

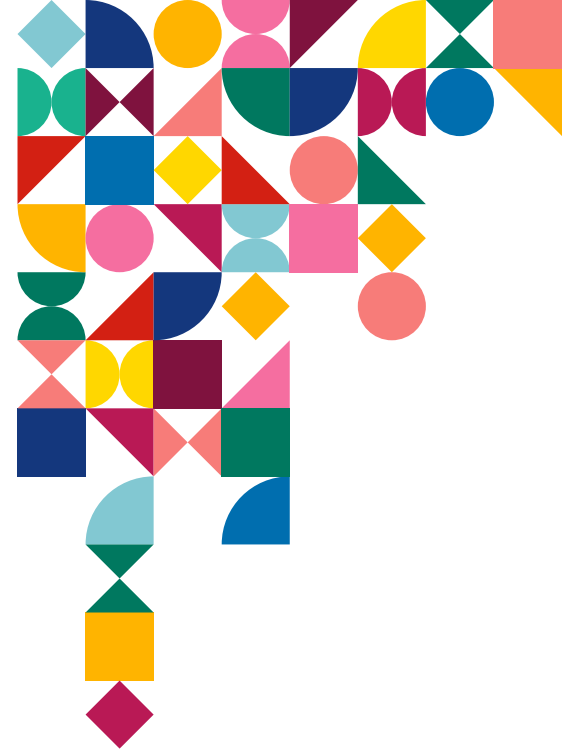
Future Mentors

Information Package



Table of contents

Introduction.....	3
The Future Mentors Programme In A Nutshell	4
Overview.....	6
General Instructions	7
The Roles	7
Values Of The Programme	8
On Dialogue	9
Online Platform.....	11
Detailed Session Instructions	12
Local Online Kick-Off.....	13
Second Meeting With Mentors.....	14
Third Meeting With Mentors	14
First Mentoring Session.....	15
Second Mentoring Session.....	15
Conclusion.....	16



Introduction

This information package is for you, our brave Future Mentor. Welcome along on a trip worth celebrating. Great to have you with us!

Your job as a Mentor is to bring your expertise about being a young person in your city to the fore. You will have a chance to get your voice heard.

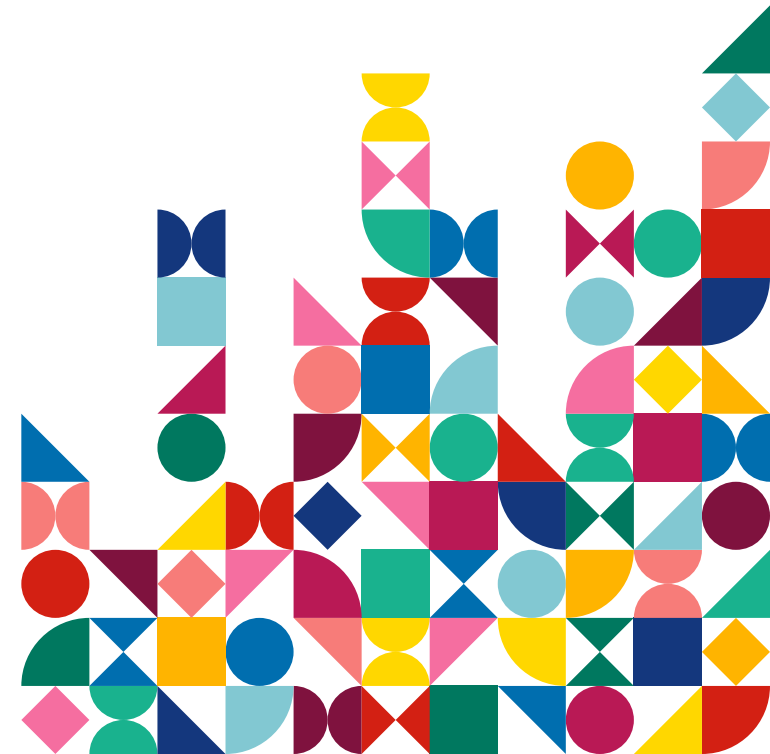
During the Future Mentors programme, you and your fellow team of Mentors will work and prepare for two mentoring sessions with your local city leader. The subjects of the mentoring can be anything as long as they are connected to the sustainable future of your city.

