



British Columbia Chapter
Canadian Evaluation Society

CESBC

2023 Annual Conference

Buddy Program

About the Buddy Program

The conference Buddy Program pairs experienced evaluators with students and emerging evaluators for a breakfast on the morning of the conference. Mentors are invited to share their knowledge and experience with mentees before and during the conference.

Registration for mentors can be found [here](#), and registration for mentees can be found [here](#).

We will be holding a virtual networking session early October (exact date TBD) where mentors and mentees can meet one another and take part in some interactive activities before the conference begins. You are still able to register as a mentor or mentee if you are unable to make this virtual networking session.

If you have any questions, please email cesbc.conference@gmail.com

How the Buddy Program Works

This Buddy Program has been designed to suit the availability and needs of different

1. Application

Mentors and mentees, who have already registered for the CESBC Conference, are invited to complete a registration form. This information will be used to match mentors and mentees on the basis of availability, aims for being involved in the buddy program, and areas of expertise.

2. Matching

The CESBC Conference Organisers will match mentor applicants with mentee applicants. We hope to match each mentee with a mentor, but it may also be possible that two mentees will be matched with a mentor, based on areas of interest and availability of mentors.

3. Introductions

Once the matching process is complete, we will be sending out emails of introduction to mentors and mentees. After this point, you are invited to contact either other and perhaps even set up an online or in-person meeting.

4. Pre-Conference meeting

In early October we will be setting up an online meeting for all mentors and mentees to meet and talk about their aims and objectives for participating in the Buddy program.

We encourage mentors and mentees to think about three aims or objectives from their Buddy experience - this could include interpersonal or professional skills development, networking, finding out more about careers in evaluation, etc.

	Aims/Objectives	How can my Buddy help me achieve this aim / objective?
	<p><i>For mentors: Think specifically about aspects of mentoring that you would like to develop, or around knowledge and experiences you feel would be useful for a mentee in early stages of their career. Consider some aspects of working in the evaluation sector where knowing something (a skill, for instance) may have helped you develop your career.</i></p> <p><i>For mentees: Think of aims and objectives that are specific and measurable. Focus on areas that are specific to evaluation and developing skills or competencies around networking, methods, etc</i></p>	<p><i>For mentors: Think about what you can do and how you can interact with the mentee to develop your own skills and to pass on knowledge and competencies.</i></p> <p><i>For mentees: Think about tangible ways in which you could leverage your mentor's experience and skills to give yourself a push towards the aims / objectives you have listed</i></p>
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5. Conference Breakfast

All mentors and mentees are expected to attend the Conference Breakfast, where you can sit with your Buddy, ask questions and discuss your aims and objectives in more detail. We hope that the conference breakfast is only a starting point in this journey, and that the mentors and mentees will be able to interact both during the conference itself as well as afterwards.

6. Post-Conference

Following the Conference, we encourage Mentors and Mentees to meet or keep in touch to help mentees achieve the aims or objectives they have set out.

7. Evaluation

We will be reaching out to all Buddies (mentors and mentees) to tell us all about how their Buddy experience has been. We would like this learning to help us improve the program in the coming years.

Benefits for the Mentee

The potential benefits for mentees are varied, depending on their career stage, what they would like to do next, what training they have already undertaken, etc. Some valuable benefits that a mentee can gain from a mentor:

Guidance and Direction: A mentor provides valuable insights and advice to help mentees navigate through complex professional decisions, whether they relate to career choices, personal development, or overcoming challenges. This guidance helps mentees make informed choices and avoid common pitfalls.

Skill Development: Mentors offer practical knowledge and expertise that can help mentees enhance their skills and capabilities, including signposting mentees to particular learning or training opportunities.

Networking Opportunities: Mentors are likely to have extensive networks within the evaluation sector, including particular types or aspects of evaluation. Through mentorship, mentees can gain insight or even access to these networks, opening doors to valuable connections, potential job opportunities, partnerships, and collaborations.

Personal Growth and Self-Confidence: Mentors offer a safe space for mentees to discuss their aspirations, fears, and self-doubts around becoming evaluators or using particular approaches in evaluation. Through constructive feedback and encouragement, mentors help mentees build self-confidence, self-awareness, and emotional resilience, whilst guiding them in their own professional and personal growth as emerging evaluators.

