk management
    - Re-investing in the business for business growth
    - Branding / Brand management
    - Financial analyses/Forecasting finances
    - Crosscultural management
  - **Soft skills**
    - Strategic thinking
    - Constant reevaluation of goals and resources
    - Growth mindset
    - Critical observation
    - Stress management
- **Competences**
  - Strategic planning and management
  - Results orientation
  - Project management

## MENTORS

Knowledge Skills Competence

Highly specialised knowledge and critical awareness of the issues in the field of mentoring for social entrepreneurship

Specialised problem solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields

Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches.

### Level 1

- **Knowledge**
  - Principles of social entrepreneurship
  - Value proposition in social entrepreneurship
  - Business Model Canvas for social entrepreneurship
  - Principles of management
  - Principles of marketing
  - Principles of accounting
- **Skills:**
  - **Hard skills**
    - Social needs assessment
    - Stakeholders mapping
    - Market research
    - Business plan elaboration
    - Operations management
    - Financial reporting
    - Opportunity assessment
  - **Soft skills**
    - Determination
    - Initiative
    - Motivation
    - Assertiveness
    - Commitment
    - Positive Attitude
    - Communication skills
- **Competences:**
  - Market environment analysis
  - Needs assessment
  - Business development

## MENTEES

Knowledge Skills Competence

Basic factual and theoretical knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts in the field of social entrepreneurship

Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools

Take responsibility for completion of tasks; adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems

## Level 2

- **Knowledge**
  - Value chain models
  - Financial model, financial scenarios in social entrepreneurship
  - Investments
  - Product research and development
  - Design Thinking Fundamentals
  - Budgeting and keeping track of expenses, revenue and profits
  - Principles and mechanisms of fundraising
  - Social innovation design
- **Skills:**
  - **Hard skills**
    - Drafting a business strategy
    - Drafting a marketing strategy
    - Digital and social media marketing
    - Management of time and resources
    - Budgeting
    - Pitching
  - **Soft skills**
    - Leadership
    - Time management
    - Public speaking
    - Presentation skills
    - Collaboration and teamwork
    - Feedback receptiveness
    - Assembling and motivating business team
    - Multitasking
- **Competences:**
  - Business planning
  - Marketing
  - Digital marketing
  - Resource management
  - Financial planning
  - Fundraising

## MENTEES

Knowledge Skills Competence

Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within social entrepreneurship and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge

Comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems

Exercise self management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change; supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities

## Level 3

- **Knowledge**
  - Financial investments
  - Principles of sales management
  - Principles of public relations and partnerships
  - Professional associations and trade bodies
  - Trade exhibitions and conferences
  - Open innovation
  - Corporate social responsibility
- **Skills**
  - **Hard skills**
    - Implementation of business strategy
    - Implementation of marketing strategy
    - Partnerships management
    - Personnel management
    - Financial management
    - Benchmarking
    - Assessing the environmental impact of business
  - **Soft skills**
    - Decisionmaking skills
    - Problemsolving skills
    - Networking
    - Persuasion and Influence
    - Creativity and innovation
    - Results orientation
    - Stress management
- **Competences:**
  - Business management
  - Marketing Planning
  - Sales management

## MENTEES

Knowledge Skills Competence

Advanced knowledge in the field of social entrepreneurship, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles

Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in the specialised field of social entrepreneurship

Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others

## Level 4

- **Knowledge**
  - Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of business processes
  - Sustainability of social enterprises
  - Branding
  - Building networks
  - Crosscultural awareness and management
  - Business process optimisation
  - Business Information systems
- **Skills:**
  - **Hard skills**
    - Risk management
    - Sectorspecific outcome mapping
    - Branding/Brand management
    - Financial analyses/Forecasting finances
    - Crosscultural management
    - Project management
    - Re-investing for business growth
  - **Soft skills**
    - Resourcefulness
    - Strategic thinking
    - Growth mindset
    - Negotiation skills
    - Critical observation
    - Emotional and social intelligence
- **Competences:**
  - Strategic planning and management
  - Results orientation
  - International team management
  - Managing Projects and Project Portfolios