Being a Future Mentor is a big chance and a big responsibility. We hope you will do your best to support the process in your city to the best of your abilities.

In this guide we will go over the general outline of the programme. There are also some things about the values of the programme and a short introduction on dialogue. We suggest you read this package through before meeting your fellow team members for the first time. If, after reading this package, you still have questions or need clarification, don't hesitate to contact your local city coordinator. They will do their best to help you.

Please note, that this package is based on our suggested content for the workshop. As local variations do occur, we wanted to give each city some leeway in planning and preparing for the workshops. We've asked your city coordinator to give a heads-up if your local plan differs from the plan outlined in this package. So don't stress if things happen a bit differently in your city to what is presented in this package.

Once again, on behalf of the City of Espoo, we thank you for being part of Future Mentors. We really hope that you will enjoy working on the Future Mentors programme!



The Future Mentors Programme In A Nutshell

The Future Mentors programme is a reversed mentoring programme, in which a small group of young people will mentor a leader from their own city about the hopes, dreams and fears of the future generation regarding the future of their city. In this programme the city leaders are not the mentors, but the mentees, the ones offered the opportunity to be exposed to the bright thinking of their young mentors.

The programme is a platform for youth in cities to contribute to a sustainable future at the same tables as the decision-makers. The Future Mentors programme provides a platform for dialogue between the youth and the city leader about a sustainable future in cities.

The topics discussed could be linked to sustainable future of the city. The Future Mentors will be given the task of dreaming up a city of future. The topics of the mentoring will be decided by the Future Mentors themselves during the process, as this programme is a platform for the voice of the next generation. The Future Mentors will use their own city as the starting point, envision it in the near and far future, and then communicate their dreams and fears for the future of the city to the mentee, the city leader, as part of the mentoring process. The topics can be grand in scale such as climate change in cities, opinion polarisation, mental health issues and biodiversity loss, or more concrete and local such as urban mobility, recycling plastic, youth empowerment and everything in between. All these are issues that must be dealt with to create a better future for the generations to come. We must be willing to question our thinking and be open to the idea that our thinking could be better. This can best be done by exposing ourselves to dialogue with different people.

The mentorship programme enhances youth participation and strengthens their voice in their cities. The aim is to exchange ideas and gain perspective and understanding on the sustainable future of cities through the eyes of younger generations. The young Future Mentors will

reinforce the future community by bringing youth and leaders in the cities together.

We encourage posting about the Future Mentors programme on social media. Please use the hashtags **#Espoo** and **#FutureMentors**



The aims of the mentoring programme are to:

- Provide a platform for dialogue between city leaders and youth about a sustainable future in cities. The values and decisions of today's cities directly affect the future in the short- and long term. The future generations as the ones who must live in that future should have their say in the conversation.
- Bridge the gap between youth and the city leaders. Young people all over the world have begun to fight the global sustainability deficit and demand that governments act, especially against climate change. The youth climate movement has not only shone a light on the sustainability challenge, but also on the gap between decision-makers and young citizens.
- Increase mutual understanding in dialogue and improve decision-makers' knowledge of the values, hopes and dreams steering younger generations. Give new perspectives to all participants.
- Make the voice of young people better heard in the cities.
- Increase the feeling of togetherness between young people in cities.
- Create a new and future-oriented way of working towards dialogue with the youth in cities. The initiative will spark an increased understanding of how to include the voices of youth and citizens in cities.
- Increase young people's feeling of being invested in the city's future. The cities need the youth to stay and be interested in the city's future. If the youth is not interested in their city's future, does the city have a future at all?