Feedback and Accountability: Mentors can provide constructive feedback on mentees' work, ideas, and performance in evaluation, as they have insight into what types of knowledge, approaches and expertise are most valuable in this sector. This feedback helps mentees identify areas for improvement and growth while holding them accountable for their goals and career development in evaluation.

Expanded Perspectives and Knowledge Sharing: Mentors bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the mentee, including around how the evaluation sector has developed in the past years. Mentors can challenge mentees to consider alternative viewpoints, methods and approaches in evaluation, whilst helping them broaden their horizons and think critically about various situations and interactions with different communities.

Access to Resources: Mentors can provide access to resources in evaluation such as books, journals, articles, workshops, and training programs that can help mentees in their personal and professional development journeys.

Career Advancement: A mentor who has been working in evaluation for a number of years can help create a clear roadmap for career advancement for the mentee. This includes setting goals, planning career trajectories, and identifying opportunities for growth both within evaluation as well as outside it when considering transferable skills in project management and research for instance.

Time Management and Prioritization: Mentors can offer guidance on managing time efficiently, setting priorities, and finding a healthy work-life balance in a sector that is rapidly growing.

Leadership and Soft Skills: Mentors impart insights into leadership principles, effective communication, teamwork, and other soft skills that are crucial for success in the evaluation sector.

Inspiration and Motivation: A mentor's success story (and even challenges they encountered, in evaluation or beyond!) can serve as a powerful source of inspiration and motivation for mentees, helping them overcome challenges and strive for excellence.

Long-Term Relationship: A mentorship can evolve into a lasting professional relationship, where mentees continue to seek guidance even after the formal mentorship program has ended.

Benefits for the Mentor

For Mentors, sharing their experience and knowledge in a specific subject area with an emerging evaluator can be a way to both pass on knowledge as well as help the mentee navigate what can be a confusing space.

Personal Fulfilment: Mentoring provides mentors with a sense of purpose and fulfilment as they contribute to the growth and success of emerging evaluators.

Skill Reinforcement: Teaching and guiding mentees can reinforce mentors' own knowledge and skills. Explaining concepts, methodologies and approaches can deepen mentors' understanding of their subject matter.

Leadership Development: Mentoring offers mentors an opportunity to refine their leadership and communication skills. Guiding an emerging evaluator requires effective communication, active listening, and the ability to inspire and motivate. Mentors can develop their own leadership skills whilst supporting an emerging evaluator to develop their own leadership in the field.

Networking: Through mentoring, mentors can expand their own networks as they connect with mentees, as well as other mentors and mentees within the evaluation sector. We encourage mentors and mentees to explore any opportunities for networking together through follow-up activities or through conferences and workshops.

Fresh Perspectives: Interacting with mentees can provide mentors with fresh viewpoints and ideas, which can in turn support them with mentoring other research assistants or emerging evaluators. Mentees may bring innovative approaches to challenges, inspiring mentors to think creatively around evaluation processes, methods or communities.

Reciprocal Learning: Mentoring is not a one-way process; mentors often learn from their mentees' experiences, viewpoints, and unique perspectives, enriching their own understanding of the evaluation sector.

Recognition: Effective mentors gain recognition and respect within the evaluation community for their commitment to fostering the development of future evaluation professionals.

Continued Learning: Mentoring provides mentors with an opportunity to stay updated with the latest trends, technologies, and ideas, as they often need to offer relevant guidance to mentees around how they can build and develop their evaluation skills too.

Long-Term Relationships: Mentoring relationships can evolve into lasting friendships and professional connections, enriching mentors' own support networks.

Empowerment: As mentors witness their mentees' transformation and success, they are empowered by the knowledge that they played a vital role in someone else's journey in becoming evaluators.

In summary, mentoring provides mentors with a myriad of benefits, ranging from personal fulfilment and skill reinforcement to expanded networks and enhanced leadership. Guiding others not only gives mentors the opportunity to make a positive impact but also enriches their own professional approaches and skills in meaningful ways.

Next Steps

To apply for the Buddy program, you will need to be registered for the CESBC Annual Conference on October 27th 2023. Once you have registered for the conference, you can complete a form for mentors [here](#), or the form for mentees [here](#).

We will be holding a virtual networking session early October (exact date TBD) where mentors and mentees can meet one another and take part in some interactive activities before the conference begins. You are still able to register as a mentor or mentee if you are unable to make this virtual networking session.

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We will review applications and get back to all applicants in early October 2023.