## MENTEES

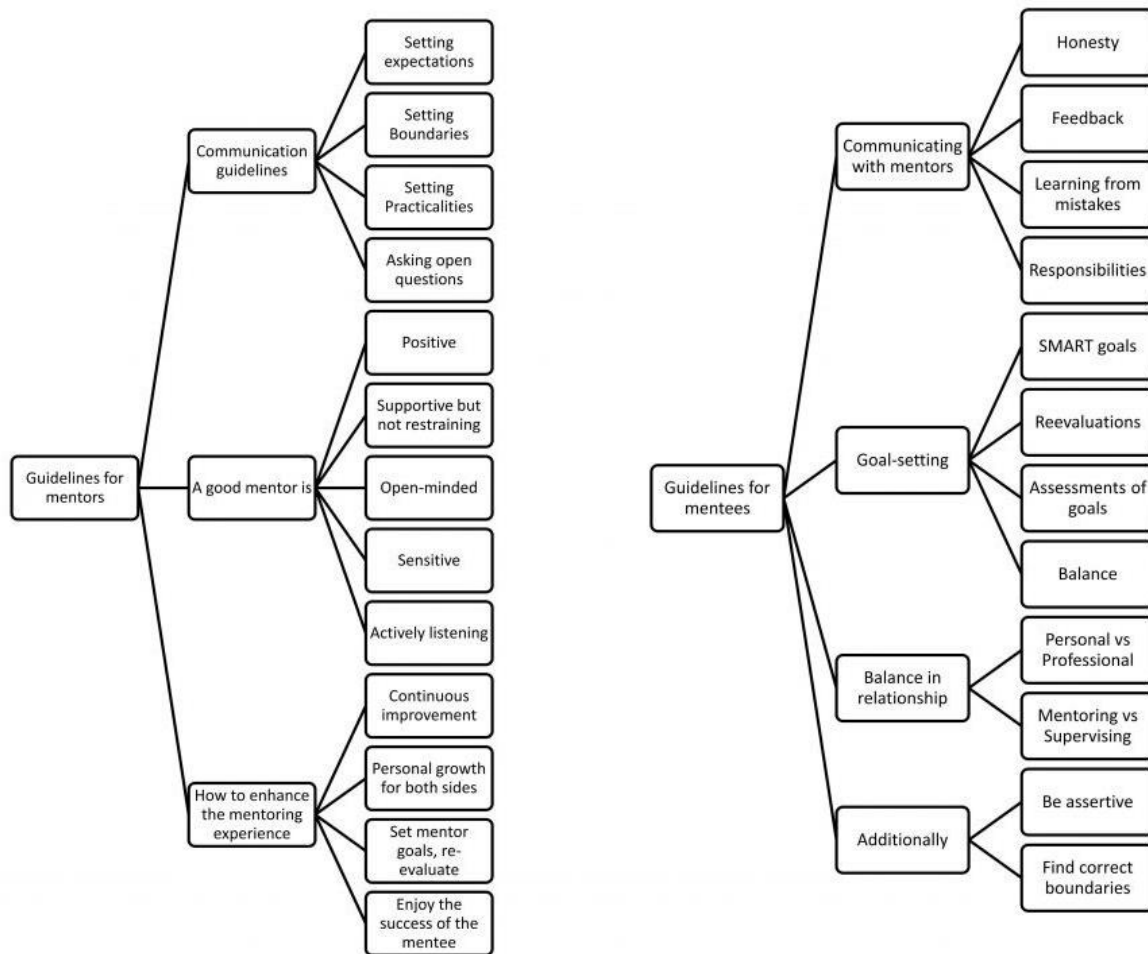
Knowledge Skills Competence

Highly specialised knowledge at the most advanced frontier of the field of social entrepreneurship, critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields

Advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to develop new knowledge and procedures, to integrate knowledge from different fields, to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice

Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams

Euromentor’s expectations for mentors and mentees include:



UnLtd supports around one thousand social entrepreneurs each year. [UnLtd Connect](#) has a network of mentors, partners and volunteers including Deutsche Bank, UBS, PA Consulting, Debevoise & Plimpton, DLA Piper and Herbert Smith. Supposedly more than 70% of social entrepreneurs who accessed mentoring support through UnLtd significantly increased their skills in business planning. UnLtd argues that a mentor is a valuable resource for social entrepreneurs if they can: brainstorm and develop ideas, as well as challenge them, find the most appropriate solution to a problem, improve communication skills, introduce contacts and additional partners, identify areas of a business to develop, help build personal skills, maintain focus and motivated, and build confidence. It shares its expectations for good mentors: business expertise, self-awareness and emotional intelligence, ability to listen and ask good questions, and strong interpersonal skills. UnLtd UK published an in-depth [guidebook](#) for mentors of social entrepreneurs. It includes the right time of mentoring support, criteria for mentors, expectations, mentoring techniques, mentoring frameworks, sample agendas, troubleshooting, FAQ, etc.

[PwC Social Entrepreneurs Club](#) is a network with membership of more than 250 social entrepreneurs across the UK. The club allows entrepreneurs to connect with advisors and peers who are willing to share expertise and past experiences. The PwC club argues that mentoring is a two-way process and can enrich both parties. The mentors “aim to act as a sounding board, a trusted advisor and a critical friend,” so mentees can think carefully about business challenges. Acceptance to the club necessitates an online application in which an entrepreneur provides details such as numbers of beneficiaries.

## V. Pro-bono programs and awards

Mentorship is also provided through pro-bono fellowship programs for social enterprises. Red Bull can serve as an example with its fellowship program [Red Bull Amaphiko in Austria](#). As part of a 12-month development program, Red Bull Amaphiko offers support for social entrepreneurs in project development, personal development and public relations. As part of this program, they are provided with important tools to build a solid foundation for a successful social business model. Furthermore social enterprises become part of an international community, including academies, events and programs in which social entrepreneurs are brought into contact with a community and worldwide network of like-minded persons. In the United States, the [Amaphiko Academy](#) is a ten-day “academy” in which the social entrepreneurs may connect with leaders and entrepreneurs and receive mentoring. At the academy, the entrepreneurs are matched with mentors who provide insights for the full 18-month Amaphiko program.

Other for-profit enterprises offer awards combined with mentorship programs. One example is the [Get Active](#) Social Business Award of Coca Cola in cooperation with the Austrian newspaper Der Standard and the NPO and SE Competence Center of the Vienna University of Economy. In the course of the competition, the ideas regarding social businesses have to be prepared in the form of a business plan. Based on this plan, a decision-making body uses clearly defined assessment criteria to select the most eligible projects in the area of social entrepreneurship, which are then supported with a cash injection, benefits in kind and mentoring by experts. Along the way, they receive detailed input and support from expert lecturers and coaches.

Erste Bank uses [social banking](#) to develop social entrepreneurs. Erste Group’s social banking focuses among other things on enabling job creation and self-employment by financing starting entrepreneurs. Through a network of local banks and also with other organisations and NGOs, entrepreneurs are provided with financial literacy and money advice, business education with training courses and mentoring regarding growing and making financial decisions. Social entrepreneurs partake in capacity building programs and receive ongoing mentoring, and are guided in testing the sustainability of their business models and acquiring necessary skills. In [Erste Bank Serbia](#), entrepreneurs who receive loans are matched with a mentor based on their needs, who will advise them face-to-face in the development of their business for 12 months toward their goals.

UniCredit Bank with Divac Foundation and Smart Kolektiv, in Serbia held three editions of the program "[Idea for Better Tomorrow](#)." The program contributes to the development of social entrepreneurship whose products and services can improve the image of Serbia in the region and abroad. In June and July 2017, of 130 ideas proposed, the commission selected 15 finalists whom experts mentored and worked with on developing a business plan. Winners were selected by evaluating business plans, innovation of the idea and project sustainability. Seven finalists received a grant in the total amount of 40,000.

