

TFTC Mentoring Program

WHO IS TFTC (THE FUTURE THROUGH COLLABORATION)?

TFTC is a not for profit joint initiative of Defence Industry organisations that have come together to address industry wide challenges. The overall aim is to grow and enhance capability.

In 2015, TFTC launched its first initiative, the TFTC Mentoring Program for female engineers and project managers in defence. The program has the aim of tackling the issue of diversity head on by supporting the attraction and development of females within technical disciplines and the industry as a whole.

THE TFTC MENTORING PROGRAM

The TFTC Mentoring Program is a structured, cross-industry mentoring program, providing female engineers and project managers with the opportunity to learn from their peers and superiors.

Participants receive

- Initial 3.5 hour training session and materials on mentoring;
- Attendance to the launch lunch;
- Three quarterly 2 hour facilitated training sessions throughout the year; and
- Ongoing support from the program coordinator, including quarterly calls to check in.

Matching

- All participants are paired with individuals outside of their organisation.
- Participants are paired based on location, level of experience, skill set, and overall goals of the program.
- Although we can't ensure that every pair is co-located, the facilitated sessions are scheduled so that the pair will be at the same location on the same day, with a 2-hour block between the mentee and mentor sessions, allowing them 4 opportunities in the year to meet face to face.

Who is involved

Although this changes each year, our participating organisations have included:

- Department of Defence
- Royal Australian Navy
- BAE Systems
- Airservices Australia
- Raytheon Australia

- QinetiQ
- Jacobs Australia
- Beca
- KBR
- Nova

BENEFITS TO MENTEES

Benefits to mentees

- Fast track learning and development gained from the mentor's expertise.
- Receive constructive feedback in key areas including communication, interpersonal relationships, change management, and leadership skills.
- Build stronger connections within the Defence Industry.
- Access to the expertise of a defence professional in roles/ranks such as:
 - o Director of Engineering
 - o Head of Engineering
 - o Head of Project Management
 - o Project Director
 - o Managing Director
 - o CEO (SME)
 - o Senior Specialist
 - o National Operations Manager
 - o SPO Director
 - o Air Vice Marshal (RAAF)
 - o Group Captain (RAAF)
 - o Air Commodore (RAAF)
 - o Captain (Navy)

Feedback from mentees

- *"I feel so inspired working with this group of wonderful ladies. It gives me a buzz to take back into my work."*
- *"I'm more confident personally and professionally and engage more and share my ideas within my work team."*
- *"It's so nice to see there are other people out there like me."*
- *"It definitely feels better seeing government and industry organisations as a combined, united industry working towards achieving the same goals"*

BENEFITS TO MENTORS

Benefits to mentors

- Further develop leadership skills including listening skills, asking the right questions and providing feedback.
- Opportunity to learn through teaching.
- Build stronger connections within the Defence Industry.

Feedback from mentors

- Due to benefits, there is a 70% mentor return rate
- *"I believe I have developed skills in listening and understanding other people's concerns and issues, and developed techniques to help talk through those issues."*

- *"In my day-to-day engagements, I feel I'm better able to recognise when it is that I should be engaging as a mentor, rather than say a coach, consultant, manager, etc."*
- *"I've been involved with mentoring programs before and they've always failed. This is the first program that's had a structure, brings people back together and holds them accountable. It actually works."*
- *"The value [is] in sitting and working with a group of my peers."*

GETTING INVOLVED

Expectations of participants

- That they will spend an hour in a mentoring session each month; approximately 12 hours over 12 months.
- Commitment to attend all four facilitated sessions; approximately 9.5 hours over 12 months.
- There may be travel involved, depending on where they are based.
- They commit to investing in the process and professional development provided.

Expectations of organisations and management

- Participants are sponsored financially by their employing organisation in a one-off payment that covers all support and training for the year.
- In order to keep the numbers of mentees and mentors even, an organisation is required to sponsor a pair set of one mentee and one mentor (Note: they will never be paired with one another).
- As there is a time commitment involved, the organisation must provide support for the individual to take the time to attend the four facilitated sessions and to invest in the relationship.
- The line management should ensure the participants have read and understood all information provided about the program and will be committed for the full 12 month duration of the program.

Cost

- Approximately \$4,000 + GST for 2 individuals; one mentee and one mentor.
- The exact amount may vary and depends on the number of individuals supported in the intake.
- This is a one-off payment that covers all support and training for the year.
- The program is run as a not-for-profit.
- There may be travel costs involved.

Example Dates of the TFC Program

<i>Commitment on numbers from organisations</i>	<i>Dec</i>
<i>Applications Open for Participant Matching Forms</i>	<i>Jan</i>
<i>Applications Close for Participant Matching Forms</i>	<i>Feb</i>
<i>Program Induction Training (1/2 day) & Launch Lunch</i>	<i>First Thursday in May</i>
<i>Graduation / Program Concludes</i>	<i>May the following year</i>