Photo: freepik.com

Overview

	Participation phase			Mentoring Phase	Follow-up
	2-3 weeks	2-3 weeks		5-7 weeks	After the programme
Phase of the programme	Local online kick-off	Second meeting with Mentors	Third meeting with Mentors	At least two sessions	
Info on page	13	14	14	15	
Time allocated for meetings	1 hour	2 hours	2 hours	1,5 hours	
Roles taking part in activities	Mentors + city coordinator + a quick visit from the mentee	Mentors + city coordinator	Mentors + city coordinator	Mentors + mentees + city coordinator	
Future Mentors: To Do	Work on the pre-task	Participate in a local meetings			Online platform stays open after the programme. A chance to continue networking with other young mentors in the city
	Participate in online session				
	Agree on an online collaboration channel	Participate on Discord			Provide feedback on the process

General Instructions

We strongly recommend that you read this guide through before having your first Future Mentors meeting. It is useful to know the basics of the programme by the time you have your first kick-off meeting.

The Roles

The Future mentor

In this mentoring programme the youth will act as mentors. A group of 3–4 young mentors chosen by each participating city will mentor a leader of their own city as a team. The Future Mentors are experts on the thoughts and dreams of the young and, in this programme, they have the opportunity to make their voice and the voice of the youth of their city better heard at city-level and European level.

The Mentors will get instructions from the local city coordinator on how to do the mentoring and are guided and supported by the coordinator throughout the whole programme. With the help of the coordinator, they will choose specific topics related to the sustainable future of the city to talk about with the mentee, prepare for the mentoring meetings, collect views and opinions from their city's local youth, prepare a little presentation for the mentee and have a dialogue with the leader in two meetings.

The youth can decide for an online platform to do the communication on.

The mentee

The mentee is a city leader/politician like the mayor, deputy mayor, or someone from the city administration.

The mentee's role is to be open to learning about the dreams, hopes and fears of the younger generations through the eyes of the Future Mentors from their own city. This will empower the youth to become active urban citizens, have their voices heard in decision-making and feel part of their own city's future.

The city coordinator

The city coordinator is in charge of coordinating and organising the mentorship programme.

The city coordinator will plan the specific timetable of the mentoring in their city.

The city coordinator will have a step-by-step guide on how to implement the mentoring programme. We have prepared instructions for every meeting in our step-by-step guide. Using those guidelines as a reference, the city coordinator can plan the content of the meetings with the city coordinator and the Future Mentors. At those meetings, the city coordinator will help the Future Mentors to choose the topics to be discussed with the mentee, plan how the mentors will collect other local youth's opinions and views and plan the content of the actual mentoring session in relation to the topics chosen.



Values Of The Programme

1. **We're in this together** – everyone taking part does their best to help others be the best they can during the programme
2. **Be open.** Approach new topics and people in an open-minded manner, take every emerging issue and situation as an opportunity to learn new things and develop.
3. **Respect.** Give others space, pay attention to your choice of words and keep in mind the diversity of the event participants.
4. **Encourage.** Take responsibility for the experience of other participants as well. Listen and encourage.
5. **Relax.** Confusion and questioning are allowed.

In addition, to provide a safer environment for everyone taking part in the programme:

6. **Don't assume.** Respect everyone's self-determination and do not make assumptions about, for example, the gender, background or family relationships of others.
7. **Involvement.** If you witness any form of harassment or other inappropriate treatment, do not just remain an observer.





Photo: freepik.com

On Dialogue

The Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra has produced a great tool called Timeout for maintaining a good dialogue. On Timeout they define dialogue as follows:

“ *A dialogue is a constructive and equal way of having a discussion. It is aimed at understanding others, but not at reaching unanimity. At best, a dialogue generates unpredictable insights and new thinking. A dialogue creates a trusting atmosphere and deepens the participants' understanding of almost any topic. With the help of a dialogue, you can bring together people from different backgrounds to an encounter in which they are on an equal footing.*

In Future Mentors -programme, we truly bringing together people from different backgrounds: a young person is surely living a different life than a city leader! Therefore, it is important to offer a working platform for maintaining mutual dialogue, which enables a respectful and goal-oriented discussion amongst the people taking part in it.

