



SHARING SKILLS
AND KNOWLEDGE

PMF Mentoring Scheme

Welcome to the Production Managers' Forum Mentorship Scheme!

Information for Mentors & Mentees

This is a Mentorship scheme for Production/Technical Managers and Assistants in the Theatre, and Live Events Industries. For clarity we have used the term Production/Technical Manager to represent many job titles such as:

- Assistant/Deputy Production Manager
- Technical Manager
- Head of Technical & Production
- Head of Production
- Technical Director

It is accessible to Mentees at any career stage, ideally once you have had at least two years paid employment history in a backstage position to have gained experience in how backstage works and significant experience in at least one technical discipline.

The networks created will drive change within the industry by creating an open dialogue between Production Management professionals, to encourage connectivity, communication, and community between the generations. Mentoring is for both skills and career development and will foster a culture of knowledge sharing by providing a structured framework.

We envision the scheme in three layers:

- Early Career,
- Mid Career
- Later Career.

This is to generate a tree-like structure, a kind of 'trellis' of support, where Early Careers get mentored by Mid Careers, Mid Careers get mentored by Later Careers, and Later Careers can get specific advice/help from other Later Careers. The PMF believes that a Mentee in their early career would get more relevant advice from a Mentor in mid-career than from someone in a later career that may have followed a very different path.

Our commitment request is approximately 1-2 hours every month. We expect the relationship to last one year, with a review after 6 months, so that Mentors are available for new Mentees. All Mentors are volunteers, and we ask that Mentees respect the Mentor's time by always being punctual, giving no less than 48 hours' notice if they need to change a meeting.

We would expect the Mentee to ideally have had at least two years paid employment history in a backstage position to have gained experience in how backstage works & significant experience in at least one technical discipline, and that they are now looking to move to a management role or have been appointed to a management role. Hence, the Mentee is now looking for a Mentor to advise on some of the following list of topics.

- Offer practical advice in the role of a Technical or Production Manager.
- Technical advice in areas that are not their base skill.
- Managing staff
- Managing creatives
- Managing HoD's and delegation
- Scheduling and Planning
- Setting budgets
- Handling Co-producers and Visiting companies
- Health Safety & Environment Regulations
- Training
- Managing sustainability
- Heading up the organisations Health & Safety
- Being part of a Senior Management Team
- Recruitment diversity equality and safeguarding

The Mentee is responsible for organising all the meetings and completing any paperwork. Currently meetings are planned to be virtual, but with the intention, if possible, to get Mentoring pairs geographically close so physical meetings are possible. In the future we hope to be able to fund actual visits and/or work experience.

Applications for Mentees are always open. You can find the application form [here](#). To help the PMF Mentoring Team match the Mentee with the most appropriate Mentor, please tell us why you want to be Mentored and what specifically you want advice on, you may do this in the space provided on the application form. You will then be invited to email the PMF a copy of your CV, and if you want a short video on why you want to be part of the scheme, and what you expect to get out of it..

Once we find you a match, we will be in touch with the details of your assigned Mentor. If you are not paired straight away, please do not be disheartened! The pairing is done on a first-come, first-serve basis, taking into consideration Mentor availability and suitability.

We look forward to your application! We will keep your application on file and be in touch when a Mentor is available.

Prospective Mentors can apply anytime, indeed we would encourage those in Mid-career to be both Mentees and Mentors, especially ex-Mentees. You can find the application form [here](#).

How the scheme works

- The PMF recruits Mentees from applications to its website, and Mentors from applications to its website, from the existing membership, and contacts in the industry.
- The PMF Mentoring team then matches Mentees with a Mentor.
- The Mentor is then sent a copy of the Mentee's CV to check there are no clashes and they are OK with the pairing, if all is OK the Mentee is informed of the pairing, and is tasked with making contact and setting up the first meeting.
- Mentoring pairs then set up their agreement about how frequently and when to meet.
- It is up to the Mentee to initiate first contact with the Mentor, and this should be within the first month of the arrangement being notified. The Mentee should define what they want from the pairing.

- If contact is not made within a month of the matching arrangement, one of the pair should let the PMF (Mentoring@productionmanagersforum.org) know so that PMF can follow up and check whether the other party wants to continue.
- You can meet in person, by phone or video conferencing, that is for the pairing to agree upon.
- In between meetings the Mentees can email their Mentor for support.
- The Mentee is responsible for organising all the meetings and sending a Meeting Form to the PMF Mentoring Team after each meeting. They also ensure that the next meeting is scheduled at the end of each meeting.
- The PMF will check in with Mentees to make sure that the relationship is working, and they are able to meet their Mentors. And there will be a formal review with the PMF Mentoring Team after 6 months.
- We will ask Mentors to report back on any issues or things they think it would be helpful for the PMF Mentoring team to know.

