

# ACCESS PROGRAM

*A Career Development Initiative  
for Post-Secondary Students*

*Mentors Manual*





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# INTRODUCTION

The Access Program is a career development initiative designed by the Burnaby Board of Trade (BBOT) to bridge the skill gap for post-secondary students and enhance their professional readiness. By collaborating with post-secondary institutions and businesses, this program provides students with invaluable networking opportunities, practical training, and direct industry engagement, enabling a smoother transition into the workforce.



# ABOUT THE **PROGRAM**

The Access Program offers a comprehensive set of initiatives designed to equip students with the skills, knowledge, and professional connections necessary for career success. Through mentorship, targeted training, networking opportunities, and real-world business challenges, participants will gain valuable experience and direct access to industry professionals. The following components outline the key elements of the program:

MENTORSHIP

TRAINING &  
WEBINARS

NETWORKING  
EVENTS

CAREER  
FAIR

# MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The Mentorship Program is a core pillar of the Access Program, designed to provide students with an invaluable opportunity to be matched with a business professional who will provide professional insights and support as students transition from post-secondary institutions into the workplace. This initiative fosters meaningful professional relationships, equipping students with industry insights, career strategies, and workplace readiness skills. By engaging with seasoned mentors, students gain valuable perspectives that enhance their employability and confidence as they transition from academia to the workforce.

## KEY FEATURES

### **Structured Mentorship Matching**

Students are paired with mentors based on their field of study, career interests, and professional goals.

### **One-on-One & Group Mentorship**

A combination of individual guidance and group discussions ensures diverse learning opportunities. The program will maintain a Mentor-to-student ratio of 1:5, thus ensuring meaningful engagement.

### **Monthly Check-ins & Progress Reviews**

Regular mentor-mentee meetings to track development and provide targeted advice.

### **Networking & Industry Exposure**

Mentor-led events and panel discussions with industry leaders.

### **Final Reflection**

Students summarize their learnings and present key takeaways from their mentorship experience.



# WHAT'S EXPECTED FROM THE MENTORS

## **Time Commitment**

Every mentor/mentee relationship is unique. The minimum time we request mentors to volunteer for the program is 3 meetings (of approximately an hour each). Mentors are welcome to work with their mentees to setup either in-person or virtual mentorship sessions based on what works best for them.

## **Guidance & Support**

Mentors should provide professional insights, career guidance, and workplace readiness advice to help students transition successfully into the workforce.

## **Active Engagement**

Mentors are expected to be proactive in their interactions, ensuring consistent communication and meaningful discussions.

## **Networking & Industry Exposure**

Where possible, mentors should try and introduce mentees to industry contacts, networking opportunities, and professional events.

## **Constructive Feedback**

Offering honest, supportive, and constructive feedback to help mentees develop professional skills and confidence.

## **Commitment to Growth**

Encouraging mentees to set goals, reflect on their experiences, and take actionable steps toward their career aspirations.

# WHAT'S EXPECTED FROM THE MENTEES

## **Proactive Participation**

Mentees should take initiative in scheduling meetings, preparing questions, and actively engaging in discussions with their mentors.

## **Open-Mindedness & Willingness to Learn**

Being receptive to feedback, new perspectives, and career advice provided by mentors.

## **Professionalism**

Treating the mentorship relationship with respect by being punctual, prepared, and professional in all interactions.

## **Respect for Time & Boundaries**

Acknowledging and respecting the mentor's time and professional commitments by communicating effectively and adhering to scheduled meetings.

## **Goal Setting & Reflection**

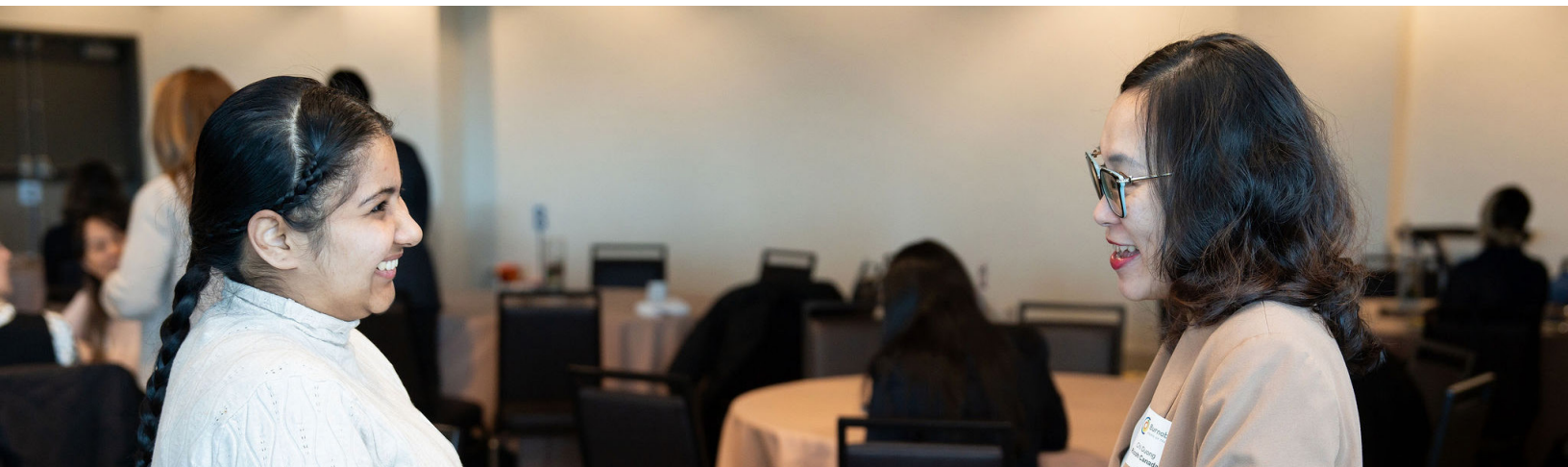
Setting clear goals at the beginning of the mentorship and reflecting on progress throughout the program.

## **Application of Knowledge**

Implementing the guidance and strategies discussed during mentorship sessions into academic, internship, and career pursuits.

## **Final Reflection Paper**

Submitting a final reflection paper, highlighting key learnings and takeaways from their mentorship journey.



# PROGRAM **TIMELINE**

The Access program is designed to be a 4-month long program, starting in April 2025 and culminating in July 2025.

Mentors and Mentees would be expected to connect and engage at least once a month, and mentors are welcome to attend any/all the events hosted in the entire duration of the program.



## **SUCCESS** STORIES

BBOT has run multiple successful mentorship programs as a part of previous iterations of the Access programs. These programs have been extremely well received in the past and have contributed to the career growth and development of the students who have participated.

Previous mentors to have participated in this program include some of the leading business leaders of the region, such as Director of Facilities at Shape Properties, CEO at 604Digital, CEO at Mogiana Coffee, Project Manager at Fraser Health, and senior executives from various other organizations such as Telus, RBC, Ritchie Bros, YVR Prep etc.

*The newest generation entering the workforce is as fascinating as ever. I admire and am grateful to learn of their curiosity and drive to make their mark as well as their desire for a fulsome work-life balance. I'm pleased to be able to share my experiences and insight to help them clarify their vision and intention and to provide a strong foundation for a successful transition from school into the workforce.*

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