As a Mentor you can do your bit in helping to maintain a good and constructive dialogue during the programme. Try to support your fellow team members and help them during the programme.

We understand that it might be a bit scary to meet with a local leader. Leaders have lots of power and are used to certain protocols, way of speaking etc. But also try to remember, that it can be really hard for the city leader to give up on this power and meet you on a common ground.

At the start of every session, it's good to remind the parties taking part of some rules regarding the discussion. Again, we refer to the Timeout-material provided by Sitra:

Ground rules for a constructive discussion by Timeout:

1. **Listen** to the others, do not interrupt or start additional discussions. *"Everyone must have the opportunity to explain their views in peace. It is important that we do not interrupt each other or whisper to the person next to us."*
2. **Relate** what you say to what the others have said and use everyday language. *"The objective of the dialogue is to relate what we say to what the others have brought up in the discussion. Let's try to use everyday language and avoid specialist terms."*
3. **Talk** about your own experience. *"To be able to better understand the issue being discussed and each other, it is a good idea to talk about our own experiences. This means that we tell the others what issues, events and situations have affected our views."*
4. **Talk to the others** directly and ask about their views.
5. **Be present** and **respect** the others and the confidentiality of the discussion. *"In a dialogue, it is important to concentrate entirely on each other and on understanding the issue we are discussing. We will respect the different views people have. Let's keep the conversation confidential so that everyone can talk as freely as possible."*
6. **Find the hidden and bring together.** Boldly deal with emerging conflicts and find issues that have gone unnoticed. *"The dialogue is intended to be a safe situation, in which even conflicts can be processed. In addition, it is important to look for things that have gone unnoticed for one reason or another. In the end, we can examine the links between the points of view that have come up in this discussion."*

Sometimes it can be difficult to move the discussion onwards. People keep going round in circles or maybe no-one wants to say anything. Timeout provides us with some good questions that can stimulate discussion.

1. What are the experiences that first come to your mind when you start discussing this issue?
2. What observations or feelings do you associate with the issue?
3. What is it like to talk about this together?
4. How do the people present affect the handling of the issue?
5. What are we aiming for in this discussion?

Timeout can be a valuable tool. If you're really interested in checking it out in more detail, you can go to its website where it provides a lot of resources on facilitating dialogue:

www.sitra.fi/en/timeout

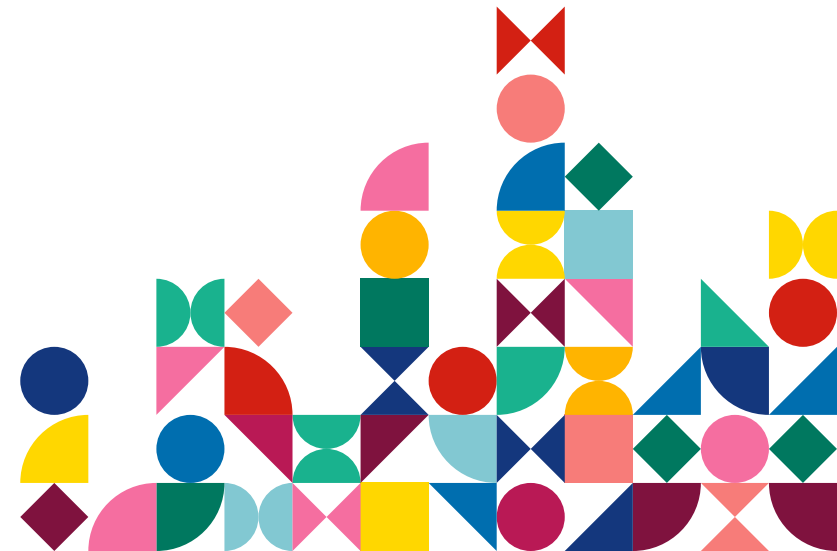




Photo: drobotdean/freepik.com

Online Platform

Besides local meetings, the group can also decide to use some online platform that enables Future Mentors to network, chat and share files easily and in a moderated environment.

