

ABIS Mentoring Programme for Early-Stage Researchers

Frequently Asked Questions

General

1. [What is mentoring?](#)
2. [What is the ABIS Mentoring Programme for Early Stage Researchers?](#)
3. [What are the benefits of participating as a Mentee?](#)
4. [What are the benefits of participating as a Mentor?](#)
5. [Who is eligible to participate as a Mentee?](#)
6. [Who are the mentors?](#)
7. [How long does this Mentoring Programme last?](#)
8. [What is the role of the Mentoring Team?](#)
9. [What kind of guidance is provided in this Programme?](#)
10. [Will the information I share through the Mentoring Programme be kept confidential?](#)
11. [Do you promote additional activities?](#)
12. [How much do I need to pay to participate?](#)

Application and Matching

13. [What is the Calendar for the Programme?](#)
14. [How do I sign up?](#)
15. [How is the selection process organized?](#)
16. [What are the main criteria in the selection?](#)
17. [When will I be informed if I was accepted as a Mentee?](#)
18. [What is a no-fault opt-out clause?](#)

During the Mentoring Process

19. [If I'm accepted, what is expected of me?](#)
20. [How often should I meet with my Mentor?](#)
21. [What happens if my Mentor and I aren't a good match?](#)
22. [What happens if the mentor is not responsive?](#)
23. [Where can I find the documents and information I need during my Mentoring Programme?](#)

General

1. What is mentoring?

"Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop skills, improve performance and become the person they want to be" Eric Parsloe, former Director of The Oxford School of Coaching and Mentoring

Mentoring is a highly successful, adaptable, and practical strategy for supporting individuals' success and satisfaction across their personal and professional lives. Within the academic context, mentoring has been shown to enhance mentees' research productivity (Bland & Schmitz, 1986; Bland et al., 2002; Byrne & Keefe, 2002), to enhance teaching effectiveness (Williams, 1991), and

to increase self-competence, self-confidence and satisfaction (Allen et al, 2004). Mentoring can be of particular importance to women and diverse faculty, who are less likely to find spontaneous mentoring relationships that address the full range of their career concerns (Mott, 2002; Zellers et al., 2008; Pololi & Knight, 2005; Van Emmerik, 2004; Bickel, 2014). In a mentoring relationship, the flow of learning is two-way and mentors often gain as much as their mentees (Jones, 2009; Ghosh & Reio, 2013). Studies have demonstrated clear improvement in the ability of mentors to rationalise their own experiences, gain insight into the lives/situations of others, and development of inter-personal skills (Philip & Hendry, 2000).

2. What is the ABIS Mentoring Programme for Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) ?

Our Programme is designed to make young Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) in the field of sustainability grow, by creating opportunities for mentees to have one-on-one relationship with mentors, who are academic experts in sustainability-related domains, and can encourage mentees' ability to accomplish their goals. The goals of the programme are:

- Develop a mentoring practice focused on whole-person and relational development of sustainability researchers
- Promote the access to role models and contribute to sharing knowledge to advance the role of business in society

The core of the programme is a set of **6-8 one-hour mentoring sessions** over a period of 9 months, face to face or online, complemented by regular workshops and online meetings organized by ABIS.

3. What are the benefits of participating as a Mentee?

Common outcomes from mentoring programmes are:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General support and guidance • Career decision making • Support in making a research Fellowship application • Support for career progression • Improving CV • Support with a difficult person or situation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better work-life balance • Increased self confidence • Increased self-reflection • To set further goals for professional development • To set further goals for personal development |
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In particular, the ABIS programme helps young, talented ESRs to develop their skills and aptitudes, to better understand "their selves" and the opportunities available to them as sustainability academics and change-makers. It allows to improve career strategies and gain exposure to new situations and people, and accelerate career progress. It give access to:

- academics with significant experience, who can become a sounding board for decisions and evolution milestones
- a network of fellow mentees, with whom you can share your experiences and self-organize networking activities
- a structure and activities developed by the ABIS team specifically for your intake

4. What are the benefits of participating as a Mentor?

On top of the benefits mentioned under questions 1, further benefits include:

- Supervisory skills
- Personal satisfaction
- Personal fulfilment
- Creative synergy
- Networking/collaboration
- Negotiation skills

In particular, the ABIS programme focus on sustainability provides an opportunity to gain fresh knowledge, insights and perspectives from emerging researchers in the field and to strengthen one's contribution to exploring and addressing relevant environmental and socio-economic challenges.

5. Who is eligible to participate as a mentee?

The Programme targets Early Stage Researchers who:

- are PhD students enrolled in a business school
- engaged in research focused on a sustainable development issue
- are looking for guidance on how to advance their career in sustainability
- want a different perspective on how to tackle work-related issues
- want to develop their network and confidence
- are ready to step up their personal and professional growth

6. Who are the mentors?

Most of our mentors are highly experienced academics from a wide range of academic fields related to sustainability. As members of the ABIS network, they mostly come from business schools, faculties of economics and sustainability research centres. These individuals:

- want to invest in the future of a sustainability researcher, helping him/her grow and develop in their career
- want to grow as a leader alongside the mentee and gain a fresh perspective on your own career path and research
- are willing to share expertise, wisdom and perspective with less-experienced mentees
- are willing to engage on a voluntary base under the roof of ABIS

7. How long does this Mentoring Programme last?

Our Programme supports pairs of Mentors and Mentees for 9 months, from September to June. We are sure mentees will build long lasting relations after the Programme, not just with their Mentors, but also with other Mentees.

