

**Information for Leicester/Leicestershire Businesses**

Leicester is one of the most diverse cities in the United Kingdom, but this is not often reflected in the leadership of businesses in the city. [UK research](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/race-in-the-workplace-the-mcgregor-smith-review) has shown that having a mixed ethnicity workforce brings fresh thinking into teams and drives business growth, as well as being an imperative for equality.

In addition, research has shown the potential benefit to the UK economy from full representation of Black, Asian and minority Ethnic (BME) individuals across the labour market, through improved participation and progression, is estimated to be £24 billion a year, which represents 1.3% of GDP. Furthermore, with 14% of the working age population coming from a BME background, now more than ever is time to enact positive change.

To help Leicester’s businesses recruit and retain more graduates from a BME background, De Montfort University (DMU) is leading a £400,000 initiative called Leicester’s Future Leaders, co-funded by the Office for Students. A lack of networks, Mentors and role models has been identified as one of the barriers to progression for people from a BME background. As a result, we have developed and designed a targeted in- work mentoring programme for: DMU graduates, who self-identify as BME and are employed by a Leicester organisation in a highly skilled role to support them into leadership positions.

**What is Mentoring?**

Mentoring is essentially a relationship designed to be supportive in helping a mentee develop their full potential. It is a relationship built on trust, empathy and active listening. Mentoring can be a powerful learning tool that can enrich a professional journey.

**What is Group Mentoring?**

Group Mentoring is where mentees will have the opportunity to speak to multiple mentors.

Mentoring groups effectively strengthens the relationships between all participants involved and encourages a natural exchange of information in a team-based environment. This type of mentoring allows different ideas to be shared among the members of the programme and provides unique advice to the mentees (Mentorloop.com).

***“When you reach the top, you should remember to send the elevator back down for the others” -*** [***Edith Piaf***](https://www.azquotes.com/author/11634-Edith_Piaf)

**The benefits of Mentoring - Research**

A recent survey by the UK’s Department for Business, Innovation and Skills found that 94% of SMEs using external support have seen benefits. These firms are more ambitious and have higher relative turnovers (National Mentoring Day 2020).

If your organisation does not have the resources or expertise to set up a mentoring programme, your organisation can be part of a fully funded mentoring programme developed by the university.

**How will the Mentoring work?**

* Each graduate (Mentee) will be matched with an experienced professional Mentor from a business in Leicester/Leicestershire.
* All mentoring meetings will take place online such as: MS Teams, Zoom and Skype.
* The partnership will last six months (from June/July 2021).
* Mentors and Mentees will have a minimum of one mentoring meeting once a month.
* The meeting will be led by the objectives and goals set by the Mentee.
* Mentees are expected to set the agenda, arrange the meeting and complete feedback forms on a monthly basis. The meeting does not need to take place during working hours unless agreed by both Mentee and Mentor.
* The match is made based on details provided by the mentors and mentees on the application form such as what transferable skills mentees would like to develop.
* Full training and mentoring resources are provided to both Mentors and Mentees in order to benefit as much as possible from the experience.

In addition to the one-to-one meeting with the meetings, there will also be an opportunity to attend group mentoring session where they can share their experiences, thoughts, and exchange ideas. Mentors and Mentees will also have an opportunity to deliver masterclass, publish an article on LinkedIn on their chosen topic.

**Evaluation**

As this is a fully funded project with measurable outcomes, we require your organisation to complete a questionnaire to measure by participating in the programme how has it impacted the employee and the oganisation after the project has completed.

**How can I support now?**

You may wish to support your employee by writing a recommendation letter to support their application.

**Your letter of recommendation should include five items:**

1. **A brief introduction that states who you are, your relationship to the applicant and your personal experience or expertise.**
2. **An overview of the applicant’s strengths as you’ve experienced them and as they relate to the recipient.**
3. **A personal story that elaborates on one to two traits the applicant possesses.**
4. **A closing statement that summarizes why the individual you are recommending would be a good fit for the Leicester’s Future Leader programme.**
5. **A signature that includes your name and contact information.**

To find out more about Leicester’s Future Leaders please get contact:

* LFL Mentoring Manager
* Rabeya Choudhury
* Rabeya.choudhury@dmu.ac.uk