The Amsterdam Municipality [Action Program for Social Entrepreneurship](#) 2015-2018 includes Action plan 5: strengthen entrepreneurial skills and strengthen connections in ecosystem. It measures strengthening knowledge sharing and connection among entrepreneurs with experienced role models and mentors. This mentorship can begin after analysis of specific needs and experienced social entrepreneurs could be linked with social entrepreneurs who want to be coached. Mentorship involves coaching entrepreneurs in the various developmental stages. The municipality serves a role as initiator of exploration, while partners in the city implement. Potential partners identified are experienced social entrepreneurs, Impact Hub Amsterdam, Social Enterprise NL, Social Firms Platform, and Lokale Lente (Local Spring). The municipality allocated €50,000 toward this program.

In the Czech Republic, social entrepreneurs can also use tools from the [Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#) such as free-of-charge consultations from experienced social entrepreneurs, which receives great interest.

The Delta Holding Foundation launched "[Plant for the future](#)" in 2015 as a pilot phase of the project to support the development of social entrepreneurship in Serbia, where social entrepreneurship is recognized as a viable solution for poverty reduction. The field of support is agriculture and entrepreneurs were given expert assistance from Delta agronomists. From mid-2015 to the end of 2016, Delta supported 12 organizations, including with mentorship.

As CSR, [PwC Czech Republic](#) employees volunteers to share their knowledge and skills. Their goal is to contribute to education and development of the underserved. This includes consultancy concerning sustainable development and long-term competitiveness in the area of taxes and legal compliance. It had 18 mentors in the framework of the Social Impact Award (SIA) alone in 2016. The 5th SIA Mentoring Program organized at PwC in summer 2016 involved 23 employees mentoring 9 successful entrepreneurial projects.

In Hungary Erste Bank run a one year program which just ended at the end of June. The program called SEEDS provided complex capacity building. the program started with training with the involvement of two non-profit organizations - IFUA Nonprofit Partners and Simpact who are expert supporters of the social entrepreneurs. The training programs were followed by mentoring where 90 pro bono mentors were involved all together. 67 organization started the program, 48 have successfully developed their business plans. The ten most promising business ideas, plans, based on the evaluation of experts, were awarded all together 10.000 Euro. The program ended with a pitching session before experts, investors,

bank representatives, which created future opportunities for the social enterprises for getting access to bank loans, hybrid financial resources and investments.

In Hungary Badur Foundation, a private foundation with operational focus to vulnerable groups all around the world, has implemented its program second time in 2018. With NEsT Europe Budapest as intermediary, they have selected three most promising business ideas, which plan to generate significant impact in the lives of under privileged groups. After a half year mentoring process, provided by NESsT, combined with business planning training sessions, two most promising organization would get 32.000 Euro award to implement their ideas.

The already mentioned UniCredit Bank project titled “Step with us” awards the most promising social enterprises after the capacity building by the help of NESsT trainers and mentors, with 60.000 Euros as a total.

## VI. Summary of best practices

The programs discussed above, with examples drawn from partner countries and other countries, illustrate best practices for mentoring social entrepreneurs. Unsurprisingly, there is overlap in the guidelines and expectations in these relationships. The common themes are discussed below, shared not as required practices but as suggestions for successful models. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Longer investments of time improve depth of relationship
- Mentors must be selected for motivation and expectation of learning
- Mentees and mentors should be matched according to needs and expertise, respectively
- Mentors may be professionals in a given field, experts in a sector, or former or serial social entrepreneurs
- Mentorship should be structured around a specific goal
- Mentorship should involve a clear action plan and timeline to evaluate progress against set goals
- Programs should prepare mentors for understanding of the sector and expectations for mentorship
- Mentors should be well-connected in industry or sector and open network to mentees
- Mentorship should be a process of two-way learning and development
- Mentors should exhibit relationship-fostering qualities such as active listening, strong communication, open-mindedness, emotionally intelligence, reliability, intuition

Mentorship ranges in time commitment. There is consensus that it should extend beyond one meeting, and many programs have at least a minimum of two meetings or a certain number of hours. These may be in person or remote with online meetings on Skype, etc. Programs ought to encourage the mentors and mentees to continue investing in the

relationship for a longer time period if they connect well. Longer lengths of time, often lasting multiple months, can allow for a greater depth of work together in addressing challenges.