The online platform can run along the local sessions, and offer a chance for Future Mentors to network. Please note, that the online platform is suggested to be used only by the Mentors.

We suggest you to encourage your team of Mentors to take part in the online aspect of the programme.

Detailed Session Instructions

General instructions:

1. Familiarise yourself with the aims (on [page 4](#)) and values (on [page 8](#)) of Future Mentors programme beforehand and try to do your best to help in making them happen
2. Your job is to be an expert on being a young person in your city. You don't have to be a sustainable development expert or a professional in any field. You were chosen for this programme because your city wants to improve its work with young people like you and it values your thoughts.
3. Think how you can make the meetings as fun and motivating as possible. Be active, participate and don't be afraid to speak on things that are important *for you*.
4. At the same time, respect the views of others, give space, listen and learn.



Local Online Kick-Off

Duration: one hour or more.

This workshop is for Future Mentors and the City Coordinator. A short visit from the Mentee is encouraged.

The aims of the workshop:

1. Give detailed and relevant local information about the programme for Future Mentors
2. Get to know each other
3. Meet the mentee briefly (online/face to face) for the first time (if possible)
4. Agree on schedules
5. Give instructions on a pre-tasks for Future Mentors
6. Give the mentee a small pre-task

General information on the workshop:

This workshop is meant for local information regarding the programme. It is also a chance to meet the team of Future Mentors for the first time. You can arrange this workshop either online or face to face, depending on availability and local conditions.

During the workshop, you should decide and/or give information on where and when the local meetings will take place (see timetable for suggested time).

During this workshop, you will receive information on the pre-task. The pre-task is there to help Future Mentors so that they have a wider view on their city during the programme. This will also help them to think of the issues brought up during the programme from other people's point of view.

We have recommended that this meeting include a short visit by the city leader. During this short visit, we suggest that you present the city leader with a simple pre-task for them to do: to think about how the city has changed from their childhood and what kind of hopes and fears they had regarding the city's future when they were young. The answer to this pre-task can be presented in the first mentoring session.



Second Meeting With Mentors

Duration: two hours.

This workshop is for the Future Mentors and the City Coordinator.

The aims of the workshop:

1. Build trust amongst the group
2. Learn a bit about sustainable development
3. Prepare for the mentoring sessions

General information on the workshop:

During this workshop you will have a short talk about sustainable development and your pre-task. After this you will think about the city of your dreams and the various developments that have led to it.

Third Meeting With Mentors

Duration: two hours.

This workshop is for Future Mentors and the City Coordinator.

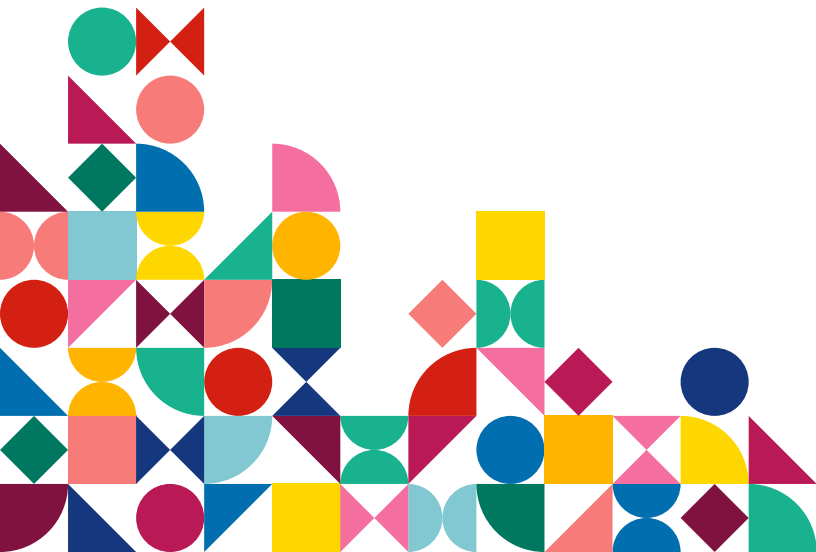
The aims of the workshop:

1. Finish preparing for the mentoring sessions

General information on the workshop:

During this workshop, you will continue preparing for the mentoring session. You will first imagine a city of your fears and the various developments that have led to it.

After that you will make a presentation to help you guide the dialogue with the city leader. The mentoring sessions will begin after this workshop. How exciting!



First Mentoring Session

Duration: 90 minutes.

This workshop is for Future Mentors, the City Coordinator, and the Mentee.

The aims of the workshop:

1. Introduce the Mentee to the Mentors
2. Start the mentoring

General information on the workshop:

During the mentoring sessions you will have a chance to mentor a leader from your city. The City Coordinator is there to help and facilitate the discussion workshop. You will have a short talk about sustainable development and your pre-task.

You can start from the most important topic of the presentation and go on from there. It's better to properly concentrate on one topic before advancing to the next. Make sure that everyone can have a say. Help your fellow Mentors if you feel they need help.

Second Mentoring Session

Duration: 90 minutes.

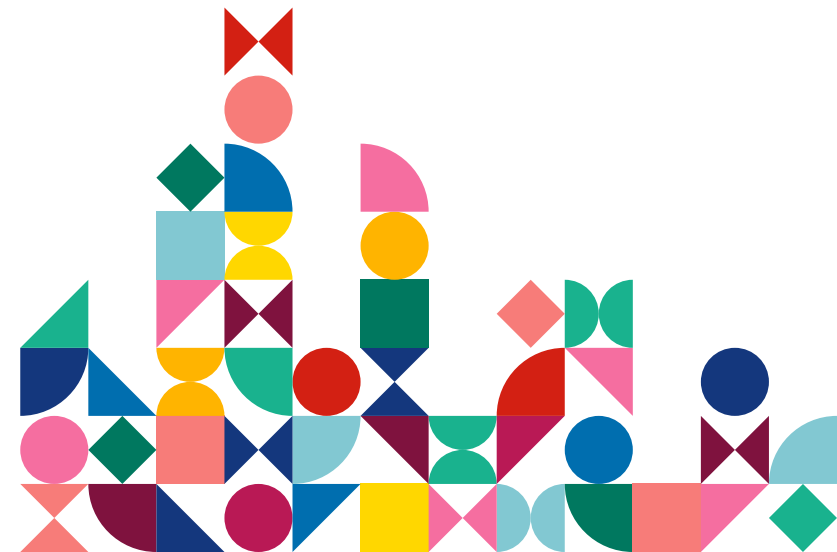
This workshop is for Future Mentors, the City Coordinator, and the Mentee.

The aims of the workshop:

1. Continue mentoring
2. Make follow-up plans
3. Decide on the Mentor who will travel to Espoo for the Eurocities conference.

General information on the workshop:

Continue the discussion. During this mentoring session, the Mentee can have an opportunity to ask their own questions. Maybe your city has something going on that would benefit from an opinion from the Future Mentors and other young people? The main focus should be on the topics picked up by you, the Mentors.



Conclusion

You've arrived at the end of this guide. Thank you for making it this far! We truly hope that the Future Mentors -programme will be a fun and engaging tool for you and your city. We wish you many successful sessions with everyone you meet during this programme.

Best of luck to you!

With warm regards,
The Espoo City team