Mentor responsibilities

Mentors should:

- Make sure your Mentee has contacted you. If you've not heard from them for four weeks after being assigned a Mentee, contact PMF to let us know and we will chase up contact with your Mentee or make sure you are reassigned a new Mentee.
- Complete the [Mentor Agreement Form](#). This will be sent to the PMF Mentoring Team, who will send you a copy.
- With the Mentee complete a copy of the [First Meeting Form](#) and subsequent [General Meeting Forms](#)
- Take the lead in agreeing how frequently you might meet. We'd suggest that once every month is sufficient.
- Be open to what the Mentee would like to discuss with you, but also be prepared to talk about the industry, your experience, your knowledge.
- Listen! You are there to be a sounding board, to hear what the Mentee says and to provide a 'safe' space for them to talk about their experiences, their thoughts, hopes and aspirations. Don't feel you have to have all the answers.
- We have no budget to provide training, but it would be helpful if you could get Mentoring training through your own employer, which the PMF would endorse.
- Speak to the PMF if your Mentee brings up something that you feel is outside your bailiwick.
- Don't share any personal contacts (including PMF emails) for your Mentee without their consent, even if it looks like you're doing them a favour. We are bound by data protection laws.

Becoming a Mentor has a lot of benefits. As well as being rewarding, it can support the development of your own practice. Here are some other reasons for becoming a Mentor:

- Rewarding activity in developing the next generation of PM's
- Gaining satisfaction of supporting another in their career.
- Boosting CV, whilst developing new skills in coaching and reflecting on your own career and experience.
- Part of developing the workforce and further encouraging the wider diversifying of the sector.

When you sign up to become a Mentor you will be sent a short support document.

Mentee responsibilities

Mentoring isn't a one-way street. To get the most out of it you, the Mentee, have to put something into it as well.

Mentees should:

- Take the initiative to set up the first meeting with the Mentor with whom you've been matched and decide on an outline of what you want to get out of the pairing.
- Complete the [Mentee Agreement Form](#). This will be sent to the PMF Mentoring Team, who will send you a copy.
- With your Mentor, complete a copy of the [First Meeting Form](#). This will be seen by the PMF Mentoring Team who will send a copy to your mentor.
- Complete a [General Meeting Form](#) after each subsequent meeting.
- Ensure that the next meeting is scheduled at the end of each meeting.
- Answer your Mentor's emails or calls and turn up to meetings. Remember, they're giving up their time to do this because they want to help you and to keep the PMF network alive.
- Think about what you'd like to get out of this relationship – is it feedback on your work, advice on the industry, thoughts about supporting yourself professionally, help with management skills and so on? Mentors aren't experts in everything, but they are working professionals who can give you the benefit of their experience.
- Listen! If you're asking someone for advice or help, listen to what they say, even if you don't necessarily agree.

Let the PMF (Mentoring@productionmanagersforum.org) know if you have worries about your relationship with your Mentor: they're human too and might go through tough times, but that isn't the core of Mentoring. If you feel uncomfortable in the relationship, let PMF know, and we will try and find you a different Mentor. Also, there will be a formal review with the PMF Mentoring Team after 6 months.

Don't share your Mentor's personal information, including phone numbers or emails, without their consent and if they agree to having a contact passed on, make sure you've done that by email. We are bound by strict data protection laws.

Respect at PMF

As we describe above, the PMF Mentorship Scheme is a professional relationship to assist backstage staff in making the transition into management and providing Mentees with a link into the wider PMF network. Mentors and Mentees will be covered by our Behaviour in PMF spaces policy, which is on the website [here](#)

The Mentor will not be expected to give any legal advice or take on any liability for Mentee projects.

While we hope that the Mentoring relationships will create professional networks between PMF members for years to come, it's important for both Mentors and Mentees to know that the formal 'Mentoring' part of the relationship does come with an end point after one year. You might wish to continue to keep in touch, and that's up to you. But at the end of the Mentorship the PMF are very interested in your reflections on anything that's come out of this Mentorship which might be fed into schemes or used in publicising the scheme or applying for funding.

PMF flourishes on feedback, both positive and negative, so do provide any comments back to PMF.