Mentors can provide their time as a volunteering, pro bono service, or they may be compensated for their time. In some companies, employees are encouraged to volunteer for a number of hours, for which a budget exists so they are still paid. A formalized contract may calculate the value of the mentoring according to salaries or general consulting fees. Other programs — which do not have employees volunteering — may possess the resources to remunerate mentors for their time and are then selective about those they recruit. In such cases, it is a good practice to assess potential mentors for their intrinsic motivation to provide guidance to social entrepreneurs.

It is highly recommended that efforts are made to create a tailored match between both parties after an assessment of the mentee's needs and the mentor's expertise, skills, and experience. The mentees' needs should always be the starting point. While this may be difficult in large volumes and successful relationships can be built without a personalized match, compatibility puts both parties in a better position to learn from one another and gain necessary competencies. It is important to have a pool of mentors available with varied backgrounds and disciplines to increase the chances for a social entrepreneur's specific needs to be fulfilled. Mentors may be professionals in a given field, experts in a sector, or former or serial social entrepreneurs. Networks and online platforms exist to create a community to allow for knowledge sharing between mentors and mentees. This may allow parties to find one another without a formal middleman.

The results of mentoring can be more effective when it is structured around a specific goal. This may be a unique challenge that a social entrepreneur or team is encountering, e.g. financial planning or human resources. Most mentoring programs for social enterprises revolve around the business plan and other general components of scaling. A mentor ideally should be comfortable guiding a social enterprise through various developmental stages. When both parties initially articulate and work toward specific aspirations, they can measure the enterprise's progress throughout the relationship and the mentor may act as a consultant. One ought not to dictate the mentees' actions but instead encourage them to test, observe, and either continue or reorient. It may be an iterative process with re-evaluations of actions versus the set goals. Strong mentoring involves an action plan and clear timeline for accountability. Some mentoring programs have a clear "end" as well, presenting or summarizing results and lessons learned. At this point, mentors and mentees should also evaluate each other and the benefit of their time together, perhaps with independent queries from an intermediary.

A program may have the responsibility to prepare the mentors so they are well-oriented to add value for the mentee. Programs can have in place trainings and workshops — or send relevant literature — to familiarize mentors with the social enterprise and social entrepreneurship. This would also be the time to communicate expectations and explain to mentors how to guide meetings and set and meet goals with mentees with recommended methodologies. In cases where a program is the intermediary, representatives

may be present for some of the mentoring sessions to observe or facilitate conversation for as long as deemed appropriate or necessary, or at least may check in with both parties throughout.

The bond between mentor and mentee is unique. It has the potential to be an alliance where the mentor contributes considerably to support the capacity building of a social enterprise, beyond one-way advisement. A mentor also should be well-connected in an industry or in the social enterprise ecosystem. The mentor should be opening the network to the mentee, enabling the entrepreneur to connect with others relevant to their success and pursue opportunities. A mentor should understand that the mentee is not meant to become dependent on them; they should be discovering their own abilities and growing personally and professionally to champion their social enterprises.

Mentoring should be a two-way relationship. Both parties should expect to learn and develop themselves along the way in knowledge, hard and soft skills, and competences. For employees, leaders of multinational companies to work with social enterprises generating social impact to the life of those who are mostly in needs, many cases operating in remote areas, mentorship can open a window to social problems they had not been aware of at all. Understanding this part of the world can support the emotional side of the cooperation, an additional motivation. For this mutual benefit, certain qualities in character foster relationship building. Since a mentee is seeking help, there may be more expectations for the way mentors conduct themselves. To name a few, mentors should be active listeners and strong communicators, open-minded, emotionally intelligent, self-aware, reliable, problem-solving, and intuitive. Much of the potential for the relationship is in the mentor's guidance and any program connecting mentors and mentees should be deliberate in selecting those best suited.

NESsT was a pioneer in the social enterprise sector and has extensive experience in capacity building. The enterprises in its portfolio have benefited from its methodologies. Read further about the success of mentorship in a case study about Timural Group, which adopted lean production processes after NESsT connected them with a mentor.