8. What is the role of the ABIS Team?

The ABIS Team provides support to guide and direct efforts of mentors and mentees to ensure successful Programme completion. In case of difficulties participants can ask the ABIS Team for assistance and Mentees are responsible for giving the ABIS Team feedback on how the Programme is going.

9. What kind of guidance is provided during the Programme?

- Participants receive all information materials and presentations for download
- Mentoring guidelines
- Mentoring agreement
- Template to structure mentoring meetings
- Informal meet ups to gather and answer any questions
- Feedback sessions

Every mentoring relationship is different, and what each Mentee needs from our Programme may be different. After the initial meeting and the connection with the Mentoring Team we do not define a strict path; instead, we provide the Mentor and the Mentee with support structure to help them make the most out of the programme.

10. Will the information I share through the Mentoring Programme be kept confidential?

Yes. All requested information is used for selection and matching purposes only. Contacts will be shared amongst other participants.

11. Do you offer additional activities?

Yes. Our ABIS Mentoring Programme includes other supporting activities, besides the core mentoring Programme, such as:

- Mentee and Mentor networks
- Events (Match-making, Kick-off, celebration event)
- Workshops
- Informal meetups
- Feedback and follow-up

12. How much do I need to pay to participate?

In order to take part in the programme, mentees contribute a fee for administrative expenses of:

- €500 - if their institution is an ABIS Member
- €750 - if their institution is not an ABIS Member. (The fee includes a complimentary yearly ABIS individual membership)

You will receive an email with payment information after being accepted in the Programme. The deadline for payment is set after the match with a mentor to ensure satisfaction with the match. An invoice for the programme fee will be provided by ABIS.

Application and Matching

13. What is the calendar for the Programme?

Our Programme is organized in several phases. Please check dates for each specific year on the Programme webpage, but you can find an indicative overview below:

- August - Opening of applications and beginning of the selection process
- Mid September - Application deadline for mentees and mentors
- End September – Match-making event
- October - Kick-off event
- During the Programme:
 - Mentoring sessions for 9 months
 - Workshops
 - Informal meetups
 - Feedback
- June - Celebration event

14. How do I sign up?

Both aspiring mentors and mentees need to complete the mentoring application form on the Programme webpage and send their CVs to the indicated ABIS contact.

15. How is the Selection process organized?

For ABIS to get a final group of very committed Mentees, there are several stages:

- The analysis of all CVs and applications and an immediate screening of those profiles that are more aligned with the goals of this Programme
- Potential interviews with the ABIS Team to identify our candidates' main goals and fit for this mentoring relationship
- Matchmaking event between mentees and mentors
- Finalisation matching process between the mentors and mentees

16. What are the main criteria in selection?

The selection criteria are based on the following elements:

- Complete application, including documents with correct naming
- Profile and where the Early Stage Researcher is in his/her career to increase his/her growth
- Very high commitment to personal growth and eagerness to progress/change
- Whether mentoring is appropriate to mentee's goals and expectations

17. When will I be informed if I was accepted as a Mentee?

We will inform all applicants of their status after the match-making event, before the kick-off event.

18. What is a no-fault opt-out clause?

Mentoring programs have an average 15% attrition rate. Some mentoring relationships do not work out, mainly due to limited commitment by either party or mentee expectations not being in line with the program. Pairs are entitled to separate if their relationship is not working. The ABIS Team will assist in this process and suggest that the pairs rethink whether it makes sense to both to continue.

During the Mentoring Process

19. If I am accepted, what is expected of me?

We ask for your commitment! Both as a mentee and as a mentor, we ask you to maintain the relationship active and productive. We also ask that you maintain periodic communication with the mentoring team. For example, if the match is not working out, the sooner the ABIS Team know, the sooner we will find a solution (e.g. provide additional support or propose to terminate the relationship).

20. How often should I meet with my Mentor?

The time commitment should be based on your goals. We encourage Mentees to meet at least once a month with the Mentors, for one hour, either a face to-face, online (Zoom, Teams etc.) or by phone. If possible, we do suggest to have 1-2 face to face meetings, in particular at the beginning, to build the relationship.

21. What happens if a Mentee and a Mentor are not a good match?

Our goal is to provide the best possible match to each Mentee. If either the Mentor or the Mentee feels that the pair is not a "good fit", they can notify the ABIS Team and we will try to help by providing additional support for pairs in need or propose to terminate the relationship.

22. What happens if the mentor is not responsive?

If the Mentor has not responded after a couple of weeks, please reach out to the ABIS team at mentoring@abis-global.org.

23. Where can I find the documents and information I need during the Mentoring Programme?

Basic information is provided on the Mentoring Programme's webpage. All Mentees and Mentors are provided with further relevant materials during the mandatory sessions (e.g. kick-off meeting) as well as via emails.