



Mentor/Mentee Expectations and Benefits

The Theatre Washington Mentoring Program facilitates positive relationships among aspiring, emerging, experienced, and seasoned theatre practitioners in the Washington, D.C. area who seek professional growth through the direct observation, guidance, and feedback of other practitioners. Mentoring pairs are matched based on specialties, career status, and development interests.

Mentor Expectations

Mentors are expected to:

- Be communicative and responsive when the mentee reaches out to set up meetings.
- Be upfront about ability and expectations.
- Answer questions about mentee's goals and development, based on personal experience and knowledge.
- Discuss eliciting feedback from others.
- Provide advice and tell relevant stories about actions that led to valuable and/or fulfilling work for you or others. Suggest readings, viewings, or skills to learn.
- Be a catalyst for the mentee developing their own network. Point to people they might reach out to and engage.
- Keep any commitments made.
- Be encouraging, tactful, and honest.
- Reach out to the Mentoring Program administrator as soon as they have any questions or obstacles.
- Fill out a midpoint survey halfway through the program and debrief at the end of the program.

Mentors are **not** expected to:

- Take the lead in the relationship, setting up meetings or driving development.
- Be always available or spend more time on the relationship than they are able to give.
- Know all the answers.
- Provide feedback on the mentee's work unless both parties feel comfortable and agree to it.
- Introduce the mentee to others unless the mentor feels comfortable doing so.
- Provide work or a job for the mentee.

Time Commitment

- 4 meetings over 16 weeks
 - Meetings can be in person or virtual, as needed and preferred by the pair.
 - Meetings can be discussions, shadowing projects, seeing/discussing productions, introductions - whatever both parties agree on as helpful and doable.

Financial Commitment

The program is free to participate in, there is no financial requirement or compensation for either mentor or mentee in a pair.

Any mentors who lead a workshop will be paid for the workshop.

Benefits

"The experience not only allowed me to share my knowledge of how theatre can be used to empower communities, but also connected our organization to a very bright and talented individual with whom we can imagine collaborating over the long term."

-Mentor Deb Gottesman, The Theatre Lab

Through this program mentors can:

- Engage and build connections with different types of theatre practitioners.
- Experience increased self-awareness and self-confidence through practicing the role of "educator."
- Expand their sphere of influence.
- Contribute to the thriving theatre ecology by helping to strengthen the workforce.
- Share best practices based on their unique experiences.
- Serve as a career "accelerator" for others.
- In some instances, and if interested, lead a workshop for a group of mentees (for which the mentor is paid).

Mentee Expectations

Mentees are expected to:

- Be very proactive and responsible in driving the relationship - reaching out to mentor and setting up meetings.
- Be communicative and responsive to both their mentor and the Mentoring Program administrator.
- Be upfront about interests and expectations.
- Regularly bring goals and development questions to the table, and be as specific as possible with their questions.

- Apply advice given and let the mentor know of the results.
- Keep any commitments made.
- Be tactful and honest.
- Reach out to the Mentoring Program administrator as soon as they have any questions or obstacles.
- Fill out a midpoint survey halfway through the program and debrief at the end of the program.

Mentees are **not** expected to:

- Be passive or have no opinions about their career development.
- Know all the right questions to ask.
- Work for the mentor.

Time Commitment

- 4 meetings over 16 weeks
 - Meetings can be in person or virtual, as needed and preferred by the pair.
 - Meetings can be discussions, shadowing projects, seeing/discussing productions, introductions - whatever both parties agree on as helpful and doable.

Financial Commitment

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Benefits

"In a perfect world, there's a mentor meet-cute and you find the person who will make all the connections you never knew you needed. But that's unrealistic. Half the time, no one speaks up and says 'I need guidance.' The formal matchmaking of the theatreWashington mentorship program alleviated that stress of guessing as to whether people care about your career. Spoiler: they truly do."

-Mentee Caitlin Caplinger, Playwright and Director

Through this program mentees can:

- Enjoy facilitated introduction to theatre professionals across power differentials.
- Experience professional skill-building through one-on-one coaching with role models.
- Increase professional visibility in the DC area theatre community.
- Increase self-confidence through capacity building.
- Develop a deeper understanding of the DC area theatre ecology.
- Network with experienced practitioners.

- Attend any workshops scheduled through the program for free.

Can I ask not to be paired with a specific mentor or mentee?

Yes. If you have any reason you'd prefer not to be matched with a specific person, please reach out directly to Britt Willis at bwillis@theatrewashington.org. No further information will be requested and your ask will be confidential and seen only by Britt.

Who do I speak to if I have any questions?

Contact the program lead Britt Willis at bwillis@theatrewashington.org.